



Wednesday, June 25th, 15:00-15:30, room 201

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Recognition, Valuation and Linguistic Power

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This contribution will explore the relationship between linguistic and semiotic power and economic outcomes. Drawing on the recognition ethics of Axel Honneth the role of rhetoric and control of the semantic mediating framework of society will be examined to investigate the extent influence in the symbolic sphere is translated into concrete economic outcomes.

Honneth maintains that the economic re-numeration which society awards to different talents, professions and contributions is dependent upon the ability of that group to manipulate the semantic mediating framework in such a way as to structure the symbolic space so as to highlight the link between specific concrete practices and the abstractly defined goals of society.

Honneth's work will be interpreted as placing rhetoric and language use at the heart of social struggle. The ability to use rhetoric to structure the normative grammar of political and economic decisions appears to be the determining factor in the legitimation of socio-economic inequality.

After having discussed Honneth's work the analysis will precede to explore the case of financialization as an example of pathologisation of recognition relations. One sector of the economy has been able to attain a position of hegemony by colonising the semantic bridge between abstract ideas of the good and concrete practises. This phenomenon will, building on the analysis of Honneth be analysed using the linguistic concept of centripedal and centrifugal language from the work of Bakhtin. An economic and socio-cultural dispositive that asserts the identity of price and value and focuses on instrumental rationality is a grammar driven by a centripedal logic and the attempt to suppress and eradicate difference. Many of the responses to financialization may be seen as a a centrifugal alternative, for example peer to peer currencies which serve as a distinct carrier of meaning and an attempt to attain peer recognition in the commons.