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Post-hegemonic Challenges: Discourse, Representation
and the Revenge(s) of the Real

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Introduction

On numerous occasions Ernesto Laclau has pointed out that what stands at the basis of a discourse theory orientation is a critique of *immediacy*. For example, in a short programmatic statement on the philosophical roots of discourse theory, Laclau argues that:

[discourse theory] has its roots in the three main philosophical developments with which the XXth Century started. In the three cases there is an initial illusion of immediacy, of a direct access to the things as they are in themselves. These three illusions were the referent, the phenomenon and the sign, ... Now, at some point this initial illusion of immediacy dissolves in the three currents –from this point of view their history is remarkably parallel– and they have to open the way to one or other form of discourse theory. This means that discursive mediations cease to be merely derivative and become constitutive (Laclau 2005).

Such a shift from an illusion of immediacy to a stress on discursive mediation and its constitutive role in the formation of social and political reality is also visible with respect to the political traditions against which post-Marxism defines itself, namely the radical tradition in the West and its Marxist kernel. Indeed, the deconstruction of the Marxist tradition in *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy* is primarily a deconstruction of the claim to have direct access and control of the totality of the real and its predictable historical (eschatological) development (Laclau & Mouffe 1985). Not surprisingly then, most critical resistance encountered by discourse theory has

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emanated from the defenders of such immediacy. Criticism of discourse theory has often taken the form of a *return* of immediacy – a *revenge* of the real.

This return can take a variety of forms; in fact, as we shall see, it has indeed taken remarkably different forms. This chapter will mainly focus on arguments dismissing Laclau and Mouffe’s theory of hegemony and discourse on biopolitical grounds; in particular it will critically engage with the relevant work of Richard Day, Scott Lash and Jon Beasley-Murray. This body of research highlights –in one or the other way– the importance of biopolitical, non-hegemonic mechanisms of domination, in which power is, supposedly, not discursively mediated, but operates directly and exclusively on a biopolitical, affective real. This criticism will first be situated within a long tradition of criticisms of discourse theory premised on some notion of the real, initially of the materialist real of the economy.

Critique of immediacy, revenge of the real: The beginnings

We are all –I guess– familiar with the traditional type of this critique, evident in the rejection of the discursive orientation by Norman Geras and his comrades in the 1980s. Speaking as the defender of an objective real, Geras had accused ‘relativist’ discourse theory of disputing the most ‘elementary facts of existence’, the material reality conditioning all discourse (Howarth 2000: 113). In Geras’s view, together with denying the primacy of the economy, the objectivity of class interests and the validity of socialism, Laclau and Mouffe are guilty of a further, more foundational, denial: ‘And even, finally: that society and history can be rendered intelligible by some unifying principle or principles, or within a unified framework, of explanation and knowledge’ (Geras 1987: 44). To deny the existence and superiority of such a

unifying principle leads, in this view, to anti-materialist idealism (Geras 1987: 59). Discourse theory, ‘a perspective in which the spheres of politics and ideology have become superordinate, in which, more generally, the “symbolic” has expanded to be all-encompassing’ (Geras 1987: 65) is clearly guilty of such ‘shamefaced idealism’ (Geras 1987: 65).¹

But what could this unifying principle be? It is here that Geras’s reliance on a pre-discursive, extra-theoretical immediacy is fully revealed:

However frequently these may be denied, either in high philosophical argument or in popular assertion, a pre-discursive reality and an extra-theoretical objectivity form the irreplaceable basis of all rational enquiry, as well as the condition of meaningful communication across and between differing viewpoints. This foundation once removed, one simply slides into a bottomless, relativist gloom, in which opposed discourses or paradigms are left with no common reference point, uselessly trading blows (Geras 1987: 67).

Albeit dismissive as well as insulting at an *ad hominem* level (see, especially, Geras 1987: 41-2), this criticism allowed Laclau and Mouffe to articulate in more detail the epistemological and ontological aspects of their framework in their reply, also published in *New Left Review*. The gist of their argument is that, far from being idealist, a stress on discursive representation is perfectly compatible with a realist position accepting the existence of objects independent of thought (Laclau & Mouffe 1987: 87). However, the crucial difference is that *existence*, the entity of an object (ens), does not determine *being* (esse), which is ‘historical and changing’: ‘the “truth”, factual or otherwise, about the being of objects is constituted within a theoretical and discursive context, and the idea of a truth outside all context is simply nonsensical’ (Laclau & Mouffe 1987: 87). Any immediate access to the truth of

¹ Geras was not alone in advancing such an argument. At around the same period, Ellen Meiksins Wood had been arguing that ‘the decisive detachment of politics from class was achieved by making ideology and “discourse” -themselves conceived as autonomous from class- the principal historical determinants’ (Wood 1986: 47).

objects is here mediated by discursive representation.²

And what happens when we pass from the idealist/realist to the idealist/materialist opposition? Here, Laclau and Mouffe point out that idealism entails a reduction of the real to the concept: ‘the affirmation of the rationality of the real or, in the terms of ancient philosophy, the affirmation that the reality of an object—as distinct from its existence—is form’ (Laclau & Mouffe 1987: 88). As a result, however, the strict opposition between idealism and materialism is destabilized and thus Hegel is vindicated in his treatment of materialism as an imperfect and crude type of idealism (Laclau & Mouffe 1987: 91). In Laclau and Mouffe’s view, a move away from idealism cannot result from an exclusive focus on the existence of the object, because nothing socially and politically significant follows from this existence alone: ‘Such a move must, rather, be founded on a systematic weakening of form, which consists in showing the historical, contingent and constructed character of the being of objects; and in showing that this depends on the reinsertion of that being in the ensemble of relational conditions which constitute the life of a society as a whole’ (Laclau & Mouffe 1987: 91), that is to say, within the meaningful yet unstable and precarious *materiality of the signifier*. Hence the ontological centrality attributed to discourse and representation and the political centrality attributed to hegemony.

Geras subsequently returns to the issue in one more text published in the *New Left Review*, his obsession with the real already inscribed in the subtitle: ‘Ex-Marxism Without Substance: Being A *Real* Reply to Laclau and Mouffe’ (Geras 1988, emphasis added). Surprisingly, however, he seems annoyed by the supposedly disproportionate attention Laclau and Mouffe have paid to two pages of his original critique devoted ‘to a certain matter of ontology: whether objects exist external to

² Statements like that have formed the basis of what subsequently came to be known as social constructionism; one should not fail to notice the strong Foucauldian influence visible in the choice of the word ‘truth’ instead of other available options such as reality, etc.

thought'. 'After some introductory remarks, Laclau and Mouffe begin by devoting fully 40 per cent of their response to those two pages', he remarks (Geras 1988: 55). Surprise is bound to be followed by astonishment when, a few lines down, he seems to be conceding the point in the most dramatic rhetorical way: 'I will not be discussing: a) Whether Laclau and Mouffe are philosophical "idealists" in the true meaning. If they want not to be that, who am I to quibble over a word?' (Geras 1988: 55). This is, simply put, how the first attack on Laclau and Mouffe's theorization of discourse, representation and hegemony from the point of view of an unmediated real perspective ends. But this was only the beginning...

Challenging the hegemony of hegemony

Today, a similar rejection is discernible in a completely different area of research. This time, together with the emphasis on discourse and representation, criticism targets the status of the category of 'hegemony' itself. Furthermore, it does not emanate from the past, defending a 'betrayed' (Marxist) orthodoxy, but claims to express the present and the future, the urgent immediacy of biopolitics and affectivity, very much in vogue recently in critical social and political theory. The huge interest in the work of classical philosophers like Spinoza and contemporary theorists such as Michel Foucault and Giorgio Agamben, Gilles Deleuze and Antonio Negri, amply demonstrates this point. Now, this orientation has often coincided with a rejection of hegemony as a suitable theoretical and analytical matrix for understanding contemporary politics; what is disputed here is, simply put, 'the hegemony of hegemony' (Day 2005).

The work of Richard Day has been instrumental in setting the stage for this type of arguments. Day objects to ‘politics as usual’, that is to say to limiting political struggle and radical activism within a play between hegemony and counter-hegemony:

The obvious answer [on how to fight capitalist globalization] is to try to establish a counter-hegemony, to shift the historical balance back, as much as possible, in favour of the oppressed... To argue in this way, however, is to remain within the logic of neoliberalism; it is to accept what I call the *hegemony of hegemony*. By this I mean to refer to the assumption that effective social change can only be achieved simultaneously and *en masse*, across an entire national or supranational space (Day 2005: 8).

The basis of this objection is predominantly political and the evidence he summons in support of it comes from new types of activism visible in what he calls ‘the Newest Social Movements’: what interests him about contemporary radical activism is that certain radical groups are breaking out of this ‘trap by operating *non-hegemonically* rather than *counter-hegemonically*’. They do seek radical change, but ‘not through taking or influencing state power’, thus challenging the logic of hegemony ‘at its very core’ (Day 2005: 8).

In Day’s discussion of hegemony, Laclau and Mouffe’s work occupies a central position. Although sympathetic to certain aspects of their project, Day has great difficulty in coming to terms with the idea, central to Laclau and Mouffe’s argument, that effective challenges to a given hegemonic regime presuppose the formation of a new discursive articulation through the linking of a series of frustrated demands in a ‘chain of equivalences’, a horizon of representation partially fixing these distinct moments around an antagonistic ideal, a nodal point challenging the current hegemony. The problem here is precisely that equivalential chains are constructed, hegemonic blocs are built and social transformation is achieved through processes of *representation* (Day 2005: 75). Representation implies a politics based on the

symbolic formulation of demands and that involves our enslavement within a logic of desire that will never allow a radical break of true social re-foundation: ‘pursuing a politics of demand in the context of neoliberal globalization is rather like pursuing the latest in automobiles, clothing or refrigerator styles. One feels a lack, which one hopes to fill, only to discover that the yearning for fulfillment has increased rather than decreased’ (Day 2005: 83).

Day is very careful not to exaggerate our ability to break out of this system completely and he is clearly not claiming that such a break has already been achieved:³ ‘Breaking out of this trap is not at all a simple or easy process, although some political subjects have begun to do it – hesitantly, partially, implicitly’ (Day 2005: 84). How else could it be, given that such a break presupposes a radical shift away from the politics of demand and the ethics of desire towards a politics of the act supported by an ethics of the real? (Day 2005: 88-9). The former ‘can change the content of structures of domination and exploitation, but cannot change their form’ (Day 2005: 88), while the latter, as conceptualized partially by Žižek (Day 2005: 89-90) and by many currents within the anarchist and post-anarchist tradition as well as within post-structuralism and beyond (Deleuze, Agamben, etc.), would permit a radical break with hegemony thinking and a conceptualization of effective resistance in terms of a series of autonomous struggles denying their equivalential articulation into a universalized counter-hegemonic representation, prioritizing non-integrated physical intervention in the here and now and entering into non-representational, non-centralized relations of *affinity* with each other.

The dawn of post-hegemony

³ Although by associating the logic of desire predominantly with capitalism, by ignoring its pre-capitalist genealogy, he does paint the chances of this break in somewhat rosier colors.

Day will challenge Laclau and Mouffe's discursive/representational theorization of hegemony, but will stop short of issuing its death certificate. This will happen a couple of years later, with the emergence within our theoretical terrain of the category of 'post-hegemony'. In fact, one can discern at least two distinct variants of this argument articulated in the relevant literature.⁴ The first type of argument proceeds through a certain contextualization of hegemony and concludes that, although hegemony has deservedly been crucial in understanding cultural and political struggles for a certain period, this is not the case anymore – this is the argument first made by Scott Lash (Lash 2007). In contrast to such a contextualization, the second type advances a frontal and total as well as diachronic rejection – this is the argument put forward by Jon Beasley-Murray (Beasley-Murray 2010). Let us examine them one by one.

In a 2007 article in *Theory, Culture and Society*, Scott Lash has thus argued that we have entered an era of 'post-hegemony' (Lash 2007). We seem to have then a rejection of the relevance of discourse theory, as developed primarily by Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe, in a world which is supposed to have entered a new period in power relations:

From the beginnings of cultural studies in the 1970s, 'hegemony' has been perhaps *the* pivotal concept in this still emerging discipline. ... In what follows I do not want to argue that hegemony is a flawed concept. I do not want indeed to argue at all against the concept of hegemony... What I want to argue instead is that it has had great truth-value for a particular epoch. I want to argue that that epoch is now beginning to draw to a close. I want to suggest that power now, instead, is largely post-hegemonic (Lash 2007: 55).

⁴ I am saying 'at least' because I will not be dealing with all the uses of the term available, but only with the ones dealing in detail with Laclau and Mouffe's work.

This is how Scott Lash starts his *obituary* of the discursive theory of hegemony, that is to say of theories focusing on domination partly through consent, achieved by ideological/discursive means (Lash 2007: 55). It is of course a friendly obituary. If it constitutes a rejection it is a respectful rejection, unlike the first wave of violent rejection of discourse theory by people like Norman Geras in the 1980s and early 1990s. Indeed, Lash does pay tribute to the explanatory power of hegemony and to the central place of Laclau and Mouffe in the hegemonic paradigm studying power ‘largely as operating semiotically, through discourse’ (Lash 2007: 58, 68).

Even if, however, the rhetorical atmosphere is very different, the actual argument is not that distant from a Geras-type critique. In both cases,⁵ the central idea is that, by focusing on the level of representation, discourse theory misses a more important and foundational level, that of the *real*. This is one more form of the attempted *revenge of the real* mentioned earlier. Many years have passed, of course, which means that while for first wave critics, this real ignored by discourse theory was primarily understood in the classical materialist terms of social class and the primary role of the economy, for Lash this is no longer the case:

The real, unlike the symbolic or the imaginary, escapes the order of representation altogether. We – i.e. those who think that power is largely post-hegemonic – agree with Zizek (see Butler, Laclau and Zizek, 2000). We agree part way. We think that both domination and resistance in the post-hegemonic order takes place through the real. ... The real ... is the unutterable. It is ontological. Power in the post-hegemonic order is becoming ontological. ... Post-hegemonic power and cultural studies is less a question of cognitive judgements and more a question of being (Lash 2007: 56).

In order to define this real, Lash leaves the Lacanian jargon initially utilized and turns first to Agamben and then, and more extensively, to Hardt and Negri’s rendering and elaboration of Spinoza. As a result, the real of post-hegemonic power tends to

⁵ As was the case also with Day.

overlap with Spinoza's *potentia*: 'force, energy, potential' (Lash 2007: 59). Post-hegemonic politics revolves around this primordial neo-vitalist real: 'the motive force, the unfolding, the becoming of the thing-itself' (Lash 2007: 59). What is at stake is not engineering consent or securing a consensus, not even normalization; now, 'power enters into us and constitutes us from the inside' (Lash 2007: 61), 'it grasps us in our very being' (Lash 2007: 75). We are thus firmly located within the terrain of *immanence* (Lash 2007: 66), of an all-encompassing 'virtual, generative force' (Lash 2007: 71).

To complexify our typology a bit, in the same issue of *Theory, Culture and Society*, Nicholas Thoburn advances an argument that seems to bridge the two waves of rejection. He performs that by reinterpreting the economy in terms borrowed by the study of biopolitics and affectivity. Thus, while discourse theory and post-Marxism are criticized –again, fortunately, without the invective of a Geras-like anathema– for not paying the required attention to the ways in which capitalist dynamics and imperatives pervade the social, these dynamics are visualized through 'an expanded understanding of production, a production considered as the patterning –or mobilization, arrangement, and distribution– of rich social, technical, economic and affective relations' (Thoburn 2007: 79-80). Central in this picture is the problematic of affect as a sub-signifying or even pre-signifying mode of somatic activation, elaborated here through a reference to Brian Massumi's work:

Affect is an experience of intensity –of joy, fear, love, sorrow, pity, pride, anger– that changes the state of a body, that has concrete effects on individual and social practice. ... affect is a key dimension of experience ... and one that most clearly marks the movement of cultural studies away from a conception of culture as signifying practice (Thoburn 2007: 84).

Clearly, this direction is indicative of what Patricia Clough has called ‘the affective turn’, a reorientation of critical theory towards ‘a dynamism immanent to bodily matter’ (Clough 2008: 1).⁶

Post-hegemony unbound

Only three years after Lash’s article on post-hegemony, a book-length treatise of the issue was published by Jon Beasley-Murray. Beasley-Murray acknowledges the affinities of his project to that of Lash, highlighting, at the same time, the one crucial difference: ‘Lash’s conception of posthegemony is purely temporal: he argues merely that power is now posthegemonic. My aim is a more comprehensive critique of the idea of hegemony’ (Beasley-Murray 2010: xi). Beasley-Murray’s critique of hegemony and discourse shares with Day the idea that hegemony theory –and the terrains that rely on it, cultural studies and civil society– are politically suspect, because they, in effect, mimic the power structures they set out to understand (Beasley-Murray 2010: xvi).⁷ But he also shares with Lash a distinct appreciation of the somatic real of power relations: ‘power works directly on bodies’ (Beasley-Murray 2010: xiii). Once more, this is clearly not the real of the economy stressed by

⁶ A similar (friendly) critique of Laclau based on a quite interesting hybrid linking the (affective) real with a new materialist understanding of the economy and class can be found in the work of Madra and Ozsalcuk and others working around JK Gibson-Graham; see, for example, Madra and Ozsalcuk 2005.

⁷ Ironically, this is the same criticism very often addressed to Hardt and Negri, a major inspiration behind post-hegemonic arguments:

Although they themselves do no more than replicate the very structures of global capitalism, these same forms are presumed to be also subversive or revolutionary, to open lines of flight, or ... to express the power of the multitude... Thus, far from involving any opposition to any oppressive power or even a course of action remotely deviating from the practices fostered by capitalism, the empowerment of the multitude, Hardt and Negri tell us, simply requires the recognition of the power that the multitude has always already had without knowing it. ... If they had the brains, those in power themselves would write books like the *Empire* (Kordela 2007: 2-4).

Geras: ‘The basic flaw in hegemony theory is not its underestimation of the economy; it is that it substitutes culture for state, ideological representations for institutions, discourse for habit’ (Beasley-Murray 2010: 60). And yet, although he outmanoeuvres all his predecessors in advancing a distinct and more holistic argument, Beasley-Murray also summarizes a defense of the real present in all of them: ‘Laclau conflates here apparatuses and discourses, presenting an expanded concept of discourse that fails to distinguish between signifying and asignifying elements’ (Beasley-Murray 2010: 60).

Beasley-Murray’s attack on hegemony theory and on Laclau’s work in particular is total: ‘There is no hegemony and never has been. ... we have always lived in posthegemonic times: social order was never in fact secured through ideology. ... Social order is secured through habit and affect, ... Social change, too, is achieved through habit and affect’ (Beasley-Murray 2010: ix-x).⁸ Already from the preface of the book it becomes clear that the aim is not only to dismiss hegemony theory altogether, but to replace it with something else, something that is programmatically posited as beyond representation and discourse. This ‘post-hegemony theory’ is articulated around three central concepts: habit, affect and the multitude. Thus, by stressing the role of habit, instead of opinion, Beasley-Murray, sketches a field beyond both consent and coercion; his focus is on the workings of the *habitus*: ‘a collective embodied feeling for the rules of the social game that is activated and reproduced beneath consciousness’. By stressing affect, he refers to an impersonal and embodied flow of intensities beyond rationality and consent. He concludes the conceptual triad supporting his theory of post-hegemony by replacing ‘the people’ with the multitude (Beasley-Murray 2010: x). Most important, all three

⁸ Interestingly enough, both Lash and Beasley-Murray seem at times unaware of the important distinction Laclau draws between ideology and discourse throughout his work.

concepts refer to immanent processes and are, thus, located beyond representation (Beasley-Murray 2010: xi).

Understandably, Laclau's theory is a prime target here since his 'version of hegemony theory is the most fully developed and influential for cultural studies' (Beasley-Murray 2010: 15). So much so that the vocabulary dominating cultural studies 'soon spoke of power in terms of hegemony and counterhegemony, resistance, transgression, and subversion' (Beasley-Murray 2010: 19). However, what is of particular interest is that, apart from criticizing aspects of discourse theory, Beasley-Murray discusses in detail populist politics and, in fact, focuses on the phenomenon of Peronism in Argentina in a bid to show that even in this paradigmatic case, which functioned as a major source of inspiration for Laclau's work (an Argentinian himself), hegemony theory is found wanting and a post-hegemonic approach can easily triumph.

In Beasley-Murray's reading, the main problem is, once more, Laclau's reliance on representation: 'the stakes of the political game become representational legitimacy rather than the satisfaction of demands' (Beasley-Murray 2010: 56);⁹ this is portrayed as particularly problematic to the extent that it signals an indirect acceptance of power structures: Laclau 'takes the state for granted, and never interrogates its power' (Beasley-Murray 2010: 55). At an abstract level the conclusion is clear – and sounds rather familiar: 'Ultimately, Laclau's project is undermined by

⁹ What Beasley-Murray misses altogether here is the constitutive involvement of the symbolic register in the formation of demands themselves, which destabilises the dichotomy he draws. The Lacanian distinction between need, demand and desire is particularly relevant at this point. In Lacan, the level of need and of its unmediated –instinctual– satisfaction is initially shared by all, human and non-human, animal life. Humans, however, by virtue of the symbolic character of society, are forced –and/or privileged– to lose such unmediated relation to need and its satisfaction. Every need has to be articulated in language, in a demand to the Other (initially, the mother), who is invested with the power to satisfy or frustrate them. Thus, on top of expressing biological need, demand also functions as the vehicle through which the subject is implicated in a relation of representational dependence to the Other, whose recognition, approval, and love acquire, as a result, an important value. Not only is this second dimension, that of demand (for unconditional love), ultimately impossible to satisfy, but exactly because it contaminates the first one, human needing is irreversibly derailed. See Stavrakakis 2007: 46.

his portrayal of society as an all-encompassing discursive web, the meaning of whose terms (because they are always meaningful, representational) is dependent upon the various struggles and articulations that constitute it' (Beasley-Murray 2010: 54). At the level of empirical analysis, not only is Laclau's take very limited, but 'Laclau's analysis of Peronism might direct renewed attention to the ways in which social order is in fact secured beneath discourse, and in the teeth of the manifest failure of hegemonic projects. We need to address this inarticulacy of power, its direct application on bodies through habit and affect' (Beasley-Murray 2010: 59).

Deconstructing post-hegemonic discourse

How is one supposed to assess the validity of all these theoretico-political projects? With all their stress on the real, they can only be treated as discourses, as representations and arguments to be interpreted, deconstructed and also appreciated.¹⁰ In Day's case, this is relatively easy, since he avoids the maximalistic claims present in Lash and Beasley-Murray. His carefully constructed discourse argues always from the margins, from a minority point of view (Day 2005: 203, 206). To the extent that his critique of the discursive theory of hegemony is empirically-grounded it will have to be primarily judged on the basis of its heuristic validity. Day is indeed very good when drawing our attention to the horizontal axis of social and political activity present in his 'Newest Social Movements', a type of activity not adequately discussed within hegemonic approaches.¹¹ However, my main objection would be that, in most cases, a multitude of autonomous struggles have historically become effective only

¹⁰ In addition, the articulation of such arguments involves a small-scale hegemonic project aiming at securing the consent of prospective readers. How can this be made consistent with the post-hegemonic content of the arguments themselves is something that remains rather obscure.

¹¹ I have, myself, highlighted the value of some of these 'experiments'; see, for example, Stavrakakis 2007: 281.

when articulated within a common counter-hegemonic horizon of representation – this was what happened with the Greek *Aganaktismenoi* movement and also what seems to be happening with the Arab Spring; it was also the Argentinian experience after the 2001 crisis. Thus, instead of erecting a wall between horizontalism and hegemonic processes, would'nt it be more productive to study their irreducible interpenetration, the opportunities and the challenges it creates?

In their relevant analysis of Spanish *Indignados* and Greek *Aganaktismenoi*, Prentoulis and Thomassen cogently substantiate the hypothesis that, contrary to their rhetorical aims, these movements have not managed to avoid the ‘tensions between horizontality and verticality, between autonomy and hegemony, or between moving beyond representation and accepting representational structures’ (Prentoulis & Thomassen 2012: 2). In fact, they conclude by highlighting two areas of particular tension, one related to the question of political representation, while the other related to the practice of autonomy and horizontality within the two movements:

In the first case, even for those who argue against representation as such, representation appears, if not desirable, then at least unavoidable. The question then becomes one of how to institute better forms of representation, rather than how to get rid of representation. In the second case, the space of the movement within which the equal voices of the protesters can be heard is itself a representational space (defined by relations among assemblies and groups, behavioural norms, and so on) (Prentoulis & Thomassen 2012: 12).

What we have in these cases is the gradual sublimation of the emerging multitude into ‘a people’ predominantly represented by one or the other (left-wing) populist party: SYRIZA in the contemporary Greek situation, Kirchner’s Peronists in Argentina. The only way to avoid acknowledging this dialectic is by focusing exclusively on the first step of the choreography involved (the multitudinous emergence of heterogeneous demands and activities) and closing our eyes on the second (their inscription within a field of populist representation with hegemonic

appeal). This is, for example, Arditi's move in an article entitled 'Post-hegemony'. Thus, while Arditi documents in detail how the 'Asambleas de Barrio, groups of piqueteros, the takeovers of factories, the unemployed and the middle classes coalesced in 2001', within the context of the Argentinian crisis, he can present them as 'the multitude in action' only by avoiding any reference whatsoever to their subsequent (partial) hegemonization by the Kirchners (Arditi 2007: 212). In fact, curiously enough, the name 'Kirchner' is not, even once, mentioned in his article. Only the first part of the story is recounted, what, given what followed, could be legitimately presented as a 'pre-populist' or 'pre-hegemonic' stage. This is not to say that all such struggles are bound, sooner or later, to acquire a hegemonic form; usually, however, when that fails to happen –as in the case of the Occupy movement in the US– this is likely to set limits to the future prospects of the movement in question.

Of course, Day also puts forward a set of theoretical arguments but as most of these are also shared by Lash and Beasley-Murray, we can now turn to their own theorizations and address them altogether. Ironically, some aspects of these most recent and very elaborate forms of rejecting discourse theory and its conceptualization of hegemony betray a rather over-simplifying reasoning and have to be criticized accordingly. To start with, Lash's schema seems to rest on a periodization which posits two distinct periods –one in which discursive mediation is constitutive of power relations and one in which focus is on the biopolitical real and post-hegemony– and the unilinear passage from the first to the second. At least two major problems arise here:

1. First of all, the structure of this narrative is a quasi-eschatological structure. Lash's passage from hegemony to post-hegemony can only be described as a new philosophy of history, which progresses in the direction of a lifting of symbolic mediation and a concomitant increase of immediacy. Perhaps it is not mere coincidence that Giorgio Agamben's *Homo Sacer* is also relying on a similar philosophy of history, on seeing the biopolitical paradigm as an irreversible stream that encompasses more and more aspects of social and political life (Agamben 1998). There is no room for contingency and the political in this picture (Kalyvas 2005) and it is really puzzling why both Agamben and Lash have not utilized Foucault's genealogy in order to avoid this obsolete historical schema.

2. Second and most important, Day's, Lash's and Thoburn's argument presupposes a set of dichotomies which are largely conceptualized in binary, mutually exclusive and oppositional terms: inside/outside, before/after, hegemony/post-hegemony, representation/real, meaning/being, horizontality/verticality, discourse/affect. Obviously we need to be very skeptical against both this strategy of introducing such hierarchical dualisms –most of them already deconstructed within the Derridian and Lacanian milieus– and the conceptual and analytical implications of most of them. My view is that Day, Lash and Thoburn fail to realize that dimensions, which can – and should– be conceptually distinguished, can simultaneously function within a historical dialectics of *mutual engagement* and *co-constitution*. For example, we can, of course, distinguish between the instinctual and representational/social aspect of the drive in psychoanalysis; however, the drive cannot be concretely constituted without both these dimensions: the symbolic and the real.

Such co-constitution radically destabilizes their binarism. For example, given that the body is the site of a continuous dialectic between symbolic and real –there is a real body and a body marked with signifiers– it is difficult to see how one can assign the body only to the real side of the equation. Indeed, recent research within the field of discourse theory and psychoanalysis has amply demonstrated that salient and long-term hegemonic identifications (nationalism, populism) require both a successful symbolic articulation and its affective, libidinal investment, the mobilization of *jouissance*.¹² As a result, the issue is not to radically isolate the eras of hegemony and post-hegemony, to present discourse and affect, symbolic and real, as mutually exclusive dimensions; it is to explore, in every historical conjuncture, the different and multiple ways in which these interact to co-constitute subjects, objects and socio-political orders. At any rate, the least one has to acknowledge from a post-hegemonic point of view –and here Arditi is bold enough to accept this conclusion– is that ‘it would be myopic and ideological—in the pejorative sense of this word—to propose that either there is hegemony or exodus, multitude and radical civil disobedience’ (Arditi 2007: 221).

The failure to acknowledge the constitutive interpenetration between hegemony and so-called post-hegemony, the symbolic and the real, representation and its beyond, is also evident and acquires its most sweeping instantiation in Beasley-Murray’s argument. Hence, it is not by coincidence that this particular post-hegemonic critique of discourse theory is led to the most bizarre self-contradictions, something pointed out even by reviewers with no association with the Essex School:

the polemic ferocity of much of the writing seems to warp the argument and lead to various distortions of history and theory. All this can be seen

¹² See, in this respect, Laclau 2005; Stavrakakis 2007, especially ch. 5.

at its most exaggerated in the first chapter, where the inaugural gesture of dismissing hegemony requires both rhetorical sleight of hand and conceptual violence that suggest an anxiety of unconvincedness. The treatment of Laclau is deeply ungenerous and contrasts with a much kinder critique of Negri's arguably far more dangerous onto-theology (Derbyshire 2011).

Indeed, already from the beginning, one encounters discursive moments that internally destabilize the argument; thus, whereas Beasley-Murray's axial thesis is to denounce hegemony theory as a form of rationalism, as antipolitics, in favour of a non-representational theory of post-hegemony in which 'state institutions emerge from immanent processes and secure their legitimacy well below consciousness, with no need of words' (Beasley-Murray 2010: 67), yet, somehow, 'the illusion of transcendence and sovereignty' is, nevertheless, produced (Beasley-Murray 2010: ix). Immanence reigns supreme and yet transcendence somehow re-emerges; representation is rejected and yet haunts this schema: power has no need of words and yet it is only through words and discourse that it becomes effective. But how is this possible? Having committed himself to a biopolitical fundamentalism, to a binarism even more radical than the one present in the first variant of post-hegemony theory, Beasley-Murray remains unable to provide any reasonable linkage. His position oscillates between paradox and *performative contradiction*.

Notice, for example, how his choice of populism as suitable example ends up in utter failure. Unequivocally contesting Laclau's schema, Beasley-Murray highlights 'Peronism [as] a prime example of the institutional inculcation of habit' (Beasley-Murray 2010: 25). A process that, true to his principles, he understands as a process beyond representation: the Peronist movement, thus, involves 'an organic, organized community that elicits an affect that can do without either ideology or discourse' (Beasley-Murray 2010: 30). What is the basis on which this argument is formulated? Surprisingly, the supporting evidence comes from the field of

representation itself, from Peron's speeches, that is to say, from *mere words*: 'As true patriotism is "a kind of love", according to Peron, "either you feel or you don't... So there will be no need for speeches, symbols, or ceremonies". This affect then induces peronist habits: "When this community is in danger, there will be nobody who does not feel the inclination and the need to defend it against its enemies external or internal" ' (Beasley-Murray 2010: 30). It is, indeed, difficult to bring to mind similar examples of such a breath-taking, unreflexive, analytical naïveté!

As if gradually becoming himself aware of the problems his argument encounters, Beasley-Murray gradually slides into an indirect acceptance of what he initially excluded. From a never-existing hegemony we slowly pass to the acknowledgement of a constitutive but hierarchical duality. Now, the problem with populism becomes that it

simplifies the double register through which the social coheres. It does this by obscuring the mechanisms through which transcendence is produced from immanence, subjective emotion from impersonal affect, signifying discourse from asignifying habit, people from multitude, and constituted from constituent power, because it is one of these mechanisms. ... Social order has to be disarticulated to reveal both its mute underside and the process by which it has been ventriloquized, made to speak but in another's voice (Beasley-Murray 2010: 63).

This is how Beasley-Murray is forced to move from one to two, only to qualify this movement by painting the emerging duality in terms reminiscent of the most vulgar Marxism, that of 'false consciousness' and the base/superstructure metaphor; at least Lash could only be accused of stagism! Immanence, affect and asignifying habit are prioritized as the authentic base, while transcendence, discourse and representation emerge as their inauthentic but –for some unexplained reason– always present and potent substitutes. Last but not least, having just stigmatized the ventriloquism of hegemonic representation, Beasley-Murray is ironically led to accept the equal value of discourse and affect by speaking in another's (Kraniauska's) voice: 'Seized by

meaning and seized by love: this is populism's double register' (Beasley-Murray 2010: 64).¹³

Towards the end, his only option left is to institute some sort of Orwellian 'newspeak' according to which symbolic 'does not mean representational or "merely" symbolic' (Beasley-Murray 2010: 191-2) and belief becomes exclusively 'a matter of the body' (Beasley-Murray 2010: 196). After momentarily referring to Žižek –whose argument he is enlisting in his effort to reconceive ideology as 'immanent and affective' (Beasley-Murray 2010: 177)–, he turns to Bourdieu's *habitus* as an 'embodied common sense' that produces the effects people usually attribute to ideology, discourse and representation (Beasley-Murray 2010: 177). This is not only to distort Žižek's take on immanence and transcendentalism; it is also much more than simply 'reading Bourdieu somewhat against the grain' (Beasley-Murray 2010: 178). If for Beasley-Murray, the politics of habit 'work beneath discourse and representation' (Beasley-Murray 2010: 180), it is clear that Bourdieu resists taking sides against representation; instead, he seems to be passionately in favour of stressing the dialectical relation between objectivism and representationalism in a bid to 'transcend the artificial opposition that tends to be established between structures and representations' (Bourdieu 1990: 125-6). If, now, we turn to the other great sociologist of *habitus*, Norbert Elias, we encounter, once more, a similar dialectic. Clearly, one of Elias's main aims is to study the complex mechanisms through which societies regulate the affective economy of their members, mechanisms involving the creation of subjective automatisms and subconscious reflexes, through the internalization of certain valorized codes, manners and rules of behavior and the development of a superegoic register imposing self-restraint (Elias 2000). However,

¹³ This is how Beasley-Murray summarises a long quote by Kraniauskas from where both terms of this double register emanate.

such regulation of bodies –through, for example, table manners– can establish itself as an unspoken ‘second nature’ only to the extent that it becomes associated with a dominant *representation* of what is considered ‘civilized’ and what is not, that is to say with a hegemonic social valorization – and, as we know from Saussure, value presupposes difference, we are thus firmly located within a symbolic/semiotic field. It is also of paramount importance that, to the extent that the subjective internalization of manners takes place through socialization, *discourse* has to be acknowledged as its privileged terrain; indeed, in his magnificent *The Civilizing Process*, Elias devotes a lot of energy to presenting and analyzing a whole discursive genre of conduct literature, which greatly influenced the development of civilized manners in Europe. Last but not least, in opposition to Beasley-Murray’s disdain for representation, language and discourse, both Bourdieu and Elias have devoted important works to carefully researching these realms (Bourdieu 1991, Elias 1991).

Mutual engagements: Discursive/affective hegemonies?

Bourdieu’s and Elias’s aforementioned orientation shows the way forward as far as the oppositions between hegemony and post-hegemony, symbolic and real, discursive representation and its beyond are concerned. As I have tried to show, this focus on interpenetration and mutual engagement is exactly what is missing from the argumentation advanced by Day, Lash and Beasley-Murray. In fact, it is rather astonishing that they all fail to take into account the way this interpenetration is registered in the work of their supposed intellectual ancestors and fellow-travellers.

Take, for example, the work of Nigel Thrift, one of the main proponents of non-representational theory. Thrift’s radical empiricism shares a lot with post-

hegemonic theories analyzed in this text, since his non-representational theory concentrates on practices, understood as ‘material bodies of work or styles that have gained enough stability over time’ as a result of ‘schooling in these practices, of each actor holding the others to them, and of the brute “natural” fact that the default is to continue on in most situations’ (Thrift 2008: 5). Non-representational theory stresses the materiality of bodies and things, the importance of affect and sensation. And yet, Thrift is very careful not to foreclose representation. Such a move would entail a dangerous degeneration ‘from intention to automation’, also implicit in capitalist development: ‘Whatever the case, I want to keep hold of a humanist ledge on the machinic cliff face... And the reason? Because how things seem is often more important than what they are’ (Thrift 2008: 13).

Maurizio Lazzarato’s impressive analysis of the debt economy follows a similar course. Lazzarato is keen to stress that debt economy involves a ‘molecular and pre-individual level’: a machinic level functioning beyond subjectivity and representation (Lazzarato 2012: 147). Its hold cannot be explained merely at a ‘“discursive”, ideological, “moral” ’ level (Lazzarato 2012: 147). At the same time, however, debt/money also functions through trust, morality, representation: ‘by creating an object of identification’, it powerfully contributes to subjective constitution. And although, for Lazzarato, ‘the Gramscian concept of “hegemony”’ (the hegemony of financial capital) seems less relevant here than Foucault’s “governmentality” ’ (Lazzarato 2012: 107), his final conclusion is to acknowledge a ‘twofold “hold” on subjectivity’ (Lazzarato 2012: 149).

Taking my cue from Lazzarato’s reference to Foucault, it is also revealing to note that Foucault’s place in Beasley-Murray’s as well as in Lash’s argument is marginal. Why is that, given that he was the most pivotal figure in putting forward the

biopolitical argument? Is it not because, even in his late work, when genealogical priorities replaced his early archaeological focus on discourse, discourse remained the plane on which power and knowledge came into contact, forming subjects and shaping practices and relations? The following passage from the first volume of the *History of Sexuality* is indicative in this respect and deserves to be quoted at some length:

What is said about sex must not be analyzed simply as the surface of projection of these power mechanisms. Indeed, it is in discourse that power and knowledge are joined together. ... Discourses are not once and for all subservient to power or raised up against it, any more than silences are. We must make allowance for the complex and unstable process whereby discourse can be both an instrument and an effect of power, but also a hindrance, a stumbling-block, a point of resistance and a starting point for an opposing strategy. Discourse transmits and produces power; it reinforces it, but also undermines and exposes it, renders it fragile and makes it possible to thwart it (Foucault 1978: 100-101).

In fact, in this same volume in which Foucault puts forward with such programmatic clarity his argument about biopolitics and biopower, discourse and ‘the incitement to discourse’ (Foucault 1978: 17) constitute the nodal points, his main historical focus being a ‘veritable discursive explosion’ around sex: ‘Since the eighteenth century, sex has not ceased to provoke a kind of generalized discursive erethism. And these discourses on sex did not multiply apart from or against power, but in the very space and as the means of its exercise’ (Foucault 1978: 32). As if this was not bad enough – for the types of arguments put forward by Lash and Beasley-Murray– Foucault is also led to acknowledge the role of the body in (bourgeois) ‘hegemony’, a category repeatedly utilized in *The History of Sexuality* (Foucault 1978: 125, 126, 127, 141).

Not only are Day, Lash and Beasley-Murray incapable of registering the constitutive interpenetration between representation and affect, the symbolic and the real, discursive hegemony and biopolitics – precisely what the work of Foucault, Elias,

Bourdieu, Thrift and Lazzarato seems to allow and encourage. By sticking to a caricature of Laclau's discursive theory of hegemony, they have also failed to take notice of developments within the terrain of discourse theory, which have been following a similar direction. And here there can be no excuse whatsoever, since these developments have crystallized well before their arguments have been formulated. In short, they have not done their homework properly. For example, how could they have missed Laclau's long dialogue with psychoanalytic theory around the status of affect, *jouissance* and the real? Indeed, very shortly after the publication of *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy*, Laclau's exchanges with Žižek will kick off an extremely productive course of registering the (real) limits of discourse. Admittedly, this registering initially focused on the negative modalities of the Lacanian real: the real as antagonism, dislocation and heterogeneity (Biglieri & Perello 2011). However, this was far from the end of the story. Most importantly, already from 2003, Laclau will proceed a step further by seriously engaging with the problematics of affectivity and *jouissance*, that is to say with the more affirmative modalities of the Lacanian real (Glynos & Stavrakakis 2003; Laclau 2003, 2004).¹⁴ By admitting himself that the themes of affect and *jouissance* had hitherto been incorporated into discourse theory in a 'rather sketchy and inchoate way' (Laclau 2003: 278) he also accepted that they should be thus seen not as an external threat that falsifies a discursive theory of hegemony (what Day, Lash and Beasley-Murray seem to believe), but as an internal challenge for further theoretical refinement and analytical development (Laclau 2004).¹⁵

¹⁴ Paradoxically, this turn to Lacan may also be bringing Laclau closer to one of the central inspirations of post-hegemony theorists, Spinoza. As Kiarina Kordela has persuasively argued in her critique of Hardt & Negri, it may be the case that 'the Spinozian-Marxist line of thought finds its proper contemporary articulation in Lacanian psychoanalysis' (Kordela 2007: 2).

¹⁵ For a detailed account of Laclau's gradual engagement with these dimensions, see Stavrakakis 2007, ch. 2.

Psychoanalytic theory suggests that analyses of the discursive, deconstructive, rhetorical or interpretative kind, though a necessary prerequisite, are often not sufficient to explain attachment to particular objects of identification, let alone to effect a displacement in the social subject's psychic economy. However, in order to capture what in practice operates as a dialectic of *co-constitution* and *mutual engagement* between discourse and affect it is necessary to sharpen the conceptual tools able to account for the specificity of each dimension. Even for concepts whose conceptual specificity relies on such a union, a prior establishment of difference is necessary. For example, *jouissance* in Lacanian theory embodies the paradoxical union of pleasure and pain. We cannot speak about *jouissance* if one of these aspects is missing. Can one capture the paradox entailed here without a distinct conceptual grasping of 'pleasure' and 'pain' as separate and even as antithetical? In fact, the force and originality of a concept highlighting their indissoluble union relies absolutely on this prior conceptual differentiation. And vice-versa of course. As Freud has shown, even in cases where conceptual opposition is radical (between *Eros* and *Thanatos*, for example) the interpenetration may, in practice, be unavoidable: 'Neither of these instincts is any less essential than the other; the phenomena of life arise from the concurrent or mutually opposing action of both [...] In order to make an action possible there must be as a rule a combination of such compounded motives' (Freud 1991: 356).

Already from 2004, Laclau had accepted this challenge of accounting for the affective dimension of hegemonic operations by conceptually distinguishing the *form* from the *force* of a discursive articulation:

... what rhetoric can explain is the *form* that an overdetermining investment takes, but not the *force* that explains the investment as such and its perdurability. Here something else has to be brought into the picture. Any overdetermination requires not only metaphorical

condensations but also cathectic investments. That is, something belonging to the order of *affect* has a primary role in discursively constructing the social. Freud already knew it: the social link is a libidinal link. And affect, as I have earlier pointed out in this essay, is not something *added* to signification, but something consubstantial with it. So if I see rhetoric as ontologically primary in explaining the operations inhering in and the forms taken by the hegemonic construction of society, I see psychoanalysis as the only valid road to explain the drives behind such construction – I see it, indeed, as the only fruitful approach to the understanding of human reality (Laclau 2004: 326).

This orientation will become even more central in his work with the publication of *On Populist Reason* (Laclau 2005b). This means that well before the objections put forward by Day, Lash and Beasley-Murray have been formulated, Laclau had already taken them into account through another (psychoanalytic) source: ‘Laclau himself has responded to some of these, turning to a Lacanian account of *jouissance* as a necessary accompaniment to the articulatory work of signification, especially in *On Populist Reason*, a work Beasley-Murray alludes to but barely engages with other than as more of the same’ (Derbyshire 2011). It remains a mystery why post-hegemony theorists have failed to engage with this important turn, which meant that Laclau’s theory of hegemony on top of being a *discursive* theory of hegemony is also an *affective* theory of hegemony. This is a pity, because, in effect, what is left from the post-hegemonic arguments if one excludes all the self-contradictions and limitations I have tried to highlight is, indeed, also an *affective theory of hegemony*. Gordillo directly corroborates this conclusion with reference to Beasley-Murray’s work:

Beasley-Murray, tellingly, never questions that Peronism has been hegemonic in Argentina for the past sixty years, or that in the 1940s Perón and Evita resonated with the multitude in ways not seen before in this country. What he questions are the attempts to explain this hegemony through rationalized, transcendent concepts (ideology, representation, consciousness) that miss its affective power: the fact that millions of people identified with Perón and Evita at a bodily, often hard-to-articulate, affective level. This is why what Beasley-Murray proposes is an affective theory of hegemony (Gordillo 2011: 8).

Given, however, Laclau's direct engagement precisely with the formulation of such a theory already between 2003 and 2005, one is entitled to ask: isn't this *too little too late*?

Conclusion

From the very beginning, 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 Lash and 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 has helped 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 discussed in this chapter 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 we have seen, these limits have increasingly dominated his work.

At first they acquire a *negative* inscription that highlights the *not-all* character of discursive being within an ontological horizon of impossibility, resulting in a radical registering of the partial and temporary character of every hegemonic articulation. Later on they acquire a more *positive* inscription by acknowledging the constitutive interpenetration between representation and *jouissance*, discursive articulation and affective investment. Every vibrant theoretico-political tradition has to remain ‘work in progress’, open to continuous renewal; this is the case with discourse theory, something visible in both Laclau’s trajectory and in the relevant work within the Essex School at large.¹⁶

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 manage to avoid. However, there is no repression without a return of the repressed; thus representation and discourse return to haunt post-hegemonic arguments, leading them to one contradiction after the other. 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.

¹⁶ See, for example, Glynos 2012.

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Ελληνική Εταιρεία Πολιτικής Επιστήμης Δίκτυο Ανάλυσης Πολιτικού Λόγου

Στόχος του ερευνητικού δικτύου για την «Ανάλυση του Πολιτικού Λόγου» είναι: (α) η προαγωγή του επιστημονικού προβληματισμού γύρω από την έννοια και τις θεωρίες του λόγου (discourse – discours - diskurs) και (β) η συστηματική εξέταση του πολιτικού λόγου και των επιχειρημάτων που αρθρώνουν οι πολιτικοί δρώντες (κόμματα, κινήματα, ΜΜΕ, κ.λπ.) καθώς εμπλέκονται σε σχέσεις αντιπαράθεσης ή συναίνεσης.

Η δημοσίευση σειράς «Κειμένων Εργασίας» (Working Papers), τα οποία αναρτώνται στον ιστότοπο του δικτύου και της Ελληνικής Εταιρείας Πολιτικής Επιστήμης (ΕΕΠΕ), αποτελεί αξονική προτεραιότητα του δικτύου για την «Ανάλυση του Πολιτικού Λόγου». Τα κείμενα εργασίας λειτουργούν ως παρεμβάσεις στο δημόσιο διάλογο είτε και ως ερεθίσματα για περαιτέρω επιστημονικό προβληματισμό. Βοηθούν δε τους συγγραφείς τους να ελέγξουν «υπό κατασκευή» επιχειρήματα και υποθέσεις εργασίας πριν λάβουν την τυπική μορφή επιστημονικών δημοσιεύσεων. Εξέχουσα θέση στο πλαίσιο του πρώτου κύκλου «Κειμένων Εργασίας» κατέχει η θεματική που αφορά σε «Λόγους της Κρίσης», σε πολιτικούς λόγους δηλαδή οι οποίοι αρθρώνονται με αναφορά στην τρέχουσα οικονομική -αν και όχι μόνο- κρίση στην Ελλάδα και την ΕΕ.

Τα κείμενα εργασίας που κατατίθενται προς δημοσίευση αξιολογούνται από τουλάχιστον δύο μέλη του δικτύου. Σε κάθε περίπτωση, τα κείμενα εργασίας εκφράζουν τις απόψεις των συγγραφέων τους και δεν απηχούν θέσεις του δικτύου ή της ΕΕΠΕ.