

DISCOURSE THEORY: WAYS FORWARD

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Plenary Panel 1: Discourse, Materiality, Reality, Fantasy

Chair: Jason Glynos

1. Aysem Mert (Stockholm University)

From Utopian Socialism to Ecotopia at the End of History

In post-structuralist discourse theory, the phantasmal is the domain in which the radical contingency of social reality can be concealed by a fantasy of perfect fulfilment. It suggests a condition before the primordial loss, in which there are no threats to the identity of the subject. This impossible promise provides the fantasy support for many of our political projects and choices. Utopias fall into this domain, promising a harmonious resolution to all social antagonisms. In *Socialism: Utopian and Scientific*, Friedrich Engels (1880) called many socialist thinkers of his time as 'utopian' in their search to emancipate all humans rather than the proletariat. He thought that plural interpretations of socialism was potentially divisive. What was needed was only one truth: "To make a science of Socialism, it had first to be placed upon a real basis", that of historical materialism. In the next generation of socialist utopias, politics was something of the past, which did not belong to the ideal societies narrated. In this paper I examine three such utopias (Edward Bellamy's *Looking backward*, William Morris' *News from Nowhere*, and H.G. Wells' *In the Days of the Comet*). I aim to show how anti-democratic technologies, rationales, identities, and governmentalities emerge in search for a perfect society. I then juxtapose them to Ernest Callenbach's *Ecotopia* with its radical ecological democracy. This reveals potential theoretical solutions to our problems with democracy, technology, and ecology beyond that of agonistic pluralism and radical democracy. Following Glynos and Howarth's take on the fantasmatic logics (and learning from the works of Stavrakakis and Weaver as well), I investigate what the fantasy support for a radical democracy can be in a world where socialism is not a viable political option and reflect on the possibilities of a radical democracy in green politics and ideologies.

2. Nico Carpentier (Charles University in Prague)

The Discursive-Material Knot and Participatory Theory

The talk starts from the idea that the discursive and the material are entangled in a discursive-material knot. Even if many theoretical frameworks, including discourse theory and new materialist theory, support this idea, there is still a need for a more developed theorization of the material in its relationship to the discursive. The challenge is not to give up on the discourse-theoretical starting point -that all social phenomena and objects obtain their meaning(s) through discourse- while simultaneously constructing a non-hierarchical ontology that theorizes the knotted interactions of the discursive and the material as restless and contingent, sometimes incessantly changing shapes and sometimes being deeply sedimented. It is this focus on Laclau and Mouffe's discourse theory -without ignoring the critiques on discourse theory, oscillating between loyalty and disloyalty, in always respectful ways for their work- that makes the discursive-material knot project specific. This re-thinking is also aimed at expanding discourse theory, infusing (or infecting) it more with the material —through a dialogue with new materialism— using the mutation to feed further theorizations and empirical research. In a second part, the talk will outline a theoretical framework that allows articulating participatory processes as engulfed in an assemblage of discourses and materials. Again, starting from the discourse-theoretical perspective, a series of structuring discourses and subject positions (the citizen, leader, owner and expert), crucial to participatory processes, will be discussed. This discourse-theoretical approach to participation will then be enriched by a (new) materialist approach, which scrutinizes the role of the material at the level of access, interaction and participation. These more theoretical reflections about participatory theory will briefly be illustrated by a case study on the Cyprus Community Media Centre.

3. Yannis Stavrakakis (Aristotle University of Thessaloniki)

Criticizing Discourse Theory: Post-Hegemony and the Return of the Real

Already from the 1970s and 1980s, by radically criticizing (theoretical and political) illusions of immediacy, the discursive theory of hegemony articulated by Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe has quickly become the target of a long list of avengers of the real. Following a rather poor overture orchestrated by Geras's naïve objectivist realism, this debate has quickly focused on the status of the category of 'hegemony' itself and its reliance on discourse and representation. Richard Day has first challenged the hegemony of hegemony, before Scott Lash and Jon Beasley-Murray put forward their theoretico-political project of post-hegemony in its two main variants. A detailed presentation and deconstruction of all these projects will help us evaluate their strengths and weaknesses. While, politically, they do highlight certain aspects of political activity only marginally examined within discursive theories of hegemony –especially in their initial formulations–, they fail to account for the irreducible links between these horizontal practices and hegemonic politics, visible in many contemporary examples; links that may be essential for their wider political implications. At the same time, theoretically, the post-hegemonic theories on which we will focus also fail to register Laclau's genuine and sustained willingness to take into account the (real) limits of discourse and representation, through his engagement with Lacanian theory, as well as Mouffe's engagement with the passions. Somehow this is ignored by most post-hegemonic critics, who, guided by a one-sided desire for immediacy, by a 'passion for the real' in its unmediated purity, are often led to a veritable repression of representation and discourse, precisely what many of their intellectual inspirations and companions (Foucault, Bourdieu, Elias, etc.) manage to avoid. If there is a positive contribution here it has nothing to do with the end of hegemony. Rather, it has to do with highlighting its affective side, something already stressed by Laclau himself well before the articulation of these criticisms.

4. Johannes Angermuller (University of Warwick)

Truth and Untruth in Discourse. For a Strong Programme in Discourse Research

What is "truth" in discourse analysis? Two perspectives are often pitted against each other. For the realist, language hides a truth that the discourse researcher is to reveal. For the relativist, by contrast, truth results from the words used by speakers. In the light of current media discourses about "post-truth", I would like to remind you of the limits of such an opposition. By drawing from a debate in Science and Technology Studies, I would like to make the case for a strong programme in discourse research. For the strong programme, the discourse analyst needs to see a symmetry between true and false knowledge. Rather than asking how Truth is suppressed by power, it asks how discursive practices constitute "true" as well as "false" knowledges. In this perspective, there is nothing relative about truth. Truth is taken as a product of discursive struggles in which some knowledges become truer than others. The objective of discourse analysis then is to critically reflect on how truths are constructed discursively - not only in the mass media but also in academia. The Strong Programme discourse research is grounded in the founding traditions of "French" and "Critical" Discourse Studies, which have struggled over questions of truth and reality since the beginning. While critically interrogating the structuralist heritage of these strands, the Strong Programme insists on the practices of making and unmaking ideas through language use, therefore inviting discourse researchers to a practice turn. I will discuss examples from two distinct arenas, the discursive dynamics that create populist leaders in political discourse and academic stars in academic discourse.

Panel 1a: Left-Wing Populism

Chair: Yannis Stavrakakis

1. Alexandros Kioupkolis (Aristotle University of Thessaloniki)

Populism 2.0

This presentation addresses populist social movements and their re-emergence in recent years, after the inaugural Narodniki in 19th century Russia and the U.S. People's Party. Research in recent 'bottom-up' populism, most notably the 'Arab Spring', the Spanish 15M, the Greek 'squares movement' and the North American Occupy in 2011-2012, has been growing over the last years. But the difference that the new populist mobilizations have made to the conventional populism remains underexplored. The presentation deploys the rubric 'populism 2.0' to capture this difference and to elucidate its democratic promises by inquiring into egalitarian, progressive mobilizations which could be associated with the left and have been endorsed, indeed, by leftist populist actors, including Podemos in Spain and SYRIZA in Greece. 'Populism 2.0' is not meant to imply mainly that these movements were Internet-based or suffused with social media. Rather, the argument is that a certain ethos attributed to 'network society' or the Web 2.0 –openness, user-generated content, diversity, rejection of hierarchies, transparency, pragmatism, fluidity, reflexivity- is what truly differentiates them not only from the typical, top-down populisms, but also from populist movements of the past. It is this distinct ethos which is pregnant with egalitarian, emancipatory and innovative possibilities.

2. Themis Kaniklidou (Hellenic American University)

Left-Wing Populist Discourse and Communication in Greece

The rising power of populist actors has been a pervasive phenomenon (Block & Negrine 2017), often disrupting the course of politics in the west. In the European sphere, populism has been for some time now almost exclusively associated with the radical right (Mudde 2007) and linked to politics of fear (Wodak 2015). At a time when populism and right-wing (neopopulist) movements have often been perceived as intertwining syndromes, left-wing populism (LWP) has often escaped scholarly attention and remained under-specified. In Greece, with some notable exceptions (Stavrakakis 2017; Stavrakakis and Katsabekis 2014), we have paid less attention to LWP discourse. What is more, research into the communicative logics that underpin the language choices of left-leaning press has been scarce. This paper looks to understand and unpack the discursive template of LWP using metaphors and frames as tools of analysis. I align myself with scholars who argue for the interconnection between framing, and discourse (Entman 1997; Scheufele 1999) and metaphors and discourse (Chilton and Lakoff 1995; Charteris-Black 2005; Hart 2008) and therefore communication. More specifically, I trace the particular lexical 'buttons' that the press uses to activate certain legitimization strategies. These include i) a persistent appeal and strategic use of the terms 'Greek family' and 'household' as being under constant threat of austerity politics, ii) use of 'the People' presented in an asymmetrical relationship to outgroups representing 'the establishment', and iii) a proliferation and strategic use of metaphors that facilitate the construction of topoi of danger or hope, understood in this paper as two polar emotive scripts (Nabi 2003).

3. Arthur Borriello (Université Libre de Bruxelles) & Anton Jäger (Cambridge University)

Left-Populism on Trial - Laclauian Politics in Theory and Practice

Both in practice and theory, left-populism finds itself at a crossroads. The momentum enjoyed by populist forces in the Southern periphery of the Eurozone (Podemos, Syriza) years now seems to be stalling in the face of several setbacks, including the Catalan question, the weak but significant revival of euro-economies, and the protracted Brexit-crisis. This stagnation of populist practice, however, can hardly be isolated from its theoretical background – in particular, the trailblazing work of Ernesto Laclau. Since both discourse theorists and political activists inspired by Laclauian precepts often explicitly recognise the organic link

between both sides of the populist experience, such a link between practice and theory stands in need of investigation. This paper seeks to investigate how the recent difficulties faced by the populist challengers (in particular, left-populism's supposed "institutional deficit" (David Howarth), or its incapacity to transform the politico-economic power structures embedded both at the national and at the European level) can be understood in light of the limits of its theoretical inspiration. The main objective of the paper is thus to give an overview of, and to reflect upon, the potential pitfalls of Laclauian populism. Testing such limits, however, should not be seen as an attempt at negation or dismissal. Rather, the aim of our paper is constructive and suggestive, pointing at possible avenues for overcoming's left-populism's limitations – the critique offered is an internal one. Some of the frailties that we would like to discuss include: Interrogating the a-historical nature of Laclauian theory; The tension between verticality (electoral machine) and horizontality (social movement); The lack of a more overtly 'nominalist' and reflexive approach to populism in Laclau, that would take into account the role of the theoreticians themselves in the rise of contemporary populist movements; The hyper-formalism of the Laclauian approach, which might operate at the expense of a more structural analysis of class relations and economic structure; The link between institutions and populism; The lack of clear-cut analysis of the challenges posed by the articulation of national, supranational and global constraints over political practices. Since we intend to cover a large range of issues, we cannot possibly pretend to provide satisfactory ways out of all the impasses of the Laclauian perspective. Rather, our ambition is to provide a more comprehensive overview of some of left-populism's blind spots, and stimulate discussion on them. If we are to seriously deepen the critique of Laclau's extraordinary theory – both academically (in order to draw operative concepts for empirical analysis from it) and politically (to build a credible counter-hegemonic project against the current neoliberal order) – this interrogation remains, above all, a matter of political urgency.

4. Esperanza Morales López (University of A Coruña) & Nicolina Montesano

Montessori (HU University of Applied Sciences Utrecht)

The Articulation of 'the People' in the Discourse of Podemos and its Partners En Marea and En Comú. The Dilemma with Ethnicity

In different papers, we have published our research on the 15M's discourses (the Spanish social movement, named as well "Movimiento de los indignados", in 2011), and then on the post-15M discourses which appeared some years later, shaped as social movements or/and new political parties, such as the left-wing political party Podemos and its regional partners (more information in Montesano-Montessori and Morales-López 2014 and (forthcoming). In this presentation we will focus on the difference between the Podemos' discourse and its partners in Galicia (En Marea) and in Catalonia (En Comú Podem) in the articulation of 'the people'. This contrast is particularly relevant in the context of the "Catalan conflict" (the attempt by the Catalan government to declare independence from the Spanish state in September and October 2017).

The rhetoric-discursive analysis shows that Podemos aims at making a difference in the historical political narrative of Spain based on its claims to directly serve and protect the people and to restore the dignity of Spain. It recodes the concept of the nation from centrality of the state to popular sovereignty. En Marea and En Comú Podem develop its political agenda in bilingual regions, where the population is divided by nationalism and ethnicity. The analysis of the speeches of these particular groups, contrary to Podemos, shows the dilemma of including the nationalistic approach in their demands, with the danger, particularly in Catalonia, of being abandoned by the left-wing voters who support the actual status quo (being part of Catalonia and at the same time part of Spain and Europe).

From a discourse theoretical point of view, we will revise these findings as a tension between the universal and the particular. We will emphasise the transformative potential of discourse theory and its concepts such as empty and floating signifiers, the split identity and chains of equivalence. In this sense we draw on earlier research on the Zapatista Movement in Mexico (Montesano Montessori 2011) and, indeed, Podemos in Spain. Both movements have intellectual leaders who were inspired by discourse theory and redesign these findings in transformative mechanisms which can play an important role in a world increasingly torn by conflicts between global universalism and ethnic, political, cultural and historical particularism. We also point to some

difficulties and contradictions when putting discourse theory into political practice as observed in our discursive analyses.

Panel 1b: Discursive-Material: Politics and Governance

Chair: Nico Carpentier

1. Olga Baysha (National Research University Higher School of Economics, Moscow)

Dehumanizing Political Others: A Discursive-Material Perspective

In his recent book *The Discursive-Material Knot*, Nico Carpentier (2017) identifies three nodal points of antagonistic discourse: the need for destruction of the enemy, homogenization of the self as opposed to the enemy, and the radical difference of the enemy. The latter appears when the self and the other are thought to be irreconcilably at odds, and the enemy is presented as inferior. In the more extreme cases, this radical othering leads to a dehumanization and demonization of the other, which makes the destruction of the enemy easier. Using post-Maidan social confrontation within Ukraine and its Facebook discussions as a case study, this paper analyzes how exactly the radical othering and subsequent dehumanization of the enemy is discursively structured, and describe the conditions under which such extreme manifestations of conflict could be eliminated with the ultimate goal of transforming antagonistic into agonistic discourse.

Keywords: Facebook, antagonistic discourse, discursive-material knot, radical othering, Ukraine, Ernesto Laclau, Chantal Mouffe, discourse theory.

2. Zoltán Gábor Szűcs (Hungarian Academy of Sciences)

The Case for a Political Poetics

The aim of the paper is to propose a poetic approach to politics based mostly on Aristotle's *Poetics* and its understanding tragedy as a mimesis of action (1); mimesis as a mode of mediating important insights into the structure of the reality of politics on an intermediary level of abstraction between the concrete and the abstract (2); and catharsis as a mode of experiencing politics mixing cognitive and affective elements (3). Besides discussing Aristotle's basic concepts the paper shortly examines the role of tragic theater within Athenian democracy and stresses that attending dramatic competitions was more than just a religious or sport-like activity in the life of the citizens of a democratic political community, but it served as a way of ritually relive actual political experiences and a way of civic education. Drawing on these lessons, the paper argues that a political poetics based on these ancient Athenian experiences could have two advantages for discourse theory: on the one hand, it offers a normative democratic theory of discourses and, on the other hand, it offers an inspiring model of discourse in which action, cognition, affection, individual and collective experiences are connected by the medium of fiction. The last part of the paper will seek to show how this poetical approach can deepen our understanding of individual and collective political engagements (from Facebook posting to participating in mass protest events on to other forms of political activism) and can help us to deal with some of the troubling challenges of the post-truth politics.

3. Frank Stengel & Dirk Nabers (Uni Kiel)

Beyond Materialism and Idealism: Toward a Discourse Theory of International Relations

The paper takes issue with the centrality of the mind for International Relations (IR) theorizing. It queries both the dualism between a knowing subject and an external object, and the monism of reducing the real to thought. While large parts of IR theorizing seem to conflate discourse theory with anti-materialist idealism, this article puts forward exactly the opposite argument, i.e., that discourse theory should primarily be interested in the materiality of discourse. To develop more thoroughly the argument that ideas – as mental products – do not independently constitute the experienced (whether observable or not), but are themselves an upshot of discursive variation, the article discusses prominent IR work on critical realism, new materialism, ideas and discourse in part 1. In part 2, we contend that the IR state of the art is reflected in how the philosophy of science and the philosophy of the mind have been treated in prominent IR work over the decades. Unsurprisingly, the focus on either materiality or the mind and on ideas as products of the

mental forecloses an engagement with discourse as an ontological level beyond both the material and the mind. It is on this basis that the article proposes to transcend the dichotomies between mind and world as well as ideas and materiality by proposing a political ontology that stresses a particular concept of discourse in part 3. This segment of the argument is greatly indebted to the work of the late political theorist Ernesto Laclau and his co-authored work with Chantal Mouffe. In thoroughly engaging their argument, it will become possible to put forward a discourse theory of IR that is situated both beyond materialism and idealism.

4. Steven Griggs (De Montfort University) & **David Howarth** (University of Essex)

The Discourse of Collaboration, Democratic Politics and Resistance: The Case of Nantes

This paper explores the intersections between the discursive and material practices of collaborative governance, on the one hand, and protest and resistance, on the other hand, under conditions of austerity. It does so through a case study of the French city of Nantes, in which the municipal council has established a regime of citizen engagement and co-production, identifying itself as a 'collaborative city'. At the same time, radical campaigners have mobilised against the building of a new international airport on the outskirts of the city, establishing a 'zone to defend' on the proposed airport site in which they model alternative lifestyles and democratic decision-making. Analysing how these two different spaces are reproduced by intersecting assemblages of discursive and material practices, we demonstrate how, under conditions of austerity, collaboration has come to serve in the city as an ideological abridgement. Drawing upon post-Marxist discourse theory and logics of critical explanation, as well as work associated with new materialists like William Connolly, Jane Bennett, and Timothy Mitchell, we foreground how logics of collaborative governance, the so-called 'jeu à la nantaise', produce 'parallel' systems of local decision-making which rest on the articulation of radical campaigners against the new international airport as a "constitutive outside". We conclude by drawing lessons as to the limits of collaborative governance under the changing material conditions of austerity, exploring how we might begin to prefigure alternative democratic spaces of organisation and collaboration.

Panel 1c: Politicizing Economies of the Workplace

Chair: Jason Glynos

1. Alessandro Niccolò Tirapani (City University of London)

'There is No Budget!'. The Reproduction of Precariousness among Interns in Brussels

Precariousness is becoming more and more preponderant in employment practices. Short-term contracts, the shift of responsibility from the employer or the society to the employee, and low salaries are key characteristics of these changes. Even though there is growing attention to cases like the gig economy, management studies have dedicated little to no attention to internship practices. Yet these roles are utterly precarious and highly representative. What is even more challenging is the modest amount of overt resistance we witness, especially by the side of young people. In this work, I employ qualitative methods to look at interns in Brussels, namely those working in the so-called Eurobubble. In this 'extreme' case study, thousands of highly qualified young people flock every year to the Belgian capital, accepting every kind of contract as long as it helps entering the bubble linked to the EU institutions and the organisations revolving around it. Taking a poststructuralist stance, I build on long interviews and non-participant observations to reconstruct the discourse of precariousness put in place by interns before, during and after the internship. More precisely, I use the 'critical logics' framework of Glynos and Howarth (2007) to surface social, political and fantasmatic logics and map the discourse that activates or inhibits resistance among interns. The goal is to better understand the naturalisation of these practices of precariousness, in doing so linking their discursive and material aspect (which cannot actually be divided from a poststructuralist perspective). To cast an empirical light on these aspects can help us moving beyond the current theoretical debates on the latest developments of neoliberalism, as well as granting us additional tools to tackle other forms of precariousness, such like the gig economy.

2. Edina Dóci (Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam) & **Matthijs Bal** (Lincoln University)

Neoliberal Ideology in the Workplace and in Work and Organization Psychology: a Discursive Logics Perspective.

This paper explores the role of neoliberal ideology in workplace practices and in work and organizational psychology (WOP) research. It analyses how neoliberal ideology manifests in these two domains by using a prominent framework from the field of political theory to understand ideology through three different logics: political, social and fantasmatic logics. We explore the main neoliberal assumptions underlying existing practices in the workplace as well as in WOP research, how individuals are gripped by such practices, and how the status quo is maintained. The paper analyses how individuals in the contemporary workplace are henceforth influenced by neoliberalism, and how this is reflected in the practices and dominant paradigms within WOP. In particular, we focus on three ways neoliberalism affects workplaces and individual experiences of the workplace: through instrumentality, individualism and competition. The paper finishes with practical recommendations for researchers and practitioners alike on how to devote more attention to the, often implicit, role of neoliberal ideology in their work and research. The discussion elaborates on how alternative paradigms in the workplace can be developed which address the downsides of neoliberalism.

3. Jan Zienkowski (Université Saint-Louis) & **Benjamin De Cleen** (Vrije Universiteit Brussel)

The Logics of Anti-Labour Union Discourse

This paper focuses on the de-legitimation strategies used by union critical voices in debates about union actions against Belgian austerity politics in 2014 and 2016. Based on a discourse theoretical analysis of union critical discourse in three mainstream Flemish newspapers, six sets of de-legitimation strategies that share a series of family resemblances are distinguished. These are: (1) strategies that depict unions as conservative anachronisms that are out of sync with the realities of our times; (2) strategies that psychologize and individualize unions as self-centred, irresponsible and child-like actors; (3) criminalization strategies that depict unions and unionists as vandals, as hostage takers and/or as terrorists; (4) a collection of strategies that oppose unions to a homogenized general interest; (5) metadiscursive de-legitimation strategies that criticize unions' discursive practices; and (6) more direct metapolitical claims that question the democratic character of the unions and/or their practices. Indeed, these de-legitimation strategies link up with a broader metapolitical struggle, where the meaning of politics itself as well as the institutionalized relationships between business, government, civil society and citizens are reconfigured.

4. Taavi Sundell (University of Helsinki)

Laclauian Post-Foundational Discourse Theory and Political Economy: The Contingent Foundations of Academic Capitalism

Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe's *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy: Towards a Radical Democratic Politics* ventured to deconstruct Marxist theory and to articulate a new approach to the study of discourse. Such an approach, it was claimed, would enable a critique of perspectives on economy in general, and capitalism in particular, which saw them as autonomous and non-political fields of societies. However, Marxism, understood as critique of political economy and analysis of the existing capitalist economies became increasingly absent in their later writings even if some Marxist concepts were still utilized in an ad hoc manner. Unlike argued by some critics of Laclauian post-foundational discourse theory, this paper will assume that even if this has been the case, it can still be put to productive use in analyzing the contingent, discursive, and political aspects of economy and economics. On these bases, this paper will first discuss the role given to the economy in the literature on post- foundational discourse theory. This will be followed by a discussion of 'economism', 'property rights', and 'econocracy' as the contingent foundations of contemporary capitalism. As such, it will be argued, they can form a starting point for a post-foundational analysis of the economy. Finally, it will be briefly outlined how these concepts will be put to use in later versions of this paper for the analysis of the theory of human capital and the political economy of higher education.

Panel 2a: Theorizing Populism 1

Chair: Emilia Palonen

1. Galib Bashirov (Florida International University)

Populism and Transformation of Identity: A Discourse Theoretical Approach

In recent years, Ernesto Laclau's post-structuralist conception of populism has received heavy criticism from an emerging scholarly consensus that opted to define populism as a 'thin-centered ideology'. Laclau's discursive approach, the argument goes, makes populism too abstract of a term to be analyzed empirically. Instead, populism is defined as a thin-centered ideology, and therefore as a phenomenon it can be found across the political spectrum from left to right. Nonetheless, precisely because it is 'thin-centered', populism has to attach itself to a 'thick' ideology such as socialism, liberalism, nationalism and others in order to have a coherent meaning. Hence populist socialism, populist right, etc. However, I argue that by forcing populism to attach itself to a 'thick' ideology with a defined set of political positions and concepts, the ideological approach dismisses transformative capacity of populism affecting identities and discourses. In this paper (which fits the topic of 'Populist discourses and discourses about populism'), I aim at demonstrating the ways in which Laclau's post-structuralist approach enables us to recognize and understand transformative capacity of populist discourse. In particular, I want to show how populist discourses transform dominant identities and discourses of political actors who are forced to work through populist antagonism. In this regard, I analyze two recent cases from Turkish politics: the transformation of the HDP from a strictly pro-Kurdish political party toward a radical democratic actor in 2015, and of the CHP from a strictly Kemalist elitist party toward a democratic populist party in 2018. I will demonstrate the ways in which interactions of these parties' discourses with the hegemonic nationalist populist discourse of the ruling AKP, and the antagonisms these interactions created, led to their eventual transformation. The ideological approach cannot explain this dramatic transformation on the part of the opposition parties of the HDP and the CHP, given its structural attachment to thick ideologies. Instead, the post-structuralist approach understands identity as relationally organized and changeable, and allows the political actors to be represented by different clusters of signifiers. This research can shed important light on transformation of political identities operating within hegemonic populist settings that are becoming ever more common in democratic societies.

2. Camila Vergara (Columbia University)

Populism as the Discursive Performance of Emancipation

Within the topic "populist discourses and discourses about populism" this paper proposes to analyze the construction of 'the people's of populism from the post- foundational political philosophy of Jacques Rancière. Even if for Rancière populism is just a "convenient name under which is dissimulated the exacerbated contradiction between popular legitimacy and expert legitimacy," I argue that his aversion to populism is due mainly to the mainstream discourse on populism that he denounces as putting together features that have "no necessary connection" and that "amalgamate the very idea of a democratic people with the image of the dangerous crowd."² I propose to disregard this contingent bias against the concept of populism, and apply Rancière's ideas to the study of populist discourse. I argue we should understand the construction of 'the people' of populism as analogous to the subjectivation process of what Rancière calls the "part of no-part," as the inchoate subject that becomes a full- fledge political actor by, on the one hand recognizing its unequal status and its "no- part" within the order of police, and on the other, by actively disrupting the scene through radically performing equality and taking part in politics. By connecting the radical republican thought inaugurated by Machiavelli's theory of political conflict to the post-foundational analysis of Rancière, I propose to conceive of the conflict between the few and the many, the desire to dominate and to achieve emancipation, the fundamental disagreement between police and politics, as a constitutive feature of 'the people' of populism, an emancipatory subject constructed agonistically against the dominant order, springing from the socio-economic crisis rooted in austerity measures and neoliberal policies. The paper presents first a critical analysis of academic discourses on populism, then an interpretation of Rancière's theory of

disagreement through the radical republican theory of conflict, and finally an application of Rancière's ideas to the analysis of 'the people' of populism as an alternative to the mainstream discourse on populism and its dangers.

3. Seongcheol Kim (WZB Berlin Social Science Center)

...Because the Homeland Cannot Be in Opposition: A Discourse and Hegemony Analysis of Fidesz and Law and Justice (PiS) from Opposition to Power

This paper draws on a Lefortian perspective on democracy to understand populism, following the likes of Ernesto Laclau and Margaret Canovan, as a constitutive moment of democracy: if democracy is sustained by an unbridgeable gap between "the people" and power, and populism is understood as the general operation of constructing an antagonistic divide between "the people" as the constituent subject of democracy and the power constituted in its name, populism always entails activating the "symbolic dispositif" of democracy but can also subvert it with the same gesture if the claim to "the people" is an exclusive one – hence the "symptomatic" quality of populism and its "undecidable" relation to democracy (Arditi). In light of these theoretical reflections, the paper seeks to examine how the coupling of populism and authoritarian closure has occurred in the cases of the two ruling parties most prominently associated with authoritarian "backsliding" in Europe: Fidesz in Hungary and Law and Justice (PiS) in Poland. Drawing on the conceptual instruments of Essex School discourse and hegemony analysis as well as Laclau's theory of populism and institutionalism as the conceptual Other of populism, the paper proposes reading the terms in government of Fidesz (2010-present), PiS I (2005-07), and PiS II (2015-present) as three varieties of authoritarian closure: while both parties are characterized by consistently nationalist discourses combined with marked phases of populism in opposition, the defining characteristic of Fidesz's discourse in power is an authoritarian institutionalism centered on the "System of National Cooperation" (NER) coupled with an illiberal-nationalist populism directed at foreign powers (EU, George Soros) and their alleged agents in domestic civil society; PiS's discourse is strongly populist in its first term, directed against allegedly hidden sources of power within the state in league with liberal forces (the "układ" and "lumpenliberalism"), while shifting toward a heavily moralized (yet hardly populist) antagonistic frontier against political opponents ("total opposition," "the worst sort of Poles") in its second term – indicating a shift from a populist to a non-populist iteration of illiberal nationalism in power. The cases of both parties vividly illustrate how populism functions as an immanent critique of actually existing democracy but can also prepare the ground for authoritarian closure through an exclusive claim to enact popular sovereignty.

"The people has the right to oust the government in a democracy too if it governs against the will of the people, if it endangers the existential interest of the people."

– Viktor Orbán in his 2007 National Day address as Leader of the Opposition

3. Péter Csigó (Obuda University)

Anti-foundationalist discourse theory and left populism: a non-(necessary) correspondence?

In *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy*, Laclau and Mouffe have proposed an anti-foundationalist, anti-essentialist programme that broke, with a brute innovative force, the predominantly deterministic framework of Leftist thinking and politics. HSS is a classic which irreversibly infused the Left with the idea of the autonomy of the political process. In the past two decades, however, Laclau and Mouffe have established their theoretical leadership in the field of leftist-progressive populist resistance against liberal hegemony. This paper aims to show that the two positions, to use a popular poststructuralist trope, are „not in necessary correspondence“. The populist programme (Laclau's „Populist Reason“, Mouffe's „For a Left Populism“) re-essentializes at many points the original antiessentialist program of HSS. The progressive populism that they (among others) advertise falls much closer than it should, if HSS is taken seriously, to three essentialist positions Laclau and Mouffe forcefully rejected in their classic work: economism, top-down vanguardism and „dominant ideology“. Today, the first trope is reflected in the image of populism as a „revolt of the losers of neoliberal economy“, the second is expressed in calls for „seizing the populist moment“ and the third one is expressed in calls for a new, popular egalitarianism.

The paper argues that the above re-essentialization follows almost inevitably from three latently essentialist loose ends in HSS itself, unresolved problems that are detrimental to the further development of the theory. Key constitutive elements of HSS theory bear in themselves latently foundationalist assumptions („essentialist fixities“, „preconstituted positions“, „a priori privileged points“ to use three of HSS’ formulations). First, the notion of (popular or social) „demands“, dispersed resistances and subject positions that turn against the system, are consistently portrayed as pregiven entities/processes that lie out there and wait to be politically articulated into a new popular antagonism. I illustrate the pregiveness of demands with the notion of the „stone“: a concept that Laclau and Mouffe use recurrently (1985:108, 1987: 82, 1990:101) to explain what they mean by the discursively constructed identity of social entities. Second, the figure of the articulating subject, the hegemonic agent is also dependent on a latently essentialist figure: the „intellectual and moral leader“ portrayed by Gramsci. This leader is attributed with „pregiven“ powers to change the world, her position is „externalized“ relative to the demands she articulates. I will illustrate this with HSS’s portrayal of Thatcher and Reagan (and some key neoliberal intellectuals) as masters-agents whose top-down innovation resonates with existing popular demands and creates a new world. Thirdly, HSS proposes an „equivalential-egalitarian logic“ (HSS 168) of articulation and claims that only this type of articulation can be called truly democratic. With this, HSS reduces democracy to a pregiven value set (egalitarianism) and contradicts the broader „anti-foundationalist“ approach to democracy that it promotes at a more abstract level. Among the three above essentialist loose ends, „demand“ latently rehabilitates the rejected notion of class interest, „moral leadership“ rehabilitates the rejected notion of vanguardism, and „equivalential-egalitarian logic“ rehabilitates the notion of dominant ideology rejected in the name of hegemony.

The second part of the paper inquires further on these essentialist loose ends and explains: why they have remained unresolved in HSS, how they are responsible for the relative failure of authors to maintain their antiessentialist position in their populism period, and how they may be left behind by choosing a new ground for continuing the anti-foundationalist endeavour.

HSS’ anti-foundationalist position expresses the Zeitgeist of its birth: the common experience of middle class individualism, cultural fragmentation, economic abundance, the end of the working class, the rise of new social movements, the fall of the welfare state as a trusted agent of progress, the success of neoconservatism-neoliberalism. However, this common experience cannot serve a stable enough defense against essentialism, I will argue. Moreover, this common experience overlaps with the liberal worldview, which is a liability: if the liberal order falls into crisis, its key underlying narratives may well be disqualified, class struggle and class politics may well be rehabilitated, and the radical democratic programme undermined. Thus, when the dysfunctions of the liberal order have grown apparent, Laclau and Mouffe had no other choice than occupying the only available counter-position in the „post-class“ world they themselves have promoted: that of antiliberal populism. This move had to be done even at the price of reessentializing their radical democratic programme.

The paper ends by arguing that the simple rejection of class determinism and the diagnosis of fragmentation do not offer any more a good enough background for the projects of discourse theory and radical democracy. After three decades, the anti-foundationalist turn needs new impetus, and embracing populism can hardly bring us closer to a renewed and enriched understanding of the structural autonomy of democratic politics. Understanding this autonomy is vital today, where there seems to be no alternative, no space to act beyond the options of liberal mainstreams and illiberal authoritarians, the left-populist fringes are weak and powerless.

The final part of the paper presents arguments that three decades after the publication of HSS, it may be high time for a truce with social democracy. A non-class based social democratic programme may be a more genuine continuation of the original anti-foundational turn than the left populist programme. The paper ends by comparing a renewed social democratic programme with the populist programme of the new left, and presents arguments in favour of the former.

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1. Henrik Ahman (Uppsala University)

Religion, Meaning, and Mediation: An Analysis of the Role of Language in Ingmar Bergman's Trilogy of Faith

In the 1960s, Swedish film director Ingmar Bergman made three films that have become known as the Trilogy of faith (Through a glass darkly, Winter light, and The Silence). In general, critics and scholars have emphasized two different themes in these films. Some have focused on religion, and argued that the trilogy is a critical investigation of the conditions for religious faith in modern, secularized societies. Others have emphasized the social aspects of the films and suggested that the trilogy is a study of interpersonal communication and how to build and maintain social relationships. While both of these themes have been thoroughly explored in research, less focus has been given to the interdependence between them and to how Bergman's account of religion is indissolubly entangled with questions about the nature of language. This paper is an attempt to re-read Bergman's Trilogy of faith in order to identify different perspectives on the relationship between religion and language, to explore how these perspectives are entangled with questions about hope, social relations, secularization, and modernity, and to reflect upon possible consequences for discourse theory.

2. Jimena Vazquez (University of Essex)

The Political Lack of the Digital Subject

The current argument regarding the relation between the digital platform (i.e. the exacerbated use of the internet through smartphones and social media) and the political is a positive one: it is easier to connect citizens and governments, information is better accessed and political organization has fewer difficulties. Overall, the insertion of the digital into the political is seen as productive for it has created new spaces that make political participation easier. The aforementioned analysis rests predominantly upon a conception of the digital as a tool which the subject uses to its advantage as it relates with the political. This paper will argue in favour of a more nuanced understanding of the digital, and claim that we have neglected to look at how the digital is using the subject. In other words, we have omitted an analysis of the digital as a discourse, which highlights the subjection process that the subject undergoes in the digital space; such is the core of this paper. The analysis will be constructed by the stressing of three Foucauldian concepts found in the digital: the panoptic, mediation of discourse and biopower. The paper will also emphasize the symbiotic relation we have with the items that allow us to enter the digital (i.e. smartphones) bringing to the fore materiality and commodity fetishism. I will ultimately argue that the Foucauldian characteristics present in the digital, alongside the aspect of materialism, are aspects which in themselves are not politically productive, posing the question: if the characteristics of the digital space are not political, how do we expect the subjects and spaces that arise from it to be any different? Hence, I will conclude that we are, in fact, dealing with politically lacking subjects and spaces. This argument has important implications for political practice, critical theory, democracy and, particularly, calls upon the urgency of a new type of subjectivity.

3. Nicolina Montesano Montessori & Tom Bartlett (HU University of Applied Sciences Utrecht)

Combining CDA and DT and the Emergence of a Theoretical Puzzle

In this paper the authors draw on previous work combining Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) and Discourse Theory (DT) (e.g. Montesano Montessori, 2011; Bartlett, 2012) to suggest a series of questions for further theoretical research provoked by this articulation of perspectives. There is a useful complementarity here in that DT has developed a sophisticated theory of hegemony as a sociodiscursive phenomenon and so helps to interpret the outcome of linguistic analysis but is less explicit in providing the methodological principles and procedures to perform the text-oriented analysis necessary to substantiate the theory. CDA, in contrast, has developed a range of analytical procedures for textual analysis and so helps to pin down abstract

concepts developed in DT, such as empty signifiers. Further complementarities are evident in CDA's construal of agency as a causal factor in change, which DT tends to account for as the result of a dislocation (lack), while DT takes on board a fantasmatic logic and the potentially emotional aspects of discourse, which often remain absent in CDA analyses. Such an articulation of complementarities, however, leaves the researcher with a series of theoretical problems. These often emerge at the level of interpretation, given that DT and CDA were developed at different scales of abstraction with different ontological underlying assumptions: critical realism in CDA vs idealism/radical materialism in DT. This entails different takes on the relationships between discourse and the material and between structure and agency. In this presentation, therefore, we open up discussions on how to further develop this particular avenue of research. These questions include: How can we envision Social Logics in relation to Discourses as sedimented, crystallised and durable visions of the world? What is the potential relation between the political logics of DT and CDA's orders of discourse? How do the fantasmatic logics of DT relate to CDA's concept of ideology? And to what extent can DT accept the layered approach that is inherent to CDA's critical realist ontology?

Panel 2c: Austerity Politics and Beyond

Chair: Jason Glynos

1. Yiannis Mylonas (National Research University, Higher School of Economics, Moscow)

The "Greek Crisis" in European Media: Class, Race and Politics

The presentation will draw on the study of the so-called "Greek crisis" and its public representation in mainstream media. Drawing on Greek, Danish and German press, I developed a critical framework to understand the hegemonic crisis-discourse based on three main analytical pillars: a) post-politics b) cultural racism c) middle class morality. Culturalist and moralist explanations predominate the public discussion over the causes of the crisis, while the economic "solution" of austerity is proclaimed as the only available one. The study draws on critical political economy literature, so as to understand the economic crisis as a capitalist crisis, and to foreground the class dimensions of hegemony, as well as on discourse theory to re-politicize the seemingly apolitical and "common-sense" discursive constructions, based on economic, culturalist and moralistic repertoires. This poses particular epistemological concerns which require explanation. Laclau's discursive ontology of the social downplays the materialist dimension of politics, connected –in the specific study- to the critical political economy analysis of the capitalist crisis. Drawing on discourse theory, recent studies (Dahlberg, 2014; Schou, 2016) have probed towards the analysis of capitalism too as a discursive system, without denying the material dimensions of this system. Likewise, the idea of class is concerned with the social relations connected to capitalist accumulation and production processes, but it is also a position that people can identify with, according to their interests and beliefs. In line with Bourdieu's (2010) work on the symbolic dimensions of class, an analysis of class hegemony can be reintroduced by deploying Laclau's concepts, understanding the contemporary negation of working-class identities, lifestyles and cultures due to the naturalization of middle-upper class values. As Schou (2016: 301) shows, Laclau did not per se object to the overdetermination of identity traits such as ethnicity or race by class. In that sense, the orientalist constructions of Greece, are dimensions of a (bourgeois) class hegemonic intervention in a prolonged capitalist crisis setting, attempting to naturalize austerity regimes.

2. Joash Tapiheru (University of Essex)

Coercion in Agonistic Politics - The Case of Collaborative Governance Framework at Sub-National Level in North-Ayrshire, Scotland

This presentation discusses the on-going dissertation project that focuses on the concept and phenomena of coercion. This research takes coercion as the central topic as a response to the multiplication of coercion claims in the current political discourses worldwide. These coercion claims come along with discourses that project new form of social formations that promise ideal societal life where coercion is absence. In many instances, these discourses have slipped into anti-political, anti-politics, even anti-power stances and, thus, neglect the necessary nature and constitutive role of power in the production and reproduction of social life.

The theoretical and analytical frameworks in this research are based on Laclau and Mouffe's discourse theory and Lacanian conception of subject and Howarth and Glynos' Logic of critical explanation respectively. This research takes the case of collaborative-governance concept and practices, a good example to represent this discourse of pushing power to the edge of the social, at the sub-national level in North Ayrshire County, Scotland. This presentation is comprised of three parts. The first part describes the theoretical framework, through which I specify the concept of coercion in relations to the concepts of 'power' and 'agonistic politics' and how I utilize this framework as analytical tools. This description leads to the second part that describes the methods I utilize for data collection and analysis. The third part will describe the data I have collected up to this point and the plan for further field work and data collection.

3. Konstantinos Roussos (University of Essex)

Collective action in the crisis-ridden European South: moving beyond the neoliberal rationality

Since the beginning of the recent crisis, accounts of the everyday and anti-austerity forms of collective action in the European south are presented in a wide variety of approaches within the field of Social Movement Studies and the theory of the Commons. Undeniably, on the one hand, social movement studies' attention to the external political environment as well as the micro-level of activists and the meso-level of organizational formats offer important insights regarding the context of mobilization and the raise of collective claims. On the other hand, various conceptualizations of the commons setting their locus on the trans-local level, provide a conceptual toolbox to understand bottom-up practices and logics that move beyond the state and market solutions. In this respect, both disciplines highlight loose organizational forms, the construction of alternative communities and collective imaginaries. Nevertheless, by using different explanatory frames, the two literatures seem to remain unconnected and ignore each other. Against this background, a crucial task for this paper, and one that has been largely neglected, is to rethink social movement studies and the theory of the commons in light of one another. We aspire to do so by focusing on the south European context. Moreover, a major flaw that this paper recognizes in both literatures revolves around questions about the character of neoliberalism, its history and conspicuous social, political and subjective impetus. This paper endeavours to develop a synthetic theoretical perspective focusing on three main aspects. First, we provide a brief overview of the empirical context as this has been structured by the implementation of neoliberal adjustment programs and the collective responses to them in this region. Second, we will show how an ontological reading can reveal the constructed and political character of any social objectivity by drawing on post-structuralist discourse theory. Third, our analysis grapples with a set of concepts addressed in both social movement and commons literatures seeking to highlight how a conceptual synthesis on the basis of certain ontological preconditions can sharpen and re-politicize the theorization of contemporary collective action in the everyday level.

4. Arthur Borriello (Université Libre de Bruxelles), **Ricardo Peñafiel** (Université du Québec à Montréal) & **Corinne Gobin** (Université Libre de Bruxelles)

The Austerity Discourses

The French tradition in discourse analysis shares a common interest with the post-structuralist and post-foundationalist approaches in the analysis, deconstruction and critique of the economic discourse. To do so, it has developed its own analytical concepts and tools. Rooted in that intellectual tradition, the objective of this collective research project is to apply these tools to various areas of contemporary austerity discourse. Compared to the 1980s, when austerity was depicted as a necessary evil or as a 'shock therapy', the austerity policies carried out in the wake of the Great Recession are less explicit. The term 'austerity' itself is even often denied: "there is no such thing as austerity", but only "budgetary discipline" or "sound policies". Actually, if the justification of austerity policies is nowadays forced to deny their austere nature, it is precisely due to the presence of counter-discourses claiming the opposite. How then to define the "austerity discourses", given that 'austerity' is denied by those who tend to legitimise it and is recognised only by those who reject it? Our research, the "interdisciplinary analysis of austere economic discourse" aims to answer this question, starting from the assumption of the primacy of 'interdiscours'. Starting from the epistemological and methodological assumption that one cannot presume an "origin" from which the

discursive practices of austerity are produced and diffused, this interdisciplinary research addresses it through a “dialogic construction of a corpus”. Starting from the analysis of a pre-corpus, structured around the utterance of austerity policies or its semantic equivalents (“budgetary discipline”, “fiscal consolidation”, “sound policies”, etc.), this research relies on the dialogic marks that this pre-corpus gives about the “other” producers of austerity discourses in order to build a final corpus taking in account those other voices. Hence, even though the austerity discourses are first and foremost “economic” discourses that entail fiscal and budgetary policies, they also involve social, political, moral and other issues that the analysis should bring to light. The cases studies come from different areas: economic directives of the European Union (C. Gobin), speeches of the governors of the European Central Bank (T. Guilbert and F. Lebaron), speeches of national leaders (A. Borriello), media discourse, genealogy of the neoclassic economic theory and wage negotiations (M. Dufour, A. Laurin-Lamothe and R. Peñafiel), argumentation of the IMF (S. Longuet and J. Marques-Pereira).

Panel 3a: Discourses About Populism

Chair: Jana Goyvaerts

1. Antonis Galanopoulos (Aristotle University of Thessaloniki)

A Discourse-Theoretical Analysis of Anti-Populism in Greece: Towards a Working Definition

Populism reappeared in everyday public discourse in Greece with the first protests against the austerity policies and the structural reforms imposed by consecutive Greek governments. Many scholars of populism have demonstrated the emergence and consolidation during the crisis period in Greece of the populism/anti-populism cleavage. While most studies focus on the populist side of this dichotomy, attempting to define what is populism and who is populist, this paper will focus on the anti-populist side. The emphasis will be on discourses about populism that emerged in Greece and became dominant during the crisis and on the purely negative presentation of populism in the mainstream political discourse through its identification with something abnormal or pathological. The main purpose of this paper is, by studying the discourse about populism in the political, academic and journalistic sphere, to describe the main discursive patterns and the core elements of anti-populism. What exactly is anti-populism beyond a criticism or a rejection of populism? Is there a concrete anti-populism logic or is it simple a reflexive discourse developed after the emergence of a populist discourse? What political implications carry an anti-populist discourse? Finally, the paper will explore the socio-cultural dimension of anti-populism as the latter is usually related to culturalist approaches to politics, moralistic or disciplinary arguments and use of pejorative language. In Greece, for example, anti-populist discourse is connected with a normativist discourse. The paper will build upon the remarks of De Cleen, Glynos and Mondon in their recent co-authored paper and its main theoretical framework will be the one that emanates from the Essex School of Discourse Analysis, supplemented with more recent works, like the work of Ostiguy and the research project "Populismus". Despite the fact that the limited focus of this paper on the Greek case cannot provide a universally applicable definition of anti-populism, the attempt to locate some core elements would be useful on the way to a working definition of anti-populism.

2. Michal Hamo, Zohar Kampf & Naama Weiss-Yaniv (The Hebrew University of Jerusalem)

Populism as a Meta-Discursive Resource for Positioning and Framing in Mediated Political Discourse

The growing scholarly attention to the recent spread of populist ideologies and rhetoric has resulted in 'populism' becoming a salient keyword in contemporary political discourse. While there are diversified academic conceptualizations of the term – focusing on its thematic-ideological, institutional-procedural or discursive-rhetorical aspects – its vernacular and public uses were hardly studied. The present study aims at addressing this lacuna, by exploring the emic meanings and functions of 'populism' in Israeli mediated political discourse. To this end, we combined quantitative analysis of the reference and linguistic context of a sample of 500 occurrences of 'populism', 'populist' and their inflections in major news outlets during 2012-2017; and qualitative analysis of the uses and functions of the keywords in mediated political talk during 2016-2017. Our findings suggests that in addition to the three meanings discussed in academic literature, political actors add another layer to the concept of 'populism': the motivational-intentional. This dimension has not been explicitly addressed as a key defining feature of populism probably because it consists of an overt moral judgment and is based on speculating, inferring and attributing intents to others. Moreover, adopting an interactional perspective on 'Populism' reveals that it is a highly flexible and multi-functional positioning resource: it is used to challenge antagonists and to undermine their challenges and appears in a wide array of modes of positioning: self and other, present and non-present parties and co-present interlocutors. Interestingly, 'populism' is also evoked in two sophisticated self-positioning strategies: to preempt potential accusations of populism and as a 'veiled threat'. Both strategies allow journalists and politicians to benefit of populist rhetoric without being accused of populism. Our findings reveal that 'populism' is a highly quotable keyword, as the very use of the term is deemed newsworthy, and generates expanding cycles of on-going discourse. Its usage may be interpreted as evidence of the self-reflexivity of

contemporary political discourse, as 'populism' is salient not only as an ideological agenda and a rhetorical style, but also an object for a meta-discourse negotiation over communicative norms and practices.

3. Barbra Čapinská (Charles University in Prague)

'Porn on Vltava': Fantasmatic conditions of effectivity of countering populist scandals

This article analyses a 2018 Czech media controversy that became known as 'Porn on Vltava'. It started with accusations by the councillors of publicly funded broadcasting corporation Czech Radio that its established art station *Vltava* aired a pornographic passage from a novel of British homosexual author. Soon after it was fuelled by a hateful statement of one councillor that linked the writer's homosexuality to 'insane Muslims' in Britain to protection of Czech children from vulgarity. At first glance, the affair looked as a typical scandal created to perform a spectacle and grab attention, of which the media and citizens are mere helpless observants. However, the analysis revealed significant contribution of mainstream media, those in hegemonic positions, even citizens both to the escalation of the confrontation and its multiple success. A thorough investigation of all relevant media texts and minutes of the Council of Czech Radio brought to light a hegemonic discursive silence regarding normalization of homosexuality, which, despite being under the surface of the scandal, never got explicitly tackled. As a result, the instigator drew enjoyment from having his fantasmatic narrative of a dissenter oppressed by the hegemonic liberal discourse of tolerance and its protectors being confirmed, stressing at the same time his status as a representative of 'the people'. In conclusion, pondering the intentions behind this populist scandal, the author formulates specific recommendations to mitigate adverse effects of similar future challenges emphasizing dialogue instead of silencing.

Keywords: populist scandal, hegemony, silence, dissent, fantasy, enjoyment, homosexuality

Panel 3b: Populism In Power

Chair: Giorgos Katsambekis

1. Giorgos Venizelos (Scuola Normale Superiore)

Populism(s) in Power: Collective Identities and Social Imaginaries from SYRIZA to Trump

The wake of the Great Recession altered dramatically the map of global politics. The increasing normalisation of populist discourses, both on the Left and the Right, and the consolidation of populist actors, from SYRIZA to Trump, in political institutions raises a critical question: what happens when populists achieve power? Mainstream research maintains that 'populist parties are by nature neither durable nor sustainable parties of government. Their fate is to be integrated into the mainstream, to disappear, or to remain permanently in opposition' (Mény and Sural 2002). In a similar manner, Canovan (1999) argues that populism fails to realise its promises once in power; Mudde (2017) prognosticates the eventual consolidation of populists with the institutions of power, while Müller (2016) contends that they turn authoritarian. Despite the proliferation of respective literature, the analysis of populism in power remains critically problematic as it is founded on an analytical inconsistency: in applying a comparison between the pre- and the in-power phase, current research makes evident an analytical shift from the form of populism to the outcomes produced by the actor under study. Crucially however, effects of 'populists' in power are not necessarily constitutive characteristics of populism; this leads to concept-distortion and association of populism with other phenomena such as authoritarianism and nationalism. This project aims to cure this inconsistency by departing from a very formal and rigorous conceptualisation of populism. I argue that the analytical locus of populism in power must still be found in the minimal definition that classifies a phenomenon as populist: that is the people-centric discourse in juxtaposition to an anti-elitist one. Thus, in order to observe the transformation of populism when in power, one must grasp to what extent and how the framing of the people and the elite changes. By applying a comparison between two heterogeneous populist phenomena in power, SYRIZA and Donald Trump, this research aims to render evident distinct typologies of populism. It operationalises Ernesto Laclau and the Essex School's research program in order to investigate empirically the production of social

imaginaries and collective identities through processes of articulation; and incorporates the role of affect and identification as a key component in the construction of populist identities.

2. He Li (Merrimack College)

The Chinese Discourse on Populism

Populism has been widely discussed in the Chinese intellectual circles in recent years. When one searches for 民粹主义 (populism in Chinese) in Baidu.com (the top search engine in China), one can get over 7 million results. In China, the populists have employed an “us-them” strategy help the ruoshi qunti (“vulnerable” groups in Chinese) focus on a common enemy as the source of their suffering, typically the existing system at home or the global system dominated by the West. Their discourse emphasizes the social and political rights of the poor. Historically, Maoism was considered as a form of populism. The Chinese Communist Party came to power by mobilizing and unifying diverse groups of marginalized and discontented segments of the population. Many liberal scholars in China worry that the spread of populism in recent years could undercut the market reform and the rule of law. My paper explores the following questions: How and under what circumstance did populism as a school of thought reemerge in China? What are the major arguments of the Chinese populists? What are the differences and similarities between populism in China and its counterparts in other parts of the world? What is the populist critique of the rise of inequality generated by the market reform? What kind of a challenge does populism pose to liberalism in today’s global political economy? How does the party leadership use populism to advance its agendas? The paper, which is based on my extensive interviews in China and analysis of the literature in Chinese, will lay the foundation for a chapter on populism in my next book-length manuscript, tentatively entitled “Chinese Political Thought in the Twenty First-Century.”

3. Ewen Speed & Russell Mannion (University of Essex)

Populism as Political Performativity: Implications for Health Policy

Over the past decade, some of the world’s most stable parliamentary democracies have witnessed a revival in populist political discourse, movements and leaders. The election of President Trump in the United States and the United Kingdom’s vote to withdraw from the European Union (Brexit) have both been interpreted as the outcome of a popular/populist backlash against the traditional institutions of liberal democracy and establishment politicians. Issues related to economic inequality and cultural backlash are the dominant tropes that have been used to describe the upswing in populist politics; but do these descriptions adequately explain populism? Drawing on the insights of the influential political theorist Ernesto Laclau, we interpret populism as a performative political act, predicated on drawing lines of equivalence (and difference) between different actors, which is in fact, far more prevalent and pervasive in mainstream politics than these recent more extreme examples suggest. We use this interpretation to frame a discussion of the challenges that the rise of populism poses for the health of populations and the implementation of health policies.

Panel 3c: Discourse And Critical Political Economy

Chair: Pieter Maesele

1. Joscha Wullweber (University of Vienna)

Money, State, Hegemony: A Political Ontology of Money as Master Signifier

The paper deconstructs existing approaches to money in order to develop a specific political understanding of the money-form, its relation to value, to society, and to the state. It argues that no commodity has intrinsic value. Instead, the value of a commodity is the expression of a societal relation and this relation depends on the political, social and economic context. There are only value relations, and these value relations are expressed in a general measure of value – money. Hence, money serves as the equivalent for all commodity values. This general equivalent of value is conceptualized as a master signifier. Based on discourse theory and theories of International Political Economy, the paper argues that it is the master signifier, which not only defines the relation of one commodity value to another, but also constitutes the

commodities by assigning value. It follows that the value of a commodity can only be determined when it can be expressed in money, and that commodity values can only be made comparable when they can be related to this general money form. Furthermore, the transition from the value-form to the money-form is theorized as a hegemonic process. Hence, money ultimately represents a specific political relationship resulting from hegemonic struggles. To conceptualize money as a master signifier makes it possible to understand money not as a neutral measure of abstract value but as a general measure of value relations resulting from political processes and social struggles. This political process will be illustrated by way of the unconventional post-Lehman central bank monetary politics.

2. Anar Koli (Soka University)

The Political Economy of the Green Economy. A Post-Structuralist Discursive Analysis

This study argues for the development of a post-structuralist political economy of the Environment. The study examines the complex discursive articulations between political economy and environment, particularly in the discourse of the green economy. Since the Rio + 20 conference in 2012, the notion green economy, which focuses on low carbon, resource efficiency and social inclusiveness, gained prominence as a so called new paradigm to guide the global environmental discourse. This study employ a discourse analytic framework that sheds light on how the discourse of green economy is institutionalized in the global policy arenas and global politics. This study intends to ask how specialized discourses about the environment are constructed by the neoliberal political economy and environmentalism as disciplinary articulations of knowledge and geo-power. One of the major focuses of this study thus rests with deconstructing the political economic dynamics that evolve around the green economy debate and emergent practice. The discursive framework of this study conceptualizes the power-knowledge relationship in articulation of global environmental discourses, particularly the green economy. Green governmentality, based on the critical project of Michel Foucault's account of how discursively formed disciplines operate inside regimes of truth as systems of governmentality -provides a basis for advancing this critical discursive analysis.

3. Jason Glynos (University of Essex)

Neoliberalism, Competition & Utility: A Critical Political Theory Perspective on the Promise of Robert Frank's Behavioural Economics, and its Limits

Using the work of behavioural economist Robert Frank I show how an appeal to a Darwinian conception of competition as 'positional' can be mobilized to offer a critique of neoliberalism, as well as policy solutions designed to overcome disutilities produced by it. However, I argue that Frank's account of positional competition is grounded on a mechanistic understanding of social processes that underestimates the ambiguity and contestability of the concept of utility. I show that political and ideological processes render the context of positional competition less passive than Frank allows; and that an active strategy of 'reading for difference' can help us better appreciate the fragile and potentially varied character of the competitive process and thus also of the relation between economy, politics, and ideology.

Key Words: Critical Political Theory, Neoliberalism, Competition, Utility, Positional Goods, Frank, Darwin, Behavioural Economics, Ideology

4. Jens Maesse (University of Giessen)

Discursive Marxism: how Marx treats the economy and what discourse studies contribute to it

This contribution seeks to develop some reflections on Marx as an analyst of the economy. I argue for a discursive Marxism that makes the integration of Foucauldian ideas into a Marxian framework possible. Three distinctive but interrelated questions will be addressed. First, what is specific about a Marxian understanding of the economy, especially compared to certain tendencies in economic sociology and political economy? Second, how is a Marxian understanding of the economy reflected by current Marxist studies and how have these studies contributed to a discursive-cultural turn in Marxist and neo-Marxist analysis of the economy? Third, while the discursive-cultural turn became increasingly important, what is the contribution of discourse studies of the economy to a Marxian framework? The paper concludes with the idea of a Discursive Political Economy approach in order to grasp the cultural and institutional complexity of power. To put discursive processes into a Marxian framework, a combined analysis of discursive-imaginary as well as institutionalized-sedimented power positions is required.

5. Laurens van der Steen (UAntwerpen)

Against the Market or Against this Market? A Discourse-Theoretical Analysis of the Communication Practices of Oxfam-World Shops

Since the turn of the century, fair trade-organizations with roots in the countercultural movements of the 1960s have been criticized for encouraging an engagement with fair trade as a 'shopping for a better world'. This article studies how the vindication of the consumer is embedded in more comprehensive changes in the political alliances and ideological orientations of traditional fair trade-organizations. Conceptually, we draw on the mainstreaming-literature, which theorizes the consequences of the increased presence of fair trade-products in new outlets (e.g. supermarkets) for the communication practices of these fair trade-organizations, in addition to the tradition of discourse theory, in particular the distinction between social, political and phantasmatic logics. Using a document analysis of a variety of documents of the Flemish traditional fair trade-organization Oxfam World Shops, we discern two contrasting discourses, a first discourse in the documents that are less recent (before 2009) and a second in more recent documents (after 2009). Socially, the first discourse rejects the consumer from the North as an integral part of a profit-based system that exploits the South, the second defends the consumer as a natural market actor. Politically, the first discourse draws a political boundary between a profit-driven North and a justice-driven South, the second a boundary of consumers and producers versus the multinationals. Phantasmatically, we identify in the first discourse a metapolitical theory of an emerging "countermovement" that will overcome the antagonism between North and South, while the second discourse roots its call for an equal market in the authority of neoclassical economics and an appeal to common sense about market exchange. In our conclusion, we pay special attention to the ideological shift in the discourses of Oxfam-World Shops and how it relates to the contention of a "post-political zeitgeist".

Plenary Panel 2: Theorizing Representation, Hegemony, Populism

Chair: Yannis Stavrakakis

1. Emilia Palonen (University of Helsinki)

Rhetoric-Performative Analysis and Populism

Discourse theory should not only engage with what is being said but what is being done: practices generate meaning perhaps even beyond words, because these are difficult to contest with anything else than practices. This paper introduces rhetoric-performative analysis as a sub-category of discourse theory developing on the Essex School poststructuralist discourse analysis or ideology and discourse analysis (Howarth, Norval and Stavrakakis 1999; Glynos and Howarth 2007). My approach stresses the performative affective dimension: rhetoric-performative discourse analysis (Palonen and Saaremaa 2017; c.f. Laclau 2014; Butler 2015) connects with the post-Gramscian and post-Althusserian theory of hegemony that Laclau and Mouffe (1985) developed. It enables the researcher (or practitioner) to explore both practices and materiality alongside speech and writing – particular practices that also take material forms. The paper is based on (an immanent critique of) Ernesto Laclau's work and particularly his later writings in *the Rhetorical Foundations of Society* from a postfoundational perspective (c.f. Marchart 2008; Marttila 2015) still recognising the potential of limited agency and effects of visual and concrete manifestations of discourse on the discursive field as a contingent field of meaning making and a site of struggle. In this paper, I take the case of populism to explore rhetoric performative analysis. It reveals the relevance of performativity for understanding democracy.

Discursivity is a condition where meaning-making takes place, but the objects of study could be the interesting things that partake in or result from this meaning-making practice. Rhetoric-performativity refers to the contingent meaning-making process: it enables us equally to explore the affect-laden persuasive processes that challenge and maintain hegemonies, as the logics and forms of meaning-making that a tropological approach to rhetoric would unveil. The rhetoric-performative approach affords attention to the ways in which meanings are being made on the micro level, where the relative agency and possibility to make meanings is emphasised.

The paper investigates 1) moves from the speech and writing to the emergence of populist articulation in the visual and concrete manifestations, 2) practices of frontier making in the intellectual space, and finally 3) the way in which we can better understand the populist logic of articulation with democracy vs. demography.

2. Lasse Thomassen (Queen Mary University of London)

Laclau as a Theorist of Representation: Populism and Universality

While best known today for his theory of populism, Ernesto Laclau also has a distinctive theory of representation, which is developed in *On Populist Reason* (2005) in particular. Like other scholars working within the so-called constructivist turn in contemporary work on representation, Laclau takes representation to be a general category and not just limited to formal political institutions, and he takes representation to be performative in that it also brings about what is represented. This paper examines the implications of this conceptualization of representation for two concepts central to Laclau's later work and to contemporary politics: populism and universality. Laclau takes populism to be exemplary of his conception of representation because populism is a discourse that brings into being what it claims to represent: the people. Although less explicit in Laclau's writings, populism is also the exemplary form of the articulation of universality; both populism and universality are articulated through what he calls chains of equivalence and empty signifiers. This is important for current debates about populism and the crisis of democratic institutions. The aim here

is not to engage in a detailed analysis of these debates. Rather, the aim is to illustrate how our conceptions of representation inform how we think about populism. I show this in the context of a reading of Jan-Werner Müller's influential critique of populism.

3. Giorgos Katsambekis (Loughborough University)

Are 'the People' of Populism Necessarily Homogeneous, Virtuous and Pure? A Critique of Mainstream Approaches from a Discursive Standpoint

There is no doubt that at the heart of every populist project is the construction of a collective subject that in most cases is named as 'the people.' It is also common ground that this very process of constructing 'the people' can be performed in various and different ways, depending on the ideological orientation of a given populist actor and the context within which they emerge. Hence, 'the people' can be identified with the national community in populist discourses of the right and radical right, or they can be defined in socio-economic terms, as the poor, the 'underdog' in populist discourses of the left or radical left. While in both cases 'the people' most often appears as the democratic sovereign. Despite the fact that most scholars recognise the numerous possibilities and variations in constructing 'the people,' approaches operating within the now hegemonic 'ideational' model (advocated by scholars like Cas Mudde and Kirk Hawkins), insist in understanding every populist conception of 'the people' as primarily moralistic and necessarily homogenising. Not only does the people have to be a homogenous and monolithic collective subject, it also has to be defined as 'pure' and 'virtuous,' as morally superior. However, this assumption can be challenged both on the theoretical and on the empirical level. This paper thus presents a critique of approaches that understand populism as the construction of a homogenous and morally pure people against an evil and corrupt elite. It shows that it is often a sense of unity (rather than homogeneity) that defines the construction of 'the people;' a people could also be a pluralist collective actor primarily defined in political or socio-economic terms (not moral ones). What is more, there are populist leaders (especially in Latin America) that have openly accepted that 'the people' can be corrupt and even prone to delinquency, if that's necessary for survival in an unjust society, portraying an image that is far from purity and virtue. Something that clearly challenges the argument about moral purity/superiority. In this context, the case will be made that the 'ideational' approach might be more vulnerable to analytical and normative bias, as it uncritically stresses the alleged illiberal and anti-pluralistic orientation of populism that present a danger to the established liberal democracies of today's world. Concluding, we will argue that a discursive approach based on 'minimal criteria' can avoid such pitfalls, as it offers the framework in which to assess the construction of popular subjectivity and its antagonistic signification in an analytically unbiased and methodologically rigorous way.

4. Allan Dreyer Hansen & Marianne Høi Liisberg (Roskilde University)

We and the Terrorist Other: On the Construction of the French and Danish National Political 'we' - An analysis of the public Debates in France and Denmark after the Terror Attacks of January and February 2015

A central claim of Laclau and Mouffe's discourse theory (Laclau & Mouffe 1985) is the need of any identity to delimit itself from a constitutive Other. When it comes to the articulation of a national political identity – a People – explicit attempts of such articulations are relatively rare: in day to day politics, agonistic relations tend to dominate the political landscape. However, the public debates following the terrorist attacks in France (January 2015) and Denmark (February 2015) several political leaders addressed this very question in explicit antagonistic terms: one of the central issues of these debates were exactly that of the identification of a particular national People in relation to the Other.

The two events took place within few days, and triggered equivalent, yet different, articulations in the two countries. Apart from that France and Denmark are interesting cases since they belong to different tradition of state- and nationhood, the republican, universalist and the cultural, respectively. Whereas Mouffe has argued liberal democracies are based on allegiance to the principles of freedom and equality for all (and the left should seek their radicalisation, rather than replacement), in any actual articulation of basic principles, we do not only see specific interpretations, we (of course) also find their articulations with other principles and logics.

Through an analysis of a selection of articulations from the two debates, we compare and discuss the way the two debates construct the national We through a chain of equivalence of a series of central signifiers linking constitutive principles and logics to the national political communities, i.e. the People. Intimately linked with the question of We is the question of the Other. A central, but as of yet, undeveloped challenge in the Laclau and Mouffe tradition, is how we can analyse the 'We' by way of the exclusions of the Other. Finally, normatively, our analysis provides elements for a democratic criticism of the construction of the national in France and Denmark.

– PARALLEL SESSION 4 –

Panel 4a: Populism And Nationalism 1

Chair: Benjamin De Cleen

1. Marie E. Tuley (University of Sussex)

Migrant Integration Narratives and the Making of National Identity

This paper analyses how sub-state nationalist parties re-define national identity myths using (gendered) narratives about migrant integration. Concretely, the paper looks at how the Scottish National Party (SNP) and the Nieuwe Vlaamse Alliance (NV-A) re-define a Scottish or Flemish identity in reaction to the so-called European 'refugee crisis'. The paper draws on post-structural discourse theory to analyse the integration policies of both Scotland and Flanders, which have been adopted under the (ministerial) leadership of the two nationalist parties. The analysis shows that national identity myths are reimagined and redefined in relation to (gendered) discourse on non-EU migrants to both Flanders and Scotland, with a reaffirmation of gendered roles for both nationals and immigrants. Concretely, it demonstrates how the debates surrounding the rights and responsibilities of non-EU migrants become enmeshed with the re-making of a Scottish or Flemish sub-state national identity vis-a-vis their respective 'other' England or Wallonia.

2. Jakub Eberle (Institute of International Relations, Prague)

People, Nation, State: Discourse Theory and Relations between Populism, Nationalism and Foreign Policy

This paper will provide a discourse-theoretical exploration into the conceptual relations between foreign policy, populism and nationalism. Theoretically oriented works linking the literatures on foreign policy and populism are extremely scarce. This is rather perplexing, since as soon as we adopt a discourse-theoretical perspective, which is well established within both bodies of work, notable similarities start to emerge. I will explore these links by approaching foreign policy and populism through the lens of their 'discursive architectonics' (Stavrakakis 2017). From this point of view, foreign policy and populism can be seen as having strikingly similar effects on discourse: they divide it along a single antagonistic boundary, drawing a clear-cut line between 'us' and 'them' and constructing mutually opposed binary identities on its both sides. I further follow De Cleen and Stavrakakis in suggesting that such formal (ontological) conceptualisations should be injected with a minimum amount of (ontical) content. This minimum content is defined by the different collective subjects that are constructed and reproduced: the state in foreign policy and the people-as-underdog in populism. This is also where nationalism, constructed around the nation as its collective subject, enters the equation as a third concept, one that is closely related, yet also different from the other two. The argument proceeds in two parts. I first discuss the definitional problems, gradually elaborating working definitions of foreign policy, populism and nationalism that enable us to capture the articulations, relations and resonances between these phenomena in particular empirical contexts. Second, based on these definitions, I outline and discuss ideal-typical examples of the most important interactions between foreign policy on the one hand, and populism and/or nationalism on the other hand. The result of this exercise is a typology that also offers certain preliminary ideas about how populism and nationalism impact on foreign policy.

3. Maria Avraamidou (University of Cyprus)

Representations of Europe in Greek-Cypriot Newspapers at Times of Massive Migration Movements

4. Jacopo Custodi (Scuola Normale Superiore)

Podemos and the Imagined Nation: The construction of Spain in the political discourse of Pablo Iglesias

In many European countries, nationality is increasingly acquiring a conflictual political value, most often fuelled by right-wing populist forces. Yet, in Spain national identity has recently made a comeback also on the left side of the political spectrum, driven by the new leftist political party Podemos. Its leaders have been laying claim to patriotism in their speeches, attempting to detach Spanish identity and national pride from their link with conservative ideologies. This article represents one of the very few analyses of Podemos' nationalist discourse. It outlines a discourse-theoretical conceptualization of nationalism that works as a bedrock for the research, and it carries out an analysis of speeches given by Podemos Secretary-General Pablo Iglesias. The findings confirm that claims to be true Spanish patriots and pride for being a Spaniard are indeed recurrent elements in Iglesias' rhetoric. However, the meanings that patriotism assumes in his speeches are substantially different than the ones typical of right-wing discourses. As findings show, 'Spain' is constructed by Iglesias through an inclusive and egalitarian discourse that covers three symbolic dimensions: people's history; cultural and national pluralism; and welfare policies and solidarity. Through a reimagining of Spain according to leftist values, Iglesias tries to provide fixity and legitimacy to the political alternative that Podemos aims at representing.

Keywords: Podemos, Pablo Iglesias, Spain, Nationalism, Patriotism, Radical Left, Populism

Panel 4b: Visuality 1

Chair: Ilija Tomanic-Trivundza

1. Fani Giannousi (Aristotle University of Thessaloniki)

Shades of Shame. Public Discourses in the Greek Crisis

Since the 2008 global financial crisis, Greece has been spiralling down a tunnel of economic and socio-political crisis. For the past decade massive riots, consecutive elections, a debilitating public debt, crumbling social structures and endless rescue plans devised by international bodies, constitute what has been named the Greek crisis. During the crisis several kind of discourses, both domestic and foreign, have emerged addressing the country's ailments seeking to explain them to an already dazed and confused society and possibly cure it.

Shaming either by states or non-government organizations or international bodies has emerged as an increasingly prominent strategy for achieving compliance with rules and norms in world politics. This presentation will attempt not only to explore the nature and impact of shaming strategies and affective mechanisms deployed during the Greek crisis but also their role as an instrument of collective identification in an environment of multiple overlapping crisis.

2. Paul Sambre (KULeuven)

Cose Nostre: The Multimodal Reconstruction of Positive Social Change in Anti-Mafia Documentaries

This talk describes the discursive expression of civil resistance against organized crime in Italy based on two episodes of Cose Nostre (Rai 2016), a series of Italian video documentaries about different mafias in Calabria, Campania and Sicily. The episodes, both in talk and images, display the stories of civil anti-mafia

resistance, through personal in situ testimonials by activists, private entrepreneurs (Gaetano Saffioti) and public managers (Antonio Candela), as they undergo psychological intimidation and physical violence by mobsters and yet keep on defying the law of silence exerted by the mafia syndicates in order to improve social conditions in their region (Ambrosoli 2016). This work in progress takes further the potential of a multimodal approach to (Balirano et al. 2017) documentaries : (1) documentaries unmask new types of economic criminal activities not associated traditionally with the traditional or heroic mafia, such as (public) procurement in the construction or health sector; (2) they make discursively explicit the critical choices, risks and crucial moments in the activists' no mafia, often at the expense to their own safety as well as (3) the social connections their change attitude produced with local workers, citizens, relatives and other individuals, and do so in the very local and public settings where crimes were perpetrated and positive social change occurs (Sambre 2017). As a result, critical discourse theories may need a fundamental revisal of the notion of critique not limited to negative deconstruction, but including a positive take on social reconstruction, progress and visual display of local materiality, offers of interaction and public space in which individuals' refusal of resilience sometimes makes a positive change.

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Sambre, Paul. 2017. The Multimodal Representation of Italian Anti-Mafia Discourse: Foregrounding Civil Resistance and Interlocution in Two Global English Video Reportages. *I-LanD Journal*, 2017(1),

3. Tim Griebel (Friedrich-Alexander-Universität Erlangen-Nürnberg)

To Have or to Be? A Corpus-Assisted Multimodal Critical Realist Discourse Analysis of Austerity in the United Kingdom

Starting from the meta-theoretical considerations of Critical Realism in general and Cultural Political Economy (CPE) in particular, this contribution develops a corpus-assisted multimodal critical realist discourse analysis that will be used to offer an explanatory critique of austerity in the United Kingdom. Following earlier conversations between critical realist and poststructuralist arguments, this critique will be developed through a dialogue with poststructuralist approaches that pursue similar goals. By doing so, CPE will be enriched by thoughts about multimodality, subjectivation processes and methodological concerns. In respect to multimodality, CPE is well equipped to study the interdependencies between semiotic systems and material social structures in a post-foundationalist way, but it is usually used to analyse textual material only. This is surprising as the central role of imaginaries already cries for a consideration of images. By transferring CPE's central ideas to visual materials, this contribution will offer an explanatory critique of both texts and images. In respect to subjectivation processes, CPE is combined with the materialist social psychology of Erich Fromm. From the perspective of CPE, the forces behind discourses are grounded in economic structures. Fromm's insights about different modes existence advance this relationship as they offer a link between economic structures and discourses by explaining why some discourses provide not only material but also psychological gains and why people, therefore, get attached to certain economic structures. Of central importance here is the difference between the having mode of existence that is based on competition, antagonism as well as fear and the being mode of existence that is based on solidarity and love. The latter mode shall be enhanced by critical social science. In respect to methodological reflections, these theoretical goals will be pursued in conversation with quantitative and qualitative analyses of 271 multimodal articles about austerity from the Guardian and the Daily Telegraph. Semiotic regularities will be detected with the help of keyword and collocation analyses (for textual material) and with an image type analysis (for visual material). These regularities will then be analyzed qualitatively in order to offer an explanatory critique in the service of human emancipation.

1. Lut Lams (KULeuven)

Dislocation in the Western Discourse of Representative Democracy - a Conceptual Exploration of the Signifier 'Democracy' in the Opinion Pages of De Volkskrant

Judging from recent titles of academic publications and symposia, the primacy or hegemony of liberal democracy or representative democracy as a governance model is increasingly being questioned. While some authors dismiss the idea of democratic recession as a myth, others find empirical evidence that the past decade has been a period of at least incipient decline in democracy (Plattner, 2015). Since democracy, as a catchword of contemporary political discourse, 'easily resonates in people's minds' (Schmitter & Karl, 1991:75), one may wonder whether people understand the distinctive components or subscribe to the procedural norms that made democracy possible. Also, as democracies come in various types, there are diverse practices with varying effects. Hence the need to clarify meanings and unravel conceptual ambiguity. From a discourse-theoretical perspective, one can raise the question whether the term 'democracy' has become an 'empty signifier' (Laclau and Mouffe, 1985) in its struggle against the non-democratic other. Dislocatory events from within democratic systems, such as populist electoral discourse, the Brexit referendum, the victory of the US populist presidential candidate Donald Trump, or the antagonist challenger from the outside in the form of (semi-)authoritarian regimes, have sparked multiple debates on the meanings and role of representative democracy. A good arena to look for this "changing horizon of meanings, conventions and practices" (Norval, 1996:7) is the quality press in an open media system, where its role in informing the public, providing a forum for a plurality of voices, and fulfilling a watchdog function to hold politicians accountable serves to facilitate communication of democracy. The current paper thus aims to assess the meaning and usage of the signifier 'democracy' through an analysis of arguments in the op-ed articles of a selection of Dutch quality newspapers. The period of investigation ranges from 1 December 2015, just before the Ukraine referendum in the Netherlands to 1 December 2017, a month after the lengthy Dutch cabinet formation. The study utilizes a mixed-method approach of corpus-linguistics and discourse analysis, exploring the collocational profile of the key term 'democracy' and mapping which concepts the notion is most often associated with. Besides analysing the semantics of these concepts, the study adds a qualitative analysis of argumentation patterns and conceptualizations of the key word to uncover the meanings underlying the use of 'democracy'. Findings show a marked variability in the arguments about the state and desirability of democracy, thus revealing the undecidedness of this symbolic subject. In its vulnerability to recent dislocatory events, its contingency is exposed, giving rise to debates in the op-ed pages about alternative forms of governance systems or changes in the democratic system itself.

2. Thomás Zicman De Barros (Sciences Po Paris)

Are Theorists of Populism Cynical?

According to critics such as Slavoj Žižek (2006) and Stefan Rummens (2009), among others, Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe would be cynical discourse theorists. On the one hand, Laclau and Mouffe adopt a fruitful post-structuralist and post-foundationalist approach towards discourse to study populism. This framework implies the acknowledgement of the "impossibility of society", accepting the radical contingency of our sedimented social practices. For them, discourses play a constitutive role in shaping reality, and populist discourses constitute the "people" as a political subject. On the other hand, however, Laclau and Mouffe articulate a normative analysis of populism and defend it as a possible strategy to advance a progressive and inclusive agenda. This involves affectively investing a signifier – such as the name of a leader – through the idealization of a fully reconciled society, producing endless metonymic substitutions of fantasmatic promises. Therefore, for their critics, instead of stressing radical contingency, Laclau and Mouffe's political project would deny it, reproducing the logic of fantasy. There would be a gap between how they talk about populism in theory and the populist practices they support – they would be openly misleading the public. The aim of the paper is to critically review Laclau and Mouffe's work to show how their critics' accounts are at least partially unfair and how, despite some undeniable ambiguity, their defense of populism implies

a paradoxical reference to the impossibility of society. The paper will try to demonstrate how, since its first formulation, the concept of empty signifier can be understood not as a matter of constructing fantasies and illusions, but rather representing the impossibility of society as such and accepting it as a positive value. This possible reading would become clearer in the triple debate between Ernesto Laclau, Slavoj Žižek and Judith Butler, and in the following incorporation of the psychoanalytical notion of sublimation to think about populism.

3. Craig Love (University of Essex)

Re-evaluating the Populist Puzzle: Intellectuals and Loaded Signifiers

Populism is a riddle wrapped within a puzzle and locked inside an enigma. Within the field of political theory, populism is a highly contested concept with little consensus regarding its content, purposes and effects. Therefore what is required in order to get to grips the populist phenomenon currently sweeping the world is to furnish the theoretical means which allow us to grasp how different political/populist projects construct different discourses by connecting the building blocks of identities and grievances in particular ways (De Cleen & Stavrakakis, 2017). I contend that the 'Loaded signifier' is a meticulously constructed object of identification; a signifier that has been carefully and specifically identified for cultivating a specific identity suited to the needs of a given populist discourse. The introduction of the 'Loaded Signifier' is not intended to displace or reject Laclau's contributions regarding empty or floating signifiers; rather its purpose is to further the understandings that can be drawn from their logic and application. The loaded signifier thus seeks to address the articulatory processes through which a signifier may become empty or floating within populist discourses.

Panel 5a: Populism And Nationalism 2

Chair: Benjamin De Cleen

1. Michaelangelo Anastasiou (University of Victoria)

The Spatiotemporality of Nationalist Populism

The relationship between nationalism and populism remains enigmatic. While progress has been made in analytically disentangling the two phenomena, the question that is left unanswered is why populist movements typically take on a nationalistic form or come to impinge on nationalistic institutional arrangements. An application of Laclau's theory of space and time can yield fruitful answers. For Laclau, "space" is to be understood as any sort of material and ideal configuration, such as institutional arrangements, that obeys the principle of repetition. These configurations, by ontological fiat, operate within a total symbolic structure that comes to be sedimented in the form of power relations—in other words, a hegemonic bloc. Conversely, "time" is to be understood as the disruption of repetitive modes of conduct, i.e. social change—a possibility that outpours from the social's constitutive indeterminacy. Following this logic, nationalism is to be understood as being principally situated at the level of spatiality, in the form of sedimented hegemonic arrangements. Populism, on the other hand, is to be understood as inhering to the temporality of being. As a form of political antagonism, it potentially disrupts spatialized practices. However, political acts, invariably and by necessity, hinge on spatialized arrangements, since any practice is executed within a total symbolic structure—a (national) hegemonic bloc at this historical juncture. Thus, populist mobilization is to be understood as an on-going dialectic between extant (nationalistic) hegemonic arrangements (i.e. spatialization) and the immanent "disruption" of those arrangements (i.e. temporality) through novel political configurations. In this sense, nationalist populism can be understood as a form of populism whose mode of antagonism rhetorically "activates" extant national(ist) hegemonic arrangements. The execution of a nationalist populist logic therefore entails an articulated metonymical/metaphoric extension between spatialized nationalist arrangements and the temporality of being, that is, political potential.

Keywords: Populism, nationalism, nation-state, hegemony, space, time

2. Liv Sunnercrantz (Lund University)

Populism Without Nationalism, or, Learning from the Enemy

Critically revisiting the trend of associating populism with nationalism, I draw on examples from my PhD thesis to show how neoliberal radicals may also exhibit populist characteristics. In the thesis I applied a discourse-theoretical methodology to the Swedish privatisation debate during the crisis years of 1988-1993. The populist appeal of the Swedish neoliberals furthermore explains part of their success and contributes to a better understanding of how the Swedish social-democratic hegemony was toppled. My analysis is informed by scholars suggesting that the central theme in populist discourse is the construction and signification of an antagonistic divide between 'the people' and 'the elite'. By using a post-foundationalist approach to analyse past events, it is possible to untangle 'populist' from 'nationalist' discourses and be able to show how other radical contenders to mainstream politics have used the very same populist logic. The Swedish neoliberalists, for instance, moved swiftly from the margin to the mainstream precisely by positioning themselves as an anti-establishment alternative to the powers that be.

3. Ryan Flitcroft (University of Essex)

Identifying Populist Discourses: Evaluating the Populist Logics of the UK Independence Party

This paper will shed light on the possibility of utilising some basic quantitative coding methods in order to help guide the qualitative search for populist elements within a given discourse. I contend that the concept of 'articulation' is not only useful but pivotal in identifying populist practices and logics within a given discourse. I utilise a method of quantitative 'counting' of particular populist indicators in order to provide a

broad surface-level reading of 10 years of speech data given by ex-UKIP leader Nigel Farage at their bi-annual conferences. This reading is then refined through an analysis of the ways in which certain signifiers, themes and patterns are articulated across the speeches, paying special attention to the way that chains of equivalence are constructed and utilised by the speaker. Through the deployment of Ernesto Laclau's theoretical schema on populism, the various speeches can then be attributed different levels or 'intensities' of populism, which provide us with an in-depth picture as to the extent to which the party can be described as populist across the 10-year timeframe.

4. Daniel Smith (Cambridge University)

Anti-Globalism as Hegemony?: A Discourse-Theoretical Analysis of Anti-Globalism and the Contemporary Populist Right

This paper will consider the degree to which hegemony theory, as articulated by Laclau, Mouffe, and others of the Essex School, allows us to understand the emerging ideological phenomenon of anti-globalism. Anti-globalism stands as one of the most distinctive and novel features of contemporary right-wing populist discourse: Trump, Le Pen, Orban, Farage, and others all speak of their opposition to globalism and globalist elites. I intend to argue that Laclau's theory of populism (and its basis in post-structuralist discourse theory) allows for a deeper understanding of anti-globalism's significance in the contemporary political landscape than other competing approaches to the study and analysis of ideology and discourse. For comparative and expository purposes, the paper will begin with a brief morphological analysis of anti-globalism. I will then consider the limits of such an approach and argue that a purely morphological account of anti-globalism, while useful both in deconstructing anti-globalist ideology into constituent concepts and in demonstrating the morphological affinity between conservative and anti-globalist ideology, is insufficient for understanding the relationship between anti-globalism and populism. Overcoming mere conceptual analysis, the Laclauian lens offers a means of theorizing anti-globalism as a counter-hegemonic populist project which offers a central antagonism (globalist v. patriot), a constitutive outside (globalist elites and ideology) to define itself against, and a series of popular-democratic demands (end free trade, strengthen borders, return sovereignty to nation-states) around which a chain of equivalence can be constructed. Moreover, De Cleen's recent discourse-theoretical work on the 'logic' of conservatism offers a novel way of understanding the relationship between anti-globalism and conservatism, which had previously escaped precise definition and conceptualization. While conceiving of anti-globalism as a counter-hegemonic project in this sense allows for a sophisticated understanding of the complex relationship between anti-globalist ideology, national(ist) identity and the rise of right-wing populism, it raises theoretical questions about Laclau's theoretical edifice. Can we consider the claims of anti-globalists to be popular-democratic, when the ideas and values underpinning (right-wing) anti-globalist discourse are contrary to those endorsed in Laclau and Mouffe's conception of 'radical democracy'? And can, or should, we divorce the Laclauian theories of ideology, hegemony, and populism from their post-Marxist origins in order to unchain the analytic potential inherent in these theoretical tools from an (alleged) normative commitment to a vaguely defined egalitarianism? I intend to conclude my paper with some tentative answers to these urgent theoretical questions, with the aim of stimulating debate and clarifying my own position on the matter in subsequent discussions.

Panel 5b: Visuality 2

Chair: Ilija Tomanic-Trivundza

1. Efharis Mascha (Hellenic Open University)

Visual manifestations of the European discourse on solidarity of refugees and migrants

The paper aims to examine different visual manifestations of the European discourse on solidarity during the immigration crisis (2015-2017). International Organisations such as UN (United Nations), IOM (International Organisation for Migration) and EASO (European Asylum Support Office) following a set of European policies reflect solidarity in practice among the EU states. Policy makers apart from implementing and drafting different sets of policies in moments of emergency due to the immense migrant flow, have also accompanied

these practices with visual representations in the form of posters and photos. These visual representations feature the organizations themselves and the discourse on solidarity towards the migrants. Hence, examining this material we can have a clear picture of the identity of the organizations but also, and most importantly, how they visualize their understanding of solidarity discourse. The paper is unfolded in the following way. Firstly, the theoretical framework of solidarity and the European Union's perspective of solidarity are discussed in detail. Then, the focus is moved towards a theoretical discussion of emotion, the role of affect and the role these Organizations play in the creation of European policies on migration. Thirdly, the analysis of the material, photos, posters and a leaflet will be discussed in conjunction to the aforementioned theoretical framework of solidarity and affect.

Keywords: solidarity, emotion, affect, refugee policy, Greek Asylum Service

2. Mariano Dagatti (University of Buenos Aires)

Political Images and a Politics of the Images: A Rhetorical study of the Political Image in hypermedia societies

Modern political life is full of images. We are made to watch images of mass events, of political leaders or their challengers, of smiling or threatening faces or glances, of candidates debating. Images of images, of colorful campaign posters, of audiovisual advertisements or straight propaganda. Politics is not limited to images, but there are neither politics nor politicians without images. Contemporary processes of hipermediatization have emphasized the spectacular face of politics to confusing it with politics itself, and have made us feel confuse about it in the way. It is usually pointed out that the rise of the spectacle is parallel to a decline in vocal oratory. This paper aims to investigate a fundamental domain of Politics and its inter-penetration with media regimes: the realm of a Political Aesthetics. I limit my analysis to a corpus of images disseminated by different media of the most important political formations that were in office in XXI Century Argentina, that of the so called 'Kirchnerismo' (2003-2015), a left-wing populist front, and that of the right-wing umbrella reformist coalition of current president Mauricio Macri, called 'Cambiamos' (2015-cont.). I aim to describe which are their dominant aesthetical resources and devices, their ways of organizing every mise en scène, their ways of imagining politics (eminently, the relationship of the political sphere with citizenship). My postulate is that it is necessary to abandon the 'verbocentrism' of the analysis when studying discursive hegemony. The study of political aesthetics, that is, of the politics of the images that regulate the political images, allows us to shed light on the modes of operation of a discursive hegemony in a given field, in this case the political one. The main objective of the analysis of the multiplicity of discourses that give images to contemporary politics is to investigate the global regulatory system that organizes them. After all, as J.-J. Courtine put it, our task as discourse analysts or rhetoricians is to bet on undoing the complex devices of words, images and sounds from which unprecedented forms of political domination are exercised.

3. Ilija Tomanic Trivundza & Andreja Vezovnik (University of Ljubljana)

Symbolic News Photography as Empty Signifier: Depicting Migration on Rtv.slo.si

This paper offers a theoretical reflection on the use of "symbolic photographs" in news reporting as mechanisms that both facilitate the move beyond factual reporting and challenge the role of visual communication in news discourse. Symbolic photographs are (press) photographs which are used for news reporting but are not directly related to the reported event and can originate either in register of press photography or in other registers, such as stock photography or travel photography. They are thus different from more "traditional" photojournalistic visual tropes (e.g. pieta) which rely on more direct connection between the occurring event and the singularity of depicted moment, rather than on the visual representation of the (stereo)typical image.

The two main issues we aim to address are: (1) the relation between the event and the photojournalistic "iteration" of the event through photographic representations of migration events, and (2) the question how symbolic photographs of migrants on boats operate as empty signifiers invested with specific media and political narratives. The argument is structured around a series of repetitive images depicting migrants on boats published on news site of Slovene public broadcaster (rtvslo.si) between September 2015 and March

2016. The use of these images – which admittedly is not limited to the period of “2015-2016 refugee crisis” or this particular news outlet – is illustrative of the dual nature of symbolic photographs, which regardless of their unfixed signification to a great extent limit possible interpretation of events within the various discourses which they are made to articulate.

4. Gianlouis Hernandez (Università della Svizzera italiana)

International students: a crisis of representation? A discourse theoretical analysis of diversity representation in Swiss higher education institutions

This paper argues that the visibility of particular bodies is part of an assemblage that legitimizes and produces the modern/colonial imaginary in international student migration/mobility. As a horizon that “structures a field of intelligibility” (Laclau 1990, p. 64), the modern/colonial imaginary is also a “generative matrix of power that materially and symbolically orders” relations of meaning according to the Western values of modernity (Stein and Andreotti 2017, p. 175). Similarly, visibility, or “that narrative that concentrates on the formation of a coherent and intelligible picture of modernity” (Mirzoeff, 2006, p. 66) is the means by which some material objects, practices, and, importantly, bodies are rendered visible, while others are made unseeable (Rose, 2016, p. 191)

Attending to the interplay between material and discursive elements of social phenomena is an integral aspect of discourse theoretical analysis (Carpentier and de Cleen, 2007; Carpentier 2017). However, the visual aspect of perceiving material differences has long been under theorized by discourse scholars, particularly in reference to the differences between the material flesh of bodies (Spillers, 1987). Utilizing visibility as a framework for the racial imaginary (Rankine and Loffreda, 2015) offers a fruitful basis of inquiry for the analysis of the material and discursive articulation of racial and ethnic identities (Drzewiecka and Steyn, 2012).

This paper, as part of my dissertation, examines the role of articulations of diverse elements that constitute an array of subject positions within the field of international student migration/mobility. The focus of the analysis is representation on websites of international students at Swiss universities, with a particular focus on images as “particularly persuasive producers of specific visions of social difference such as hierarchies of class, ethnicity, race or sexuality” (Trivundza, 2013, p. 231). Adopting a poststructuralist discourse approach, I interrogate how representations of race, ethnicity, and nationality are articulated in online discourse. Finally, the paper identifies and discusses seven specific subject positions within the modern/colonial global imaginary based on the articulations of and between race, ethnicity, and nationality. Carpentier, Nico. "The Discursive-Material Knot." *Cyprus in Conflict and Community Media Participation*, New York: Peter Lang (2017).

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1. Emilio E Feijóo (University of Essex)

The Tropological 'Foundations' of Hegemony: (Dis)locating Catachresis in Laclau's Political Ontology

For post-structuralist discourse theorists, the rhetorical aspects of hegemony theory remain underdeveloped. This paper makes three proposals for further research into the rhetorical dimensions of hegemony theory: i) create a research programme under the name 'tropological discourse analysis' that uses the implicit logics of tropes to capture the discursive construction of political identities, subjects, and hegemonic projects. ii) propose that catachresis (a dominant trope in the overall rhetorical architectonic of hegemony theory) comes in three modalities. This nuanced distinction makes a contribution to Laclau's use of catachresis in that it distinguishes the ontical and ontological uses employed by Laclau and post-structuralist discourse theorists. And finally, iii) develop the conceptual arsenal of hegemony theory into a tropological topology that organizes all the operative concepts into a heuristic model that keenly analyzes all the differentiated layers that structure the terrain of hegemony theory. In an interview, Laclau emphasized that the three models of hegemony theory developed over the last three decades represent a deepening of the original insights of HSS but at a higher level of abstraction. Already in HSS, tropes such as metaphor, metonymy and synecdoche take on a more ontological character but their implicit logics remained underdeveloped. In his later work, Laclau develops a theory of signification that turns towards the ontological implications of rhetorical theory as a consequence of the centrality attributed to discourse, representation, naming, among others. For Laclau, the logics implicit in tropes are mobilized to develop a theory of signification that highlights the nuances of political representation. By focusing on the rhetorical dimension of hegemony theory, the 'radical constructivist' nature of society becomes more explicit and useful in the creation of new hegemonic projects.

2. Luk Van Langenhove (Vrije Universiteit Brussel)

The Ontological Dimensions of Discourse

This paper explores why and how discourse is the essence of the social world. Based upon the work of Rom Hare, John Searle and others, it presents a coherent social ontology of the social world that can advance Social Theory in such a way that it better grasps the linkages between psychological and social phenomena. This theory advances the idea that the social realm consists out of three analytical levels: the primary social reality of world-wide and species long conversations and speech acts, the secondary social reality of constructions that includes artefacts, persons and institutions and fields of influence that emerge out of speech acts, and a tertiary social reality in which the primary and secondary social reality is constantly reconstructed through social icons and stories. These realities are not 'levels', there is only one social realm: that of discourse. The secondary reality are the products of that realm, the tertiary reality are the representations used by persons to make sense of the social world they live in.

As such, any social sciences endeavor to understand the social phenomena should involve discourse analysis. It will be argued that positioning theory (Harré and Van Langenhove, 1999; Van Langenhove, 2017) allows to link empirical discourse analysis to this alternative social ontology.

3. Tomas Marttila (Vienna University of Economics and Business)

Relational Discourse Analysis

Post-foundational discourse analysis (PDA) emanating from the Essex School in Discourse Analysis (Ernesto Laclau et al) constitutes one possible way to understand and analyze the discursive structuration of the social world. PDA deciphers discourses as relational configurations of elements producing significations and therefore naturally conjuncts with the wider scientific field of relational social inquiry. Somewhat surprisingly, researchers affiliated with PDA have made hardly any attempts to establish a dialogue with resembling approaches to relational social inquiry. This article establishes the missing dialogue between PDA and the

field of relational social inquiry and discusses how the insights gained from that dialogue capacitate discourse analysts to better define and study discourses as contingent ensembles of relations. While the first part elucidates the ontological “family resemblances” shared by PDA and relational social inquiry in general, and Actor Network Theory (ANT) and Social Network Analysis (SNA) in more particular, the second part elucidates PDA’s particular conception of the relational structuration of the social world. The concluding third part shows that, beside ANT and SNA, Foucauldian dispositif and governmentality research also offer PDA useful instructions for a further conceptualization and empirical analysis of discursive regimes structuring social life.

4. Ferruh Yilmaz (Tulane University)

Analyzing Hegemony as a Stable Construction: Cultural Ontologies of the Social

My presentation offers a theoretical solution to the problem of analyzing stable constructions of social structures in discourse. I first discuss epistemological and methodological issues with Critical Discourse Analysis and Discursive Psychology and combine insights from these two approaches with insight from Discourse Theory as formulated by Laclau and Mouffe (2001). The main argument in this presentation is that despite the fact that language use is full of inconsistencies and contradictions and thus does not provide an inventory of stable ideological patterns, it is possible to analyze stable constructions of the social world without assuming the existence of macro-structures (i.e. ideologies or mental representations) as stabilizing background for discursive practices. I demonstrate that stability is not so much a function of ideologies, representations and articulation of “chains of equivalences” but depends on how the ontological structure of society is imagined in the background. The particular argument is that the new hegemonic articulation of the social division that shifted the ontological imagination along cultural lines limits the positions that can be taken in relation to identity categories regardless of the values one attributes to the categories. The presentation is based on a detailed analysis of an interview around immigration in Europe.