

Readers may redistribute this article to other individuals for noncommercial use, provided that the text and this note remain intact. This article may not be reprinted or redistributed for commercial use without prior written permission from the author. If you have any questions about permissions, please contact Klaus Nellen at IWM, Spittelauer Laende 3, A – 1090 Vienna, e-mail <nellen@iwm.at>.

Preferred Citation: Schmidt-Gleim, Meike. 2002. A Comment on Class Struggle in 2001. In *Questionable Returns*, ed. A. Bove, Vienna: IWM Junior Visiting Fellows Conferences, Vol. 12.



A Comment on Class Struggle in 2001¹

Meike Schmidt-Gleim

Democracy institutionalizes what is at stake in the famous slogan of Clausewitz inverted by Michel Foucault: “Politics is the continuation of war by other means.”² The struggles for power regularly performed in the elections of democratic systems recognize conflicts, offering them a symbolic outlet, but they never resolve these conflicts. Yet another parallel with Foucault’s slogan arises because if one agrees that politics is a continuation of war, then politics ceases to exist, for there is no longer a war (conflict). The end of conflict entails the end of politics.

Elections and the succeeding shifts in power are in no way to be understood as a resolution of the ongoing struggles within society. Instead “they are a recognition of the latter’s existence. The conflicts remain in themselves and, as democracy’s driving motor, its fate.”³ Hence society is marked by division. To follow Claude Lefort’s ideas on democracy this far (I will return to them in detail) has several consequences for a conceptualization of democracy. Democracy can only be fully conceived when its specific relation to history is taken into account, not in an analysis that concentrates on the depiction and installation of specific institutions, rights, or

¹ Work on this paper was supported by the Austrian Academy of Sciences.

² Foucault 1986, p. 8.

³ Compare Lefort 1990, pp. 90-94.

practices. If conflict never finds a real resolution in a democratic system, then reconciliation is endlessly postponed, and society can in fact break into parts but can never result in a fulfillment or reach a final target.⁴ It has no telos, and its course or outcome cannot be thought of as teleological. Rather its historical development is radically contingent. Lefort himself made the following oft-quoted remark: “The important point is that democracy is instituted and sustained by the dissolution of the markers of certainty.”⁵

The connection of contingency to the continuity of a system signified by an open end with respect to its further development and by ongoing divisions within it seems plausible in the horizon of a deconstruction of society’s supposedly homogeneous identity. But in an article by Lefort and Gauchet, “On Democracy: The Political and the Institution of the Social” (originally a series of lectures at the University of Caen in 1966-7; edited by Marcel Gauchet), there is a sentence that somehow contradicts, as I will attempt to explain, this matrix of contingency. Lefort and Gauchet claim: “Democracy emerges necessarily in that era in which class struggle becomes identifiable for itself.”⁶ In other words, class struggle stands necessarily at the beginning of democracy. But two concepts in this sentence are rather confusing, for at first sight they do not seem to fit into an interpretation of Lefort’s theory of democracy as basically open and contingent: the main term, “class struggle”, and the adverb “necessarily”. I would even claim that this sentence of Lefort and Gauchet might be seen as constituting a paradox, on the one hand establishing a discourse of *contingency* in connection with their concept of democracy, and on the other hand indicating a *necessity* with regard to its historical development. In fact this is not the case, although in the course of this analysis, we shall see why this suspicion is not far-fetched, and why this misreading is linked to a tendency to simplify the complexity of Lefort’s and Gauchet’s approach. It is worth taking a second look because this almost paradoxical statement indicates how democracy is related to history and, moreover, how contingency is linked to necessity. Democracy is the historical society par excellence, as Lefort once claimed. But this is where necessity comes into play. For it is precisely the contingent foundation of democracy which takes into account embeddedness in actual power structures and society’s hegemonic dispositions.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Lefort, 1988, p. 19.

⁶ Lefort and Gauchet, 1990, p. 91.

What is Lefort saying in the quotation? Is it just a remark about a historic fact? A remark about the French Revolution – its struggle for democratic change on the one hand, and its marches for bread on the other? Historians might interrupt nervously at this point, wishing to clarify this distorted picture of history. They could probably give historical evidence that if we take the French Revolution as democracy's initial moment, then it was not the proletarian class struggle – which is alluded to in the quote, and which is what we commonly refer to in speaking of class struggle – but the struggle between the bourgeoisie and the aristocracy which stood at the beginning of democracy.

Thanks to this clarification it remains unresolved whether the connection between democracy and (sticking to the term used by Lefort in order to find out why he is using it) class struggle was a mere historical coincidence or whether there is something which connects democracy and class struggle more internally or intrinsically, as indicated by the adverb “necessarily.” Perhaps some causation or, let us say, class struggle is the very condition of democracy. And if we assume that there is more to the nexus between democracy and class struggle, are we not getting to a point where Lefort again reduces all societal antagonism to this single contradiction between classes? Is it a remnant of Lefort's Marxist past? Is he reproducing the old mistake of Marx, thinking of antagonism only in the sense of class antagonism?⁷ At any rate, Lefort raises an old question: is class struggle a variable, a struggle among others on the “battlefield” of society? In short, is class struggle an x?

What is at stake in this question? Is it at all worth asking again? Haven't many others given answers to it already? Why should I be bothering to find an answer to a question already given on several occasions? One might call it suspicion, but I think the question is not only a relic of a theoretical practice overcome some time ago, but a symptom of this practice. Precisely because I think I know the answer.

So what is the answer held back here? It is that yes, of course class struggle is an x. It is one struggle among other equally important contingent struggles with civil society – the feminist struggle, the anti-racist struggle, the environmental struggle, just to mention some of them – all of which struggle around specific agendas not tied to substantial identities. There is not the one and only core struggle in democracy, the essential class struggle. Such a struggle is fictitious; it is Marx's mistake. Lefort himself speaks enthusiastically about the current phenomenon of particularist fights: “At the periphery of the big parties, minority groups mobilize public opinion

⁷ Mouffe, 1993, p. 408.

around concrete targets such as environmental protection, the dangers of nuclear energy, arbitrary dismissals, insecurity in the cities and suburbs and the fate of immigrants.”⁸

So how is it possible that the same person who said democracy is necessarily emerging when class struggle identifies itself, refers to today’s contingent struggles with adoration? What is democracy’s connection to these contingent struggles? Can we substitute the term class struggle in the initial quotation arbitrarily with, say, struggle against nuclear weapons, hence: democracy emerges necessarily in that era in which the struggle against nuclear weapons identifies itself? Yes and no.

Before I explain what I mean by this ambiguous statement let me return to the line of argument. Has it brought us any closer to an answer to the question than that I found out what I already knew, namely, that the answer to the question, Is class struggle an x?, is already given, and that Lefort himself appreciates this answer when he honors multiple struggles in civil society? The suspicious moment of this statement occurs, however, when one reflects on the character of this supposedly compelling question and answer pair. What is a question when there is already an answer to it? Is it still a question? It is rather a fact, a “true” depiction of reality.

Still suspicious, I would suggest approaching the subject as I previously intended, by posing a question about a question. What is at stake when I repeat the question, Is class struggle an x? The yes of my answer is always already more than only a yes. It is like putting a signature underneath a contract which contains a lot of very fine print. It brings into play an inclination toward a specific discourse, or can be depicted as a positioning on an existing theoretical field.

The statement: yes, class struggle is a struggle among equally valuable struggles, leads to a chain of categories. The contingency of struggles, the contingency of history, the contingency of the agents of civil movements, the impossibility of a closure of society or the open character of the social field or, more “carefully” depicted, the impossibility of society as a homogeneous totality.

How are these categories connected? The discourse of a contingency of struggles sets up a certain logic which renders these categories relatively dependent on each other. Only when society is not conceptualized as a homogeneous totality but rather as divided into different heterogeneous groups that struggle with each other, can one speak of a contingency of struggles. These struggles then lead to an openness of the historical horizon, to its contingency. (Some of the terms hint at the terminol-

⁸ Lefort, 1998, p. 2.

ogy of Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe⁹, which does not mean that I identify their work with the depicted discourse,¹⁰ and by the way one can find similar expressions in Lefort's work.)

The question is signified by a specific discourse. But to what degree is it also a signifier of a blind spot, if I take it seriously in its supposedly symptomatic dimension? Is it possible to reformulate the question Is class struggle an *x*? in other, possibly more abstract terms? With this move I suddenly catch myself having expected there to be only one interpretation of the question. Now, I have to admit more than one possible reading. The answer was somehow devoted to the question of whether class struggle is a conflict which is substantial in society. But what about the following reading of the question: Is class struggle a conflict which is *constitutive* of society? How, then, was it possible to read it in such an unambiguous way in the first place? Was the answer given therefore an ideological answer, and if so, what does it fail to recognize?

Nevertheless, I would like to stick to the first interpretation of the question. If we want to arrive at the same conclusion we have already drawn from it, the equivalent answer now is no. But what happens if we say yes? Yes, class struggle is a conflict which is substantial in society. This answer refers in an analogous way to a theoretical field, in which one category leads to another. It is older than the already mentioned discourse. (To reduce confusion, I will refer to the older discourse as the first discourse, even though it is not clear how far it is retrospectively constructed, and to the more recent discourse as the second discourse.)

Answering the question whether class struggle is substantial in society with a yes means, in the sense of the fine print on a contract, saying identities are substances, history is teleology, and society is a totality. In contrast to *contingency* it is the logic of the *necessary* which is the dominant element in this discourse. One might recognize this discourse as traditional Marxism.¹¹ At any rate, it makes it obvious that the term *class struggle* as well as the term *necessarily* do fit into this first discourse while democracy finds its horizon in the second. Now, have I come across the expected

⁹ Laclau, Mouffe, 1991

¹⁰ Žižek, p. 5-6., 1989

¹¹ Compare Marchart, 1998, pp. 92-3; "This traditional (Marxist) notion implies two interconnected features: (1) there exists a certain fundamental antagonism possessing an ontological priority to 'mediate' all other antagonisms, determining their place and their specific weight (class antagonisms, economic exploitation); (2) historical development brings about, if not a necessity, at least an 'objective possibility' of solving this fundamental antagonism and, in this way, mediating all other antagonisms..." Žižek, 1989, p. 3.

paradox? Does the phrase, “democracy emerges necessarily in that age in which class struggle becomes identifiable for itself,” mix two discourses that one cannot mix unless one means to construct a paradox?

In order to answer these questions, I need to know something about their mode of relation. How, then, are they related?

In the historical perspective – when we look at these two discourses in the order in which they are developed – they describe a narrative of gradual development from a traditional essentialist Marxist politics of class to the radical contingency of civil conflicts (the so-called post-marxist politics¹²): a problematic curve of a progressive historical process, with the by-product of an evolutionary construction of history. In a non-historical perspective, a perspective which assumes these discourses at the same time in the same space, a confrontation between two discourses is constructed simultaneously which leads to a contradiction.

The opposition of the answers yes and no continues to exist in a confrontation of the discourse they generate. Each of the categories is linked to a complementary one in the opposite field, resulting in two chains of opposed categories:

- Teleology versus Contingent History
- Totality versus the Impossibility of Totality
- Substance versus Contingency

Hence the duality of the discourses not only leads to a choice, but forms a dichotomy: teleology, totality, and substance on the one hand; contingent history and the impossibility of totality on the other.

A decision in favor of one of the categories against the others seems inevitable. But is it a theoretical rupture that becomes manifest here? Isolde Charim argues in an analogous case that “theory breaks like one breaks up a friendship.” The second discourse replaces the first like a new product replaces last year’s model.

Coming up with a question that makes possible only two opposite answers only to complain about the dichotomy inherent in the question seems like intentionally constructing a vicious circle. But Lefort’s own work legitimizes this step because one can find traces of this dichotomy in it. Honored with the Hannah Arendt prize, he said:

¹² “The basic feature of so-called ‘post-Marxism’ (...): almost any of the antagonisms which, in the light of Marxism, appear to be secondary can take over this essential role of mediator for all the others.” Zizek, 1989, p. 4.

When I was young and politically engaged, one had to, insofar as one belonged to the Left, decide between revolutionary and reformist targets. For my part, as I was a Marxist and militantly engaged in a Trotskyite party, I took the side of a revolutionary perspective.... It took me more than fifteen years to notice and publicly speak out that revolution is a myth in a democratic society, and that one could become a reformist and at the same time be a radical....¹³

This statement, made in 1998, can either be taken as a sign of resignation or appreciated for its realistic judgment about the current development of democratic societies. However, both positions accept the premise that revolution and reform are fundamentally different. Lefort places revolution in opposition to reform and declares the need for an either/or decision. Moreover, he claims that revolution is a myth in democratic societies, and he links democracy to reformism, which gives even more evidence for the exclusive character of this decision.

The opposition between the two practices is an effect. It is embedded in the theoretical concept itself. Political practice turns out to be something that results from and is not prior to a specific concept of the dynamics of society. In this logic, it becomes evident which one of the depicted discourses renders possible the concept of a revolution and which one the reformist alternative. The precondition of a revolution is a concept of history which, as in a teleological development, makes reconciliation possible. Reform, however, is tied to a concept of society as an open space with an open end (without reconciliation but never-ending contingent changes). Lefort must take such a critical position with respect to revolution (revolution is a myth) because a revolution requires, theoretically speaking, a set of categories (totality, substantial class identity, teleology) which contradict his concept of democracy.

As mentioned at the beginning, for Lefort democracy is more than just a certain system with a specific set of institutions (e.g. parliament) and rights (e.g. the vote). He depicts a principle at the core of society in general: conflict. The specificity of democracy is now the recognition of this principle. Concretely, he calls attention to the right to vote alongside the installation of an empty place of power that can only be taken provisionally, not so much for the participatory qualities of this right or even as one dimension of popular self-governing processes. Instead, Lefort conceptualizes democracy as a struggle for power (which is guaranteed in elections) that

¹³ Lefort, 1998, p. 2.

provides a symbolic outlet for the real conflict (class struggle). It is a symbolic recognition of the existence of conflict rather than the solution of a particular conflict. I spoke of a fundamental division in the midst of society because of its conflictual character, through the installation of a struggle for power (which symbolically externalizes power from society) another division comes into play: the division between society and power. The result is the appearance of society, because it can only identify itself as an identity from an imagined exterior place.¹⁴

Does Lefort ascribe a substantial content to society in general and to democracy in particular in this analysis? The opposite is the case: Lefort empties the signifier “democracy”. Precisely because of their gesture toward giving civil conflict a symbolic outlet, aleatory conflicts and their hegemonic struggles decide the fate of a society. And democracy becomes what Lefort claims is the historical society par excellence.¹⁵

Lefort is a post-foundationalist. Both contingency and the emptiness of the place of power indicate that society is not built on a stable ground; they *designate the absence of social or historical necessity*, the absence of a positive foundation of society. What they also designate, however, is that the dimension of ground does not simply disappear since it remains present as absent. This is the point where democracy enters the stage ... as the institutional recognition and discursive actualization of the absence of a positive ground of society.¹⁶

All of these criteria of democracy provide reasons to link it to what I called the second discourse: contingent history, contingent conflicts, and a society characterized by division and not homogeneity. Taking up Lefort’s own vocabulary, one can refer to a democratic society as an open question. “In fact, this system inscribes itself nowhere except at the site of a question.”¹⁷ And because the solution of society’s struggles is perpetually postponed, society never remains the same. Change becomes institutionalized, rupture transformed into steady movement, discontinuity into continuity.

¹⁴ “That this [social space] itself, despite (or because of) its numerous divisions, orders itself as these same divisions in their numerous dimensions, implies reference to a place from which this space is to be seen, read, and named. Power evidences itself as this symbolic pole.” Lefort, 1999, p. 49.

¹⁵ Lefort, 1990, p. 291.

¹⁶ Marchart, 2000, p. 51.

¹⁷ Lefort, 1990, p. 90.

Calling attention again to Lefort's sentence: democracy emerges necessarily in that era in which class struggle identifies itself, seems to give evidence for the claim that it is a paradoxical statement. Even within Lefort's own theoretical approach it does not seem to make sense to speak of necessity. For how can Lefort speak of a necessary connection between class struggle and democracy if, as Marchart's interpretation of Lefort claims, democracy is signified by an *absence* of social or historical necessity, and democracy neither has a necessary development nor is connected to any necessary ground?

What are the consequences of this concept of democracy? How is the concept of contingency as a foundation for democracy to be understood? Can one apply the reproach Chantal Mouffe makes against liberal thinkers to Lefort's reference to the notion of exclusion in democracies? Mouffe writes,

This is something that pluralist liberals do not understand because they are blind to power relations. They agree on the need to extend the sphere of rights in order to include groups hitherto excluded, but they see that process as a smooth one of progressive inclusion in citizenship.... The problem with such an approach is that it ignores the limits imposed on the very extension of pluralism by the fact that some existing rights have been constituted on the very exclusion or subordination of the rights of other categories.¹⁸

Is Lefort's approach equally blind to power relations as that of these pluralist liberals? No, one cannot blame Lefort for this. But reading Lefort in this way is what I would call a symptomatic reading. Contingency is conceptualized from out of power relations and democracy is conceptualized as a system without totalizing aspects. This reading is due to an assumed contradiction between contingency and totalizing effects expressed in the dichotomy of the depicted discourses. It installs a blind spot where democracies have exclusionary effects.

In order to depict Lefort's approach adequately we must take a second look at this theory. When Lefort speaks of the dissolution of the markers of certainty, it is not meant to be a banal statement. If not recognized in a more profound dimension, Marchart writes, it "would be reduced to the trivial insight that many a thing is uncertain in our modern times (a banality which has been elevated to the level of science by so-called risk theorists)."¹⁹ So how is Lefort's claim to be understood?

¹⁸ Mouffe, 1996, p 236.

¹⁹ Marchart, 2000, p. 51.

Up to now I have suggested two different perspectives on the two discourses developed in this analysis: the historical perspective (diachronic), building a development, and the synchronic, building a dichotomy. But Lefort does not only replace the old field with a more fashionable one. He dismisses the traditional concepts only to a degree, shifting their position away from the center. When Lefort says that revolution in a democratic state is a myth, we can take his words literally. Revolution becomes part of the imaginary.

Hence what Lefort is doing is distinguishing between different constitutive dimensions of society. He employs Jacques Lacan's differentiation of the real/the imaginary (on the intersubjective level) and the symbolic (as the whole of relations), though he does not always employ it in a rigorous way.²⁰

Lefort himself defines the symbolic dimension as "instituting access to the world."²¹ Marchart explains: "One could say that for Lefort, the symbolic defines the very way in which the chiasmatic, instituting dimension of society – its self-externalization – is operationalized and institutionalized."²² An example is the concept of totality: Lefort still refers to it, but in a decentered way. Society does build a totality but only on a symbolic level – or better to skip the use of "only" because what seems to take up only a symbolic dimension in fact excludes many from what it constitutes as society.²³

Returning to the initial problem of class struggle, what can we derive from this observation for an analysis of its theoretical status? To take fully into account what Lefort means by class struggle, we must multiply the category and apply it to the three different orders of the real, the imaginary, and the symbolic. Class struggle is not just an empirical fact. It has a symbolic, a real, and an imaginary dimension.

What is class struggle actually doing to society? It is splitting society into different entities, fractions, and in this case most obviously into classes. Hence on the

²⁰ "Lefort's usage of terms like 'the real' and 'reality' is not always consistent and he sometimes employs these terms interchangeably. ... At any rate, for Lefort, reality (what he calls facts) is discursive in nature since 'there is no institution which is not organized within a linguistic activity.' Thus facts are defined by Lefort as first-order language, while the symbolic and the imaginary *mise-en-forme* is defined as second-order language." Marchart 2000, p. 66.

²¹ "Both the political and the religious confront philosophic thought with the symbolic – not in the sense that the social sciences have given it, but in the sense that both institute access to the world through their own articulations." Lefort 2000.

²² Marchart, 2000 p. 66.

²³ Cf. Bernard Flynn: "For Lefort, the symbolic Order is that which deploys the 'within and without'; it is what operates this distinction." Flynn, quoted in Marchart, 2000, p. 66.

level of the real we cannot speak of a unity referring to society, but only of division. However, because class struggle (in the sense of the real) is not part of the symbolic order, the division which it causes does not become visible unless it results in riots. It is not represented on the stage of the political. Still, the splitting and disturbing involved in class struggle remains a threat to society, to its unity when, for example, class struggle takes the form of an uprising.

Lefort describes the place of class struggle (in the sense of the real) in society as origin. But this is to be understood neither in the sense of a mere historical fact (which is over now) nor in the sense of an a priori nor as something like a metaphysical essence of society. It is merely the result of struggle, class struggle – admitting at the same time that the term “result” is terribly misleading because it has always already happened. One cannot reach the point of its production. The origin associated with class struggle has the ambivalent status of being neither absent nor present. We cannot inscribe it into a historical chronology or experience it. Desiring to experience it, we can only note that it has already happened. Appropriately, Lefort called one of his lectures, “Society is not a Society of Individuals,” which means that our starting point is already one of exchange and conflict among individuals.

The imaginary enters the stage as a form of concealment of the dimension of the real. Speaking about the impossibility of giving class struggle a precise historical date I was already touching the dimension of the imaginary. As Lefort claims, the imaginary does in fact relate to the real like the distorted image we see of ourselves in the Lacanian mirror-stage – unifying what is actually fragmented.²⁴ So when we come to the point of the impossibility of experiencing the origin or inscribing it into a chronology of incidents, it is the discourse of the imaginary that makes possible the writing of history (as facts of truth) and the concealment of society’s disturbances. The imaginary shifts the position of the thinker or the historian into a posi-

²⁴ Dick Howard characterizes Lefort’s notion of the imaginary (*l’imaginaire*) as follows: “The Freudian term which in the work of Jacques Lacan conceptualizes the representational dimension of psychic functioning, the image of itself which the human needs in order to function as a social being. This self-image is articulated by Lacan in terms of the oedipal drama where the father represents the law, indicating to the male child what is socially forbidden, and therewith teaching the child his place in society. Analogously, the social *imaginaire* would represent the law of society’s structuring, telling it what is and is not legitimate, what can and cannot be changed, and ultimately defining and limiting its self-identity. The *imaginaire*, symbolically articulated, structures the scientific, religious, and aesthetic discourse through which a society comes to know itself. Its function is to neutralise the conflictual origins of the social, to create the illusion of permanence and necessity which characterized the ‘society without history.’” 1988, p. 216, quoted in Marchart.

tion, which Lefort calls a flight over history, an outsider's position, which allows a total overview of history. Hence it is the imaginary which makes class struggle a historical event that belongs to the past and is now over. As such, the statement: democracy emerges necessarily in the same era in which class struggle becomes identifiable for itself, makes reference to a past historical event.

But it remains to take the symbolic dimension into account. I said that class struggle is not represented within democratic society. But this is only partially true. It is, according to Lefort, precisely the recognition of class struggle that becomes the foundation for a democratic regime. But this recognition transforms class struggle (in the sense of the original division) into a competition for power, into a conflict for representation, and shifts the class struggle onto the stage of the political.

Let me quote the statement once again: "Democracy emerges necessarily in the same era in which class struggle becomes identifiable for itself." One can now conclude that the historical necessity expressed in this statement makes democracy a relation rather than a substance (as it would be in the first discourse). Class struggle which becomes identifiable for itself is nothing else but the appearance of society. The installation of an empty place of power external to society enables one to identify society, which according to Lefort is precisely what happens in democracy – its principle, as I argued above. The second part of Lefort's statement – class struggle becomes identifiable for itself – states the very principle of democracy.

Class struggle in the sense of the real builds the point of reference of what is systematized in democratic regimes, and thus altered in form, into class struggle as a struggle for power. Democracy stands for an establishment of a relation between the real of class struggle (the original division) and the symbolic dimension of class struggle (the competition for power).

Still open is the question of why this is called class struggle and not any other conflict. What is the relation of class struggle to the original division? Does it express a necessary relation? I would say yes. But this is not due to any essential connection between class and conflict. Rather, it refers to the hegemonic historic constellation or the dominant discourse of interpretation. Origin only becomes intelligible when identified as class struggle and not the other way round. The relation to the origin is never one of mere observation but always one of an intuitive gesture. It is not wrong, but it is never fully grasped in all its dimensions.

In conclusion I will quote Lefort one more time: "Democracy is necessarily emerging when class struggle identifies itself." This statement now includes several layers analyzing the relation between democracy and class struggle. First, one can argue that the expressed necessity of the connection between both parts of the sen-

tence is due to their congruency. Second, the term class struggle makes reference to the specific historical condition of a specific power structure and, of course, to the representation of this struggle in literature (through Guizot, Thiers or Marx).²⁵ Hence contingency is not to be confused with indifference or uncertainty.

Why does class struggle and not the fight against nuclear weapons stand at the beginning of democracy? The answer is banal. There are historical reasons why it does.

²⁵ Foucault, 1996, pp. 48-49.

Works Cited.

Foucault, Michel: *Vom Licht des Krieges zur Geburt der Geschichte*, Merve Verlag Berlin 1996

Lefort, Claude, *Fortdauer des Theologisch-Politischen?*, Passagen Verlag Wien 2000

----- "*Die demokratische Gesellschaft ist keine Gesellschaft von Individuen*", Lecture (anlässlich der Verleihung des Hannah-Arendt-Preises für politisches Denken), Bremen 1998

----- ; Marcel Gauchet, Über die Demokratie: Das Politische und die Instituierung des Gesellschaftlichen, in: *Autonome Gesellschaft und libertäre Demokratie*, ed. Ulrich Rödel, Frankfurt/Main 1990

----- Die Frage der Demokratie, in: *Autonome Gesellschaft und libertäre Demokratie*, ed. Ulrich Rödel, Suhrkamp, Frankfurt/Main 1990

----- "The Question of Democracy," in: *Democracy and Political Theory*, Polity Press, Oxford 1988

Marchart, Oliver, "Division and Democracy," in: *Filosofski*, Filozofski institut ZRC SAZU, Ljubljana 2000

----- "Gibt es eine Politik des Politischen" in: *Das Undarstellbare in der Politik. Zur Hegemonietheorie Ernesto Laclaus*, ed. Oliver Marchart, Turia & Kant, Wien 1998

Mouffe, Chantal, "Democratic Citizenship and the Political Community," in:

Dimension of Radical Democracy. Pluralism, Citizenship, Community, ed. Chantal Mouffe, Verso 1996

----- Chantal Mouffe in Conversation with Oliver Marchart, in: *Mesotes* 3/3, 1993

----- ; Ernesto Laclau, *Hegemonie und radikale Demokratie*, Passagen Verlag Wien, 1991

Zizek, Slavoj, "*The sublime Object of ideology*", Verso 1989