

clarity and a fascinating read. It is well-written and consistently organised. Its insights could both help scholars and graduate students in their research and trigger the imagination of those actually involved in political activism or institutional politics.

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Recognition by **Cillian McBride**. Cambridge: Polity Press, 2013. 184pp., £14.99, ISBN 9780745648484

In this book Cillian McBride provides a wide-ranging, but structured argument. It is an accessible contribution to the study of recognition that is sure to be of interest to both political philosophers and members of the public interested in gaining some critical purchase on the conflicting recognitive demands made in a diverse and stratified society.

Chapter 1 raises questions relating to the politics of recognition, and gives a strong critical summary of contemporary writing on the matter, especially of Charles Taylor's account of the tension within the modern social imaginary between universal respect and particular recognition. Through this discussion McBride reaches the conclusion that the politics of recognition as currently configured, because of its division of the population into essentialist categories and its employment of the deficit model of recognition, fails to respond appropriately to cultural pluralism.

Chapter 2 explains the significance of Axel Honneth's three forms of recognition: love, respect and esteem. McBride discusses how instances of sustained disrespectful treatment, such as slavery, affect one's self-conception, and argues that one can maintain self-respect in such conditions through 'virtual recognition' in which our self-respect is preserved by contemplation of how we ought to be respected, in an imagined 'ideal moral community' (p. 69). While McBride convincingly shows that an already established self can survive the withdrawal of recognition by its peers, the question remains open as to whether recognition relations are a more purely empirical phenomenon than he suggests. McBride does not establish, or question, whether a self that was not initially socialised in conditions of respect would have the desire for respect. Similarly, McBride does not investigate examples of 'virtual recognition' in pre-modern or non-Western societies, leaving open the possibility that 'virtual recognition' is an exclusively

modern, Kantian thought rather than a universal moral resource.

Chapter 3 deals with esteem, and contains an informative history of attitudes towards self-esteem, or pride, from Aristotle to Adam Smith. This treatment is complemented with a history of ideas concerning social distinction, from Rousseau to Bourdieu. McBride highlights the inter-relationship between social and self-esteem and more traditional economic indicators of inequality.

Chapter 4 discusses the possibility of reconciling the tensions between our desires for equal respect and differential esteem, but reaches a sceptical conclusion.

Chapter 5, finally, contains a discussion emphasising the ways in which agents actively manage the recognitive demands made upon them – an attractive position that steers between individualist and communitarian extremes.

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Metamorphoses of the City: On the Western Dynamic by **Pierre Manent** (trans. **Marc LePain**). Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2013. 376pp., £24.95, ISBN 9780674072947

Pierre Manent here expands on themes announced in his earlier work concerning the character of political forms and their significance in Western political thought. Although he charts the history of these political forms from the city states of Greek antiquity, through the Roman Empire, the universal Catholic Church and finally the modern nation state, the soul of the book lies in a profound engagement with a range of texts, including those of Homer, Plato, Aristotle, Augustine, Montaigne, Montesquieu and Rousseau. The key chapter is on Cicero, for it is in his work that we see the mark of the transition from the city to a political form – the empire – which has as its essence the constant, self-generating motion of the political community. In this connection, Manent distinguishes 'Greek' from 'Roman' political science. He argues for the resurrection of the latter to combat the proclivity in contemporary political science to displace the primacy of the political form with its putative socio-economic and psychological 'determinants'.

This is a well-worn path, but Manent does not always walk it in a steady fashion. He provides some