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Critical theory as Post-Marxism: The Frankfurt School and beyond

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Critical theory as a Post-Marxist discourse is a category of academic thought that broadly involves theoretical scholarship aimed at interrogating the structures and discourses of power. As such, it casts a broad net to include interdisciplinary thinkers ranging from cultural studies, Marxism, linguistics, sociology, philosophy, psychoanalytic criticism, and others. Thus, critical theory consists of the works of the Frankfurt School and its Institute for Social Research in Germany, namely Walter Benjamin, Max Horkheimer, Theodor W. Adorno, Herbert Marcuse, Erich Fromm, Jürgen Habermas, and Axel Honneth. Critical theory also includes the work of other Continental European thinkers from Central and Eastern Europe who employ a Hegelian-Marxist, Marxist, or neo-Marxist scholarly outlook, such as the work of the Hungarian philosopher Georg Lukács, the Italian Antonio Gramsci, and Louis Althusser from France. Broadly speaking, and used throughout the humanities and social sciences, critical theory can apply to the work of French thinkers, and others who employ Marxist and non-Marxist theoretical frameworks, as well as structuralist, post-structuralist, postmodernist, and psychoanalytic traditions, including most notably Michel Foucault, Roland Barthes, Jacques Derrida, Jacques Lacan, Jean-François Lyotard, Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari. Narrowly, critical theory only applies to the works of those making statements in the tradition of modernity. Critical theory also includes postmodern thought. Conventional themes in critical theory include critiques of modern, global capital and wage-labor relations. Over time, critical theorists also have incorporated ideas arising from a culture of late capitalism, including the logic of its mass consumerism.

The origins of critical theory: The historical foundations of Marxist and Post-Marxist social and political thought

The transition of many societies from feudalism to industrialization exposed social and cultural inequalities. The seemingly new social relations between owners and workers, the educated and the illiterate, and the powerful versus the marginalized fostered structural critiques of governments, socio-cultural institutions, and economies. As a result, the origins of critical theory lie in the works of Karl Marx, Marxism, and the scholarship of Friedrich Nietzsche, Max Weber, and Sigmund Freud, among others. The genesis of critical theory largely emanates from the ideas of Karl Marx, Hegelian-Marxism, other Marxist thought, and the work of Marx that was co-published with Friedrich Engels. The critical theorist Herbert Marcuse demonstrated how the rise of critical social theory rested on the emergence of the work of philosopher G.W.F. Hegel (Marx's leading philosophical influence), and it was one generation earlier than Hegel that Immanuel Kant was among the first of the philosophers to present a critical philosophy. One early Marxist working in

the early twentieth century was Karl Korsch, and his work *Marxism and Philosophy* was influential on the first generation of critical theorists at the Frankfurt School and its Institute for Social Research. The Frankfurt School also drew on the works of Friedrich Nietzsche and Sigmund Freud when they formulated their initial critical theory of society. The genesis of critical theory there rests upon those thinkers' works in addition to work of Marx and Marxists. Freudo-Marxism would become a characteristic of critical theory as practiced at times by the Frankfurt School.

The forerunners to critical theory: The Kantian, Neo-Kantian, Hegelian, and Post-Hegelian philosophy of Continental Europe and its intellectual culture

In the Neo-Kantianism that reigned in German academic institutions in the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century, Kant's critical philosophy was reapplied to what was called the 'human sciences', 'cultural sciences', and social sciences, by its Southwestern School of scholars. This marked the beginnings of theory construction of a critical nature in a modern disciplinary context. It can be considered 'critical' because it marked one of the first concerted efforts at problematizing the way power operates in structural and discursive constructs of society. Many thinkers at this time borrowed from and then scaffolded onto the French academy of ideas, created by Destutt de Tracy, where the concept of ideology originated. Additionally, Wilhelm Dilthey pioneered the study of the human sciences in Berlin, and was an intellectual influence on the Frankfurt School's critical theory, as were Georg Simmel and the Southwest's Max Weber in the cultural and social sciences. The latter's theories of rationalization and disenchantment were of great importance to the development of modern critical theory, especially the type pursued by the Frankfurt School's Horkheimer, Adorno, and Habermas. Weber's theory of rationalization and disenchantment represented his critiques of dialectical reason, traditional philosophical thought, and skeptical social inquiry, which all were built on his social theory of a calling and his iron cage of bureaucratic society, in turn deeply influencing the intellectual orientation of the Frankfurt School.

Canonical critical theory: The Institute for Social Research/Frankfurt School

The Frankfurt School and its Institute for Social Research is a paradigm case of scholars who employed a critical theory of society. Mainly in an effort to fathom the complex ways in which persuasive cultural messages could compel millions into embracing the evils of Nazism, the Frankfurt School forged a concrete and vital mission for its purpose, namely to embrace multiple disciplinary academic works to understand the complexities emerging in neo-industrial societies. The first generation of its critical theorists included Max Horkheimer, Theodor W. Adorno, Herbert Marcuse, Erich Fromm, and others that surrounded the Institute were Walter Benjamin, Siegfried Kracauer, and Ernst Bloch. Among the second generation that carried the tradition of critical theory forward was Jürgen Habermas. Members of the Institute's third generation that continue to make landmark statements in critical theory include Axel Honneth, Hans Joas, and Claude Offe. The U.S. based political philosophers Nancy Fraser and Seyla Benhabib have held residencies at the Institute, and they are informally considered part of the Frankfurt School's third generation of critical theorists. As critical theory's chief representative in Frankfurt, Habermas engaged in scholarly dialogues with several of the other leading thinkers in Europe, including Michel Foucault, Hans-Georg Gadamer, and Jean-François Lyotard. Overall, the Frankfurt School is most known for its varied cultural critiques, including questioning the role of media, examining the methods of production involving cultural texts, and interrogating the way diverse audiences consume cultural artifacts.

The practicing of critical social theory and critical cultural theory today: Post-Marxism as critical social, political, and cultural theory after the Frankfurt School

Critical theory in the social sciences is often critical social theory, but not always. There exists critical political theory that political scientists draw upon, and critical cultural theory that anthropologists and sociologists utilize, among a host of others. A critical theory of politics was long explored by philosophers, and critical social and political theory occur in research by those in humanities, especially philosophers who work to differentiate the new cultural terrain from social and political philosophy, as well as historians of social and political thought who conducted similar work. Critical theory in the humanities has the reputation as being used by scholars and students in English departments, as well as Comparative Literature and Communications departments. Those in English departments often employ the works of Foucault in addition to the Frankfurt School, while critical theory in Philosophy departments typically rely solely on the Frankfurt School. The works of Foucault and other French theorists are grouped in the tradition of post-structuralism, which is a separate methodology from critical theory in the latter's tradition of continental philosophy. In hindsight, we can reasonably argue that intellectuals locked into their own disciplinary frameworks did not yield as much productive work at problematizing and understanding the nuances of socio-cultural and political societies and organizations than their counterparts who embraced interdisciplinarian approaches.

Notable critical theorists and theories of Marxism, Neo-Marxism, and Post-Marxism: The legacy of humanism in the critical European tradition

Given the varied nature of critical theory, it is practically impossible to offer a narrow list of academic figures responsible for its development. Additionally, critical theory's interdisciplinary essence means that many different and separate lines of academic thought help contribute to critical theory's evolution. As a result, we will presume the reader has some familiarity with other lines of academic thinking – such as post-structuralism – since, for the sake of space and time, we cannot possibly detail each line of thinking that goes into constructing critical theory. Instead, we will briefly introduce the reader to the major thinkers in the history of critical theory, and we will mention some of the other areas of academic thinking so the reader can explore those areas further should they choose.

Georg Lukács (1885–1971) was a Hungarian philosopher and dissident whose work in the Marxist tradition formed an early statement in the trajectory of critical theory. He refined the Marxist notion of reification, which was one of his leading contributions to critical theory, along with a careful extension of Marx's ideas on consciousness, including Lukács'. Lukács theory of reification represented his articulation of social relations and power dynamics in the social reality of modernity. He extended his theory of reification in his work *History and Class Consciousness* and developed a Marxist theory of literature in his work *The Theory of the Novel*. His student Agnes Heller would go on to serve as a representative of early Marxist critical theory outside of Hungary.

Walter Benjamin (1892–1940) was a literary critic and cultural theorist associated with the first generation of the Frankfurt School and one of the leading contributors to critical theory in the twentieth century. He proposed a theory of 'aura', or the authenticity and prestige of a cultural work in his essay, 'The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction'. His work *The Arcades Project* was an example of critical theory's critique of everyday life. Benjamin also wrote on the philosophy of history in a critical context, extending themes of Hegelian self-consciousness and historical destiny into 20th century intellectual thought.

Siegfried Kracauer (1889–1966) was another literary critic and cultural theorist loosely affiliated with the first generation of critical theory at the Frankfurt School. His work was an example of how critical theory could entail film studies and urban studies/culture. He developed a critical

theory of the metropolis – the modern city – in contemporary culture in his work *The Mass Ornament*. His work shares commonalities with Benjamin's, especially with Benjamin's aforementioned *Arcades Project*, as well as with the neo-Kantian philosopher and sociologist of culture Georg Simmel. In 'The Metropolis and Mental Life', it was Simmel who offered an inchoate critical theory of urban culture, one that would later form a commonality with the work of Kracauer and Benjamin, which included collective notions of society that were informed by the fin de siècle classical social theory of Marx, Durkheim, and Weber.

Born in Sardinia in 1891, Antonio Gramsci is best known for his theory of hegemony. His passion for journalism took him to Turin, Italy, where he worked with and reported on the factory councils – a gathering of workers who united in efforts to require fair wages and working conditions from management. Gramsci co-founded the Italian Communist Party, but later disagreed with Lenin over the inadequacy of Russian socialism as a model for Italy and Gramsci's rejection of historical determinism. As a result, Gramsci closely analyzed Italian history, culture, politics and economics. He believed that, unlike Marx, oppression was a cultural phenomenon, not primarily an economic relationship. The subaltern, or citizens relegated to the margin of society, existed in the terrain of oppression. But, the Gramscian dialectic suggests that ensembles of subaltern individuals, particularly the organic intellectuals within the subaltern stratum, yielded a possibility of subsuming the main dominant power base, which he called 'hegemony'. Hegemony, according to Gramsci, is neither good nor bad, but it is merely a descriptive label for elements of power in society. Hegemony is a conception of societal power, but not a coercive, or forceful power, but rather power that operates based on the consent of the governed. As such, Gramsci argued that hegemony was 'gelatinous', meaning it ebbs and flows based on historical moments, or blocs. When hegemony is weak, other cultural groups could establish their own hegemonic principles. Gramsci suggested that the best way to do this is through civil society, where cultural understandings and influences reside. Gramsci used the military metaphors of 'war of position' and 'war of maneuver' to explain how hegemonic transitions can occur. The war of position explains how cultural groups can unify into ensembles and solidify their own values and norms. When the gelatinous hegemony weakens, the war of position can become a war of maneuver, when a subaltern group, for instance, could then supplant current hegemonic notions with their own. All of this, of course, can only transpire if individuals can recognize and reflexively overcome 'common sense', or the everyday unquestioned assumptions that permeate society and allow the hegemony to function relatively without molestation. Seen as a threat to fascist Italy, Gramsci was imprisoned by Mussolini, and died in 1937. While in prison, Gramsci wrote his famous prison notebooks, which were his thoughts and reflections about primarily Italian history and politics.

Ernst Bloch (1885–1977) was another critical theorist who was a loose affiliate of the Frankfurt School's first generation of scholars. His *Spirit of Utopia* pursued what labeled 'ideology critique', one that presented critical theory as primarily a political activity. His critical theory of this nature was also among the first to form what was understood as the sociology of knowledge, as was the work of Karl Mannheim, Max Scheler, and to a lesser extent, Max Weber's brother Alfred along with Norbert Elias.

Philosopher Max Horkheimer (1895–1973) directed the Frankfurt School's Institute for Social Research and established critical theory as a scholarly activity separate from the social sciences. In his work, he described the differences between traditional theory and critical theory. He also stated how critical theory could be considered by some as an intellectual activity that was between philosophy and social science. His critical theory of *The Eclipse of Reason* continued many of the themes he pursued in *Dialectic of Enlightenment* with Theodor W. Adorno, namely, how reason had turned into its opposite in modernity, or how all truth is relative in the deception of the culture industry.

Theodor W. Adorno (1903–1969) was a Frankfurt School critical theorist whose work demonstrated how critical theory could be developed in intellectual discourses beyond philosophy. Also he developed critical theory in context of the Western philosophical tradition of metaphysics

and epistemology, including critiques of the existentialism and phenomenology of Martin Heidegger in *The Jargon of Authenticity* and *Negative Dialectics* and a critique of the phenomenology of Edmund Husserl in *Against Epistemology*, as well as pursuing a critical theory of art in *Aesthetic Theory*. He also worked to develop critical theory in the context of musicology in *Philosophy of New Music* and in *Introduction to the Sociology of Music*. One of his critical themes in aesthetics was the idea of content versus form, and in metaphysics was the long subjective/objective dichotomy in that philosophical tradition. His idea of critical consciousness had socio-economic implications for the development and fate of democracy in modernity. Adorno embodied the idea of critical theory as a largely pessimistic intellectual activity, yet one that involved and promoted the full use of the faculties of reason. Adorno also proposed a critical theory that portrayed subjective identity in modernity and its late capitalism as 'psychoanalysis in reverse' which represented his continental philosophical attempt at extending and reviving nineteenth century relativism in the social sciences. This complemented and built on Lukács' neo-Marxian theory of false consciousness, which nearly all the critical theorists of the Frankfurt School added to or revised in some fashion. As a critical theorist, he also contributed to a social psychological analysis of the Authoritarian Personality in mass society.

Herbert Marcuse (1898–1979) was another philosopher of the first generation of the Frankfurt School and was among the initial leaders in critical theory. He proposed a critical theory of society, engaged in a measured amount of ideology critique, and wrote about the fate of man in industrial society. He applied critical theory to the aesthetic dimension, and incorporated the psychoanalysis of Freud in his work, the latter as evident in his study *Eros and Civilization*. He became one of the leading figures of the New Left during the 1960s, showing how European critical theory could be synthesized with Leftist American thought. This combination of academic scholarship to political activism was highlighted in his book *One-Dimensional Man*, which provided a scathing critique of advanced industrial society. His critical theory, including *One-Dimensional Man*, was important in the development of works by his notable students in the United States, including Angela Davis, who applied elements of critical theory to race. In addition, Marcuse pursued the Frankfurt School's canonical critique of capitalism. He also demonstrated how critical theory could synthesis Freud and Marx.

Erich Fromm (1900–1980) was a social psychologist and psychoanalyst of the first generation of the Frankfurt School who developed a critical theory of society from Freud and other psychological works, including social psychological and psychoanalytic, constructs. He did so in his work *Escape from Freedom*, which examined mass society as a totalizing force, as well as *The Sane Society*. He also engaged in a critique of consumerism and consumer culture in his work *To Have or to Be?*, which examined flaws in consumerist cognition, which incorporates Marxian themes of false consciousness and estranged labor into critique of contemporary culture .

The Frankfurt School of critical theorists attempted to synthesize Marx and Nietzsche as well as build a bridge between Hegel and Marx. Their output was more than social, cultural, political, and economic – it was also literary, aesthetic, and musical. Adorno offered a philosophy and sociology of music. He critiqued jazz music and jazz culture in his philosophy and sociology of music and functioned as the Frankfurt School's chief music critic. His critical philosophy of music was aesthetic, ontological, and metaphysical – offering ontology of music and metaphysics of music in addition to aesthetics of music. Music was treated as Post-Marxism and Critical Humanism in his scholarship. His *Negative Dialectics* and *Aesthetic Theory* examined the compositions of Beethoven and others from Continental Europe.

Born in Algeria in 1918, Louis Althusser was a French Marxist philosopher. He was influenced by Marx, and noted Gramscian Renate Holub has argued that Althusser credits Gramsci for some of his views. Althusser is important for critical theory because of his theory of ideology. Althusser, a structuralist, saw the ruling power of society in terms of apparatuses, of which there are two structural pillars – the repressive state apparatuses (RSAs) and ideological state apparatuses (ISAs). Although distinct conceptually, both frameworks can overlap. However, Althusser

believed that understanding the differences can illuminate how ideology operates. For RSAs, the state uses coercion, even violence, in public manifestations in order to maintain control. ISAs, on the other hand, function through ideology in mostly private arenas, such as churches, schools, etc. Thus, a society can forcefully impose its views on society, or it can insert its *raison d'être* through common cultural sites. The individual subject, over time, grows accustomed to the state's ideology to the point where their subjectivity is 'interpellated'. Althusser uses the analogy of a police officer yelling 'hey you' at a citizen, and the citizen turns to see what is the matter. The recognition of the hailing and the response that may ensue, is how the citizen is subjectified through interpellation. After all, when a subject is interpellated, they are responding to the state's authority and tacit, if not in some ways explicit, rendering of the person's subject position in society, *vis-à-vis* the authority of the police. Calling this process the 'concretization of subjectivity, Althusser claims that every societal apparatus, in some way or another, helps to interpellate us as subjects. Since all apparatuses congeal in some fashion to concretize, or cement, our subjectivity, certain apparatuses are more influential than others during important historical moments. Althusser calls these moments of ideological dispersion 'overdetermination', such that a singular apparatus may be more prominent than others at a particular historical moment in time. Always the Marxist, Althusser argued that this structural process was predicated on class and helped to explain the inevitability of class struggle. While somewhat complex, Althusser's notion of interpellation in ISAs illustrates how ideology functions. As a perspective of the ruling order, ideology inculcates itself into our very identity based upon our position in the larger societal fabric. After a lengthy and important career as a professor of philosophy, Althusser died in 1990.

Hannah Arendt (1906–1975) was a political philosopher who contributed to critical theory, namely a critical theory of politics. Her work *The Origins of Totalitarianism* examined the power dynamics of mass society's authoritarian regimes, and it was in such a sense that her work came to embody a critical theory of politics, or the nexus of critical theory and political theory.

Jürgen Habermas (1929–) re-established critical theory at the Frankfurt School as Director of the Institute for Social Research, and leader of its second generation of scholars, as a critical theory of society, one that was practiced largely in the tradition of philosophy as was during the directorship of Horkheimer. Habermas wrote the two volume work *The Theory of Communicative Action* that signaled a communicative turn in critical theory. In the second volume of his work, he built on and redefined Weber's notion of rationalization. He discussed the role of the media in mass society and democracy in his work *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*. His work inspired a number of media studies and communication themes in critical theory, and which was influential to scholars from those traditions who wanted to practice critical theory among its native context of modernity. Habermas in fact opposed and debated post-modernity, arguing that critical theory was intended as a purely modern discourse. He did so in works of his such as 'Modernity versus Postmodernity' and *The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity*, which opposed philosopher Lyotard's study *The Postmodern Condition*, as well as the works of Foucault and Derrida, among others. Carrying the tradition of critical theory in Adorno – his graduate supervisor at the Frankfurt School – forward, he also displayed an intellectual hostility towards the work of philosopher Martin Heidegger, which demonstrated once again how critical theory was in fact its own methodology among the tradition of continental philosophy in the contemporary humanities. His critical theory, especially in *The Theory of Communicative Action*, also proved influential among the discipline of sociology and for sociologists practicing sociological theory, while his *Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere* did the same for the discipline of political science and for political scientists practicing political theory. In philosophy, his work launched a leading contribution to discourse ethics and discourse theory, one that formed a rivalry with the work of Foucault. The theory of the 'lifeworld' found in Habermas's critical theory, as expounded in *The Theory of Communicative Action*, also initiated an intellectual opposition to the hermeneutics of the philosopher Gadamer. Those following in his tradition of critical theory at the Frankfurt

School include his students Claus Offe, Axel Honneth, Hans Joas, Oskar Negt, and Karl-Otto Apel. Those among the first generation of critical theory also included Friedrich Pollock, Leo Löwenthal, Otto Kirchheimer, and Franz Neumann.

'French' Critical Theory, namely the works of Foucault, Jean Baudrillard, Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, Jacques Lacan, Roland Barthes, Jacques Derrida, and Jean-François Lyotard represented an intellectual tradition among literary critics, one that was intertwined in that field with the works of traditional critical theorists Walter Benjamin and Theodor W. Adorno, among others. In literary criticism, critical theory's relation to postmodernism and post-structuralism was examined in full by the employment of these French thinkers' works, as was the case with the earlier structuralism of Claude Lévi-Strauss, and in that sense, his predecessor, Swiss linguist Ferdinand de Saussure. The postmodern Marxist, American Fredric Jameson, was also studied among the tradition there. In the UK, critical theory and cultural studies were intertwined in the interdisciplinary spirit seen in The Frankfurt School. In particular, the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies, in Birmingham, forged the important work of noted intellectuals, such as Paul Gilroy, Dick Hebdige, Lawrence Grossberg, Angela McRobbie, Stuart Hall, and many others. As a result, British cultural studies also employed critical theory as practiced by literary critics, including the works of Raymond Williams, Stuart Hall, in addition to the Marxist literary theorist Terry Eagleton. British cultural studies, especially in the work of Hall, reformulated Gramsci's notion of hegemony and drew upon the theoretical constructs of Claude Lévi-Strauss and Roland Barthes, namely in their analyses of myth, and in the development of its own distinct tradition in critical cultural theory. The work of that particular tradition in critical theory is largely shaped by media studies and the role of media in contemporary society, making it extremely relevant to critical theory as practiced in communications departments and by cultural theorists. Other works of critical theory by French thinkers include Étienne Balibar, Lucien Goldmann, Sylvère Lotringer, Paul Virilio, Georges Bataille, Michel de Certeau, Henri Lefebvre, Guy Debord, and to a certain extent, the social practice theory of Pierre Bourdieu, including his notions of habitus and reflexivity (the latter of which has been studied in contrast to the critical theory of Adorno at times.) The works of non-French thinkers Marshall McLuhan (media), Dick Hebdige (subculture), John Fiske (communications), and Laura Mulvey (film) have been influential in the development of media theory, one that contemporary critical theory can at times employ as a systematic area of concentration.

Recent European critical theory practiced in communications, contemporary cultural studies, and elsewhere in the humanities in addition to some of the social sciences, includes the work of philosophers Slavoj Žižek, Giorgio Agamben, Alain Badiou, Julia Kristeva, Hélène Cixous, Luce Irigaray, Jacques Rancière, Umberto Eco, and Peter Sloterdijk, and to a lesser extent Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe and Jean-Luc Nancy. Žižek's critical theory rested largely on synthesizing the works of Hegel and Lacan. In Agamben's critical theory and its notion of homo-sacer, the philosophy of jurist Carl Schmitt is especially important. In Badiou's critical theory, of significant import is the role of continental science in the development of contemporary European philosophy, particularly as it relates to ethics and moral questions. Kristeva, Cixous, and Irigaray are among the leaders of a contemporary French tradition of feminism developed and practiced among a post-structuralist (and post-Freudian) framework.

Recent critical theory in the U.S. includes the works of Judith Butler, Nancy Fraser, Seyla Behabib, Michael Hardt, Douglas Kellner, Thomas McCarthy, Donna Haraway, and Avital Ronell, among others. Fraser has engaged in scholarly dialogues with the Frankfurt School's Axel Honneth, and her critical theory incorporates elements of both Habermas and Foucault, one that rests more heavily on the former. She has made key statements in philosophical feminism, and renewed the intellectual tradition's foundation in political philosophy, one that presents a critical theory of politics in addition to a critical theory of society. In doing so, she has drawn on Foucault's theory of governmentality, and has engaged contentious themes in social and political theory, such as the dialogue of globalization. Her critical theory, along with the work of Benhabib and Hardt, has increasingly been studied by political theorists, while the critical theory

of Kellner has increasingly been studied by media, communications, and education scholars. A recent theme in political economy among critical theory has been the critique of Neo-Liberalism that was begun in the late lectures of Foucault. Among the scholars in critical theory that have engaged Neo-Liberalism as a theme have been the geographer David Harvey, the philosopher Étienne Balibar, and the critical pedagogy scholar Henry Giroux. Notable post-colonial theorists' works have also formed a venue for contemporary critical theory, including the post-colonial notions of Edward Said, Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, and Homi Bhabha. Other Marxists that have contributed to critical theory have included Marshall Berman, Stanley Aronowitz, Ernesto Laclau, Chantal Mouffe, and Antonio Negri. Sociologist Gillian Rose has also contributed to the tradition. In a certain sense the social theorist Anthony Giddens has too, as well as Ulrich Beck, Scott Lash and Zygmunt Bauman, the latter of which by the proposing of his theory of liquid modernity and critique of postmodern consumerism.

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