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EDITORIAL

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Many different versions of cultural studies have emerged in the past decades. While during its dramatic period of global expansion in the 1980s and 1990s, cultural studies was often identified with the approach to culture and society developed by the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies in Birmingham, England, their sociological, materialist, and political approaches to culture had predecessors in a number of currents of cultural Marxism. Many 20th century Marxian theorists ranging from Georg Lukacs, Antonio Gramsci, Ernst Bloch, Herbert Marcuse, Walter Benjamin, and T.W. Adorno to Fredric Jameson and Terry Eagleton employed the Marxian theory to analyze cultural forms in relation to their production, their imbrications with society and history, and their impact and influences on audiences and social life. Traditions of cultural Marxism are thus important to the trajectory of cultural studies and to understanding its various types and forms in the present age.

The origins and rise of cultural Marxism

Marx and Engels rarely wrote in much detail on the cultural phenomena that they tended to mention in passing. Marx's notebooks have some references to the novels of Eugene Sue and popular media, the English and foreign press, and in his 1857-1858 "outline of political economy," he refers to Homer's work as expressing the infancy of the human species, as if cultural texts were importantly related to social and historical development. The economic base of society for Marx and Engels consisted of the forces and relations of production in which culture and ideology are constructed to help secure the dominance of ruling social groups. This influential "base/superstructure" model considers the economy the base, or foundation, of society, and cultural, legal, political, and additional forms of life are conceived as "superstructures" which grow out of and serve to reproduce the economic base. In general, for a Marxian approach, cultural forms always emerge in specific historical situations, serving particular socio-economic interests and carrying out important social functions.

For Marx and Engels, the cultural ideas of an epoch serve the interests of the ruling class, providing ideologies that legitimate class domination. "Ideology" is a critical term for Marxian analysis that describes how dominant ideas of a given class promote the interests of that class and help cover over oppression, injustices, and negative aspects of a given society. On their analysis, during the feudal period, ideas of piety, honor, valor, and military chivalry were the ruling ideas of the hegemonic aristocratic classes. During the capitalist era, values of individualism, profit, competition, and the market became dominant, articulating the ideology of the new bourgeois class that was consolidating its class power. Ideologies appear natural, they seem to be common sense, and are thus often invisible and elude criticism.

Marx and Engels began a critique of ideology, attempting to show how ruling ideas reproduce dominant societal interests serving to naturalize, idealize, and legitimate the existing society and its institutions and values. In a competitive and atomistic capitalist society, it appears natural to assert that human beings are primarily self-interested and competitive by nature, just as in a communist society it is natural to assert that people are cooperative by nature. In fact, human beings and societies are extremely complex and contradictory, but ideology smoothes over contradictions, conflicts and negative features, idealizing human or social traits like individuality and competition which are elevated into governing conceptions and values. Many later cultural Marxists would develop these ideas, although they tended to ascribe more autonomy and import to culture than in classical Marxism.

While Marx's writings abound with literary reference and figures, he never developed sustained models of cultural analysis. Instead, Marx focused his intellectual and political energies on analyzing the capitalist mode of production, current economic developments and political struggles, and vicissitudes of the world market and modern societies now theorized as "globalization" and "modernity." The second generation of classical Marxists ranging from German Social Democrats and radicals to Russian Marxists focused even more narrowly on economics and politics. Marxism became the official doctrine of many European working class movements and was thus tied to requirements of the political struggles of the day from Marx's death in 1883 and into the twentieth century. A generation of Marxists, however, began turning concentrated attention to cultural phenomena in the 1920s.

Perry Anderson (1976) interprets the turn from economic and political analysis to cultural theory as a symptom of the defeat of Western Marxism after the crushing of the European revolutionary movements of the 1920s and the rise of fascism. In addition, theorists like Lukacs, Benjamin, and Adorno, who instituted a mode of Marxist cultural analysis, were intellectuals who had deep and abiding interest in cultural phenomena. The Hungarian cultural critic Georg Lukacs wrote important books like Soul and Form (1900) and Theory of the Novel (1910) before he converted to Marxism and briefly participated in the Hungarian revolution. The ultra-Marxist Lukacs of the early 1920s intently developed philosophical and political dimensions of Marxism before returning to cultural analysis later in the 1920s. In Russia, exile, he withdrew internally from Stalinism, while working on a series of literary texts that have underappreciated importance for cultural studies. Lukacs' Theory of the Novel connects the rise of the European novel to the emergence and triumph of the bourgeoisie and capitalism. Its highly-delineated individual protagonists corresponded to the individualism promoted by bourgeois society and the lessons learned in the course of the characters' experiences often conveyed useful instruction, reproducing the ideology of bourgeois society.

For Lukacs, literary forms, characters, and content must all be interpreted as articulations of historical contexts in 3 which narrative itself takes on diverse forms and functions in dissimilar environments. His important contributions for cultural studies in this regard constitutes a resolute historicizing of the categories of cultural form and analysis, as well as reading cultural texts within a specific historical milieu and using the interpretations of texts to illuminate in turn their historical setting. Lukacs' early historicist cultural studies were enriched in the 1920s in his turn to Marxism in which he used theories of the mode of production, class and class conflict, and Marx's analysis of capital to provide economic grounding for his socio-cultural analysis. History now was constructed by a mediation of economy and society and cultural forms are understood in their relation to socio-historical development within a mode of production, while cultural forms, properly interpreted, illuminate their historical circumstances. Thus, Lukacs' readings of Balzac, Zola, Thomas Mann, Kafka, and other writers provide models of how to read and analyze critical texts in specific sociohistorical situations. Lukacs' prescriptive aesthetic valorized critical (and socialist) realism as the model for progressive art and assaulted modernist aesthetics, a position that was strongly rejected by subsequent Western Marxists from the Frankfurt School through British cultural studies. The late Lukacs also turned to more dogmatic political forms of

Marxian ideology critique and formally renounced his earlier utopianism that saw literature as a mode of reconciliation between individuals and the world and art as a way of overcoming alienation. Ernst Bloch, by contrast, stressed the utopian dimensions of Western culture and the ways that cultural texts encoded yearnings for a better world and a transformed society. Bloch's hermeneutic approach to Western culture looked for visions of a better life in cultural artifacts from the texts of Homer and the Bible to modern advertising and department store show-case displays (1986). This utopian impulse contributes to cultural studies a challenge to articulate how culture provides alternatives to the existing world and images, ideas, and narratives that can promote individual emancipation and social transformation, perspectives that would deeply inform the Frankfurt School and contemporary theorists like Fredric Jameson.

For the Italian Marxist theorist, Antonio Gramsci, the ruling intellectual and cultural forces of the era constitute a form of hegemony, or domination by ideas and cultural forms that induce consent to the rule of the leading groups in a society. Gramsci argued that the unity of prevailing groups is usually created through the state (as in the American revolution, or unification of Italy in the 19th century), the institutions of "civil society" also play a role in establishing hegemony. Civil society, in this discourse, involves institutions of the church, schooling, the media and forms of popular culture, among others. It mediates between the private sphere of personal economic interests and the family and the public authority of the state, serving as the locus of what Habermas described as "the public sphere." 4 In Gramsci's conception, societies maintained their stability through a combination of "domination," or force, and "hegemony," defined as consent to "intellectual and moral leadership." Thus, social orders are founded and reproduced with some institutions and groups violently exerting power and domination to maintain social boundaries and rules (i.e. the police, military, vigilante groups, etc.), while other institutions (like religion, schooling, or the media) induce consent to the dominant order through establishing the hegemony, or ideological dominance, of a distinctive type of social order (i.e. market capitalism, fascism, communism, and so on). In addition, societies establish the hegemony of males and dominant races through the institutionalizing of male supremacy or the rule of a governing race or ethnicity over subordinate groups. Gramsci's key example in his Prison Notebooks (Gramsci, 1971) is Italian fascism that supplanted the previous liberal bourgeois regime in Italy through its control of the state and exerted, often repressive, influence over schooling, the media, and other cultural, social, and political institutions. Hegemony theory for Gramsci involves both analysis of constitutive forces of domination and the ways that particular political forces achieved hegemonic authority, and the delineation of counterhegemonic forces, groups, and ideas that could contest and overthrow the existing hegemony. An analysis, for instance, of how the regimes of Margaret Thatcher in England and Ronald Reagan in the United States in the late 1970s and early 1980s won power would dissect how conservative groups gained dominance through control of the state, and the use of media, new technologies, and cultural institutions such as think tanks and fund-raising and political action groups. Explaining the Thatcher-Reagan hegemony of the 1980s would require analysis of how rightist ideas became dominant in the media, schools, and culture at large. It would discuss how on a global level the market rather than the state was seen as the source of all wealth and solution to social problems, while the state was pictured as a source of excessive taxation, overregulation, and bureaucratic inertia. Gramsci defined ideology as the ruling ideas which present the "social cement" that unifies and holds together the established social order. He described his own "philosophy of praxis" as a mode of thought opposed to ideology, which includes, among other things, a critical analysis of ruling ideas.

In "Cultural Themes: Ideological Material" (1985), Gramsci notes that in his day the press was the dominant instrument of producing ideological legitimation of the existing institutions and social order, but that many other institutions such as the church, schools, and different associations and groups also played a role. He called for sustained critique of these institutions and the ideologies that legitimate them, accompanied by creation of counter institutions and ideas that would produce alternatives to the existing system. Gramsci's critique of the dominant mode of

culture and media would be taken up by the Frankfurt School and British cultural studies providing many valuable tools for cultural criticism.

The concepts of ideology and utopia and historical-materialist cultural analysis developed by Lukacs and Bloch, influenced the trajectory of Frankfurt School cultural studies. 5 The work of the Frankfurt School provided what Paul Lazarsfeld (1941), one of the originators of modern communications studies, called a critical approach, which he distinguished from the "administrative research." The positions of Adorno, Lowenthal, and other members of the inner circle of the Institute for Social Research were contested by Walter Benjamin, an idiosyncratic theorist loosely affiliated with the Institute. Benjamin, writing in Paris during the 1930s, discerned progressive aspects in new technologies of cultural production such as photography, film, and radio. In "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction" (1969), Benjamin noted how new mass media were supplanting older forms of culture whereby the mass reproduction of photography, film, recordings, and publications replaced the emphasis on the originality and "aura" of the work of art in an earlier era. Freed from the mystification of high culture, Benjamin believed that media culture could cultivate more critical individuals able to judge and analyze their culture, just as sports fans could dissect and evaluate athletic activities. In addition, processing the rush of images of cinema created, Benjamin believed, subjectivities better able to parry and comprehend the flux and turbulence of experience in industrialized, urbanized societies. Himself a collaborator of the prolific German artist Bertolt Brecht, Benjamin worked with Brecht on films, created radio plays, and attempted to utilize the media as organs of social progress. In the essay "The Artist as Producer" (1999 [1934]), Benjamin argued that progressive cultural creators should "refunction" the apparatus of cultural production, turning theater and film, for instance, into a forum of political enlightenment and discussion rather than a medium of "culinary" audience pleasure. Both Brecht and Benjamin wrote radio plays and were interested in film as an instrument of progressive social change. In an essay on radio theory, Brecht anticipated the Internet in his call for reconstructing the apparatus of broadcasting from one-way transmission to a more interactive form of two-way, or multiple, communication (in Silberman 2021: 41ff.)– a form first realized in CB radio and then electronically-mediated computer communication. Moreover, Benjamin wished to promote a radical cultural and media politics concerned with the creation of alternative oppositional cultures. Yet he recognized that media such as film could have conservative effects. While he thought it was progressive that mass-produced works were losing their "aura," their magical force, and were opening cultural artifacts for more critical and political discussion, he recognized that film could create a new kind of ideological magic through the cult of celebrity and techniques like the close-up that fetishized certain stars or images via the technology of the cinema. Benjamin was thus one of the first radical cultural critics to look carefully at the form and technology of media culture in appraising its complex nature and effects. Moreover, he developed a unique approach to cultural history that is one of his most enduring legacies, constituting a micrological history of Paris in the 18th century, an uncompleted project that contains a wealth of material for study and reflection (see Benjamin 2000 and the study in Buck-Morss, 1989).

Max Horkheimer and T.W. Adorno answered Benjamin's optimism in a highly influential analysis of the culture industry published in their book Dialectic of 6 Enlightenment, which first appeared in 1948 and was translated into English in 1972. They argued that the system of cultural production dominated by film, radio broadcasting, newspapers, and magazines, was controlled by advertising and commercial imperatives, and served to create subservience to the system of consumer capitalism. While later critics pronounced their approach too manipulative, reductive, and elitist, it provides an important corrective to more populist approaches to media culture that downplay the way the media industries exert power over audiences and help produce thought and behavior that conforms to the existing society. The Frankfurt School also provide useful historical perspectives on the transition from traditional culture and modernism in the arts to a mass-produced media and consumer society.

In his path-breaking book The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere, Jurgen Habermas further historicizes Adorno and Horkheimer's analysis of the culture industry. Providing historical background to the triumph of the culture industry, Habermas notes how bourgeois society in the late 18th and 19th century was distinguished by the rise of a public sphere that stood between civil society and the state and which mediated between public and private interests. For the first time in history, individuals and groups could shape public opinion, giving direct expression to their needs and interests while influencing political practice. The bourgeois public sphere made it possible to form a realm of public opinion that opposed state power and the powerful interests that were coming to shape bourgeois society. Habermas notes a transition from the liberal public sphere which originated in the Enlightenment and the American and French Revolution to a media-dominated public sphere in the current stage of what he calls "welfare state capitalism and mass democracy." This historical transformation is grounded in Horkheimer and Adorno's analysis of the culture industry, in which giant corporations have taken over the public sphere and transformed it from a site of rational debate into one of manipulative consumption and passivity. In this transformation, "public opinion" shifts from rational consensus emerging from debate, discussion, and reflection to the manufactured opinion of polls or media experts.

For Habermas, the interconnection between the sphere of public debate and individual participation has thus been fractured and transmuted into that of a realm of political manipulation and spectacle, in which citizen-consumers ingest and absorb passively entertainment and information. "Citizens" thus become spectators of media presentations and discourse which arbitrate public discussion and reduce its audiences to objects of news, information, and public affairs. In Habermas's words: "Inasmuch as the mass media today strip away the literary husks from the kind of bourgeois self-interpretation and utilize them as marketable forms for the public services provided in a culture of consumers, the original meaning is reversed" (1989: 171). Habermas's critics, however, contend that he idealizes the earlier bourgeois public sphere by presenting it as a forum of rational discussion and debate when in fact many social groups and most women were excluded. Critics also contend that Habermas neglects various oppositional working class, plebeian, and women's public spheres developed alongside of the bourgeois public sphere to represent voices and interests excluded in this forum (see the studies in Calhoun, 1992). Yet Habermas is right that in 7 the period of the democratic revolutions a public sphere emerged in which for the first time in history ordinary citizens could participate in political discussion and debate, organize, and struggle against unjust authority.

Habermas' account also points to the increasingly important role of the media in politics and everyday life and the ways that corporate interests have colonized this sphere, using the media and culture to promote their own interests. Cultural Marxism was highly influential throughout Europe and the Western world, especially in the 1960s when Marxian thought was at its most prestigious and procreative. Theorists like Roland Barthes and the Tel Quel group in France, Galvano Della Volpe, Lucio Colletti, and others in Italy, Fredric Jameson, Terry Eagleton, and cohort of 1960s cultural radicals in the English-speaking world, and a large number of theorists throughout the globe used cultural Marxism to develop modes of cultural studies that analyzed the production, interpretation, and reception of cultural artifacts within concrete socio-historical conditions that had contested political and ideological effects and uses. One of the most famous and influential forms of cultural studies, initially under the influence of cultural Marxism, emerged within the Centre for contemporary cultural studies in Birmingham, England within a group often referred to as the Birmingham School.

British cultural studies

While the Frankfurt School arguably articulates cultural conditions in the stage of state monopoly capitalism or Fordism that produced a regime of mass production and consumption, British cultural

studies emerged in the 1960s when, first, there was widespread global resistance to consumer cap-
italism and an upsurge of revolutionary movements, and then emergence of a new stage of capital,
described as "post-Fordism," postmodernity, or other terminology that attempted to describe a
more variegated and contested social and cultural formation. Moreover, the forms of culture
described by the earliest phase of British cultural studies in the 1950s and early 1960s articulated
conditions in an era in which there were still significant tensions in England and much of Europe
between an older working class-based culture and the newer mass-produced culture whose models
and exemplars were the products of American culture industries.

The initial project of cultural studies developed by Richard Hoggart, Raymond Williams, and
E.P. Thompson attempted to preserve working class culture against onslaughts of mass culture
produced by the culture industries. Thompson's inquiries into the history of British working class
institutions and struggles, the defenses of working class culture by Hoggart and Williams, and
their attacks on mass culture were part of a socialist and working class-oriented project that
assumed that the industrial working class was a force of progressive social change and that it
could be mobilized and organized to struggle against the inequalities of the existing capitalist
societies and for a more egalitarian socialist one. Williams and Hoggart were deeply involved in
projects of working class education and oriented toward socialist working class politics, seeing
their form of cultural studies as an instrument of progressive social change.

The early critiques in the first wave of British cultural studies of Americanism and mass culture
in Hoggart, Williams, and others during the late 1950s and early 1960s, thus paralleled to some
extent the earlier critique of the Frankfurt school, yet valorized a working class that the Frankfurt
school saw as defeated in Germany and much of Europe during the era of fascism and which
they never saw as a strong resource for emancipatory social change. The 1960s work of the
Birmingham school was continuous with the radicalism of the first wave of British cultural studies
(the Hoggart-Thompson-Williams "culture and society" tradition) as well as, in important ways,
with the Frankfurt school. Yet the Birmingham project also eventually paved the way for a post-
modern populist turn in cultural studies. It has not been widely recognized that the second stage
of the development of British cultural studies – starting with the founding of the University of
Birmingham Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies in 1963/64 by Hoggart and Stuart Hall –
shared many key perspectives with the Frankfurt school. During this period, the Centre devel-
oped a variety of critical approaches for the analysis, interpretation, and criticism of cultural arti-
facts (see Hall et al., 1980b; Johnson, 1986/87; McGuigan, 1992; and Kellner, 1995).

Through a set of internal debates, and responding to social struggles and movements of the
1960s and the 1970s, the Birmingham group engaged the interplay of representations and ideol-
ogies of class, gender, race, ethnicity, and nationality in cultural texts, including media culture.
The Birmingham scholars were among the first to study the effects of newspapers, radio, televi-
sion, film, and other popular cultural forms on audiences. They also focused on how various
audiences interpreted and used media culture in varied and different ways and contexts, analyz-
ing the factors that made audiences respond in contrasting ways to media texts. The now clas-
sical period of British cultural studies from the early 1960s to the early 1980s continued to adopt
a Marxian approach to the study of culture, one especially influenced by Althusser and Gramsci
(see, especially Hall et al., 1980a).

Yet although Hall usually omits the Frankfurt school from his narrative, some of the work
done by the Birmingham group replicated certain classical positions of the Frankfurt school, in
their social theory and methodological models for doing cultural studies, as well as in their polit-
ical perspectives and strategies. Like the Frankfurt school, British cultural studies observed the
integration of the working class and its decline of revolutionary consciousness, and studied the
conditions of this catastrophe for the Marxian project of revolution. Like the Frankfurt school,
British cultural studies concluded that mass culture was playing an important role in integrating
the working class into existing capitalist societies and that a new consumer and media culture
was forming a new mode of capitalist hegemony. Both traditions engaged the intersections of

culture and ideology and saw ideology critique as central to a critical cultural studies. Both perceived culture as a mode of ideological reproduction and hegemony, in which cultural forms help to shape the modes of thought and behavior that induce individuals to adapt to the social conditions of capitalist societies. Both also conceived of culture as a potential form of resistance to capitalist society and both the earlier forerunners of British cultural studies, especially 9 Raymond Williams, and the theorists of the Frankfurt school viewed high culture as containing forces of resistance to capitalist modernity, as well as ideology.

Later, British cultural studies would valorize resistant moments in media culture and audience interpretations and use of media artifacts, while the Frankfurt school tended, with some exceptions, to conceptualize mass culture as a homogeneous and potent form of ideological domination – a difference that would seriously divide the two traditions. From the beginning, British cultural studies was highly political in nature and investigated the potentials for resistance in oppositional subcultures. After first valorizing the potential of working class cultures, they next indicated how youth subcultures could resist the hegemonic forms of capitalist domination. Unlike the classical Frankfurt school (but similar to Herbert Marcuse), British cultural studies turned to youth cultures as providing potentially new forms of opposition and social change. Through studies of youth subcultures, British cultural studies demonstrated how culture came to constitute distinct forms of identity and group membership and appraised the oppositional potential of various youth subcultures (see Jefferson 1976 and Hebdige, 1979). Cultural studies came to focus on how subcultural groups resist dominant forms of culture and identity, creating their own style and identities. Individuals who conform to dominant dress and fashion codes, behavior, and political ideologies thus produce their identities within mainstream groups, as members of specific social groupings (such as white, middle-class conservative Americans). Individuals who identify with subcultures, like punk culture, or black nationalist subcultures, look and act differently from those in the mainstream, and thus create oppositional identities, defining themselves against standard models.

But British cultural studies, unlike the Frankfurt school, did not adequately engage modernist and avant-garde aesthetic movements, limiting its attentions by and large to products of media culture and "the popular." However, the Frankfurt school engagement with modernism and avant-garde art in many of its protean forms is arguably more productive than the ignoring of modernism and to some extent high culture as a whole by many within British cultural studies. It appears that in its anxiety to legitimate study of the popular and to engage the artifacts of media culture, British cultural studies turned away from so-called "high" culture in favor of the popular. But such a turn sacrifices the possible insights into all forms of culture and replicates the bifurcation of the field of culture into a "popular" and "elite" (which merely inverts the positive/negative valorizations of the older high/low distinction). More important, it disconnects cultural studies from attempts to develop oppositional forms of culture of the sort associated with the "historical avant-garde" (Bürger 1984 [1974]). Avant-garde movements like Expressionism, Surrealism, and Dada wanted to develop art that would revolutionize society, which would provide alternatives to hegemonic forms of culture. The oppositional and emancipatory potential of avant-garde art movements was a primary theme of the Frankfurt school, especially Adorno, and was largely neglected by many schools of British cultural studies. Yet, it is interesting that engaging avant-garde forms and movements was central to the project of Screen, which was in some ways the hegemonic avant-garde of cultural theory in Britain in the 1970s, with powerful influence throughout the world before the rise to prominence of the Birmingham School.

In the 10 early 1970s, Screen developed a founding distinction between "realism" and "modernism" and carried out a series of critiques of both bourgeois realist art and the sorts of media culture that reproduced the ideological codes of realism. In addition, they positively valorized avant-garde modernist aesthetic practices, which were championed for their political and emancipatory effects. This project put Screen theory in profound kinship with the Frankfurt school, especially Adorno, though there were also serious differences. British cultural studies

developed systematic critiques of the theoretical positions developed by Screen in the 1970s and early 1980s which were never really answered (Hall et al., 1980). Indeed, what became known as 'screen theory" itself fragmented and dissolved as a coherent theoretical discourse and practical program by the 1980s. While many of the critiques of Screen theory developed by British cultural studies were convincing, the emphasis on avant-garde practices championed by Screen and the Frankfurt school constitute a productive alternative to the neglect of such practices by current British and North American cultural studies. British cultural studies – like the Frankfurt school – insists that culture must be studied within the social relations and system through which culture is produced and consumed, and that thus analysis of culture is intimately bound up with the study of society, politics, and economics.

The key Gramscian concept of hegemony led British cultural studies to investigate how media culture articulates a set of dominant values, political ideologies, and cultural forms into a hegemonic project that incorporates individuals into a shared consensus, as individuals became integrated into the consumer society and political projects like Reaganism or Thatcherism (see Hall, 1988). This project is similar in many ways to that of the Frankfurt school, as are their metatheoretical perspectives that combine political economy, textual analysis, and study of audience reception within the framework of critical social theory. British cultural studies and the Frankfurt school were both founded as fundamentally transdisciplinary enterprises that resisted established academic divisions of labor. Indeed, their boundary-crossing and critiques of the detrimental effects of abstracting culture from its socio-political context elicited hostility among those who are more disciplinary-oriented and who, for example, believe in the autonomy of culture and renounce sociological or political readings.

Against such academic formalism and separatism, cultural studies insists that culture must be investigated within the social relations and system through which culture is produced and consumed, and that thus analysis of culture is intimately bound up with the study of society, politics, and economics. Employing Gramsci's model of hegemony and counterhegemony, it sought to analyze "hegemonic," or ruling, social and cultural forces of domination and to seek "counterhegemonic" forces of resistance and struggle. The project was aimed at social transformation and attempted to specify forces of domination and resistance in order to aid the process of political struggle and emancipation from oppression and domination. Some earlier authoritative presentations of British cultural studies stressed the importance of a transdisciplinary approach to the study of culture that analyzed its 11 political economy, process of production and distribution, textual products, and reception by the audience – positions remarkably similar to the Frankfurt school. For instance, in his classical programmatic article, "Encoding/Decoding," Stuart Hall began his analysis by using Marx's Grundrisse as a model to trace the articulations of "a continuous circuit," encompassing "production - distribution - consumption - production" (1980 b: 128ff.). Hall concretizes this model with focus on how media institutions produce meanings, how they circulate, and how audiences use or decode the texts to produce meaning. Moreover, in a 1983 lecture published in 1985/1986, Richard Johnson provided a model of cultural studies, similar to Hall's earlier model, based on a diagram of the circuits of production, textuality, and reception, parallel to the circuits of capital stressed by Marx, illustrated by a diagram that stressed the importance of production and distribution. Although Johnson emphasized the importance of analysis of production in cultural studies and criticized Screen for abandoning this perspective in favor of more idealist and textualist approaches (63ff.), much work in British and North American cultural studies has replicated this neglect.

Postmodern Turns in Cultural Studies

In many versions of post-1980s cultural studies, however, there has been a turn to what might be called a postmodern problematic which emphasizes pleasure, consumption, and the

individual construction of identities in terms of what McGuigan (1992) has called a "cultural populism." Media culture from this perspective produces material for identities, pleasures, and empowerment, and thus audiences constitute the "popular" through their consumption of cultural products.

During this phase – roughly from the mid-1980s to the present – cultural studies in Britain and North America turned from the socialist and revolutionary politics of the previous stages to postmodern forms of identity politics and less critical perspectives on media and consumer culture. Emphasis was placed more and more on the audience, consumption, and reception, and displaced engaging production and distribution of texts and how texts were produced in media industries. The forms of cultural studies developed from the late 1970s to the present, in contrast to the earlier stages, theorize a shift from the stage of state monopoly capitalism, or Fordism, rooted in mass production and consumption to a new regime of capital and social order, sometimes described as "post-Fordism" (Harvey, 1989), or "postmodernism" (Jameson, 1991), and characterizing a transnational and global capital that valorizes difference, multiplicity, eclecticism, populism, and intensified consumerism in a new information/entertainment society. From this perspective, the proliferating media culture, postmodern architecture, shopping malls, and the culture of the postmodern spectacle became the promoters and palaces of a new stage of technocapitalism, the latest stage of capital, encompassing a postmodern image and consumer culture (see Best & Kellner, 2001).

Consequently, the turn to a postmodern cultural studies is a response to a new era of global capitalism. What is described as the "new revisionism" (McGuigan) severs cultural studies from political economy and critical social theory. During the postmodern 12 stage of cultural studies there is a widespread tendency to decenter, or even ignore completely, economics, history, and politics in favor of emphasis on local pleasures, consumption, and the construction of hybrid identities from the material of the popular. This cultural populism replicates the turn in postmodern theory away from Marxism and its alleged reductionism, master narratives of liberation and domination, and historical teleology. In fact, British cultural studies has had an unstable relationship with political economy from the beginning. Although Stuart Hall and Richard Johnson grounded cultural studies in a Marxian model of the circuits of capital (production-distribution-consumption-production), Hall and other key figures in British cultural studies have not consistently pursued economic analysis and most practitioners of British and North American cultural studies from the 1980s to the present have pulled away from political economy altogether. Hall's swervings toward and away from political economy are somewhat curious. Whereas in the article cited above Hall begins cultural studies with production and recommends traversing through the circuits of capital (1980b) and while in "Two Paradigms" (1980a), Hall proposes synthesizing on a higher level à la the Frankfurt school "culturalism" and 'structuralism," he has been rather inconsistent in articulating the relationship between political economy and cultural studies, and rarely deployed political economy in his work. In the "Two Paradigms" article, for example, Hall dismisses the political economy of culture paradigm because it falls prey to economic reductionism. Hall might be right in rejecting some forms of the political economy of culture then circulating in England and elsewhere, but it is possible to do a political economy of culture à la the Frankfurt school without falling prey to reductionism yet using the same sort of model of reciprocal interaction of culture and economy. In particular, the Frankfurt model posits a relative autonomy to culture, a position that is often defended by Hall, and does not entail economic reductionism or determinism. Generally speaking, however, Hall and other practitioners of British cultural studies either simply dismiss the Frankfurt school as a form of economic reductionism or simply ignore it. The blanket charge of economism is in part a way of avoiding political economy altogether. Yet while many advocates of British cultural studies ignore political economy totally, Hall, to be sure, has occasionally made remarks that might suggest the need to articulate cultural studies with political economy. In a 1983 article, Hall suggests that it is preferable to conceive of the economic as determinate in "the first instance" rather than in "the last instance," but this

play with Althusser's argument for the primacy of the economic is rarely pursued in actual concrete studies. Hall's analysis of Thatcherism as "authoritarian populism" (1988) related the move toward the hegemony of the right to shifts in global capitalism from Fordism to Post-Fordism, but for his critics (Jessop et al., 1984) he did not adequately take account of the role of the economy and economic factors in the shift toward Thatcherism.

Hall responded that with Gramsci he would never deny "the decisive nucleus of economic activity" (1988: 156), but it is not certain that Hall himself adequately incorporates 13 economic analysis into his work in cultural studies and political critique. For example, Hall's writing on the "global postmodern" suggests the need for more critical conceptualizations of contemporary global capitalism and theorizing of relations between the economic and the cultural of the sort associated with the Frankfurt school. Hall states (1991): the global postmodern signifies an ambiguous opening to difference and to the margins and makes a certain kind of decentering of the Western narrative a likely possibility; it is matched, from the very heartland of cultural politics, by the backlash: the aggressive resistance to difference; the attempt to restore the canon of Western civilization; the assault, direct and indirect, on multicultural; the return to grand narratives of history, language, and literature (the three great supporting pillars of national identity and national culture); the defense of ethnic absolutism, of a cultural racism that has marked the Thatcher and the Reagan eras; and the new xenophobias that are about to overwhelm fortress Europe. For Hall, therefore, the global postmodern involves a pluralizing of culture, openings to the margins, to difference, to voices excluded from the narratives of Western culture. But one could argue in opposition to this interpretation in the spirit of the Frankfurt school that the global postmodern simply represents an expansion of global capitalism on the terrain of new media and technologies, and that the explosion of information and entertainment in media culture represents powerful new sources of capital realization and social control. To be sure, the new world order of technology, culture, and politics in contemporary global capitalism is marked by more multiplicity, pluralism, and openness to difference and voices from the margins, but it is controlled and limited by transnational corporations which are becoming powerful new cultural arbitrators who threaten to constrict the range of cultural expression rather than to expand it.

Cultural Studies Goes Global

The dramatic developments in the culture industries in recent years toward merger and consolidation represent the possibilities of increased control of information and entertainment by ever fewer super media conglomerates. One could argue already that the globalization of media culture is an imposition of the lowest denominator homogeneity of global culture on a national and local culture, in which CNN, NBC, MTV, BBC, the Murdock channels, and so on impose the most banal uniformity and homogeneity on media culture throughout the world. To be sure, the European cable and satellite television systems have state television from Germany, France, Italy, Spain, Sweden, and Russia, and so on, but these state television systems are not really open to that much otherness, difference, or marginality. Indeed, the more open channels, like public access television in the United States and Europe, or the SBS service which provides multicultural television in Australia, are not really part of the global postmodern, and are funded or mandated for the most part by the largess of state and are usually limited and local in scope and reach. 14 Certainly, there are some openings in Hall's global postmodern, but they are rather circumscribed and counteracted by increasing homogenization within global culture. Indeed, the defining characteristics of global media culture is the contradictory forces of identity and difference, homogeneity and heterogeneity, the global and the local, impinging on each other, clashing, simply peacefully co-existing, or producing new symbioses as in the motto of MTV Latino which combines English and Spanish: Chequenos!– meaning "Check us out!" Globalization by and large means the hegemony of transnational cultural industries, largely American, as U.S. cultural

industries dominate world markets in film, television, music, fashion, and other cultural forms. Evocations of the global postmodern diversity and difference should thus take into account countervailing tendencies toward global homogenization and sameness – themes constantly stressed by the Frankfurt school.

For Hall (1991), the interesting question is what happens when a progressive politics of representation imposes itself on the global postmodern field, as if the global field was really open to marginality and otherness. But in fact the global field itself is structured and controlled by dominant corporate and state powers and it remains a struggle to get oppositional voices in play and is probably impossible in broadcasting, for instance, where there is not something like public access channels or state-financed open channels as in Holland. Of course, things look different when one goes outside of the dominant media culture – there is more pluralism, multiplicity, openness to new voices, on the margins, but such alternative cultures are hardly part of the global postmodern that Hall elicits. Hall's global postmodern is thus too positive and his optimism should be tempered by the sort of critical perspectives on global capitalism developed by the Frankfurt school and the earlier stages of cultural studies. The emphasis in postmodernist cultural studies arguably articulates experiences and phenomena within a new mode of social organization. The emphasis on active audiences, resistant readings, oppositional texts, utopian moments, and the like describes an era in which individuals are trained to be more discerning media consumers, and in which they are given a much wider choice of cultural materials, corresponding to a new global and transnational capitalism with a much broader array of consumer choices, products, and services. In this regime, difference sells, and the differences, multiplicities, and heterogeneity valorized in postmodern theory describes the proliferation of differences and multiplicity in a new social order predicated on proliferation of consumer desires and needs.

The forms of hybrid culture and identities described by postmodern cultural studies correspond to a globalized capitalism with an intense flow of products, culture, people, and identities with new configurations of the global and local and new forms of struggles and resistance (see Cvetkovich & Kellner, 1997). New forms of cultural studies that combine traditions from throughout the world replicate the structure of an expanding and hybridized global culture, producing more varied forms of cultural studies with proliferation of articles, books, conferences, and internet sites and discussions throughout the world. From the 1980s through the present, models of cultural 15 studies expanded the range of theories, regions, and artifacts engaged, providing a rich diversity of traditions, originally deeply influenced by cultural Marxism and then taking a wide variety of forms. Critical cultural studies insisted that the politics of representation must engage class, gender, race, and sexuality, thus correcting lacunae in earlier forms of cultural Marxism. British cultural studies successively moved from focuses on class and culture to include gender, race, ethnicity, sexuality, nation, and other constituents of identity in their analyses (see the articles collected in Durham & Kellner, 2001). As argued in this entry, there are many important anticipations of key positions of British cultural studies in cultural Marxism and a wide range of traditions and positions to draw upon for cultural studies today. Consequently, the project of cultural studies is significantly broader than that taught in some contemporary curricula that identifies cultural studies merely with the Birmingham School and their progeny. There are, however, many traditions and models of cultural studies, ranging from neo-Marxist models developed by Lukàcs, Gramsci, Bloch, and the Frankfurt school in the 1930s to feminist and psychoanalytic cultural studies to semiotic and post-structuralist perspectives (see Durham & Kellner, 2001). In Britain and the United States, there is a long tradition of cultural studies that preceded the Birmingham school (see Davies, 1995). And France, Germany, and other European countries have also produced rich traditions that provide resources for cultural studies throughout the world. The major traditions of cultural studies combine – at their best – social theory, cultural critique, history, philosophical analysis, and specific political interventions, thus overcoming the standard academic division of labor by surmounting specialization arbitrarily produced by an artificial academic division of labor. Cultural studies thus operates with a transdisciplinary

conception that draws on social theory, economics, politics, history, communication studies, literary and cultural theory, philosophy, and other theoretical discourses – an approach shared by the Frankfurt school, British cultural studies, and French postmodern theory. Transdisciplinary approaches to culture and society transgress borders between various academic disciplines.

In regard to cultural studies, such approaches suggest that one should not stop at the border of a text, but should see how it fits into systems of textual production, and how various texts are thus part of systems of genres or types of production, and have an intertextual construction – as well as articulating discourses in a given socio-historical conjuncture. Cultural Marxism thus strengthens the arsenal of cultural studies in providing critical and political perspectives that enable individuals to dissect the meanings, messages, and effects of dominant cultural forms. Cultural studies can become part of a critical media pedagogy that enables individuals to resist media manipulation and to increase their freedom and individuality. It can empower people to gain sovereignty over their culture and to be able to struggle for alternative cultures and political change. Cultural studies is thus not just another academic fad, but can be part of a struggle for a better society and a better life.

Acknowledgement

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