Intersubjectivity of Mutual Recognition and the I-Thou: a Comparative Analysis of Hegel and Buber

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Abstract

Hegel and Buber are very different thinkers yet both acknowledge that human beings must relate to one another intersubjectively. Hegel presents mutual recognition as an account of intersubjectivity. Buber's account of intersubjectivity in *I and Thou* involves a dialogical encounter between 'I' and 'Thou'. This essay explores the relation of these two views. It is argued that Buber's presentation of intersubjectivity shares much in common with Hegel's. It is further argued that both of these theories involve converging conceptions of incomplete and asymmetrical intersubjectivity.

1. Introduction

In his book *Hegel's Ethics of Recognition*, Robert Williams briefly notes the similarities between Hegel's mutual recognition and Martin Buber's I-Thou relation while attempting to defend Hegel against Levinas' critiques (Williams 1997, pp. 408-412). However, Williams does not go into detail regarding these similarities. More recently, in a dissertation by Matthew Edgar, Buber's theory of I-Thou dialogicalism is presented as a middle ground bridging the perceived gaps in Hegel and Levinas' theories of intersubjectivity (Edgar 2002). In the last six pages of the dissertation Edgar explicitly discusses the relation between Hegel and Buber's conceptions of intersubjectivity (2002, pp. 278-284). However, Edgar ultimately highlights the differences between the two thinkers by contrasting Buber's theory of intersubjectivity with Hegel's. While the similarities between Buber and many other thinkers have been discussed in detail,[1] to my knowledge no one has made a more direct and detailed comparison of the similarities between Buber and Hegel's theories of intersubjectivity.

The agreement between these two thinkers—and also some of the differences—might be explained in part by Buber's intense study of Feuerbach when a student under F. Jodl, an editor of Feuerbach's works, at the University of Vienna.[2] As is well known, Feuerbach's own thought developed under Hegel's teaching at the University of Berlin. In one of the few brief passages where Buber mentions Hegel explicitly, he writes that Hegel is not humanistic enough (Buber 1947, pp. 137-145). Robert Wood notes that it was Feuerbach who provided a more humanistic alternative to Hegel for Buber (Wood 1969, p. 5). Buber ultimately concludes that while the young Hegel was developing a positive humanistic focus in his philosophy, given the lack of humanist concerns in his later thought, the "Hegelian house" is in the end "uninhabitable" (1947, p. 140).

While not ignoring the many areas of disagreement between Buber and Hegel,[3] I wish to show in this paper the correspondence between Hegelian mutual recognition and Buber's "I-Thou" philosophy of dialogue. Through this comparison I hope to illuminate mutual recognition by means of I-Thou dialogicalism, and I-Thou dialogicalism by means of mutual recognition. I will attempt to show that this is possible because of the significant agreement between the two thinkers on the nature of intersubjectivity and its role in self-consciousness.

2. Mutual Recognition and the I-Thou Relation

Before looking directly at mutual recognition and its similarity to Buber's I-Thou relation, it will be helpful to differentiate between Hegel's various uses of the word "recognition." Elliot Jurist makes a distinction between religious, social, interpersonal, and personal forms of Hegelian recognition (Jurist 1987, p. 6). She observes that the last two forms, one's relation to other individuals and one's relation to oneself, are intertwined for Hegel.[4] These are the two forms I want to focus on. As we explore Hegel's position, we will see what potentially makes recognition "mutual."

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Hegel's famous account in the *Phenomenology of Spirit* of the beginning of self-consciousness, and its eventual movement toward mutual recognition, allows for many widely divergent readings. I will attempt to sketch my interpretation of some of the fundamental points in order to compare them to Buber. After discussing the movement from consciousness to self-consciousness,[5] Hegel claims that self-consciousness becomes aware of objects and desires to confirm its self-sufficient life (*selbstständiges Leben*) (167, p. 104; 174, p. 109).[6] So, self-consciousness assures itself of the "nothingness of this other, it explicitly affirms that this nothingness is *for it* the truth of the other; it destroys the independent object and thereby gives itself the certainty of itself as a *true* certainty" (174, p. 109). However, the task of assuring self-consciousness of its independent existence cannot be completed in experience since there are always new objects of desire to "destroy" (*vernichtet*).[7] Hegel mentions food as an example of the process of destroying or negating the objects of experience, but also goes on to note that this desire for physical sustenance is ultimately a desire for "Life as a *living thing*" (171, p. 107). This process must continue for self-consciousness because it needs an object to contrast itself with, otherwise it would simply be the "motionless tautology of 'I am I'" (175, p. 109; 167, p. 105). Lauer writes that this stage of self-consciousness involves an object becoming an object of desire or "appetition," where the "very appetition mediates a reflection of consciousness on itself as more than a mere vague I" (1976, p. 122). Yet, self-consciousness also desires the process of destruction to end because then it would truly be independent or self-sufficient. Hence, at this point self-consciousness remains ultimately unsure of its independent existence and is not yet "satisfied" (*Befriedigung*) (175, pp. 109-110).[8]

Hegel now tells us that "Self-consciousness achieves its satisfaction only in another self-consciousness" (175, p. 110). He explains how this takes place and how recognition is related to this process. He begins his analysis by claiming that "Self-consciousness exists in and for itself when, and by the fact that, it so exists for another; that is, it exists only in being acknowledged (*Anerkanntes*)" (178, p. 111). Hegel calls this "in and for itself" self-

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consciousness a "spiritual unity" that is contingent upon a doubling (*Verdopplung*) of this unity. It is this doubling of self-consciousness that Hegel identifies with recognition.

Hence, According to Hegel, in order for self-consciousness to become more complete it must recognize itself through another self-consciousness. This recognizing has a "twofold meaning" or significance for self-consciousness: "first, it has lost itself, for it finds itself as an *other* being; secondly, in doing so it has superseded (*aufgehoben*) the other, for it does not see the other as an essential being, but in the other sees its own self (179, p. 111). So, first, in the encounter with "the other," self-consciousness recognizes itself in the other as an "other." It is this encounter with the other that provides the occasion for the initial "loss" of oneself in the other self-consciousness through recognition. Second, as with the earlier developing self-consciousness, self-consciousness now tries to cancel (*aufgehoben*) the other as an "essential being," thereby "finding" itself and assuring itself of its independence as an individual self-consciousness (180, p. 111).[9] However, self-consciousness cancels or supersedes itself in an attempt to confirm its own identity (180, p. 111). For, after initially identifying itself with the other, it supersedes or cancels "itself"—insofar as it has identified itself with the other—in the attempt to show that the other does not have an independent existence (180, p. 111).[10]

It is at this point that Hegel introduces self-consciousness' return into itself. Self-consciousness negates its self-othering, or finds its self-consciousness that was "lost" in the recognition of the other, and returns to its own self-consciousness (181, p. 111). The other self-consciousness is now recognized as a self-sufficient essence—it is free (181, p. 111).[11] This process, according to Quentin Lauer, "has become the almost paradigmatic example of the Hegelian 'negation of negation' wherein the self returns to itself, leaving the other free" (1976, p. 126). Only if this process happens mutually will each self-consciousness recognize the other as free and "in and for itself."[12] Thus, desire, or self-consciousness itself (167, p. 105), has attained its satisfaction in another self-consciousness: an assurance of an independent self-sufficient life.[13] It is only when these

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self-consciousnesses "*recognize* themselves as *mutually recognizing* one another" that each comes to a more complete self-consciousness (184, p. 112).[14] Now we will turn to look at the similarities between Hegel's mutual recognition and Buber's I-Thou relation.

In Buber's book *I and Thou*, he claims that human beings are "twofold" in their attitude toward the world (Buber, 53). These attitudes correspond to what Buber calls "the basic word pair" of "I-It" and "I-Thou" (Buber, 53). These attitudes or word pairs serve as Buber's account of how we respond to the world that we encounter around us. Again, according to Maurice Friedman, the "I-It" and "I-Thou" are Buber's way of explaining how humans relate themselves to experience and to other beings. We will first look at the I-Thou relation. Although Buber tells us that I-Thou relation is possible between humans and non-human beings, such as animals, plants, God, etc. (Buber, 57-58; 172-173), he asserts that its primary theme is interhuman relations. Friedman tells us that after personally asking Buber about this issue, Buber told him that if he were to write *I and Thou* again, he would make a clearer distinction between the interhuman and human relations to other beings. Hence, in his work *Elements of the Interhuman*, Buber does place I-Thou relations in clearer distinction from our relations to other beings. According to Friedman, (in Buber 1965, p.27) Buber ultimately wishes to place the I-Thou primarily in the realm of the interhuman because it is here that the possibility for self-conscious I-Thou relations comes into being.

This characteristic of the I-Thou relation will rightly remind us of Hegel's mutual recognition. Buber tells us that "Man becomes an I through a You" (Buber, 80). Just as for Hegel it is only possible to fully become an independent self-consciousness through mutual recognition, so also for Buber a self-consciousness can only become more complete through encounter with the other. In other words, "I require a You to become; becoming I, I say You" (Buber, 62). Buber describes this process of development in the following way. First, objects confront us and we become aware in an incomplete fashion of "the constant partner" of our own I. This beginning incomplete self-consciousness

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"reaches for" a "You" until it "comes closer and closer to the bursting point until one day the bonds are broken and the I confronts its detached self for a moment like a You—and then it takes possession of itself and henceforth enters into relations in full consciousness" (Buber, 80). This process appears quite similar to Hegel's account of self-othering, or losing oneself, in an encounter with the other. In this process, as we saw, each self-consciousness ultimately acknowledges the independence and freedom of the other while returning to itself as a more complete self-consciousness.

Buber, like Hegel, also connects freedom with the recognition of the I-Thou relationship. Buber points toward this freedom when he tells us that "The I of the basic word I-You appears as a person and becomes conscious of itself as subjectivity" (Buber, 113). Buber makes this theme of the I-Thou relation more explicit in the following passage: "Here I and You confront each other freely in a reciprocity that is not involved in or tainted by any causality; here man finds guaranteed the freedom of his being and of being. Only those who know of the presence of the You have the capacity for decision" (Buber, 100). As in Hegel's account, each self-consciousness recognizes the other as free, and it is through this reciprocal recognition that they attain their freedom.

In the above I suggest a close similarity between Buber's conception of the I-Thou relation and Hegel's mutual recognition of the other. But there is also a significant difference. Buber writes that an unconscious infantile form of the I-Thou relation is chronologically prior for human beings (Buber, 175-179), while mutual recognition comes only later on in self-conscious development for Hegel. In summarizing Buber's account of infant relation, Friedman writes, "In the actual development of the human person the I-Thou does in fact precede the I-It" (in Buber 1965, p. 23). However, as human consciousness matures and gains a sense of separation or "distance" from the world, it begins to form a unique self-consciousness. For Buber, the distance created in the development of human consciousness is the condition of the possibility for self-conscious relation to others, whether in the incomplete I-It relation or in the I-Thou

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relation (in Buber 1965, p. 22). Once this distancing from the primal I-Thou takes place, the dynamics of interhuman I-Thou relations bear close similarities to Hegelian mutual recognition.

3. Incomplete Recognition

Now that we have given a brief account of the nature of Hegel's mutual recognition and Buber's I-Thou relation and their respective similarities, we are in a better position to compare their conceptions of incomplete forms of recognition and relation. We will look first at Hegel's master/slave dialectic in the *Phenomenology of Spirit*. In the paragraph that leads directly into Hegel's discussion of confrontation, the life-and-death struggle, and eventually the master/slave dialectic, he writes that "We have now to see how the process of this pure Notion of recognition, of the duplicating of self-consciousness in its oneness, appears to self-consciousness. At first, it will exhibit the side of the inequality of the two" (185, p. 112). Hence, my interpretation of Hegel's account of the master/slave dialectic is that it represents a stepping back to examine in greater detail how mutual recognition potentially appears or develops for self-consciousness. This reading is supported by Williams who writes that the master and slave relations "represent a deficient realization of the process of recognition" (Williams 1997, p. 60).[15]After a closer examination of the master/slave dialectic, we will take note of the parallels in Buber's thought.

Hegel's account of the development of this disparity or inequality between two self-consciousnesses begins with confrontation. This confrontation leads to a struggle where ultimately one self-consciousness chooses life over risking death, and the other succeeds by showing an independence from the "absolute Lord": death (194, p. 117). Thus, the slave has given up independence due to the fear of death, while the master retains independent self-sufficiency. As we saw in our examination of mutual recognition, both self-consciousnesses must acknowledge the freedom and independence of one another for genuinely reciprocal recognition. Hence, for the master and slave, "to begin with they are

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unequal and opposed, and their reflection into a unity has not yet been achieved, they exist as two opposed shapes of consciousness" (189, p. 115). For the master, the slave is "something quite different from an independent consciousness," namely, an object (192, p. 117).[16]

Hegel relates to us that being the slave, or servant, involves an existence "for another" in the "form" (*Gestalt*) of "*thinghood*" (189, p. 115). As Williams observes, it is the master who, "starting out as pure being-for-self (*fursichsein*), reduces the slave to a mere object" (Williams 1992, p. 180).[17] The objectifying of the slave is one of the major factors[18] that prevents this relationship from being "genuine recognition" and "The outcome is a recognition that is one-sided and unequal" (191, p. 116). The master's relation to the slave consists in consuming what the slave produces, and in the incomplete recognition of the slave as a mere object (190, p. 115). My brief analysis of the master/slave relationship emphasizes the objectifying that takes place in this incomplete form of recognition. I highlight this facet of Hegel's conception of incomplete recognition because it bears striking similarities to Buber's formulation of the I-It relation.

The I-It, Buber explains, is the attitude toward the world that relates the I to another as an object (Buber, 114). He writes that the I-It consciousness aims to possess objects "by means of experience and use" (Buber, 114). Buber tells us that "The basic word I-You can only be spoken with one's whole being. The basic word I-It can never be spoken with one's whole being" (Buber, 54). We can infer from this, and from what we already know of Buber's I-Thou relation, that the self-consciousness that acts only through the I-It is incomplete. While Buber says that it is possible to be a self-conscious subject even while embracing the I-It way of being (Buber, 111-112), this cannot be a full self-consciousness, for, as we have seen, this only comes through the I-Thou recognition. As was the case for Hegel's developing self-consciousness, the awareness of otherness itself brings about the consciousness of myself as separate from objects, which is an

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incomplete form of self-consciousness. Hence, Friedman summarizes the I-It as the "subject-object" relation (in Buber 1965, p. 22).

The I-It relation interacts with the other individual only as an object for use and exploitation. Buber writes that the I-It self-consciousness "knows himself as a subject, but this subject can appropriate as much as it wants to, it will never gain any substance: it remains like a point, functional, that which experiences, that which uses, nothing more" (Buber, 114). Hence, Wood writes that although for the I-It self-consciousness "otherness is manifest, it is not other as *other* but as *Other-for-me*" (1969, p. 39). Just like the master in Hegel's *Phenomenology*, the self-consciousness involved in an I-It relation reduces the other to an object of experience. The objectifying of other human beings is what prevents the I-It relationship from being genuine I-Thou recognition.

Finally, it also follows that the limited I-It self-consciousness lacks full freedom. If true self-sufficiency requires I-Thou recognition for Buber, then the I-It self-consciousness must be limited in its independence and freedom (Buber, 100).[19] Similarly, for Hegel, in mutual recognition both self-consciousnesses must acknowledge the freedom and independence of the other in order to bring about their own freedom. To the extent that self-consciousnesses fail in this acknowledgement, Buber, like Hegel, believes that true freedom is impossible.

4. Conclusion

I want to conclude by pointing out what I think is an important distinction in both Hegel and Buber's theories of intersubjectivity. This distinction involves the treatment of asymmetrical intersubjective relations. I understand asymmetrical intersubjective relations to be those between two persons with marked individual differences. In Buber's discussion of the nature of the I-Thou relation he nuances his account by observing that recognition of the other admits of gradations due to asymmetry. He writes that in the midst of the I-Thou relationship is "the place where the desire for ever higher and more

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unconditional relation and for perfect participation in being arises and keeps rising"
(Buber, 113). However, this perfect participation is limited, Buber suggests, by individual
differences that introduce asymmetry into our I-Thou relations (Buber, 148).[20] These
individual differences can prevent recognition from being complete.[21] Buber mentions
several I-Thou relationships that are prone to this incomplete recognition such as the
genuine educator to his pupil, the genuine psychotherapist and her patient, and those
charged with the spiritual well-being of their congregation (Buber, 177). We see from
these examples that asymmetrical recognition due to differences is not to be construed as
automatically negative. On the contrary, Buber tells us that the I-Thou relationship
"seems to me to win its true greatness and powerfulness" when two very different
individuals "still stand over against each other so that each of the two knows and means,
recognizes and acknowledges, accepts and confirms the other, even in the severest
conflict, as this particular person" (in Schilpp and Friedman 1967, p. 723).

Hegel also appears to make room for these asymmetrical relations involving gradations of
mutual recognition. First, it is important to note that Hegel asserts that mutual
recognition, to some extent at least, is quite common in society. What he writes in the
Encyclopedia regarding this issue explains:

> What dominates in the State is the spirit of the people, custom,
> and law. There man is recognized and treated as a *rational*
> being, as free, as a person…he behaves, therefore, towards
> others in a manner that is universally valid, recognizing
> them—as he wishes others to recognize him—as free, as
> persons (Hegel 1971, pp. 172-173).

Hence, here Hegel seems to support the idea that mutual recognition at some level or
gradation between the members of society—even those with marked individual
differences—is possible, if they treat one another as free rational persons. Victoria Burke
gives insightful everyday examples of what might be involved in recognizing others in an
asymmetrical Hegelian manner. She mentions that mutual recognition is involved to a

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certain extent in our interactions with a store clerk or a bus driver insofar as we treat them as a free and rational self-conscious subject (Burke 2005, pp. 216-17). She specifically addresses the question of asymmetry in these instances, noting that mutual recognition here is limited because, "on Hegel's view, it is not necessarily recognition of 'who we really are.' Recognition of 'who we really are' is very rare, perhaps limited only to those with whom we are intimate, perhaps not even then."[22] Like Buber, Burke also mentions the asymmetrical relation of a student to her teacher as a potential example of limited mutual recognition.[23] Thus, for Hegel too, it appears that the individual differences involved in asymmetrical relations do not stop mutual recognition, but only limit it. While a full consideration of Hegel's stance regarding asymmetrical mutual recognition is outside the scope of this paper, it does appear that such relations are at least possible from a Hegelian perspective. In both Hegel and Buber's conceptions of intersubjectivity, then, very similar presentations of mutual recognition clearly emerge, although not without complementing warnings about the destructive failure to properly relate to our fellow human beings.

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NOTES

[1] See e.g. Steven M. DeLue, "Martin Buber and Immanuel Kant on Mutual respect and the Liberal State," *Janus Head*, no. 1 (2006): pp. 117-133; Simon Lumsden, "Absolute Difference and Social Ontology: Levinas Face to Face with Buber and Fichte," *Human Studies*, no. 23 (2000): pp. 227-241; Andrew Tallon, "Intentionality, Intersubjectivity, and the Between: Buber and Levinas on the Affectivity and the Dialogical Principle," *Thought*, no. 210 (1978): pp. 291-309; Gregory Kaplan, "Ethics as First Philosophy and the Other's Ambiguity in the Dialogue of Buber and Levinas," *Philosophy Today*, no. 1 (2006): pp. 40-57. Sylvain Boni, *The Self and the Other in the Ontologies of Sartre and Buber* (Washington: University Press of America, 1982).

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[2] According to Wood, another possible reason for their similarity is Buber's interest in the great predecessor of Hegel, Immanuel Kant. Buber read Kant at an early age, and according to Wood, the influence remained until the end of Buber's life (1969, pp. 5-6).

[3] See Buber 1970, p. 47 where Walter Kaufmann notes that while it might seem strange to link Buber and Hegel, Buber's good friend Franz Rosenweig published a two volume major work on Hegel which Buber admired. Kaufmann acknowledges that there are substantive convergences between the two thinkers, but asserts that their differences "far out weigh their similarities." From here on, Kaufmann's translation of Buber's *I and Thou* will be cited parenthetically as "Buber."

[4] Ibid., 9.

[5] Part of this previous discussion is of even more fundamental forms of self-consciousness. Hegel writes that "Consciousness of an other, of an object as such, is indeed itself necessarily *self-consciousness*, being-reflected into itself, consciousness of its own self in its otherness" (164, p. 150). Quentin Lauer points out that this form of self-consciousness is limited and uncompleted to the extent that it might be called "consciousness of consciousness." (Quentin Lauer, A *Reading of Hegel's Phenomenology of Spirit* (New York: Fordham University Press, 1976) p. 98. This most basic form of self-consciousness is only aware of itself as an "I" or subject "without distinctions" (176, p. 162). See Lauer, p. 116.

[6] G.W.F. Hegel, *The Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. A. V. Miller (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977). All quotes from the *Phenomenology* will be cited parenthetically by paragraph number and then page number. For a discussion of the desire of self-consciousness for self-sufficiency see Lauer, p. 116.

[7] As Hegel writes, "in order that this supersession can take place, there must be this other. Thus self-consciousness, by its negative relation to the object, is unable to supersede it; it is really because of that relation that it produces the object again, and the desire as well" (175, p. 109).

[8] Ibid., p. 63. Also see Rauch and Sherman 1999, p. 48. In Rauch's translation of Hegel's summary of self-consciousness from the "Phenomenology of Spirit" in the *Philosophical Propaedeutic*, Hegel writes that "Consciousness is now aware that this negating activity belongs to it. In the concept of self-consciousness there lies the determination of the as yet unrealized difference. Insofar as this difference puts itself forward at all in it, self-consciousness has the feeling of an otherness within itself—or, the feeling of a lack, a *need.*" So, the difference between self-consciousness and the object creates the dissatisfying experience of otherness.

[9] Harris (1997, p. 346) suggests that instead of earlier self-consciousness' desiring to negate the object through consuming it as food, self-consciousness now desires to treat the other as mere tool for use. Also, see Lauer, 121. Lauer observes that for this incomplete self-consciousness "A condition of its own self-certainty is that it negate the other; the very positing of ego is a negating of non-ego." Lauer, like Harris, also compares this process to the earlier desire of self-consciousness "which seeks to affirm the self by consuming the other."

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[10] Hegel tells us that self-consciousness "must supersede" the otherness of itself, and that "First, it must proceed to supersede the *other* independent being in order thereby to become certain of *itself* as the essential being; secondly, in so doing it proceeds to supersede its *own* self, for this other is itself" (180, p. 111). See Wood, *Hegel's Ethical Thought*, 1990, p. 86. Wood rightly notes that Hegel is employing hyperbole and paradox in this statement. He writes that "The point of the hyperbole is that at this stage we are abstracting from all our particular properties, and so simply as free self-consciousnesses we are exactly alike."

[11] Pippin (2000, p. 163) comes to a similar interpretation that "being a free agent consists in being recognized as one, and one can be so recognized only if the other's recognition is freely given; and this effectively means only if I recognizes the other as a free individual."

[12] Hegel asserts the need for this mutuality in order to achieve self-sufficiency when he says, But according to the Notion of recognition this is possible only when each is for the other what the other is for it, only when each in its own self through its own action, and again through the action of the other, achieves this pure abstraction of being-for-self (*Für-sich-seins*) (186, p. 113).

[13] Wallace argues (1995, p. 270) that for Hegel the desire for freedom is the motivation of mutual recognition and of the ethical treatment of others.

[14] According to Williams (1997, p. 56), self-consciousness returns to itself not as it first began, but instead is "enlarged and legitimated by the other's recognition."

[15] See also Williams 1992, p. 180. Further, Williams asserts (1995, p. 140) that Hegel presents many forms of incomplete mutual recognition beginning with the master-slave dialectic. Lynch (2001, pp. 33-48) says much the same when he presents a clear textual argument from the *Phenomenology* for reading the master-slave dialectic as an incomplete form of mutual recognition.

[16] Hegel writes, "The unessential consciousness [the slave] is therein for the master the object" (192, p. 173).

[17] A similar point is also made in Stewart 2000, p. 137.

[18] The other major factor, for Hegel, is that the slave must come to see through work that he or she is more than an object.

[19] Buber writes that in contrast to the I-Thou world of relation, "In the I-It world causality holds unlimited sway" (Buber, 100).

[20] Buber writes "Every actual relationship in the world rests upon individuation: that is its delight, for only thus is mutual recognition of those who are different granted—and that is its boundary, for thus is perfect recognition and being recognized denied" (Buber, 148). In this same passage Buber does suggest that it is possible to be perfectly recognized, presumably by divinity, even in our imperfect recognition. This he calls the "perfect relationship." See *Knowledge of Man*, p. 42. Friedman also takes note of this asymmetry, saying that Buber's I-Thou does not ultimately mean

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"I am you" but instead "I accept you as you are." See also page 43 where Friedman goes onto to argue that Buber does not advocate reducing the other to the same as oneself. He writes that "Real existence as a we is not possible in a self-contained cosmos, but only in ever renewed dialogue with what is over against us."

[21] According to Buber "There are many I-You relationships that by their very nature may never unfold into complete mutuality if they are to remain faithful to their nature (Buber, 178).

[22] Ibid.

[23] Ibid., 216.

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