Katarzyna Jezierska (b. 1979) is active at the Department of Social and Political Sciences and the multidisciplinary Research School in Conditions of Democracy at Örebro University. She has studied political science at the University of Warsaw and Bologna University. This book is her PhD thesis.

In this thesis two branches of radical democratic theory, the deliberative and the agonistic, are brought together. Katarzyna Jezierska analyses the strengths and weaknesses of Jürgen Habermas’s and Chantal Mouffe’s conceptions of democratic politics and subjectivity. She proposes a third position on radical democracy that takes on board some central insights from the two branches, at the same time as it transgresses some of their basic assumptions.

It is argued that radical democracy should embrace the fundamental undecidability of social reality expressed by the ethos of questioning. In a radical democracy everything, even its basic principles, should be open to question. This calls for an active citizenry and subjects ready to radically transform the system and themselves. In other words, it is linked to a vision of the subjects as inessential. At the same time, the subjects are limited by their social, historical and cultural surroundings, and the processes of subject formation and intersubjectivity are marked by opacity. The author also argues for the importance of theorizing the relation to the Other in radical democratic theory.