



The Political Theory of Recognition: A Critical Introduction

Simon Thompson

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In recent years the political landscape has changed: established ideas about class, economy, nation and equality have been challenged by a new politics of identity, culture, ethnicity and difference. The political theory of recognition is a response to these challenges.

In this, the first introductory book on the subject, Simon Thompson analyses the argument that a just society is one that shows all its members due recognition. Focusing on the work on Charles Taylor, Axel Honneth and Nancy Fraser, he discusses how political theorists have conceptualised recognition, the different accounts they have given and the criticisms made of the very idea of a politics of recognition. Through the political theory of recognition, Thompson argues, we gain a better understanding of identity and difference. Practically, the concept of recognition can serve as a basis for determining which individual rights should be protected, whether cultures ought to be valued, and whether a case can be made for group representation.

This clear and accessible book provides an excellent guide through the ongoing and increasingly significant debate between multiculturalism and its critics.

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