



Opponent's assessment

The title: The Process of Abstraction

Student: Ioannis-Panagiotis Paraskevas

The student submits for defense a very thoughtful and precise essay dealing with the relationship between social movements, social media and neoliberalism. The essay is written in very readable language that reveals the author's passion for the topic. The essence of the author's argument, its strengths and weaknesses have already been presented in the supervisor's review.

Personally, I am not close to this style of thinking, I am not professionally involved in the topic. For this reason I do not want to comment too much on the merits of the argumentation in the essay. Since the role of the opponent is rather critical, I would like to comment **on the problems of the essay as an academic text.**

1. I see **the system of references to sources as problematic**. The final list of references is not alphabetical. Some entries begin with the title, and in the case of collective monographs the author of the paper is not given. For example, we do not learn who authored the article The Politics of the Movement.
2. Some passages give the impression that the author is **unacknowledgedly using interpretations from secondary sources while quoting mainly primary sources**. Unfortunately, this impression is reinforced by an analysis of the citation sequences in Turnitin. Specifically, turnitin identified sequence similarities of about 20 citations to a sequence in the file <https://studylib.net/doc/8405440/social-movements--an-introduction>. This file is not clickable, it is probably some pirate shared text dedicated to social movements. The book with the same title is Diani, Porta (1999) Social Movement. an Introduction.
3. Some passages give the impression that the student does not distinguish much between paraphrases and quotations. Moreover, these quazi paraphrases appear to be taken from secondary literature without proper acknowledgement of the source. The evidence found is admittedly not legally conclusive, as it is theoretically possible that both the thesis and the secondary source are based on an incorrect paraphrase of the same primary source.

Figure 1: Page 8. original source <https://studylib.net/doc/8405440/social-movements--an-introduction>.

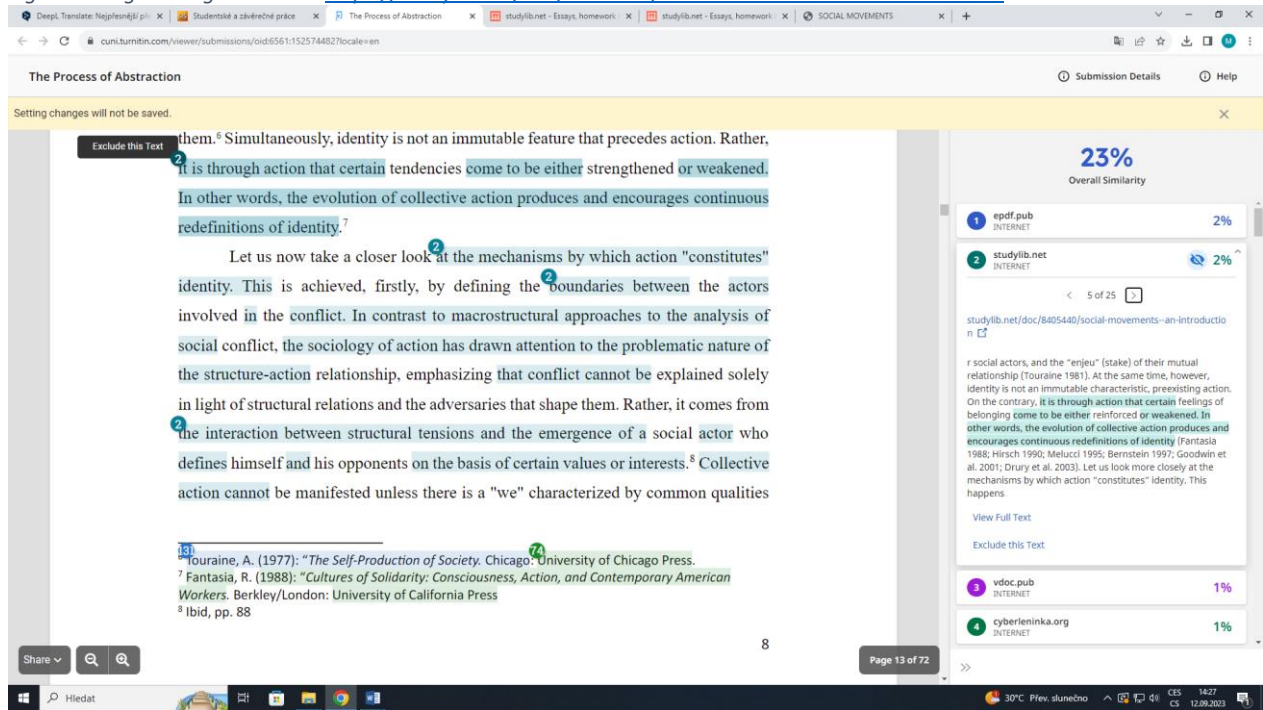


Figure 2 page 9

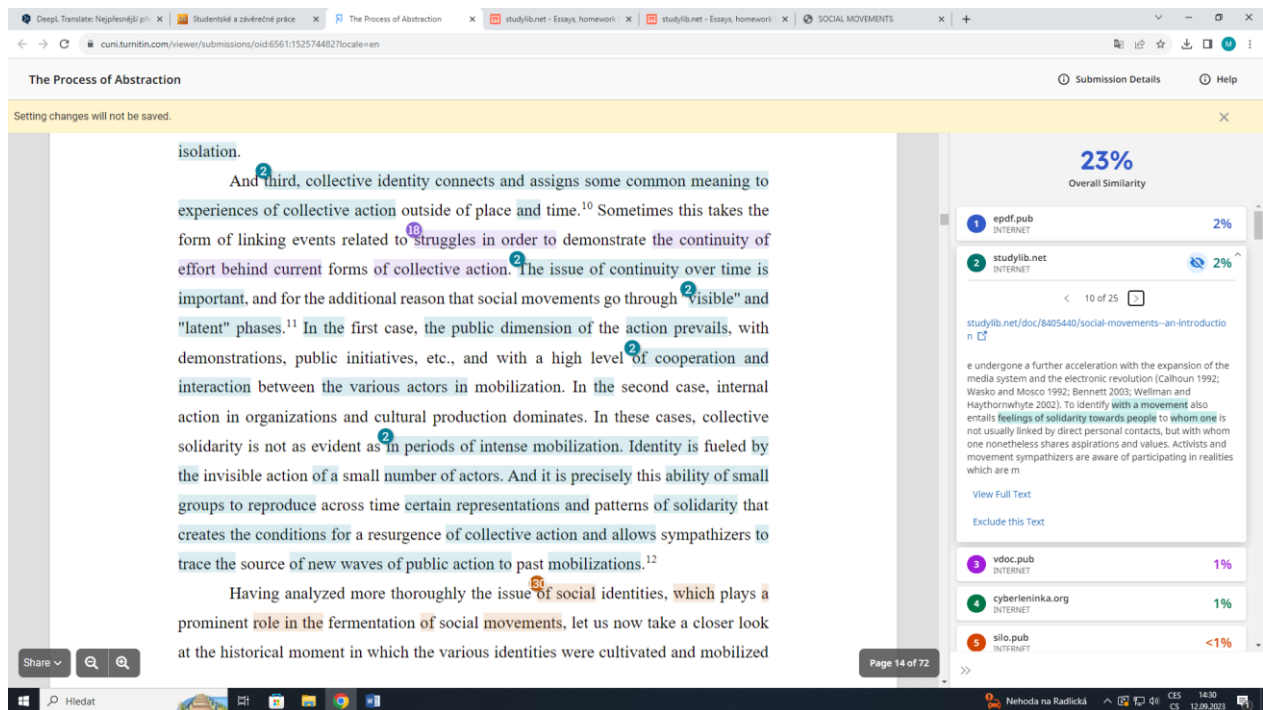


Figure 3 page 15

The Process of Abstraction

Setting changes will not be saved.

Social movements, basically, constitute a stable core of claims and mobilizations against power. They are resilient over time and adapt their actions to the time and historical situation. The openness of the political system, i.e., the political space granted by the system itself to the free formation and expression of opposition to it, seems to play a decisive role in stabilizing and consolidating the action of a social movement. The "culture" of action, as has been observed, influences action not by providing the ultimate values toward which action is oriented, but by shaping a repertoire or "toolbox" of habits, skills, and styles, by which individuals construct "strategies of action".²⁹

We see, then, that in the case of the social movements of the 60's - and as we have given emphasis on 1968- individuals acted using the culture they had. This mechanism is made up of a multitude of cultural and ideational elements, including beliefs, ceremonies, artistic forms, and informal practices such as language, conversation, stories and daily habits. We could claim that this culture was an inner element of the individuals who expressed it. What do we mean by intrinsic element? That within the framework of the values of Liberal Democracies, individuals are

28 Ibid, pp. 176-78
29 Swidler, A. (1986): "Culture in Action: Symbols and Strategies". American Sociological Review, 51, pp.273-86.

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1 Collective action as cognitive praxis The idea that culture, and specifically its impact on collective action, can be reduced to values has been controversial for quite some time. In particular, it has been observed that "culture influences action not by providing the ultimate values toward which action is oriented, but by shaping a repertoire of 'tool kit' of habits, skills, and styles from which people construct 'strategies of action'" (Swidler 1986: 273). That is to say, culture provides the cognitive apparatus which people need to orient themselves in the world. This apparatus consists of a multiplicity of cultural and ide

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- The passages devoted to the phenomenon of so-called neoliberalism correspond too closely to the standard treatment of the phenomenon in radical left literature. It gives the impression that the author has a ready-made opinion and uses the cited primary literature only to support his thesis. In the context of Central Europe, it seems strange that the author does not come to terms with Foucault's designation of German ordoliberalism as a form of neoliberalism. Foucault, as is well known, distinguished two forms of neoliberalism in *The Birth of Biopolitics*: German ordoliberalism and American anarcholiberalism. The idea of the social market economy, as is well known, comes from the German ordoliberal tradition.

Conclusion

The core of the essay is undoubtedly original and influenced by the author's original ideological view of the problems of the contemporary world. However, the essay lacks academic foundation. I am convinced that if the author had actually analysed the primary sources honestly, the whole grand narrative would have looked much more precarious. The author uses methods that border on the plagiarism of secondary sources; the primary sources give the impression of being quoted for formal purposes only and not subjected to any real analysis. The limited access to the source texts in Turnitin makes it impossible to assess the extent of the adoption of secondary sources. On the other hand, the work does not give the impression of deliberate deception; the driving motivation was undoubtedly a strong ideological conviction, which probably weakened the author's care in dealing with sources. Provided that the question of the similarity of parts of the text to secondary source 2 (<https://studylib.net/doc/8405440/social-movements--an-introduction>) is clarified, **I recommend the thesis for defence and rate it as good.**

Mgr. Marek Německý, Ph.D.