

Uğur Bulgan

The Just Response to Marital Misrecognition

Marriage as a heteronormatively conceptualized institution has resulted in humiliating experiences for homosexual individuals. First, it unjustly denies certain rights to homosexuals. Second, it does not ascribe homosexuals to the same status as heterosexuals. The latter conveys a message of moral insignificance by discriminating against homosexuals on the basis of sexual orientation and by misrecognizing them in terms of self-respect and self-esteem.

The usual response to marriage inequality has been the introduction of same-sex marriage. However, the just response against marriage inequality requires more than making the institution narrowly more inclusive. Furthermore, the introduction of same-sex marriage takes for granted the justness of the institution of contemporary marriage without scrutiny and seeks the solution only in the partial elimination of exclusion.

Pace, I argue that the introduction of same-sex marriage is not capable of dealing with the marriage inequality either backward-lookingly or forward-lookingly. It fails to remedy marital misrecognition retrospectively because it is not able to heal the moral wounds regarding the humiliation. It is only partially responsive to the forward-looking aspect of marital misrecognition by not excluding homosexuals. Instead, I benefit from recognition theory and transitional justice arguments to defend how we should conceptualize the just response to the marital misrecognition. I argue that the just response against the

misrecognition necessitates a Janus-faced approach: re-recognizing the victim in a retrospective fashion and just societal transformation in a prospective fashion. Just societal transformation stands on congruence to the rule of law, relational capabilities and trust cultivation. My discussion on trust cultivation reveals that de-recognizing the institution of marriage is a part of the just response to marital misrecognition. This argument provides an alternative defence for the marriage-free state thesis.

Giunia Gatta

The Long Genesis of Black Lives Matter: Guilt, Care for the Past, and (Re)Construction of the Future

The murder of George Floyd has moved US citizens to ponder the injustice of systemic racism to an unprecedented degree. Identifying an injustice as systemic, however, often brings to the extremes of either paralysis or revolution. In this article I propose the category of political guilt as an alternative, powerful catalyst for change in the midst of systemic injustice. I offer an account of the enduring legacy of slavery in contemporary US society and I trace current social and economic inequality to deliberate political choices made over the course of the 20th century, which helps me cast them – in the wake of Shklar – as injustices rather than misfortunes. I introduce the concept of political guilt, formulated by Karl Jaspers in the aftermath of World War II, as a device to repair injustice, to understand the current shift among white moderates, and to navigate the current debate on reparations. At the end of the article, I briefly ponder the potential of the language of guilt to also rewrite the story of colonialism and repair its wounds.

Giacomo Marossi

Conceptual Disputes in Political Theory: A Pluralist Approach

Disagreements over the meaning of concepts are very common in political studies. A major cause of these disagreements is given by the fact that there is no agreement over the methodology we should adopt to construct and analyze political concepts. As I will argue in this paper, in fact, this metatheoretical disagreement is a main source of conceptual confusion in political theory. To solve this metatheoretical issue, I propose that we adopt a pluralist approach to the

construction of political concepts following John Gerring's idea of a mini-max strategy. This means we will provide two definitions: a minimal and a maximal definition. The minimal definition is a small set of sufficient and necessary conditions for a concept to occur whereas the maximal definition is a list of all the characteristics we find associated with a concept in the academic literature and in the ordinary use. The two definitions, together, will work as a conceptual map that scholars could easily apply, in any moment, to a concept, without getting lost in endless disputes over its definition

Francesca Pongiglione

Information, Ignorance, and Obligations to Know

Reasonable persons are expected to acquire information about a situation before acting so that they are aware of the harm that may befall others as a consequence of their action. These 'obligations to know' derive from our other moral obligations, such as avoiding causing harm to someone. The progressive interconnection of human beings due to the global economy, and the much higher volume of information now available have significantly increased our obligations to know. However, while we cannot simply and legitimately refuse to hear the way that we are connected to distant people, we cannot be expected to know everything. In this paper, I will discuss the extent of our obligations to know, which constitute a moral and civic duty arising from our role as citizens in a globalized world, that requires us not to ignore the possible harm or good we bring about with our actions. I will try to establish under what circumstances individuals are culpable for their ignorance by considering two interdependent elements that could work as viable parameters: the quality of existing information, which I regard as primary, and, secondarily, the effort required to acquire it. Though the amount of information available nowadays is indeed enormous, its quality varies greatly from topic to topic, as does the effort needed to acquire it. This implies that expectations regarding what individuals ought to know cannot be the same for all topics and for all individuals

