Tomas Marttila / Vincent Gengnagel

Post-Foundational Discourse Analysis and the Impasses of Critical Inquiry

Zusammenfassung: Die aus den Arbeiten von Ernesto Laclau und Chantal Mouffe hervorgehende postmarxistische Diskurstheorie und -analyse (hier: *post-foundational discourse analysis*) basiert auf der Annahme, dass die Sinnhaftigkeit der Erkenntnisgegenstände allein aus ihrer diskursiven Konstruktion entspringen kann. Die Hyperdiskursivität der sinnhaften Wirklichkeit bedeutet aber zugleich, dass Kritik nicht mehr von einem privilegierten und an sich nicht-diskursiven Standpunkt aus ausgeübt werden kann. Die Praxis der Kritik gerät dabei wegen ihrer eigenen Diskursivität in eine Sackgasse und wird selbst zu einem möglichen Gegenstand der Kritik. Der Artikel verfolgt das Ziel, das kritische Potential der postmarxistischen Diskursanalyse vor dem Hintergrund ihrer eigenen ontologischen und epistemologischen Prämissen kritisch zu beleuchten. Es wird herausgestellt, dass das von den Vertretern der Postmarxistischen Diskurstheorie unterstützte Projekt der radikalen Demokratie, in deren Namen sie normative Kritik praktizieren und rechtfertigen, ihren eigenen ontologischen und epistemologischen Prämissen widerspricht. Die für die Praxis der Kritik erforderliche epistemologische Autorität kann die postmarxistische Diskursanalyse nur dann konsistent für sich beanspruchen, wenn die Entlarvung diskursiver Kontingenz – auch ihrer eigenen – ausnahmslos praktiziert wird.

Schlagwörter: Postmarxistische Diskurstheorie – Praxis der Kritik – epistemologischer Relativismus – normative Kritik – entlarvende Kritik – radikale Demokratie

Summary: Post-foundational discourse analysis (PDA), originating from the works of Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe, is based upon the assumption that the social meaningfulness of objects depends on their signification within a discourse. The hyperdiscursivity of any meaningful social reality implies at the same time that the practice of critique cannot be uttered from a non-discursive and epistemologically privileged standpoint. At this point, the practice of critique reaches an impasse because its own discursively contingent nature turns itself into a possible target of critique. This article elucidates the remaining critical potential of PDA against the background of its own ontological and epistemological premises. A key finding is that the political project of radical democracy, which the protagonists of PDA have promoted in the past, and which has justified and provided direction for their practices of normative critique, actually contradicts their own ontological and epistemological premises: PDA equips us with the epistemological authority required for the practice of critique only if the unmasking of discursively contingent constructions of reality includes the critique's own discursivity.

Key Words: Post-foundational Discourse Analysis (PDA) – Practice of Critique – Epistemological Relativism – Normative Critique – Unmasking Critique – Radical Democracy

1. Introduction

The recent ›discursive‹ turn in social and human sciences has not passed without leaving its mark upon our capacity to submit our research objects to critical inquiry[1]. Discourse theories based upon the works of Michel Foucault and Ernesto Laclau have not only declared that social subjects' conceptions of the world reflect their discourse-constituting epistemic horizons, but also rejected the possibility of discourses reflecting any exo- or extra-discursive character or constitution of the world (cf. Foucault 1991; Laclau/Mouffe 1990). The discursive constitution of any socially meaningful practice means that not only social, political, religious, and cultural practices, but also scientific practices, such as critical inquiry, are contingent on them rationalizing and defining discourses. The »hyperdiscursive« (Miklitsch 1995) constitution of the world is the logical consequence of the post-foundational ontological position that rejects the possibility of retracing the presence and character of particular objects of knowledge to any »ultimate ontological ground« (Sparke 2005, p. xxxv). This situation, which Marchart (2007, p. 9) described as the »post-foundational condition«, has considerable implications for the practice of critical inquiry, which is now unmasked as still another contingent and socially contestable claim to truth.

The »post-foundational condition« deprives us of the possibility to draw any natural and objective distinctions between more or less worthwhile objects of critique. If objects of critique cannot have any inherent characteristics independent of the social practices that essentialize them, then our strategies and means of critique cannot be developed and motivated against the background of the objective nature of things. For Said (1983, p. 224), the »contentious« nature of knowledge implied by the post-foundational ontology can only mean that »criticism, as activity and knowledge, ought to be openly contentious too«. Nietzsche (1885/2012, p. 115) realized at an early point in time that if »[n]othing is true, all is permitted«, then we find ourselves in a situation in which following too closely on »the heels of truth« will ultimately result in our getting kicked »in the face«. Skeptical voices, such as Latour (2004, p. 225), have drawn the conclusion that the contestability of the practice of critique makes any aspiration for critical inquiry to »run out of steam«. After all, the critic and his/her practices, means, strategies, and objectives of critique are not less apt for critique than the objects criticized by him/her (cf. Celikates 2006, p. 29). In other words, epistemological relativism accompanied by the post-foundational ontology has quite considerable consequences for the capacity of different post-foundational discourse theories – most prominently the Foucaultian and Laclauan theories of discourse – to pursue critical inquiries.[2] However, while Foucault (1997) and, later on, Butler (2002,

---

1   cf. Boland (2014); Butler (2009); Celikates (2006); Kompridis (2000); Latour (2004).
2   We use the term »post-foundational« instead of »post-structural« because the so-called »post-structural discourse theories« are not located beyond the structuralist paradigm in social sciences. Both Foucault and Laclau reject the possibility that socially meaningful existence could be derived from and based upon any pre- and exo-social transcendental foundation (cf. Brockelman 2003; Cederström/Spicer 2014; Wolin 1992, p. 6). In contrast to the Foucaultian and the Laclauan discourse theories, the so-called Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is not based upon the post-foundational, but

2009) and Koopman (2010) have succeeded in elaborating the practice of critique consistent with Foucaultian discourse theory, it is our observation along with Boucher (2009), Brockelman (2003), Cooke (2006), Critchley (2004), Demirovíc (2007) and Leggett (2013) that it is anything but clear if and how post-foundational discourse analysis (PDA) based upon the works of Laclau and Mouffe can engage in critical inquiry.[3] The principal aim of this article is to characterize a practice of critique that is consistent with PDA. Our quest proceeds in three consecutive steps: In the first section (2), we embark on the elucidation of PDA's research programme to distinguish practices of critique permissible and non-permissible with PDA. In a second step (3), we describe how »normative critique« on behalf of radical democracy as it was conducted in earlier accounts on PDA contradicts PDA's epistemological premises. In the concluding third step (4), we describe the general characteristics of the practice of »unmasking critique«, which from our point of view constitutes the practice of critique that most closely matches the epistemological premises of PDA.

2. Locating PDA's Critical Potential

Without any doubt, PDA belongs to the sample of critical theories that provide methodological instructions and means to conduct critical inquiries of social life.[4] However, there is nothing similar to a consensus with regard to the closer definition of the practice of critique motivated by PDA. For instance, Boucher (2009), Brockelman (2003), Demirovíc (2007) and Koch (1993) have argued that PDA cannot provide the epistemological authority presupposed by the project of radical democracy which is pursued, amongst others, by Glynos & Howarth (2008, 2007), Laclau & Mouffe (2001; Mouffe passim) and Marchart (2011). However, in order to identify practices of critique consistent with PDA, we must first determine the epistemological authority provided by PDA. The concept of epistemological authority refers to the totality of epistemological resources – such as ontological premises, theoretical concepts, and scientific methods – which together enable the critic to »take[s] up a position of epistemic authority over and against a world of objects« and problematize the validity of social subjects' common sense conceptions of the world and the social relations, roles, practices, etc. motivated and legitimized by them (Kompridis 1994, p. 31; cf. Celikates 2006, p. 26). According to Butler (2009, p.

on a critical realist ontology. The assumption about objects' inherent (problematic) characteristics – that exist irrespective of our observations, which is typical of the critical realism –, along with social subjects' assumed lacking awareness of the problems related to these objects supply the critic with an uncontestable epistemological authority to submit objects to critique (cf. Joseph 2001; Keller 2012, p. 22).

3   Post-foundational discourse analysis (PDA) refers to the distinctive set of theoretical ideas elaborated in the pioneering works of Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe (e.g. Laclau/Mouffe, 1985/2001) and their subsequent adaption in the works of Jason Glynos, David Howarth, Oliver Marchart, Martin Nonhoff, Yannis Stavrakakis and Jacob Torfing. The concept of post-foundational discourse analysis has been used earlier by Cederström and Spicer (2014), Marchart (2007) and Marttila (2015a, 2015b).

4   Cf. Boucher (2009), Brockelman (2003), Cooke (2006), Demirović (2007), Glynos/Howarth (2008), Koch (1993), Laclau (1997), Marttila (2015c).

777), the epistemological authority necessary for the practice of critique is derived from a set *of a priori* ontological and epistemological premises that together define »by what right« and »in what way« the critic can conduct the practice of critique. The elucidation of the epistemological authority of the critic requires a deconstructive »metacritical reading« of the practice of critique as a social practice motivated and legitimized by particular ontological and epistemological premises (Vandenberghe 2003).

In order to identify the epistemological authority provided by PDA – which enables it to submit something to critical inquiry – we first need to locate the set of ontological and epistemological premises constitutive of PDA. Historical developments in the field of PDA reveal approaches that have been mutually distinctive and influenced to different extents by regulation theory (e.g., Torfing 1999), Foucaultian discourse analysis (Marttila 2013a, 2015a, 2015b), and Lacanian psychoanalysis (e.g., Glynos 2001; Stavrakakis 2007). Despite their mutual differences, Howarth (2006) has succeeded in reconstructing these different approaches unifying a Lakatosian (e.g., 1999) »research programme«. According to Howarth (2006, p. 23), this research programme consists of a »system of ontological assumptions, theoretical concepts and methodological precepts«, which in accordance with Lakatos (1968, p. 167), inform us about »what paths of research to avoid (*negative heuristic*), and […] what paths to pursue (*positive heuristic*)«. With regard to its ontological premises, PDA pursues the assumption of the absence of any »otherworldly« objective grounding of particular social orders, which is characteristic of the post-foundational ontology (Wolin 1992, p. 6). Instead, any socially meaningful existence is based upon »self-generated grounds«, which – for lack of any natural exo-social objectivity – remain »inherently contestable« (ibid.). The absence of the objective necessity of the self-grounded grounds means that the social relations, roles and practices that are constituted in social life cannot have any »essential« characteristics independent of the social practices (of articulation) that are »essentializing« these objects (Leggett 2013, p. 302).

Post-foundational ontology is accompanied by relational epistemology. In the absence of any natural and inherent determination of objects' social meaningfulness, objects' identities must originate from »discourses« that render objects intelligible (Cederström/Jones 2014, p. 187; Laclau/Mouffe 1990, p. 105). Discourse refers to any particular relational configuration of meaning-conveying objects (i.e., *signifiers*) in which objects appear and are related to each other, and which constitutes the meaning (i.e., *signifieds*) of these objects (Glynos/Howarth 2007, p. 160). According to the relational epistemology of meaning »the way« how objects' relations are »actualized reflects effective contingency of the social world« (Donati 2011, p. 132). The post-foundational ontology impedes the existence of any non- and exo-discursive »external tribunal« with a natural definitional power to draw objective distinctions between »valid« and »invalid« discourses (Laclau 1996, p. 59). The lack of an ultimate natural and objective foundation of the social life as it is evoked by the post-foundational ontology means that not only social meanings, but also social agents generating social meanings lack any natural objective validity. In other words, »hegemonic agents« – contesting prevailing discourses and installing new discourses – fall short of any natural social authority (Glynos/Howarth 2007, p. 141). Post-foundational ontology implies that »the site of power becomes an empty place« that

can be occupied by numerous equally valid political, cultural, and economic powers (Laclau/Mouffe 1985/2001, p. 186). Hegemonic agents' capability and possibility to raise a discourse to a new uncontested common sense conception of the world depends on a complex set of factors. These factors include, among other things, the credit of trust derived from hegemonic agents' previous social roles, the extent to which a prevailing social order and its legitimacy have become untenable, and social subjects' lacking reflexivity upon the non-necessary and self-posited nature of hegemonic agents' practices of articulation.[5] Hegemonic agents exert a »hegemonizing« impact upon other social subjects when discourse purported by them constitutes the common sense conception of the world that constitutes further social subjects' horizon of intelligibility. As a result of hegemonization, social subjects accept discourses as well as subject roles, institutions and social practices defined by these discourses as self-evidential constituents of the world. Hegemonic discourses are empirically manifested in the form of social subjects' acceptance of »a widely shared ›common sense‹« conception of the world (Mouffe 1993/2005b, p. 54), which in terms of Keller (2011, p. 256) rationalize and give rise to linguistic and non-linguistic »discourse-generated model practices« (own translation).

The critical potential of PDA is located at the interface between the post-foundational ontology – which informs us about the »non-necessary character of social relations« (Glynos/Howarth 2008, p. 13) – and the relational epistemology – which explains that socially meaningful objects, practices, relations and subject roles are constructed within discourses that are equally non-necessary. The *a priori* knowledge about the discursively constructed nature of any socially meaningful existence capacitates the critic to interrogate the historical origins, structural forms and mechanisms of reproduction of discursively contingent and socially contestable social orders (Glynos/Howarth 2007, p. 197). In accordance with Glynos and Howarth (ibid.), the theoretical framework of PDA does not only inform us about how the discursive construction of the social reality takes place, but also provides the critic with a heuristic framework to engage in deconstructive »ethico-political« critical inquiry (cf. Glynos et al. 2009, p. 13; Glynos/Howarth 2008, p. 15). Ethico-political critique refers to a »second-order disclosure« (Kompridis 1994, p. 30) that reveals the discursive conditions of the possibility of a given socially accepted social order assumed as self-evident and, at the same time, bereaves the social order under scrutiny of the image of objectivity. Glynos/Howarth (2008, p. 14) caution against making the ethico-political critique an uncontestable epistemological authority. After all, the relational epistemology constitutive of PDA means that theoretical concepts applied in the ethico-political critique are themselves »contingent and finite constructs that are contestable and revisable in the light of changing conditions and theoretical developments« (ibid.). The discursively constructed nature of any meaningful object also counts for the concepts that capacitate the critic to conduct critical inquiries. As such the practice of ethico-political critique is not to a lesser extent the product of a particular (academic) discourse (on critique) than those practices, which the practice of ethico-political critique criticizes due to their lack of objectivity.

---

5 Cf. Leggett (2013, p. 305), Marttila (2015a, Ch. 5; 2013a, p. 54), Torfing (1999, pp. 153, 167).

For us, the discursively contingent nature of the practice of critique underlines the epistemologically relativist character of the practice of critical inquiry. After all, the post-foundational ontology constitutive of PDA implies that all truth claims – whether those of the scientifically rationalized critical inquiries or social subjects' routinized everyday practices – are »produced within discourses which in themselves are neither true nor false« (Foucault 1991, p. 60). The epistemologically relative character of PDA means, for us, that the critic must abandon any aspiration to »normative critique« that necessitates an access to trans-contextually valid normative measures and standards located beyond the scope of critique. Kauppinen (2002) points out that normative critique presupposes the usage of uncontestable normative benchmarks and standards that authorize the critic to raise him-/herself above and against socially agreed normative commitments. While various types of ethico-political critique, such as Foucault's genealogical critique, serve the means of ethico-political critique opening the addressees' eyes to forgotten, unknown, and suppressed origins and aspects of their social reality (cf. Saar 2007, p. 22), normative critique teaches the addressees the normative measures and standards whose validity they should accept at face value (cf. Glynos et al. 2009, p. 13; Laclau 1997, p. 303). Following Lakatos' (1999, p. 27) estimation, normative critique is based upon and claims access to a non-criticizable »elitist authoritarianism« that gives the critic the sole right to distinguish »between the goodies and the baddies« of social life. Epistemological relativism constitutive of PDA impedes the access to such objective and non-contestable »elitist authoritarianism« because the critic's point of view cannot be »*more right* than any other*« point of view (Lakatos 1999, p. 25). Epistemological relativism applies to every discourse irrespective of its conceived political, religious, economic, or scientific origin and makes scientifically and ideologically based truth claims equally valid and invalid. However, instead of consenting themselves to the practice of ethico-political critique consistent with PDA's epistemological authority, recent contributions to PDA have carried out normative critique in the name of radical democracy. In the following section (3), we describe two distinctive routes to »transcendental« (3.1) and »immanent« (3.2) normative critique on behalf of radical democracy and elucidate how they violate the epistemological premises of PDA.

3. Normative Critique on Behalf of Radical Democracy

According to Kauppinen (2002), normative critique holds the logic of »external critique« because it relies on the critic's access to trans-contextually valid normative benchmarks and standards that allow the critic to assess the validity of a given social order from a position outside that order. Vobruba (2001, p. 5) also describes normative critique in terms of »an absolute logic« because the critic's measures and standards are immune to and located beyond the possible scope of critique.[6] Normative critique becomes possible only if the critic can claim access to a non-criticizable »privileged vantage point« and also con-

---

6   Cf. Boltanski (2010, p. 216), Butler (2009, p.782), Cooke (2006, p. 6), Honneth (2000, p. 79).

ceives of him-/herself as possessing the knowledge about the social contexts and conditions that necessitate critique (Cooke 2006, p. 8; cf. Brockelman 2003, p. 190; Jarvis 1998, p. 6). As such, normative critique presupposes the critic to possess a non-contestable epistemological authority that makes his/her normative measures and standards immune to being subsequently contested by the addressees of this critique. Hence, normative critique is absolute not only in terms of the non-contestability of the measures and standards of critique, but also with regard to the critic's undisputed epistemological authority to define the conceptions of the world that the addressees of his/her critical inquiry should accept. Epistemological relativism constitutive of PDA impedes the possibility to establish any non-contestable asymmetrical relation between the critics' *superior* and the addressees' *inferior* knowledge about the ideal constitution of society. However, protagonists of PDA have made the mistake of raising radical democracy to a non-contestable »transcendent ground« that allows them to claim the right and capacity to criticize different social orders due to their insufficiently radical democratic character (Butler 2009, p. 782). In the following two sections (3.1 and 3.2), we describe two strategies of normative critique that the protagonists of PDA have pursued in the name of radical democracy.

3.1 Transcendentally Motivated Critique

In the recent past, several researchers associated with PDA have raised radical democracy to a universally valid image of the ideal mode of societalization.[7] The lack of critical awareness of the discursively contingent character and absent objective validity of radical democracy can to some extent be explained by Howarth's (2008) assumption that radical democracy is an essentially ambiguous and indeterminate concept. Howarth (ibid.) argues that such conceptual indeterminacy makes radical democracy open for various equally valid interpretations. However, there is not much to be said for radical democracy's conceptual openness and indeterminacy. For example, for Mouffe (1992, p. 1), radical democracy is the natural next step of development »of the democratic revolution initiated two hundred years ago«. Also, Glynos and Howarth (2007, p. 193) emphasize that the foundation of radical democracy derives from social subjects' »commitment[s] to the principles and values of radical and plural democracy«. Dhaliwal (1996) has observed that radical democracy does not only embody the ideal of liberal pluralist democracy, but actually also a quite distinctive Western democratic discourse that disqualifies the validity of non-Western democratic discourses. The concept of radical democracy is also definite enough to allow its proponents to define a distinctive set of subject roles and social practices associated with them, which social subjects should adapt to in radical democracies. Among other things, social subjects are called upon to protect democratic institutions against »antidemocratic attacks« (Marchart 2011, p. 968) and raise themselves against any social attempts to install forms of »autocratic power« (Mouffe 1993\2005b, p. 94). Moreover, Mouffe (2000b, p. 12) emphasizes that radical democracy can be sustained

---

7   E.g., Howarth (2008); Laclau/Mouffe (2001); Marchart (2011); Mouffe passim.

only if social subjects abandon the possibility to achieve »a rational consensus« between mutually distinctive and incommensurable (political) interests. For Mouffe (2002, p. 6), the aspiration of achieving rational consensus disregards the fact that political interests and identities are always constituted by exclusion of an antagonistic other, which qua a »constitutive outside« allows subjects to demarcate their own identities from other subjects' identities. Mouffe is not content with the theoretical conceptualization of the general logic of the antagonistic constitution of political identities, but relies herself on an equally antagonistic distinction between the superior status of the general characteristics of radical democracy and the *inferior* characteristics of other models of democracy.

These few illustrations of the non-indeterminate character of the concept of radical democracy make it clear that radical democracy is constructed and legitimized within a rather distinctive and determinate democratic discourse. Boucher (2009, p. 116) also argues that discourse on radical democracy as it is propagated in academia will ultimately result in »the formation of a new ›common sense‹« that characterizes any hegemonic discourse (cf. Brockelman 2003, p. 134). The peculiar feature about the discourse on radical democracy is that it misuses the insight into the »groundless nature of the social« derived from the post-foundational ontology to posit itself as the only available configuration of social institutions and practices ensuring that the very lack of objective ontological foundations of the social »is institutionally accepted, even promoted« (Marchart 2011, p. 967). In other words, both the discourse on radical democracy and social organization rationalized by it are conceived of as constituting the means to institutionalize the »openness« of society (which post-foundational ontology implies conceptually) to different equally valid or invalid modes of societalization (Laclau 2000, p. 199). According to Tønder and Thomassen (2005, p. 8), the post-foundational ontology can only imply that »society will always be in search of an ultimate ground, while the maximum that can be achieved will be (…) a plurality of partial grounds«. Hence, society remains an (ontologically) »empty place« that can be occupied by a plurality of equally valid and invalid democratic, anti-democratic, socialist, fascist, colonialist, or any other, discourses (Lefort 1988, p. 17). The argument that radical democracy could institutionalize and sustain the ontological openness of society disregards the fact that the non-necessity of any particular discourse generated by the post-foundational ontology impedes the possibility to make use of external measures and standards to draw a distinction between any, in whatever respect, more or less appropriate discourses. Rather ironically, the described character of radical democracy as a determinate discourse that posits its own presuppositions makes it a case in point for the ethico-political critique conducted by means of PDA.

3.2 Immanently Motivated Critique

The above described transcendentally motivated critique relies on the critic's epistemological authority to know the universally valid normative measures that he/she can use to assess the validity of different sets of social institutions and practices in different social contexts. In contrast to the transcendentally motivated critique, the immanent critique

refers to a normative critique that relies on »the commitments of the addressee of the criticism rather than those of the critic« (Kauppinen 2002, p. 482). Immanent critique does not monopolize epistemological authority on the part of the critic, as transcendental critique does, but accepts that the addressees of criticism have the ethical right and epistemological capacity to choose their own normative measures and standards. Hence, immanent critique is practiced »*within* historical reality«, which is in turn analyzed by the critic (Antonio 1981, p. 333). Notwithstanding, immanent critique is nurtured by the suspicion that societies may not live up to their own normative commitments (Boltanski 2010, p. 30). This general suspicion of constant violation of societal standards motivates the critic to take sides with the social subjects, whose living conditions he/she studies. The critic's aspiration is to identify possible »contradictions« between collectively agreed upon normative commitments – such as justice and individual freedom – and the societal implementation and maintenance of this »normative core« of society (cf. Honneth 1999, p. 386; Jarvis 1998, p. 6). Immanent critique has both an »enlightening« function because it informs the addressee that society deviates from known and accepted standards, as well as a »pedagogic« function because it teaches the addressees of criticism about the concealed, forgotten, or suppressed normative commitments that a social order does not fulfill at all or has ceased to live up to. The enlightening and pedagogic functions of critique capacitate the addressee of his/her critique to identify the »unjust« and »unjustifiable« character of his/her social existence and hence give him/her the legitimate right to express political discontent (cf. Honneth 1999, p. 386; 2011, p. 157).

In some of her writings, Mouffe (e.g., 2000a, 2000b, 2005a, 2005b) makes use of a hybrid logic of critical inquiry located at the intersection of transcendental and immanent types of normative critique. Mouffe has committed herself to releasing social subjects from the suffering they experience in societies lacking radically democratic institutions. For Mouffe, social suffering becomes tangible in the form of outbursts of political extremism – such as nationalism, right-wing populism and fascism –, which for her bear witness to social institutions' lacking adjustment to social subjects' inherent needs. However, while Honneth's (e.g., 1999, p. 386) practice of immanent critique focuses on contextually specific and empirically observable contradictions between a particular social order and its legitimizing normative standards, Mouffe takes an interest in contradictions between social subjects' actual »ontical« *being* within particular social orders and their general »ontological« *beingness* (cf. Heidegger 1988\2008, p. 67). Hence, Mouffe does not look so much at the contradictions between the normative »ideal« of liberal democracy and the »lived« liberal democracy, but instead at the more fundamental contradiction between *any* liberal democracy and the *general* ontological beingness of the subject. For Mouffe, the contradiction between subjects' ontical being and ontological beingness is manifested amongst other things by the outbursts of anti-democratic and racist political sentiments.

In accordance with the PDA's theoretical framework , Mouffe assumes that (political) identities and related social practices are based upon subconsciously located »passions« of love and hate (of the symbolic other) that constitute »the moving force in the field of politics« (Mouffe 2002, p. 8; cf. 2005a, p. 25). According to Leggett (2013, p. 303), the as-

sumed »conflict-oriented human nature« capacitates Mouffe to assess the extent to which different social and political institutions either pacify or amplify social subjects' immanent conflict potential. Based on the assumption that social subjects cannot vanquish their natural propensity to feel and express symbolic and even physical hostility vis-à-vis their symbolic others, Mouffe (2002, p. 8) searches for appropriate (political) institutions to »domesticate hostility and to defuse the potential antagonism in all human relations« (cf. Mouffe 2005a, p. 130; 2000b, p. 13). Mouffe (2000a, p. 16) sees the benefit of radical democracy in its capacity to »mobilize[s]…passions towards democratic designs«. For Mouffe (2005b, p. 30), only radical democracy allows subjects to canalize passions of love and hate that are constitutive of their subjective identities, towards »agonistic form[s] of expression through the pluralist democratic system« (cf. Mouffe 2002, p. 10). The aim of the »agonistic model« of politics »is neither to eliminate passions nor relegate them to the private sphere« but instead »to ›tame‹ these passions by mobilizing them for democratic ends and by creating collective forms of identification around democratic objectives« (Mouffe 2002, p. 9). Mouffe's (2005b, p. 26) knowledge about the essential constitution of the human nature and patterns of human behavior deduced from it allow her to problematize the 'third-way'-like, post-political »partisan-free democracy« because it represses »libidinal forces leading [to] hostility…« inherent in social subjects and – ultimately – results in outbursts of intolerance between Carl Schmitt'ian mutually antagonistic camps of friends and enemies.

Mouffe's (quasi-)immanent critique of the radical democracy contradicts PDA's ontological and epistemological premises in several regards. *Firstly*, Mouffe confuses the distinction that is constitutive of (any) post-foundational theory between the »*res cogitans*« – the physical subject capable of observing the social meaningfulness of the world – and the »*res extensa*« – the actual meaning-contents that subjects associate with the objects of their observations (Žižek 1993, p. 61). According to the post-foundational ontology, social subjects are always »thrown into« some distinctive ontic mode of being – such as a discourse – before they are capable of making any meaningful conceptions of the world (Heidegger 1988\2008, p. 67; cf. Gadamer 1975, p. 232; Marttila 2015b). If social subjects' »consciousness« is always »rooted in Dasein«, as Critchley (1999, p. 56) suggests, then the pre- and exo-discursive subject cannot consist of anything but meaningless and »substanceless subjectivity« (Žižek 1991, p. 147). Contrary to Mouffe's ideas, this means that subjects' immanent passions (of love and hate) cannot determine their acceptance of particular (political) identities. A closer look at PDA's theoretical premises reveals that particular »representatives« of meaning (i.e., signifiers) – such as words – can be conceived of as »representing« particular meaning-contents (i.e., signifieds) only if social subjects disregard the impossibility of any self-evidential relation between the »representative« and the »represented« meaning-content (Laclau 2004, p. 300). For Laclau (ibid., p. 302), only »the dimension of affect« – the unconscious and unreflected attraction or »affective attachment« to a particular relation between the »representative« and the »represented« – can explain why social subjects can regard particular meanings as being self-evidential. Mouffe makes the mistake of assuming that the dimension of affect not only constitutes the ontological condition of possibility for social subjects' identification with particular

(political) identities, but actually determines their »socio-political engagement[s]« (Boucher 2006, p. 123).

Mouffe also errs when assuming that only some social and political institutions can be compatible with the »conflict-oriented human nature« (Leggett 2013, p. 303). By deducing the desirability of different institutions from their compatibility with the pre- and exo-social human nature, Mouffe replaces a PDA-consistent ontology of the subject with a naturalist ontology of the subject that reminds us of modernist political theories (cf. Koch 1993). Modernist political theories assume that

> »[i]f human beings are self-serving and aggressive, then the strong coercive state becomes necessary. If the individual is shaped by the social body, then community practice becomes the essence and the teleology of human endeavors. If human beings are rational, to the extent that they can formulate a structure for controlling their aggressiveness, conflicts can be mediated.« (Koch 1993, p. 327)

If we accept that there can be »no a priori […] regarding the subject«, as the post-foundational ontology (of the subject) postulates, then we must, in contrast to the modernist political theory, also accept that »there can be no universal regarding politics« (Koch 1993, p. 339). The absence of any pre- and exo-discursive subjectivity prevents us from measuring the quality of different social and political institutions against the background of any presupposedly inherent character of the human nature. The described contradictions between PDA and Mouffe's promotion of radical democracy reveal Mouffe as a hegemonic agent who validates the discourse on radical democracy by identifying its transcendental ground in the constitution of the human nature (cf. Brockelman 2003, p. 188).

4. The Ethico-Political Practice of Unmasking Critique

We suggest that it is not normative critique but the so-called »unmasking critique« that provides the best way to operationalize the practice of ethico-political critique compatible with PDA (see 2).[8] The practice of unmasking departs from the *a priori* assumption that social subjects' conceptions of the world do not reflect the objective constitution of the world, but express constitutive supra-subjective structures located beyond subjects' realm of reflexivity – such as social fields, relations of power, ideologies, discourses and (discursive) regimes. Even the seemingly most natural and self-evidential conceptions of the world are nothing but »symptom[s] of something else« that escapes social subjects' conscious self-conceptions (Boland 2014, p. 115). In other words, unmasking critique departs from the general suspicion that social subjects' potential understandings, interactions, roles and practices are steered by »hidden truths« that »influence[s] them behind their backs, be it economic conditions or social structures« (Celikates 2006, p. 26). What

---

8   Kompridis (1994, 2000) makes use of the concept of »unmasking critique«, whereas, for instance, Honneth (2000) prefers the term »disclosing critique«.

is behind this »hidden truth« cannot be determined in advance without closer empirical analysis. Moreover, different social theories consider the installment and retention of such hidden truths to be regulated by different types of supra-subjective social structures. While Bourdieu (e.g., 1992) emphasizes the structural impact that »social fields« exert upon the social production of meaning, and Foucault's (genealogical) discourse analysis focuses on reciprocal relations between discourses qua objectivated systems of meaning and their retention supporting subjectivities and relations of power (Gengnagel/ Hirschfeld 2015; Saar 2007), PDA pays attention to comparatively sedimented and hegemonic discursive regimes (Marttila 2015a, 2015b). Irrespective of their particular theoretical frameworks, all practices of unmasking critique function as eye-openers that provide the addressees of critique with radically new insights into the factual constitution of the world (cf. Kompridis 2000, p. 30). As such, the practice of unmasking critique has a »disclosing« function that offers the addressees of critique »radically new description[s]« of the world that can shatter the self-evidentiality of their prevailing common sense conceptions of the world (Honneth 2000, p. 123).

Unmasking critique presupposes that the critic achieves an epistemological break with social subjects' conscious self-conceptions of the world (x) and – instead of taking these self-conceptions at face value – interprets and reveals them as being symptoms of subjectively unacknowledged supra-subjective structures (y), such as social fields, discourses or discursive regimes. In order to achieve the epistemological break the critic has

> »to redescribe x in terms of y, or reveal x to be an effect of y, or show that the condition of possibility of x necessarily requires the exclusion or repression of s, the mechanisms of which we can attribute back to ever-ready y. Ideals like truth, reason and autonomy are typical cases of x; power, the unconscious, language, history and culture of y; difference, the body, nonidentity and the like, of s.« (Kompridis 2000, p. 28)

Epistemological relativism induced by the post-foundational ontology dissolves any strict distinction between objects' phenomenal characteristics as either »intransitive« – i.e., natural and inherent – or »transitive« – i.e., depending on our epistemic horizon (cf. Joseph 2001, p. 110). Epistemological relativism implies that our perceptions of the world are always relative to our epistemic perspective which means that our perspectives, interests, and preferences are constitutive of our conceptualizations and critical assessments of the objects of critique (Pels 2003, p. 158). Similar to any other social practice, the practice of unmasking critique also suffers from the lack of any objective credibility (Åkerstrøm Andersen 2003, p. 57; Glynos/Howarth 2007, p. 155). This lacking credibility is the result of the epistemic bias that all practices of observation suffer from due to their transitive nature. In PDA, the epistemic bias originates from the set of *a priori* assumptions about »the different sorts of entities in the world – *what* is in the world …« and »how [these] entities are in our social worlds« (Glynos/Howarth 2007, p. 214). The epistemically biased character of the unmasking practice of critique means that neither the practice of critique nor its social consequences are immune to *a posteriori* practices of critique. In

our opinion, the »non-necessary character« of the practice of unmasking critique makes it indispensable to figure out how the critic should take into account the epistemic bias that capacitates his/her practice of critique.

However, the »scientific« epistemic bias caused by the critic's theoretical framework is paralleled by another »pragmatic« bias. The ontological assumption about the discursive construction of any socially meaningful existence, which is constitutive of PDA, implies that the practice of unmasking critique can be geared towards any kind of political, economic, religious, academic, cultural or other social phenomenon. In other words, there is no social phenomenon that can be naturally located »beyond the scope of critique« (Butler 2009, p. 781). The all-encompassing applicability of the practice of unmasking critique means that the »scientific« epistemic bias of critique is accompanied by a »pragmatic bias« that originates from the critic's choice of worthwhile objects of critique. While the »scientific« and »pragmatic« epistemic biases constitute the critic's epistemological capacity to engage in practices of critical inquiry, they impede, at the same time, the possibility that the discursively constructed social reality unmasked by the critic can achieve the status of an objective and subsequently non-contestable epistemological authority. In other words, the critic cannot replace social subjects' »naive doxa of lay common sense« by the »doxa of scholarly common sense (sens commun savant)« (Bourdieu 1992, p. 248). However, the addressees of the practice of unmasking critique remain unaware of the double bias of the critical inquiry unless the critic unmasks the underlying presuppositions of his/her criticism. In the other case, the unmasking critique leads to little else than a replacement of the epistemological authority of »lay common sense« by »scholarly common sense« (ibid.).

The question arises as to whether we can discover a way out of the impasse of critique caused by the post-foundational condition. Unmasking critique holds the risk of leading to a zero-sum situation when common sense conceptions of the world unmasked as being a contingent discursive construction are replaced by the critic's equally (scientifically and pragmatically) biased epistemological authority. In accordance with Pels (2003, p. 159), one possible way out of the post-foundational impasse of critique is to add an additional »level or dimension of self-reference« to the practice of unmasking critique and explain the vantage point, which enabled the critic to refute the self-evidentiality of a given social order (cf. Critchley 2004, p. 116; Kompridis 2000, p. 30). The critic's active unmasking of his/her epistemological authority is logical if we consider that the post-foundational ontology places the validity of »all social practices […] equally under suspicion« (Kompridis 2000, p. 30). Moreover, unmasking the epistemological authority of the practice of unmasking critique is likely to »enhance[s] the critical faculty of […] [addressees] to scrutinize, question and revise the results of empirical […] research and thus enable[s] them to appropriate some of its findings critically without having to risk a blind bargain« (Marttila 2013b, p. 325). The purpose of unmasked practice of critique is not to annihilate the socially transformative impact of critique altogether, but to ensure that the addressees of criticism neither remain content with the prevailing social order, nor uncritically accept the critic's epistemic perspective. Instead, unmasking critique should turn the addressees of criticism into »critical counter-parts« both with a social order embed-

ding them and with regard to practices of critique criticizing this social order (Glynos/ Howarth 2008, p. 15). By doing so, the practice of unmasking critique can »animate a new set of positions for the subject« yet still refrain from any further determination of these new subject positions (Butler 2009, p. 792).

In accordance with Butler (ibid., p. 788), the objective of the unmasking critique is to »keep the possibility of critique alive« even when the voice of the (scientific) critic has fallen silent. Obviously, the addressees of the unmasking critique continue the practice of critique only if the scientific discourse (on critique) allows them to »practice« their liberty to not only say no to the prevailing social order that subjugates them to particular subject roles and practices, but also to determine the subsequent receptions of the scientific practices of critical inquiry (cf. Foucault 1982/2000, p. 354). PDA serves the purpose of distorting the self-evidential character of existing social relations, practices and roles, while at the same time granting the addressees of the critique sufficient liberty to detect their own »will to power« and identify themselves to be the legitimate instigators of the new social order (Diken 2008, p. 3, p. 36; Nietzsche 1969, p. 59). Obviously, the lack of objectivity located at the heart of any socially meaningful existence demands the critic to submit social changes and reforms induced by him/her to new practices of unmasking critique. To sum up – the impasse of critical inquiry caused by the post-foundational ontology does not only refer to the lacking epistemological authority of the critic, but embraces the impossibility to bring the practice of critique to a halt. After all, the post-foundational condition means that any socially meaningful relation, practice or subject role is, to an equal extent, under suspicion of being decoupled from its discursive origins and conditions of possibility.

5. Conclusion

The principal objective of this article has been to identify the epistemological authority of PDA that lends the critic the right and capacity to engage in critical inquiry. We have observed that PDA's epistemological authority does not only derive from the premises of post-foundational ontology and relational epistemology, but that its acceptability and validity are constrained by these premises. Epistemological relativism – the inevitable companion of PDA – impedes the access to epistemological authority required by the practice of normative critique. The absence of any non- and exo-discursive normative benchmarks means that PDA cannot be utilized to advance any definite conception of ideal society – such as radical democracy. While the practice of unmasking critique provides a means to operationalize practice of ethic-political critique compatible with PDA, we have, at the same time, argued that the binary »biased« logic of unmasking critique limits its epistemological authority. For us, this bias can but mean that the critic must actively unmask his/her own capacity to submit objects to critical inquiry. Ideally, unmasking critique should capacitate the addressees of critique to become critical counterparts both in relation to a social order that embeds them and constitutes their subjectivities and vis-à-vis a practice of unmasking critique, which the critic undertakes to dissolve the self-evi-

dentiality of the criticized social order. PDA can never fully overcome the impasse of critical inquiry caused by the post-foundational condition because the practice of critique is always conducted on behalf of a particular academic or non-academic discourse. The PDA is no exception in this context: It equips us with the epistemological authority required for the practice of critique only on condition that the unmasking of discursively contingent constructions of reality includes the critique's own discursivity. This ethico-political and reflexive cautiousness should not be compromised – not even in the name of radical democracy.

References

Åkerstrøm Andersen, N. (2003): Discursive Analytical Strategies: Understanding Foucault, Koselleck, Laclau, Luhmann. Bristol: Policy Press.

Antonio, R. J. (1981): Immanent Critique as the Core of Critical Theory. In: British Journal of Sociology 32(3), pp. 330–345.

Boland, T. (2014): Critique is a Thing of This World: Towards an Analogy of Critique. In: History of the Human Sciences 27(1), pp. 108–123.

Boltanski, L. (2010): Soziologie und Sozialkritik. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp.

Boucher, G. (2009): The Charmed Circle of Ideology: A Critique of Laclau and Mouffe, Butler and Žižek. Re-Press: Melbourne.

Bourdieu, P. (1992): The Paris Workshop. In: Bourdieu, P./Wacquant, L. (Eds.): An Invitation to Reflexive Sociology. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, pp. 217–260.

Brockelman, T. (2003): The Failure of the Radical Democratic Imaginary: Žižek Versus Laclau and Mouffe on Vestigal Utopia. In: Philosophy and Social Criticism 29(2), pp. 183–208.

Butler, J. (2002): What is Critique? An Essay on Foucault's Virtue. In: Ingram, D. (Eds.): The Political Blackwell Readings in Continental Philosophy. New Jersey: Wiley Blackwell, pp. 212–228.

Butler, J. (2009): Critique, Dissent, Disciplinarity. In: Critical Inquiry 35(3), pp. 773–795.

Cederström, C./Spicer, A. (2014): Discourse of the Real Kind: A post-foundational Approach to Organizational Discourse Analysis. In: Organization 21(2), pp. 178–205.

Celikates, R. (2006): From Critical Theory to a Social Theory of Critique: On the Critique of Ideology after the Pragmatic Turn. In: Constellations 13(1), pp. 21–40.

Cooke, M. (2006): Resurrecting the Rationality of Ideology Critique: Reflections on Laclau and Ideology Critique. In: Constellations 13(1), pp. 4–20.

Critchley, S. (1999): Ethics, Politics, Subjectivity. London: Verso.

Critchley, S. (2004): Is There a Normative Deficit in the Theory of Discourse? In: Critchley, S./Marchart, O. (Eds.): Laclau: A Critical Reader. London and New York: Routledge, pp. 113–122.

Dhaliwal, A. (1996): Can the Subaltern Vote? Radical Democracy, Discourses of Representation and Rights, and Questions of Race. In: Trend, D. (Eds.): Radical Democracy: Identity, Citizenship, and the State. New York: Routledge, pp. 42–61.

Demirović, A. (2007): Hegemonie und die diskursive Konstruktion der Gesellschaft. In: Nonhoff, M. (Eds.): Diskurs, radikale Demokratie und Hegemonie. Zum politischen Denken von Ernesto Laclau und Chantal Mouffe. Bielefeld: transcript, pp. 55–86.

Diken, B. (2008): Nihilism. London and New York: Routledge.

Donati, P. (2011): Relational Sociology: A New Paradigm for the Social Sciences. London and New York: Routledge.

Foucault, M. (1991): Politics and the Study of Discourse. In: Burchell, G./Gordon, C./Miller, P. (Eds.): The Foucault Effect. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, pp. 53–72.

Foucault, M. (1997): What is Critique? In: Lotringer, S./Hochroth, L. (Eds.): The Politics of Truth. New York: Semiotext(e), pp. 823–882.

Foucault, M. (1982\2000): Space, Knowledge, and Power. In: Faubion, J. (Eds.): Power: The Essential Works of Michel Foucault, 1954–1984, Volume 3. London: Penguin, pp. 349–364.

Gadamer, H.-G. (1975): Truth and Method. London: Sheed and Ward.

Gengnagel, V./Hirschfeld, A. (2015): Die Herrschaft und ›das Politische‹: Machtanalyse zwischen Konsens und Konflikt. In: Hofmann, W./Martinsen, R. (Eds.): Die andere Seite der Politik: Theorien kultureller Konstruktion des Politischen. Wiesbaden: VS, forthcoming.

Glynos, J. (2001): The Grip of Ideology: a Lacanian Approach to the Theory of Ideology. In: Journal of Political Ideologies 6(2), pp. 191–214.

Glynos, J./Howarth, D. R. (2007): Logics of Critical Explanation in Social and Political Theory. London and New York: Routledge.

Glynos, J./Howarth, D. R. (2008): Critical Explanation in Social Science: A Logics Approach. In: Swiss Journal of Sociology 54(1), pp. 5–35.

Glynos, J./Howarth, D. R./Norval, A./Speed, E. (2009): Discourse Analysis: Varieties and Methods. In: Review Paper NCRM/014. ESRC National Centre for Research Methods.

Heidegger, M. (1988\2008): Ontology: The Hermeneutics of Facticity. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Honneth, A. (1999): Pathologies of the Social: The Past and Present of Social Theory. In: Rasmussen, D. (Eds.): The Handbook of Critical Theory. Oxford: Blackwell, pp. 369–396.

Honneth, A. (2000): The Possibility of a Disclosing Critique of Society: The Dialectic of Enlightenment in Light of Current Debates in Social Criticism. In: Constellations 7(1), pp. 116–127.

Honneth, A. (2011): Das Recht der Freiheit. Grundriss einer demokratischen Sittlichkeit. Berlin: Suhrkamp.

Howarth, D. R. (2006): The Method of Articulation. In: van den Brink, M./Metze, T. (Eds.): Words Matter in Policy and Planning: Discourse Theory and Method in Social Science. Utrecht: Labor Grafimedia, pp. 23–42.

Howarth, D. R. (2008): Ethos, Agonism and Populism: William Connolly and the Case for Radical Democracy. In: British Journal of Politics and International Relations 10, pp. 171–193.

Jarvis, S. (1998): Adorno: A Critical Introduction. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Joseph, J. (2001): Derrida's Spectres of Ideology. In: Journal of Political Ideologies 6(1), pp. 95–115.

Kauppinen, A. (2002): Reason, Recognition, and Internal Critique. In: Inquiry. An Interdisciplinary Journal of Philosophy, 45(4), pp. 479–498.

Keller, R. (2011): Wissenssoziologische Diskursanalyse: Grundlegung eines Forschungsprogramms. Wiesbaden: VS.

Keller, R. (2012): Doing Discourse Analysis: An Introduction for Social Scientists. London: Sage.

Koch, A. M. (1993): Poststructuralism and the Epistemological Basis of Anarchism. In: Philosophy of the Social Sciences 23(3), pp. 327–351.

Kompridis, N. (1994): On World Disclosure: Heidegger, Habermas and Dewey. In: Thesis Eleven 37(29), pp. 29–45.

Kompridis, N. (2000): Reorienting Critique: From Ironist Theory to Transformative Practice. In: Philosophy and Social Criticism 26(4), pp. 23–47.

Koopman, C. (2010): Historical Critique or Transcendental Critique in Foucault: Two Kantian Lineages. In: Foucault Studies 8, pp. 100–121.

Laclau, E. (1996): Deconstruction, Pragmatism, Discourse. In: Mouffe, C. (Eds.): Deconstruction and Pragmatism: Simon Critchley, Jacques Derrida, Ernesto Laclau and Richard Rorty. London and New York: Routledge, pp. 47–67.

Laclau, E. (1997): The Death and Resurrection of the Theory of Ideology. In: MLN 112(3), pp. 297–321.

Laclau, E. (2000): Identity and Discourse: The Role of Universality in the Constitution of Political Logics. In: Butler, J./Laclau, E./Žižek, S. (Eds.): Contingency, Discourse, Universality. Contemporary Dialogues on the Left. London and New York: Verso, pp. 44–89.

Laclau, E. (2004): Glimpsing the Future. In: Critchley, S./Marchart, O. (Eds.): Laclau: A Critical Reader. New York: Routledge, pp. 279–328.

Laclau, E./Mouffe, C. (1990): Post-Marxism without Apologies. In: Laclau, E. (Eds.): New Reflections of the Revolution of Our Time. London: Verso, pp. 97–132.

Laclau, E./Mouffe, C. (1985\2001): Discourse and Socialist Strategy. London: Verso.

Lakatos, I. (1968): Criticism and the Methodology of Scientific Research Programmes. In: Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society 69, pp. 149–186.

Lakatos, I. (1999): Lecture 8: The Methodology of Scientific Research Programmes. In: Motterlini, M. (Eds.): For and Against Method. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, pp. 96–108.

Latour, B. (2004): Why has Critique Run Out of Steam? From Matters of Fact to Matters of Concern. In: Critical Inquiry 30(2), pp. 225–248.

Leggett, W. (2013): Restoring Society to Post-Structuralist Politics: Mouffe, Gramsci and Radical Democracy. In: Philosophy and Social Criticism 39(3), pp. 299–315.

Lefort, C. (1988): Democracy and Political Theory. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Marchart, O. (2007): Post-Foundational Political Thought. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

Marchart, O. (2011): Democracy and Minimal Politics: The Political Difference and its Consequences. In: The South Atlantic Quarterly 110(4), pp. 965–973.

Marttila, T. (2013a): Culture of Enterprise in Neoliberalism: The Specters of Entrepreneurship. London and New York: Routledge.

Marttila, T. (2013b): Whither governmentality research? A case study of the governmentalization of the entrepreneur in the French epistemological tradition. In: Historical Social Research 38(4), pp. 293–331.

Marttila, T. (2015a): Post-Foundational Discourse Analysis: Political Difference to Empirical Research. Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan (forthcoming).

Marttila, T. (2015b): Post-Foundational Discourse Analysis: A Suggestion for a Research Programme. Unpublished Article under Peer-Review.

Marttila, T. (2015c): Die kritische Epistemologie der poststrukturalistischen Hegemonietheorie. In: Langer, A./Nonhoff, M./Reisigl, M. (Eds.): Diskursanalyse und Kritik. Wiesbaden: VS, forthcoming.

Miklitsch, R. (1995): The Rhetoric of Post-Marxism: Discourse and Institutionality in Laclau and Mouffe, Resnick and Wolff. In: Social Text 45(1), pp. 167–196.

Mouffe, C. (1992): Citizenship and the Political Identity. In: October 61, pp. 28–32.

Mouffe, C. (2000a): The Democratic Paradox. London: Verso.

Mouffe, C. (2000b): Deliberative Democracy or Agonistic Pluralism. In: Reihe Politikwissenschaft, No. 72. Vienna: Institute for Advanced Studies.

Mouffe, C. (2002): Politics and Passions: The Stakes of Democracy. London: Centre for the Study of Democracy.

Mouffe, C. (2005a): On the Political. London and New York: Routledge.

Mouffe, C. (1993\2005b): The Return of the Political. London: Verso.

Nietzsche, F. W. (1969): On the Genealogy of Morals. London: Oxford University Press.

Nietzsche, F. W. (1885\2012): Thus Spoke Zarathustra. Translated by Thomas Common. http://www.gutenberg.org/files/1998/1998-h/1998-h.htm (Accessed February 12, 2015).

Pels, D. (2003): Unhastening Science: Autonomy and Reflexivity in the Social Theory of Knowledge. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press.

Saar, M. (2007): Genealogie als Kritik. Frankfurt am Main: Campus.

Said, E. W. (1983): The World, the Text and the Critic. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Sparke, M. (2005): In the Space of Theory: Postfoundational Geographies of the Nation State. Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press.

Stavrakakis, Y. (2007): The Lacanian Left: Psychoanalysis, Theory, Politics. Albany: State University of New York Press.

Torfing, J. (1999): New Theories of Discourse: Laclau, Mouffe and Žižek. Oxford: Blackwell.

Tønder, L./Thomassen, L. (2005): Introduction: Rethinking Radical Democracy Between Abundance and Lack. In: Tønder, L./Thomassen, L. (Eds.): Radical Democracy: Politics Between Abundance and Lack. Manchester: Manchester University Press, pp. 1–13.

Vandenberghe, F. (2003): How is Society Possible? Towards a Metacritique of Reification. In: Lehmann, J. (Eds.): Critical Theory: Diverse Objects, Diverse Subjects. Amsterdam: JAI Press, pp. 297–314.

Vobruba, G. (2001): Gesellschaftsinterne Kritik: Eine Positionsbestimmung. In: Dialektik: Zeitschrift für Kulturphilosophie 2, pp. 5–13.

Wolin, R. (1992): The Terms of Cultural Criticism: The Frankfurt School, Existentialism, Poststructuralism. New York: Columbia University Press.

Žižek, S. (1991): For They Do Not Know What They Do: Enjoyment as a Political Factor. London: Verso.

Žižek, S. (1993): Tarrying with the Negative. Kant, Hegel, and the Critique of Ideology. Durham: Duke University Press.

Dr. Tomas Marttila
Wissenschaftlicher Mitarbeiter
Lehrstuhl für Soziologie insb. soziologische Theorie
Universität Bamberg
Feldkirchenstr. 21
96052 Bamberg
Email: tomas.marttila@uni-bamberg.de

Dipl.-Soz. Vincent Gengnagel
Wissenschaftlicher Mitarbeiter
Lehrstuhl für Soziologie insb. soziologische Theorie
Universität Bamberg
Feldkirchenstr. 21
96052 Bamberg
Email: vincent.gengnagel@uni-bamberg.de