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Critical Social Theory Approaches to European integration

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Origins of critical social theory of emancipation

Critical Social Theory (CST), in its broadest sense, is a transdisciplinary approach to the social sciences that applies critique to the status quo in order to emancipate humans and the planet from the negative consequences of modernity.

A broad understanding of CST includes historical materialism, Frankfurt School theory, cultural theory, poststructural theory, feminist theory, and postcolonial theory (Manners 2018a, 322–3). For example, Craig Calhoun's seminal 1995 study of CST included engagements with Horkheimer, Adorno, and Habermas' Frankfurt School; Derrida and Foucault's postmodernism; Bourdieu's habitus, field, and capital; Haraway and Fraser's feminist theory; and hooks and Spivak's politics of identity and recognition. The *transdisciplinary* approach of CST demands the reorganisation of disciplinary practices in order to transgress and transcend pre-existing frames of knowledge organisation found in the social sciences and humanities, in particular history, sociology, economics, ecology, and politics. In this context, CST is an 'interpenetrating body of work which demands and produces critique … [that] depends on some manner of historical understanding and analysis' (Calhoun 1995, 35). This historically-grounded *critique* is essential because 'theory is always for someone and for some purpose' since 'theory constitutes as well as explains the questions it asks (and those it does not ask)' (Cox 1981, 128; Hoskyns 2004, 224). Scholarship and activism within CST is concerned with understanding how 'tradition', the 'status quo', and the 'mainstream' are self-perpetuating practices of *modernity* that have significantly negative consequences for humans, society, and the planet as a whole. As Max Horkheimer put it in 1937, these conditions necessitate a 'critical theory of society as it is, a theory dominated at every turn by a concern for reasonable conditions of life' (Horkheimer 1972[1937]: 198–9). As discussed in the final section on imagining another Europe is possible, CST is different to the other critical theoretical approaches in setting out a holistic, ecological, and progressive approach to the planetary politics that characterise the 21st century.

This contribution is a continuation and development of two decades of work on CSTs of European integration including 'unconventional explanations', 'critical perspectives', and 'dissident voices' that help make 'another theory' and 'another Europe' possible (Manners and Whitman 2003; Manners 2007; Manners and Whitman 2016), building on the intellectual heritage

of Karl Marx, Antonio Gramsci, Horkheimer, and Theodor Adorno. However, this chapter takes two steps further in broadening the range of critical social theorists to include the heritage of Karl Polanyi and Hannah Arendt, and the work of Stuart Hall, Chantal Mouffe, Étienne Balibar, and Nancy Fraser. It also takes the current literature further in deepening the field and its contributions through examination of 'ideological common sense', 'symbols and myths', 'democratic sovereignty', 'public interest', 'transnational solidarity', the 'normative power approach', and CST political theory. The rest of this first section sets out the origins of CST of emancipation through its historical and intellectual development in the study of European integration. In section two, this intellectual heritage forms the foundation for examining the development of CST through critique in the study of European integration. Section three analyses the contribution of CST to the study of European integration by focusing on its principal contributions. The final section reflects on being critical of the critical before arguing how CST imagines 'another Europe is possible' through an ecological critique and political theory of European integration.

Interest in CST has dramatically increased over the past 50 years since the publication in English of the works of Gramsci and the Frankfurt School during the 1970s. However, it is only since the end of the Cold War that interest in CST has exploded with numerous works surveying CST in the social sciences. The original publications within early CST include Gramsci's *Prison Notebooks* published in Italian between 1948 and 1951, and published in English in 1971; Horkheimer's 'Traditional and Critical Theory' in 1937 [1972]; and Polanyi's *The Great Transformation* in 1944. More controversial is the identification of the works of Arendt with CST. However, Arendt did argue 'it is true that in his early work [Marx] spoke of the social question in political terms and interpreted the predicament of poverty in categories of oppression and exploitation' (Arendt 1963, 63). As Heather and Stolz (1979, 2) have argued, 'it is Arendt rather than the Critical Theorists who embodies the mode of thought appropriate to what Rosa Luxemburg once referred to as the "school of public life itself"'.

The origins of many CST analyses of European integration are found in the works of scholars such as Hall (1986) and Mouffe who began working with Gramscian hegemony in the 1970s and 1980s, while Balibar drew on Marx and Gramsci to examine race, nation, class, and Europe in the 1970s and 1980s. Fraser introduced a gender critique of Frankfurt School theory and Habermas into CST in the 1980s, with a later series of interventions on the rescaling of economic regulation to regional trading blocs like the European Union (EU)EU. The second generation of post-Cold War CST analyses of European integration built on these origins and insights to contribute to increasing interest from scholars such as Calhoun examining the works of Habermas and Arendt (see Eriksen's chapter on Habermas in this volume).

The development of CST as a critical theoretical approach to European integration grew through the 1990s, with an increasing concern for understanding and challenging the social production of knowledge; for historicising and contextualising subjectivity; and a commitment to progress and emancipation as the goals of research (Manners 2007, 81).

Development of critical social theory through critique

The intellectual heritage sets out above provides a foundation for examining the development of CST through critique in the study of European integration, including its major claims relating to cultural, economic, gender, social, historical, and political theories. The first of these claims and developments has come from the cultural, political, and economic theory contributions that have their origins in the works of *Gramsci*, *Polanyi*, and *Balibar*. Drawing on the work of Gramsci, Hall co-developed the field of Cultural Studies and applied its insights to the British relationship with the European Community/Union over four decades (Anderson and Hall 1961). Hall's

(1993, 349) use of Gramsci occurred within 'the development of Cultural Studies…; and in anguished conversation in the eighties, as we all tried in different ways to make sense of the disorientation of the left under the impact of Thatcherism and the forces it unleashed'. For example, Hall (2003, 60–1) argued that the search for the myths of Europe to imagine the EU will license Europe to disavow its historic instability and its deep inter-connections with other histories. Cultural studies scholars have used Hall's work to examine political communication and democracy in the EU, with Philip Schlesinger (1999) arguing that the growth of transnational Euro-media has not opened general access to communication by European publics. Giorgia Aiello and Crispin Thurlow (2006) examine visual discourse and EU identity to show how political/cultural/economic ideologies underpin the production of a supposedly pan-European identity. Similarly, the political philosophical work of Chiara Bottici and Benoît Challand (2013) comes from the intellectual direction of critical theory, Gramsci, and Hall in their scholarship on political myth, Europe, and civilisation, arguing that Europe's formation, myth, and memory are merged in a common attempt to construct an identity for its present and its future.

Particularly important for the CST of European integration has been the claims of political theory based on the work of Mouffe. Building on the use of Gramsci and hegemony in socialist strategy, Mouffe (1993, 4) developed a theory of 'agonistic pluralism' as an essential struggle where the political opponent should not be considered as an antagonistic enemy to be destroyed, but as a legitimate agonistic adversary to be tolerated, and which 'represents the very condition of existence of such democracy'. The theory was subsequently extended to the EU; 'instead of taking the role of the vanguard in the unification of the world, the EU should be visualized as one important region in this multipolar world…. By promoting a pluralist approach, it could contribute to fostering an agonistic world order that acknowledges the diversity of forms of life and modes of organization' (Mouffe 2013, 64). Kalypso Nicolaïdis (2013, 354) has set out the 'strong affinities' between Mouffe's agonistic democracy and what Nicolaïdis calls "European demoicracy" within the EU, arguing that 'if we believe in agonistic politics, the point is not to co-opt but to converse' in the processes of European integration (Nicolaïdis and Youngs 2014, 1418). For Nicolaïdis (2013, 351), 'the idea of European demoicracy is seductively simple: a Union of peoples govern together, but not as one', thus including both the pluralism of multiple democratic spheres and the necessity of agonistic coexistence and conversation.

Gramsci's influence also comes through critical political economy and its critique of neo-liberalism in the EU. The neo-Gramscian perspective associated with Cox, Gill, and the Amsterdam School became influential in the late 1990s (Manners 2007, 80; see also Bieler and Salyga's chapter on historical materialism in this volume). Within this approach, Magnus Ryner and collaborators use Gramscian terms to describe the emerging transnational hegemonic bloc of social forces in the EU formed by 'influential national politicians, transnational alliances and supranational institutions' (Bieling, Jäger, and Ryner 2016, 61), building on two decades of neo-Gramscian scholarship (Ryner and Cafruny 2016). More recent research focuses on the regulation of EU corporate governance and competition policy within the context of EU austerity politics (Horn 2012; Buch-Hansen and Wigger 2015). In parallel with Gramsci has been the influence of Polanyi's concept of the 'double movement' of economic liberalism counteracted by social protectionist forces (Birchfield 1999, 38–9). The work of Vicki Birchfield and Annette Freyberg-Inan demonstrates how Polanyi's theory of society's counter-movement is useful under conditions of market ideology (Birchfield and Freyberg-Inan 2004; Birchfield 2012). Similarly, Vivien Schmidt (2009, 20) uses Polanyi to understand how 'governance *for* the people', or 'throughput' can be part of re-embedding markets in society.

The works of Balibar on European integration, in particular *We, the people of Europe?* (2004), are important on questions of mediation, borders, and citizenship. Nicolaïdis (2013) has drawn

of Balibar's work to argue for the need to avoid the exclusionary tendencies and discriminatory language within the EU, and the same time as evoking Balibar's 'borderland' in the search for 'European demoicracy'. Similarly, Catherine Guisan (2005, 2012) uses Balibar's work on the European Communities, and a community of fate rather than of descent, in order to answer difficult questions regarding the EU as a 'union of peoples' that is a worksite of citizenship that enlarges mentality beyond borders.

The second set of major claims and developments come from the gender, social, and political theory of the contemporary *Frankfurt School* (see also Abels and MacRae's chapter on gender approaches in this volume). Fraser's critical theory brings together gender, Polanyi, and critique in the analysis of the EU arguing, for example, that in 'the commodification of money … Polanyi was remarkably prescient… [as] financialization recently has threatened to destroy the euro, the European Union, and any pretence of democracy, as bankers have routinely overruled parliaments and installed governments that might do their bidding' (Fraser 2014a, 553). At the same time, 'efforts to expand the scope of gender justice beyond the nation-state are increasingly resigned to cohere with neo-liberalism's global governance needs, as "femocrats" have entered the policy apparatuses of the United Nations, the European Union, and the "international community" ' (Fraser 2013a, 15). Catherine Hoskyns' critical theory of gender in the EU followed Fraser's 1995 lead by arguing that 'the achievement of justice in political terms requires both the recognition of difference and the redistribution of socioeconomic resources' (Hoskyns and Rai 1998, 346) and that there has been 'little in Critical Theory that shows a sensitivity to gender' (Hoskyns 2004). Sylvia Walby also draws on Fraser's gendered critical theory, in particular *Justice Interruptus: Critical reflections on the "postsocialist" condition* (2014b), in the analysis of the politics of recognition and equality, and gender mainstreaming (Walby 2004, 2005). Among the contemporary, Frankfurt School theorists Calhoun's emphasis on 'liberation, equality, justice, and all the other problematic terms that join with freedom to make up the most popular normative and political path for critical theory' has been important in broadening critical theory to explore feminist and poststructuralist theory on the path to critical social theory (Calhoun 1995, xvi & xx). In particular, Calhoun's work on identity and plurality, democratic integration, solidarity in Europe, and cosmopolitan Europe has been influential in shaping the development of CST in the study of European integration (Calhoun 2003a, 2003b, 2009).

The third set of major claims and developments are coming from the historical and political theories anchored in the work of one of the twentieth century's leading political philosophers and theorists; *Hannah Arendt*. In particular, the critical work of Arendt herself, as well as Arendtian scholars, such as Peter Verovšek, Guisan, and Bonnie Honig, is important to the contemporary critique of ethics, memory, and agonistic cosmopolitics in the study of European integration. Arendt's *Jewish Writings* and *Essays in Understanding*, written between 1940–1945, sets out her support for a European federation of nationalities to replace the nation-state: 'A good peace is now inconceivable unless the States surrender parts of their economic and political sovereignty to a higher European authority: we leave open the question whether a European Council, or Federation, a United States of Europe or whatever type of unit will be formed' (Arendt 1945 in Kohn 1994, 113).

Subsequent interpretation of Arendt's writings suggest several different critiques at work. Firstly, Arendt argues that the collapse of the European nation-state was the result of nineteenth-century imperialism, anti-Semitism, and the European colonial project (Selinger 2016): 'Unquestionably fascism has been once defeated, but we are far from having completely eradicated this arch-evil of our time. For its roots are strong and they are called Anti-Semitism, Racism, Imperialism' (Arendt 1945 in Kohn 1994, 150). Verovšek (2014, 412–3) and William Selinger (2016, 446) argue that Arendt's political theory provides unexpected support

for European integration, but memory must 'function as a resource for political transformations in the aftermath of historical ruptures' and that the 1980s resurgence of neo-liberalism and the resulting return of the far right in Europe demand greater reflection on Arendt's writings. Secondly, Arendt warned that 'now European federation is a definite political possibility, new constellations of world powers make it only too easy to apply their former nationalism to a larger structure and become as narrowly and chauvinistically European as they were formerly German, Italian, or French' (Arendt 1948 in Kohn 1994, 422), raising the risk that building a bigger and better state – a EU – would leave the problems of interstate politics precisely where they are.

Lars Rensmann (2019) and Nicole Dewandre (2018) use Arendt to argue for rethinking European democracy and politics after its legitimacy crises, in particular reconstructing Arendt's writings on European post-national democracy by moving beyond both national sovereignty and technocratic supranational governance. As Selinger (2010, 445) and Rensmann (2019, 14) have set out, Arendt advocated post-sovereign republican diffusions of power, with democratic legitimacy requiring autonomous, grassroots political activism, combined with decentralised and Europeanised publics constituting transnational political communities. Calhoun argues that her idea of public speech – the public sphere – is essential for the democratic integration of Europe (Arendt 1958 in Calhoun 2003a, 243). Similarly, Alessandra Beasley (2006, 135) uses Arendt to argue for more cosmopolitan citizenship based on Arendt's ideas of 'universal communication', while Dewadre (2018) uses Arendt and Balibar to rethink of plural EU political agents as relational selves.

Guisan argues that, following Arendt, the EU has forgotten its 'lost treasure' of ethical and political impulses behind the 50-year-old European integration process. The role of the EU's 'principles of action' has been hermeneutically retrieved by Guisan's (2012, 11–12) studies of the principle of reconciliation, the principle of power as action in concert, and the principle of recognition in the memories, and actions of participants. Guisan (2011) argues that reconciliation is a crucial, yet forgotten aspect of European integration, starting with Franco-German reconciliation with the 1951 Treaty of Paris, extending to post-Cold War reconciliation in central Europe, as well as reconciliation between Greece and Turkey. In her analysis of EMU political leadership vs. Greek civil society, Guisan (2016) argues that power as action in concert ('promise') was demonstrated more by Greek civil society organisations than by the financial Troika and Taskforce.

Honig's 'agonistic cosmopolitics' is 'located squarely in the paradox of politics – that irresolvable and productive paradox in which a future is claimed on behalf of peoples and rights that are not yet and may never be' (Honig 2006, 118; 2009, 130). Drawing on Arendt, she argues that 'an agonistic cosmopolitics is committed to the perpetual generation of new sites of action in concert on behalf of worlds not yet built or on behalf of those still emergent and in need of activist support and sustenance' (Honig 2006, 12; 2009, 133). In this respect, 'Arendt sees the self as a creature that is always agonistically engaged …. When Arendt takes these arguments to politics, she theorizes a practice that is disruptive, agonistic, and, most important, never over' (Honig 1993, 9). The work of Heidrun Friese (2010) has subsequently developed Honig's Arendtian approach to the EU, focusing on the limits of hospitality in the Mediterranean. At the same time, Paulina Tambakaki (2011) has used both Honig and Mouffe's agonistic theories to examine European citizenship, arguing that citizenship is not simply taken as a means to participation, but as a channel for political mobilisation.

Contribution of critical social theory to European integration

This third section examines in more detail a selection of six contributions that CST has made to the understanding of European integration. These contributions demonstrate both the transdisciplinary and holistic approach of CST by asking questions and demanding answers that

open up European integration to historical context, political consequences, and public scrutiny beyond disciplinary domains.

The first contribution is a critique of *ideological common sense*.As Hall demonstrated throughout his career, Gramsci understood that 'contradictory forms of "common sense" 'constitute crucial sites for the construction of popular hegemony; political and ideology struggle; and practice (Hall 1986, 26). For Hall,'common-sense neo-liberalism' is a central part of political life where, following Gramsci, it is 'not something rigid and immobile, it is continually transforming itself' (Hall and O'Shea 2013, 9). In the study of European integration, CST helps understand how the English neo-Thatcherite class were able to construct a popular cultural hegemony:'The ideological common sense of this new era was that established politicians and parties, working with the EU, were responsible for the United Kingdom's poor economic situation and that none of the established political institutions were to be trusted' (Manners 2018b, 1226). CST sets out a method for addressing and undermining ideological common sense using immanent critique. As Calhoun (1995, 23) has argued: 'At the heart of critical theory lay the notion of "immanent critique", a critique that worked from within the categories of existing thought, radicalized them, and showed in varying degrees both their problems and their unrecognized possibilities'. Theuns (2017, 287) uses an immanent critique of European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) regional progress reports to argue that EU 'democracy promotion is in conflict with other goals of ENP such as market liberalization, trade policy reforms and private sector development' (see also Nicolaïdis 2013 and Verovšek 2017 use of immanent critique). In sum, the first contribution 'encourages a move beyond accepting the status quo of power relations by using critical social theory to open space for thinking beyond occupation' of European integration (Manners 2018a, 322).

The second contribution uses CST to (re)construct systems of *symbols and myths*. Collective symbols and myths are fundamental to the understanding of issues such as European social solidarity, citizens feeling of belonging to the EU, political advocacy for and resistance to European integration, and concrete political actions in planetary politics. It is important to clarify that symbols are understood not just as the official 'icons' of the EU (the flag, the motto, the anthem, the day, or the Euro), but as including official and non-official images and representations of the EU. Similarly, myths are understood not as imaginary or unreal folklore, but as cultural and political narratives that provide meaning of the EU in society. Symbols and myths include performative 'rituals', 'totems', and 'taboos'. Such rituals and practices of meaning-making ensure that symbols and images, myths and narratives are represented and inscribed with particular understandings for the producers and consumers of European (dis)integration. The final step is to realise that such symbols and images, myths and narratives, rituals and practices are read, and must be interpreted, through political psychology (Manners 2018b, 2020), as the work of Laura Cram, Aiello, and Thurlow illustrates. Cram has drawn on Pierre Bourdieu's concept of the habitus and Michael Billig's notion of banal nationalism to analyse the case of 'banal Europeanism' where the process of routine formation is described as enhabitation:'thoughts, reactions and symbols become turned into routine habits and, thus, they become enhabited' (Cram 2009, 114). Cram asks 'To what extent must the new attractive way of life be based on an objective reality and to what extent can symbols and myths be manipulated to encourage a shift in expectations and activities towards the new political centre or to encourage particular 'imaginings' of the Union?' (Cram 2001, 237).Working in another direction, Aiello and Thurlow (2006, 149) have emphasised the importance of examining symbols and myths in research on European identity and the critical importance of understanding how 'cultural and symbolic processes are as central to the experience of Europe as any monetary or economic resource'.

The next three interconnected CST contributions critically engage with the three crises of the EU over the dilemmas of political, economic, and social order (Manners and Rosamond 2018, 32;

Scholl and Freyberg-Inan 2018).Thus, the third contribution is to the understanding of *democratic sovereignty* in European integration, with an emphasis on the importance of agonistic cosmopolitics. CST scholars argue that 'cosmopolitics combine communitarianism with cosmopolitanism… If cosmopolitanism relies on a discourse of individual rights; communitarianism is based on a discourse of social rights that is often expressed in exclusive and localist terms. Both run the risk of substituting ethics for politics' (Kinnvall and Nesbitt-Larking 2011, 92; Manners 2013, 483). Cosmopolitics combines agonistic understandings of 'pluralism' taken from Gramsci by Mouffe (1993, 4–6); and of 'contest' taken from Arendt by Honig (1993, 15–16).Thus agonistic cosmopolitics links local politics with global ethics to demand EU democratic sovereignty that is contentious, not hegemonic; that is pluralistic, not majoritarian; and that is both multicultural and cosmopolitan at the same time as strengthening grass-roots democracy and local solidarities (Honig 2006, 117; Mouffe 2013, 43–64). Leading CST scholars, including Mouffe's (2013) 'agonistic democracy', Balibar's (2017) 'new foundation' of democracy, and Nicolaïdis' (2013) European 'demoi-cracy', represent important radical voices in the reimagination of democratic sovereignty in response to the crisis of politics across Europe.

Interconnected with political crisis is the fourth CST contribution to understanding *public interest* in European integration, with an emphasis on the importance of social market economics. CST scholars argue that the political, economic, and social crises of contemporary neo-liberalism invite the Polanyian double movement of social protectionist forces in European integration. But CST goes further to identify why the double movement is not occurring and to advocate for a 'triple movement' comprising marketisation, social protection, and emancipation instead; 'the globalization of finance requires a new, post-Westphalian way of imagining the arenas and agents of social protection' (Fraser 2014a, 554; 2013b). More specifically, the achievement of social market economy requires a 'system of close ties between industrial capital and financial capital (bank-mediated corporate finance) on the one hand, and an institutionalized class compromise between owners, managers and employees on the other' (Horn 2012, 72–3).The move to social market economics helps displace neoliberal ideology with its emphasis on capital markets and the rejection of ideological austerity, including 'reframing austerity measures as a political choice as opposed to an inevitable necessity' (Scholl and Freyberg-Inan 2018, 115). It is clear that political choices that have severe social consequences need to be taken in the public interest, with deliberative democratic transparency and accountability as advocated by Schmidt (2013, 19–20). Ultimately, as Ryner (2014, 72) argues, 'it is not surprising that one of the primary political casualties of the [financial] crisis' has been European social democracy:'The tragedy is that in a situation where the radical right is moving forward its positions, Europe truly needs' a social democratic alternative. Similar to democratic sovereignty, CST scholars of political economy, including Fraser's 'triple movement', Schmidt's 'gouvernement économique', and Ryner's 'social democratic alternative', are important contributors to the rethinking of public interest in social market economics in response to the economic and financial crisis across Europe.

Doubly interconnected with political and economic crises is the fifth CST contribution to understanding *transnational solidarity* in European integration, with an emphasis on the importance of cosmopolitical solidarities sets out in Carol Gould's (2007) work on transnational solidarities through rethinking cosmopolitical democracy. CST scholars argue that the political, economic, and social crises of contemporary multiculturalism, citizenship, and solidarity demand cosmopolitical solidarities.This scholarship argues the need to identify clearly transnational EU solidarities as overlapping networks of relations that share and support actions to eliminate oppression or reduce suffering, and that cosmopolitical solidarities networking and sharing global ethics with local politics are more likely to take actions in concert that are caring and empathic towards

distantly situated others (Gould 2020; Manners 2020). Calhoun has set out, in the aftermath of 11 September 2001, how cosmopolitical perspectives differ from cosmopolitanism in that they seek a 'strong sense of cosmopolitanism [which] calls for confrontation with deep and necessarily contentious differences between ways of life', rather than a 'soft cosmopolitanism … [where] contemporary cosmopolitans meet others of different backgrounds in spaces that retain familiarity' (Calhoun 2003c, 106–7). At the same time, cosmopolitical approaches seek to engage with communitarianism by establishing a connection to the 'idea of political action rooted in immanent contradictions of the social order', where 'immanent struggle for a better world always builds on particular social and cultural bases' (Calhoun 2003c, 102–3). In terms of transnational solidarity played out within multicultural European societies, 'cosmopolitics consists of self-reflective culturalism combined with equal access to resources and power, globally and locally. A cosmopolitical approach is thus in line with deep multiculturalism and proceeds from an understanding of self as dialogical' (Kinnvall and Nesbitt-Larking 2011, 92). However, Balibar (2011a, 13; 2011b, 222–3) argues that 'the so-called return of the religious has produced the dissociation and crisis of the idea of a "multicultural" cosmopolitical agenda, or *cosmopolitanism as multiculturalism*', and that 'progressive movements' at the 'cosmopolitical level' need to grant 'more concrete character to the idea of hospitality' through recognising the 'diasporic citizen'.

The sixth contribution is the *normative power approach* (NPA) to the EU in planetary politics that uses CST as part of normative political theory addressing both global ethics and global justice (Manners 2014, 2018a). Working within CST, the NPA should be *normative*, *explanatory*, and *practical*, all at the same time. In this respect, the NPA is *normative* in arguing that agonistic cosmopolitical theory linking local politics with global ethics provides a normative basis for critique in planetary politics. Second, the NPA is *explanatory* in approaching the EU as a 'European communion'; a sharing of communitarian, cosmopolitan, and cosmopolitical relationships that provide an explanation of the EU as an actor in planetary politics (Manners 2013). This means that the EU cannot be simply explained as either a constellation of member state communities cooperating in foreign policy, or as a cosmopolitan space integrating its external actions, but it opens the possibility of explaining the EU as an example of cosmopolitical co-existence both within and without the region. Finally, the NPA argues for an analytical focus on the EU's use of 'normative justification', rather than physical force or material incentives, which provides a *practical* guide for the practice of EU normative power in planetary politics. The NPA has, over the past two decades, used CST to anchor a normative political theory of EU foreign policy (Manners 2011), that address both global ethics (Manners 2006, 2008) and global justice (Manners 2009, 14–15): 'More sustainable global economics, a more sustainable global environment, more just human development, and more sustainable systems of democratic global justice require different thinking and a different direction in national, international and transnational politics [if not] then we are likely to continue to reproduce and accelerate the great wars, great famines, genocides, poverty and starvation, and impending eco-catastrophe that traditional international relations has cultivated'.

Critical social theory imagines another Europe is possible

This final section first reflects on being critical of the critical, before arguing how CST imagines 'another Europe is possible', including an ecological critique and political theory of European integration.

Being *critical of the critical* in CST involves including the problems of understanding, the defence of ideological common sense and orthodoxy, and the need for imagination in

critique. CST is not well understood in the mainstream of social sciences and humanities, including European integration and European studies. While different disciplines have a variety of understandings of CST, they are often particular to the discipline; for example, historical materialist theories to economic history, neo-Gramsian theories to critical IPE, or postcolonial theory to literature (although see Kinnvall's chapter on postcolonialism in this volume for an exception). In this respect, the most common misunderstanding is to read CST as unique to sociology rather than transcending the social sciences and humanities, as illustrated here.

The second criticism is that disciplinary mainstreams are paradigmatically defensive of their theoretical and methodological core, and certainly do not embrace critiques of their assumptions and their boundaries readily. As discussed extensively from a variety of CST perspectives, within EU studies the disciplinary mainstream of political science has become dominant at the same time as the 'ideological "common sense" of economic orthodoxy' has 'hidden in plain sight the neoliberal preferences for market economics' (Manners and Rosamond 2018, 33–35). Hence, it is fully expected that the orthodox core of political science and economics will continue to seek to discredit CST as 'confusing' or 'unscientific'.

The third criticism is inherent in CST itself, as Calhoun (1995, 23) points out the development of CST as a broader, transdisciplinary approach to the social sciences requires recognising both the strengths and weaknesses of immanent critique and the possibilities of a pragmatic critique. In contrast to immanent critique, Cochran (1999, 276) argues that pragmatic critique:

> … begins with the acknowledgement that the social tensions which give rise to immanent critique may not be sufficient for initiating anything more than reform in some instances. Perhaps nothing more is required and this is how inquiry is temporarily concluded. However, the same tensions may suggest the need for moral imagination to play an important supplementary role to immanent critique by projecting the possibilities for radical change that may be only available through an engagement with that which is other or different, outside of our immediate resources of value.

Thus addressing these criticisms of the critical involves addressing the wider, sometimes interdisciplinary, misunderstandings of the differences, similarities, and applicability of CST across the disciplines in order to be both practical and imaginative in confronting ideological common sense and orthodox disciplinary defences.

In contrast, CST *imagines 'another Europe is possible'* through three important developments of the approach involving the need for a more holistic approach to theorising European integration across the social science, the further need to include an ecological critique of European integration, and to realise the importance of CST political theory to the contemporary challenges of Europe. The first step to imagining another Europe is possible is to develop CST through recognising the holistic nature of the challenges, theories, and solutions to contemporary crises. For example, just as the 'holistic social science of Karl Polanyi' (Block and Somers 1984) was important to previous generations, so his insights are invaluable for contemporary thinking about economic, democratic, and gender crises demanding 'civil society successfully acting to prevent catastrophe' (Walby 2015, 32). As Birchfield (2011, 141) has suggested, working within the normative power approach, that a holistic research programme 'forces us to move beyond the conventions and conformities of linear thinking with their analyses of self-interest, narrow context, isolation, and discrete questions, in order to think about holistic, contextual, inclusive, and global European studies' (Manners 2003, 78–9).

The second step to developing CST for the 21st century goes beyond narrow understandings of social science to include an ecological critique of European integration. As Fraser has argued, we lack a critical theory for our times:

> It is the convergence of these three strands – the ecological, the financial and the social – that constitutes the distinctive character, and special severity, of the present crisis…. A critical theory for our time must encompass all three of these crisis dimensions. Today, however, we lack such a critical theory. Our received understandings of crisis tend to focus on a single aspect, typically the economic or the ecological, which they isolate from, and privilege over, the others (Fraser 2014a, 542).

Instead, by developing a more holistic CST it is possible to encompass the crises dimensions of society, economy, ecology, conflict, and 'planetary politics [that] are characterised by truly planetary relations of causality that can only be understood and addressed holistically' (Litfin 2003, 481). As CSTs have previously made clear, progressively integrating the 'economic, social and ecological dimensions' into 'sustainable development' though integrating 'green theory brings particular challenges to regional integration… because ecological perspectives require us to stretch our concepts of belonging, loyalty, responsibility and identity not only beyond our own community or nation, but also to other species and across time' (Nicolaïdis 2010, 36; Brianson 2016, 128).

The last step in imagining another Europe possible is to realise the importance of CST *political theory* for the contemporary challenges of Europe. Mouffe (2013, 51–53) draws on Nicolaïdis' (2013) notion of 'European demoï-cracy' to argue for an 'agonistic model of Europe' with a 'plurality of democratic spaces for the exercise of democracy' and the need to constantly balance between different levels – the European and the 'national' – but also the regional – 'recognising the tensions existing between them'. For Mouffe (2013, 53), such a EU would thus 'not only be a 'demoï-cracy' composed of nation-states, but one where there would be a multiplicity of different kinds of *demoï*". At the same time, Nicolaïdis has systematically argued the need for the progressive principles of 'mutual recognition' and 'non-domination' to be at European demoicracy's normative core (Nicolaïdis 2007, 684; 2013, 358–60). Both Nicolaïdis and Guisan place emphasis on Taylor's 'politics of recognition' where 'recognition facilitates the rapprochement of parties previously opposed' and suggests a 'way out of the stalemate of self-perpetuating antagonistic positions' (Guisan 2005; 2012, 83–4). Similarly, Fraser has argued that while 'the politics of recognition is a crucial precondition for identity formation' the question of the social-economic inequalities of class remains critical (Petö and Manners 2006, 111; Nicolaïdis 2007, 684; Guisan 2012, 84–5). Thus, progressive CST of European integration is concerned with 'developing a *critical* theory of recognition, one which identifies and defends only those versions of the cultural politics of difference that can be coherently combined with the social politics of equality' (Fraser 1995, 69).

The second of Nicolaïdis' demoïcratic principles develops a CST of democratic freedom by shifting to a 'transnational context the goal of non-domination as democratic freedom by which [humans] are free from one another's arbitrary power' (Nicolaïdis 2013, 358). Guisan (2005; 2012, 15, 73) has also developed this idea through the progressive principles of reconciliation and 'power as action in concert', arguing that 'the principle of reconciliation is *the* foundational principle of the European integration' and the need to 'break away from the ancient tradition of power as domination.' Instead, Guisan (2012, 60) argues for non-domination to be theorised through Arendt's work 'recasting political power as action in concert rather than domination'. In this way, instead of conceptualising enactions of power

as the 'imposition of a will over another(s)' (a self-empowering exercise), 'Arendt's concept of power as power *with* explains best the intents and some of the actions of European actors' in the past and potentially the future (Guisan 2012, 61; Manners 2013, 483–4). Thus, the CST of the normative power approach provides a means of critically examining the legitimacy of principles, acts of recognition, and reconciliatory impacts of the EU in planetary politics (Manners 2018a, 331).

Imagining that another Europe is possible through more holistic, ecological, and progressive political theory helps realise the importance of critical social theory for emancipating humans and the planet from the negative consequences of modernity, capitalism, neo-liberalism, and the ideological common sense they naturalise.

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