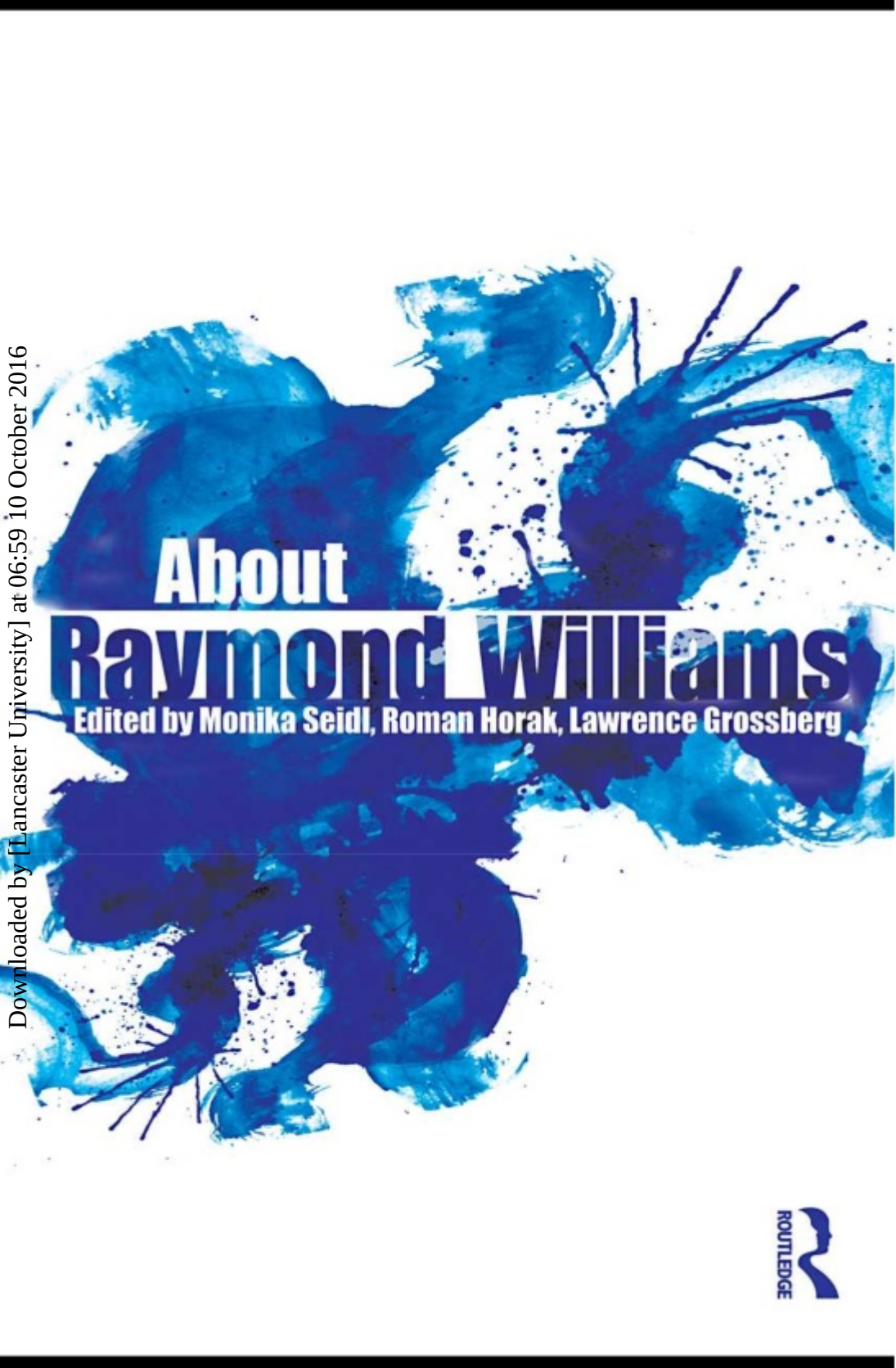

About Raymond Williams

About Raymond Williams represents the overdue critical acclaim of Williams' lasting influence and unbroken repercussions in critical thought. His writings have effectively shaped the ways in which people understand the complexity of the notion of 'culture' and many of the ways it has been taken up in scholarly practice.

This international collection of contemporary revisitings and new applications of the work of Raymond Williams both historicizes and contextualizes his theories. Essays combine biographical information, from his roots in the 1960s Leftist movement to his democratic pedagogical commitment, with explorations of the development of some of his major concepts and theories, while others consider current phenomena and questions by means of Williams' analytical tools. Exploring and making his concepts applicable in the most diverse areas and localities, the contributors testify to the impressive breadth of his influence even twenty years after his death.

Contributions from a variety of countries, disciplines, generations and traditions, including essays from: Georgiana Banita, Ana Clara Birrento, Hywel Rowland Dix, Udo Göttlich, Lawrence Grossberg, John Higgins, Roman Horak, H. Gustav Klaus, Clara Masnatta, Gilbert B. Rodman, Monika Seidl, John Storey, Christopher Joseph Westgate, Rainer Winter, Stephen Woodhams.

In times of change and transformation the reassessment of his political vision provides a useful resource and presents a unique and valuable picture of both the state of cultural studies and of the important contributions of Raymond Williams.

Monika Seidl is Professor of Cultural Studies and Director of Studies at the English Department of Vienna University, Austria.

Roman Horak is Head of Sociology of Art and Cultural Sociology at the Institute of Aesthetics and Cultural Studies/Art Pedagogy, University of Applied Arts Vienna, Austria.

Lawrence Grossberg is Morris Davis Professor of Communication Studies, Chair of the Executive Committee of the University Program in Cultural Studies at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, USA. Grossberg is co-editor (with Della Pollock) of the journal *Cultural Studies*.

About Raymond Williams

Edited by
Monika Seidl, Roman Horak,
and Lawrence Grossberg

Routledge
Taylor & Francis Group
LONDON AND NEW YORK

First published 2010
by Routledge
2 Park Square, Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon, OX14 4RN

Simultaneously published in the USA and Canada
by Routledge
270 Madison Ave, New York, NY 10016

Routledge is an imprint of the Taylor & Francis Group, an informa business

This edition published in the Taylor & Francis e-Library, 2009.

To purchase your own copy of this or any of Taylor & Francis or Routledge's collection of thousands of eBooks please go to www.eBookstore.tandf.co.uk.

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data
A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication Data
About Raymond Williams / [edited by] Monika Seidl, Roman Horak and Lawrence Grossberg.
p. cm.
Includes bibliographical references.
1. Williams, Raymond–Knowledge and learning. 2. Criticism–Great Britain–History–20th century. 3. Literature–History and criticism–Theory, etc. 4. Mass media criticism–Great Britain. 5. Historical materialism. 6. Culture–Philosophy. I. Grossberg, Lawrence. II. Horak, Roman. III. Seidl, Monika.
PR6073.I4329Z53 2009
828'.91409–dc22
2009021330

ISBN 0-203-86515-4 Master e-book ISBN

ISBN10: 0-415-54579-X (hbk)
ISBN10: 0-415-54580-3 (pbk)
ISBN10: 0-203-86515-4 (ebk)

ISBN13: 978-0-415-54579-2 (hbk)
ISBN13: 978-0-415-54580-8 (pbk)
ISBN13: 978-0-203-86515-6 (ebk)

To Patricia Häusler-Greenfield

Contents

Preface

Monika Seidl and Roman Horak

The title of this book is somewhat different from other books on eminent scholars. We called the book *About Raymond Williams* rather than *On Raymond Williams* – which might have been the more appropriate choice for a collection of academic papers – because we wanted to add a personal touch. This is so because the genesis of the book was a personal story of friendship between Monika, one of the three editors of this volume, and her colleague Patricia Häusler-Greenfield, both academics working for the English department at the University of Vienna.

Pat started working in Austria as a London-appointed Education and English Language Officer for the British Council. She got married here, raised two daughters and for a total of 35 years put most of her imaginative power, her vigour, vitality and force into her departmental duties. Apart from teaching EFL, Pat regularly gave a British civilization lecture, always on Fridays, at eight o'clock in the morning, always packed. There were also her extremely popular Friday afternoon classes, where Pat taught cultural studies. These Friday sessions needed to be smuggled into the regular curriculum via innocent titles such as 'Study skills and composition' because of curricular constraints.

Pat had first-hand experience about her chosen academic field of cultural studies as she started her university life as a prize-winning scholarship student at Girton College, Cambridge, where she graduated with a First Class Degree in modern and medieval languages. The English component of her course took her to Raymond Williams at Jesus College. One of the graduate supervisors was Terry Eagleton, and Stephen Greenblatt was a fellow (postgraduate) student.

Pat retired from teaching at university after the summer term of 2005. In 2006, Monika, as the then president of the Austrian Association of University Teachers of English, organized a series of lectures on Raymond Williams to honour Pat and her endeavour to carry the torch of cultural studies under the dismal conditions of a traditionalist department. This is the point where the personal story goes public.

All the speakers invited in 2006 base their academic work on positions developed by Williams or have adapted Williams' work for their purposes.

Monika managed to persuade Roman Horak to act as a co-organizer. He was a natural choice, as he not only did groundbreaking work on youth cultures inspired by the methodologies of the Birmingham School in the early 1980s, he also wrote the only obituary that appeared in the Austrian press in 1988 after Raymond Williams' death. The 2006 conference was the first international conference in a German-speaking country dedicated to the work of Raymond Williams.

At this stage Larry Grossberg joined the project and supported us all the way through from the initial to the final stages of this book. It so happened that this volume collects some of the papers given in Vienna and adds to the core contributions from a variety of academic traditions, thus reflecting the far-reaching dimensions of a Raymond Williams' tradition. So the book, as it is now, transcends the conference, and serves more as a 'documentary record' – in Raymond Williams' own words – of the place of Williams' work in some of the major formations of cultural studies in the UK, the United States and South Africa, as well as here in Vienna, Austria and elsewhere in Europe.[1]

Notes

1 We are indebted to Steffi Sandberger and Roland Mückstein, Monika's research assistants, who provided crucial support and whose insight and intelligence saved us from potentially embarrassing mistakes.

Chapter 1

Raymond Williams – towards cultural materialism: an introduction

Roman Horak and Monika Seidl

Raymond Williams is recognized as one of the founding fathers of cultural studies, on which he has had a profound influence in Britain and globally, and, even more broadly, on cultural criticism and theory around the world. Williams' writings have effectively shaped the ways people understand the complexity of the notion of 'culture' and many of the ways it has been taken up in scholarly practice.

The present collection endeavours to give evidence of some of the enormous breadth and originality of contemporary thinking on Raymond Williams and, at the same time, to mark the important influence of this scholar and critic. It brings together contributions from a variety of countries, disciplines, generations and traditions. Starting from Williams' most well-known ideas and notions, the book will take the reader to the fringes of his work and to approaches that relate his concepts to ongoing debates.

This introduction follows the course of Williams' renowned and recognized arguments and achievements, which range from a literary critique of culture to cultural materialism. We interrupt our journey where our contributors took inspiration from Williams' work. At these nodal points we insert summaries of their contributions, which present, in brief close-ups, snap-shot-like, some details of the many international perspectives on Williams' work presented in this collection.

Our journey begins in the early summer of 1970 when a remarkable meeting took place in Cambridge. Rudi Dutschke, tragic hero of the German anti-authoritarian movement, who had been living in England for a while to recover from the effects of the assassination attempt made on him on Easter Monday 1968, presented Raymond Williams, Fellow of Jesus College, with a research proposal on Georg Lukács' *History and Class Consciousness*. Dutschke, a former student leader, wanted to study for a doctorate in Cambridge under the renowned economist Joan Robinson, and had to undergo the usual tedious admissions ritual – such as the presentation of references and reports and talking to representatives of the University's governing body and important professors – before he was eventually accepted by the university that same summer.[1] His meeting with

Williams would probably have passed completely unnoticed had he not been expelled from the country at the beginning of 1971 on the grounds of supposedly subversive political activities, following a lengthy period of uncertainty during which figures such as Leo Löwenthal and Michael Foot intervened in his favour.[2]

Raymond Williams became passionately involved in the 'Dutschke Case' as well, as the *Cambridge Review* shows. Acting both as political activist and political commentator, he made a speech during a public meeting of the National Council for Civil Liberties in Westminster, and published excerpts from it in the university's journal (Williams 1971b: 94–5). Even more pointed and insightful was the article published two weeks later in the left-wing American weekly *The Nation*. Here, Williams analysed the ways in which the English political system was changing, taking the Dutschke case as his point of departure (see Williams 1971a: 210–12). With a well-developed sensitivity to nuances of style, he concluded that the new Tory government had abandoned the polite, upper-class approach of an earlier age. 'We know whom they represent, in real economic terms, but in style they are the angry petit bourgeoisie – all the old theatrical Toryism gone and replaced by the sharp accents of economic, political and social revenge' (ibid.: 211).

What we have here in this brief quotation is a sketch of Thatcherism *avant la lettre*. Barely a decade later, this new right-wing politics would not only have found a name but also definitively attained a hegemonic position. It was to bring about fundamental change in the United Kingdom. Raymond Williams, as we shall see, was one of the most committed opponents of this development; he also sought to understand it from a theoretical point of view, its genesis, major turning points and basic structures.

Williams' practical and participatory side in this development is brought to light in Stephen Woodhams' contribution to this collection, 'The *1968 May Day Manifesto*' (p. 57), as Williams' concrete political activities in the *May Day Manifesto* are generally unknown today. The movement around the *Manifesto* was addressing the pressing needs of the late 1960s, Woodhams argues, as it was trying to integrate local issues and international interests in their publications and concrete activities. Williams' brainchild, the *May Day Manifesto*, was intended to unite people from the nuclear disarmament movement, feminists and anti-Vietnam organizations, as well as other dispersed left formations, against the 'machine' of traditional organizations and eventually also in opposition to the Labour government. Woodhams' analysis leads up to this vital point in Williams' career when a clear opposition to Labour policies was stated and a new unified organization called for.

This political development was supplemented by a demand for a theoretical reorientation among British intellectuals. In the early 1970s, encounters with continental 'Western' Marxism were fundamental to this reorientation. Early in 1970, probably some time before his meeting with Rudi Dutschke,

Williams had met Lucien Goldmann. The French literary scholar Goldmann gave two lectures in Cambridge and was not only interesting to Williams as a representative of this school of thought, but also as an expert on the work of Georg Lukács. He offered opportunities for fascinating and challenging debate. For Williams at this moment the Lukács of *History and Class Consciousness*, Antonio Gramsci and the Sartre of the 1950s and 1960s were the most important representatives of an 'alternative Marxist' tradition (see Williams 2001:159). We can well imagine the interest with which Williams would have followed the progress of Dutschke's work.

In what follows we discuss Williams as a cultural theoretician in the stricter sense. On the one hand, we consider his role as a precursor and pioneer of cultural studies (which means concentrating on the relevant writings from the 1950s and early 1960s), while, on the other hand, looking more closely at his concept of 'cultural materialism' (developed above all in publications of the 1970s). Several recent studies have identified what they consider a more or less unbroken 'Marxist' continuity in Williams' work on the concept of culture.[3] In contrast, although we agree with this interpretation of Raymond Williams' basic stance (see Higgins 1999), our point of departure will be the idea that his approach to and methods of theorizing underwent several shifts in the late 1960s, conditioned by external events and the changing political context. Rather than seeking to establish a fixed category of 'Western' or 'alternative' Marxism that underlies all his work, however this may be defined, our thesis is that, as he grew older, Williams' theoretical work (and not just that which deals specifically with 'culture') can be seen to move closer to Marxist thought and to resist the tide of post-structuralism that was rising to dominance in the 1970s and 1980s.

Raymond Williams and the beginnings of cultural studies

There are many clichés surrounding the origins of cultural studies, including the oft-repeated stories of its 'founding fathers' and the mythical aura that surrounds the – now closed – Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies (CCCS) in Birmingham.[4] It has become common practice to refer to Richard Hoggart's *The Uses of Literacy* (1957), Raymond Williams' *Culture and Society* (1958), and Edward P. Thompson's *The Making of the English Working Class* from 1963 as the founding texts of Cultural Studies.[5]

All three authors can without a doubt be described as influential within the early New Left. In addition, all three shared an active experience of adult education and all three were concerned with reformulating the way in which culture is understood – above and beyond either traditional, conservative cultural critique or limited, party political, communist terms.[6] Nevertheless, when stressing these shared features, their different theoretical approaches should not be forgotten. To borrow Davies' apt descriptions,

Thompson's stance can most accurately be termed Marxist, whereas Hoggart's starting point was liberal humanism and Williams' was 'socialist Leavisism' (see Davies 1995:8).

It is certainly true that *Culture and Society*, Williams' first important book, is at first sight a work of literary or intellectual history. It grew out of a course on the term 'culture' in T. S. Eliot, M. Arnold and F. R. Leavis, and debates the historical genesis of the modern concept of culture from the beginning of the Industrial Revolution to the middle of the twentieth century. However, it also makes reference to the political and economic processes that in part explain the development of this concept. Although *Culture and Society* is still indebted to classical literary criticism and the methods of 'close reading', it goes beyond them. Williams established 'culture' as a central category, but saw it in relation to other developing 'keywords'[7] of the modern era: industry, democracy, class and art.

Here, 'culture' is not taken to mean solely a particular intellectual attitude, nor is it limited to the arts. With the formulation 'a whole way of life', culture is understood as a process and the entirety of cultural practices and experience is foregrounded. This way of reasoning led Williams to differentiate between middle-class and proletarian culture, situating the differences between them – as we have already suggested – at the level of a whole way of life, as H. Gustav Klaus comments:

> Summed up in one word, the middle-class way of life is individualist; it is based on a notion of society as a neutral area, in which every individual is able to follow their own interests (the 'pursuit of happiness', an idea that is enshrined in documents such as the American constitution, for example). In contrast, the proletarian way of life is distinguished by a 'fundamental notion of collectivity' and the institutions, habits of thought and intentions which arise from this.
>
> (Klaus 1983: 205)

Williams' category of 'workers' culture' developed out of his first-hand experience and went beyond an uncritical celebration of proletarian culture in a turn against what he understood as England's official culture. In an interview with Francis Mulhern, Anthony Barnett and Perry Anderson from the *New Left Review*, he commented in retrospect on the book's intentions from the perspective of the late 1970s as follows: 'It was oppositional – to counter the appropriation of a long line of thinking about culture to what were by now decisively reactionary positions' (Williams 1979d).

Williams criticized such limitations of the concept of culture. He not only wrote against its elitist limitation by bourgeois ideologues, thus distancing himself from Leavis, but also against the disdainful attitude of (popular) Marxism, which was only able to understand cultural practices and phenomena as aspects of the superstructure.

In a similarly positive vein, in 'The perspectives of radical democracy: Raymond Williams' work and its significance for a critical social theory' (p. 45), Rainer Winter shows that Williams' interventionist conception of scholarship and academia was continually focused on opportunities of empowerment and social transformation, emphasizing the potential agency of every individual in the production and transformation of culture, and the fact that this 'culture' is a material practice (rather than a secondary process of representation). Because of this, Winter claims, Williams' body of work can be understood as a 'reservoir of "resources of hope"', which can be (and, in part, is being) connected to contemporary critical theory and political movements.

In Williams' view education is one of the most powerful 'resources of hope'. He insisted that the commodities of high culture should not be denied to the workers, in a way that is not dissimilar to traditions of the German and Austrian culture of workers' education. The scholarship boy alternates between Oxbridge and the Black Mountains, as it were. On the one hand, he emphasized the cultural significance of first-hand (daily) experience of 'ordinary people'; on the other, he wanted to save the best of (high) cultural tradition for them. In this spirit Williams' writings on education tried to pursue a critical pedagogy that fairly optimistically centred on collaboration, interaction and the dialogue between teacher and students on an equal footing.

Williams' conception of culture and society emphasized the agency of every individual in their shaping and development. Hywel Rowland Dix argues in 'The pedagogy of cultural materialism: Paulo Freire and Raymond Williams' (p. 81) that Williams' conception of culture had similar pedagogical consequences to Paulo Freire's commitment to empowering the oppressed through education. Rather than settling for general comparisons between the worldviews of Freire and Williams, however, Dix tackles the question of the rootedness of both men's thinking in their respective biographical experiences and presents the development of the educational aspect of their work in a way that Freire's insights shed light on Williams' theories and vice versa. Beyond that, Dix also finds arguments in Williams' and Freire's writing for the necessity of a dialogic teaching style, in which the hierarchy between teachers and students is broken down and the experience of both is equally valued.

In order to do justice to the extent of Williams' thinking about education, Christopher John Westgate in 'Fellow-travellers at the conjunction: Williams and educational communicators' (p. 68) employs a broad view of education to include 'the educational force of our whole social and cultural experience' (Williams 1962: 14). Through charting Williams' own methods of classroom education in their development over time as well as his political thought on social education, the relevance of this conception for both classroom teaching (in the narrow sense) and educational politics (in the

broadest sense) is demonstrated. The article shows that both Williams' teaching and his political position were directed towards these goals, and thus recovers Williams' contributions to critical pedagogy, practical criticism and the political project. Endorsing Williams' efforts to educate the working classes, Westgate stresses the missionary vision that moved Williams. Williams' belief in the emancipatory force of education in developing political consciousness led to a concept of education which went far beyond professional training and promoted the idea of education as a motor of change.

Williams' tendency to rethink well-worn notions such as education in a radical and rather optimistic way can also be traced in his comments on the concept of the masses. These passages from *Culture and Society*, we believe, can still be considered among the most important sections of the book. Williams historical semantic derivation of the concept led him, via the observation that the 'masses' are never us, but always the others, to the following formulation, which has since become famous: 'There are in fact no masses; there are only ways of seeing people as masses' (Williams 1990a: 300).

One of these ways of seeing can be found in the term 'mass culture'. This did not originally emerge from the working class. What is called 'mass culture' is a capitalist product and is not consumed solely by the working classes. But, as Williams had to concede, members of the working class enjoy it, and, through their consumption of it, it became popular culture. Although he finds it very difficult to accept that the 'working class', whose way of life is so precious to him, can be content with cultural products of inferior quality, he implicitly recognized the limitations of a purely textual analysis and pointed out the necessity of considering people's experiences of mass culture. 'This analysis included the recovery of mass cultural consumption from the point of view of the consumers and studying it in the context of changing social relations and institutions' (Dworkin 1997: 92).

This was an important step in the development of Cultural Studies. Similar arguments that link textual with material practices in the context of mass and popular culture are taken up by two contributions to this volume. Udo Göttlich argues in 'Cultural studies and common culture: Raymond Williams' approach towards media cultural studies' (p. 106) that content, form and the formation of media within culture as well as power relations must be the object of research in order to work towards the goal of a 'common culture'. In this sense Göttlich's article proves the usefulness of Williams' concepts of a 'common culture' and of 'knowable communities' for meeting some of the main challenges of contemporary media theory. Göttlich argues that the term 'media culture' must not be understood as similar to 'mass culture' before Williams' revision of the concept, but that media theory must focus on the interconnection between the social constitution of media and their role as channels of communication. Instead of perpetuating metaphors of media as mediators between individuals and

'reality' (and thus excluding any notion of 'culture'), media can be described as 'passageways of social practice'.

The focus on media is continued in Georgiana Banita's piece 'Raymond Williams and online video: the tragedy of technology' (p. 94), which applies in a playful manner Williams' literary critique of culture to the YouTube phenomenon. Banita combines two apparently unrelated perspectives provided by Williams, namely his work on communications technology and his reflections on the nature of tragedy. Technology is seen as contingent on social, political and cultural configurations, connecting reality and technology in a double dependence. The impact of new configurations of public and private spaces makes YouTube, the user-generated online video database, a social institution in its own right. The current structure of feeling promoting self-fashioning and authenticity is partly shaped by the psychological climate of a traumatic mass experience, namely 9/11. At the junction of self-expression and inflationary exposure in what Williams called a 'dramatized world', the individual is at the same time faced with intensified visual and social control.

Banita's argument combines textual analysis rooted in literary criticism with a sharp awareness for social selections and institutions. In this sense her methodological approach is very close to Williams' thinking in *Culture and Society*. Williams' next book, *The Long Revolution* (1961e), looked to the future. Its publication was, as Stuart Hall notes, 'a seminal event in English post-war intellectual life' (Hall *et al.* 1980: 19). Conceived and written as a continuation of the work begun in *Culture and Society* (cf. Williams 1961e: 9), it shifted the basis of the debate from a literary, moral definition of 'culture' to a social one. Williams' point of departure was the claim that British society had undergone a transformation that was both conditioned and distinguished by industrialization, democratization and cultural change. According to Williams, the first two factors had already been sufficiently studied: his main aim was to establish and analyse the central significance of cultural change as equally important. To be able to do this, he began to expand on his concept of culture. The existing definitions of culture, or so he claimed at that point, could be divided into three categories. The first is an 'ideal' designation, 'in which culture is a state or process of human perfection, in terms of certain absolute or universal values'. The second is 'documentary', and understands culture as 'the body of intellectual and imaginative work, in which, in a detailed way, human thought and experience are variously recorded'. The final definition is a 'social' one, 'in which culture is a description of a particular way of life, which expresses certain meanings and values not only in art and learning but also in institutions and ordinary behaviour'.

It is this definition that led Williams to rethink 'culture' in three different ways. These include not only the 'anthropological' or 'ethnological' approach ('culture as a whole way of life'), but also the claim that 'culture'

can express meanings and values, and finally the claims of cultural analysis. The aims of cultural analysis are described by Williams as follows, in what could be termed a return to classical definitions: 'The analysis of culture, from such a definition, is the clarification of the meanings and values implicit and explicit in a particular way of life, a particular culture' (Williams 1961e: 57).

Taken all together, these three ways of rethinking culture constitute a 'social' definition – culture as a particular way of life, culture as the expression of a particular way of life, and cultural analysis as a method 'of reconstituting a particular way of life'. Williams' approach here is generalized and particular at one and the same time. His focus may have been culture's 'social' function, but he does not leave the other definitions of culture out of the equation: 'there is a significant reference in each of the three main kinds of definition, and, if this is so, it is the relations between them that should claim our attention.'[8]

This relation between culture as an ideal, as documentary record and as a whole way of life is explored in H. Gustav Klaus's contribution 'Williams and ecology' (p. 141). Klaus begins by commenting on the apparent absence of ecological considerations in Williams' work and goes on to extract a wealth of ecological insights from Williams' writings. He then proceeds by tracing ecological motives in Williams' novels, in which the interactions between humans and the environment over long stretches of time are thoroughly depicted; and he makes fine-spun points about Williams' literary treatment of nature in its own right and the function of naming places as a means both of assimilation and of recording and preservation. The reconciliation of social and ecological concerns testifies to Williams' interdisciplinary and integrative understanding of culture as a whole way of a life and a set of signifying practices.

Similar to Klaus one can argue that, for the Williams of *The Long Revolution*, it is not enough to see culture solely as the 'ideal' development of humanity in opposition to its 'animal' nature, just as it is not enough to limit the concept to the 'documentation' of valuable artefacts (seen in separation from the rest of our social life), or indeed to negate it as an exclusively social function, 'which treats … the general process of the body of art and learning as a mere by-product, a passive reflection of the real interests of the society' (Williams 1961e: 60). It was Williams' aim 'to see the process as a whole', and therefore studies of individual phenomena should refer 'if not explicitly at least by ultimate reference, to the actual and complex organization' (ibid.).

The references to the relationship between the different functions of culture and the emphasis on culture as a process are particularly important to us here. Williams tried to sum up his theorising in the term 'structure of feeling'. This concept runs through his work from its very beginnings right up to *Marxism and Literature* (1977). Although he would later slightly modify and update its utility, as Grossberg documents in his

contribution, it finds its clearest formulation in *The Long Revolution* (Higgins 1999: 37).

The main idea of the term 'structure of feeling' is that a shared set of ways of thinking and feeling demonstrating regular patterns forms and is formed by the whole way of life, the whole lived culture of an epoch, class or group. 'Structure of feeling' first becomes apparent in the arts of a period, in which Williams also included 'characteristic approaches and tones in argument' (Williams 1961e: 65). This is because they are 'the only examples we have of recorded communication that outlives its bearers', which naturally draw upon 'the actual living sense, the deep community that makes the communication possible' (ibid.).

The term 'structure of feeling' was of central, categorical importance in Williams' cultural analysis, above all in his earlier works. His approach was to determine particular 'structures of feeling' in the investigation of phenomena that have been culturally documented – Williams named poems, buildings and dress-fashions as paradigmatic cultural documents (ibid.).

In 'Raymond Williams: reading novels as knowable communities' (p. 165), Ana Clara Birrento employs the concepts of structure of feeling and knowable communities as Williams developed. If 'structure of feeling' initially referred to the general relations between collective experience and cultural expression, the concept was later refined to emphasize 'the agency of the subject in the transformation of cultural practices' (Birrento). This agency is realized through 'knowable communities', which are described as 'space[s] of communication of experiences'. Birrento addresses some of the ramifications of these concepts, which can provide a model of literary communication, and then goes on to apply 'structure of feeling' and 'knowable community' as tools for literary analysis.

Birrento's analysis is evidence of the fact that 'structures of feeling' are present in all societies and become effective via the dialectic of the known and the knowable. Not all the members of a society have the same degree of access to this structure of feeling, but it is there precisely because it is a precondition of communication. It is not something that is formally learned, and it is continually being transformed, whereby Williams understands the new version as a creative response to changing conditions.

While emphasizing the significance of the documentary in culture, he is nevertheless conscious of the fact that whatever has been documented has been subjected to a high degree of selection. The tension between the documentary and selection is taken up in John Higgins's '"Even the dead will not be safe": on dis(re)membering Williams' (p. 117). Higgins presents a trend in scholarly references to Williams which stays on the level of sound-bite selection and does not go back to the level of documentary, namely the writings of Williams. Higgins discusses in his article one peculiar aspect of the reception of Williams' work, namely the belittling or outright dismissal of the relevance of Williams' contribution to scholarship. This 'disremembering', as Higgins

calls it to distinguish it from accidental misremembering, is shown to employ strategies such as falsifying selection which have the effect of implying a consensus on Williams' work as something that has already been dealt with and does not need to be considered – or read – anymore. Higgins advises us to break with this 'selective tradition' and demands an honest, faithful and respectful reception of Williams' writings. Higgins thus identifies a tradition in the reception of Williams which via selection verges on falsification. This leads us back to Williams' own belief that the effectiveness of cultural tradition depends on selection and interpretation.

Disremembering Williams' work as outlined by Higgins neglects the fact that *The Long Revolution*, alongside the entirety of Raymond Williams' early works, was central to the formation of a cultural, political sociology, the likes of which had not previously existed in Great Britain. His theoretical practice, which was based on his own experiences and textual resources, and not on fixed theoretical assumptions, may have reached its own inherent limits, methodological and otherwise, but its basic dynamic remained one of openness nevertheless (see Davies 1995: 16).

Williams' approach foregrounds the everyday experiences and interpretative practices of 'normal' women and men (see Storey 1993: 56, Higgins 1999: 173). From this perspective, research no longer has far to go before it arrives at the point of asking which cultural and political acts are possible under particular circumstances and conditions. Such questions were to become extremely important, not only for Williams, but also for the newly emerging discipline of Cultural Studies.

A focus on local specifity was thus always inherent in this new project. Clara Masnatta's article 'Raymond Williams in the South Atlantic' (p.129) shows the productiveness of Williams' theorizing in the formation of cultural studies in the South Atlantic (roughly defined as 'the area ranging from São Paulo to Buenos Aires') and the effect of Williams' thought on the concrete social and political realities of the region. After a brief outline of the local intellectual ground, she explains the relevance of Williams' thinking for this 'periphery of capitalism' and the specific approaches it precipitated there. Two lines of thought that are central to Williams' impact in the South Atlantic are his treatment of the binomial of 'the country and the city' and the 'de-hierarchization between copy and original' implied in his rejection of the distinction between popular and elite cultures, both of which resonated with intellectuals in a peripheral region with a history of colonization. Also, the conjunction of aesthetic and political analyses made possible by Williams' concept of culture enabled a 'social redemption' of literary criticism during a time of military dictatorship, democratic transitions and revolutionary aspirations. Masnatta's article integrates these (and other) general considerations with detailed accounts of the personal and institutional factors which influenced Williams' reception in different regions of the South Atlantic.

Raymond Williams and cultural materialism

The late 1960s and early 1970s witnessed a turn to Marxist positions that became apparent in Great Britain as well as in the rest of Western Europe. This was not a 'Renaissance of Marxism' in the strict sense, but rather an attempt to reconstruct the traditions of another, alternative, undogmatic Marxism.

The volume *Situating Marx*, published in 1972, was paradigmatic of this development. Most of the essays in it were papers from a symposium that had been held at the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies (CCCS) at Birmingham University. The collection was edited by Paul Walton and Stuart Hall, of whom the latter was already the director of the CCCS by this point. They pointed out the differences between British debates on Marx and those in countries such as France or Germany, and appealed to their colleagues to make up lost ground in Marx's reception, presenting this as an important task for the New Left (see Walton and Hall 1972: 2ff.).

This intensified examination of the texts of 'Western Marxism' (Perry Anderson) was part of a more extensive reception of continental European theory production, and went hand in hand with the growing influence of structuralism. For Cultural Studies in particular, de Saussure and Levi-Strauss's theories of language as a symbolic system that predetermines our approach to the world, and Roland Barthes's semiotic analyses of mythologies of the mundane were to be extraordinarily influential. At the same time, Marxism remained the central system of reference for the CCCS of the 1970s.

Raymond Williams also set out to reformulate his cultural theoretical ideas against the background sketched out above.[9] Contrary to the dominant readings of Marxism, Williams asserts in *Marxism and Literature* that it is not 'the base' and 'the superstructure' that need to be studied, but specific and indissoluble real processes, within which the decisive relationship, from a Marxist point of view, is that expressed by the complex idea of 'determination'.

This focus on specificities, which clearly detaches Williams' theorizing from any type of reductionism, is taken up in Lawrence Grossberg's piece on 'Raymond Williams and the absent modernity' (p. 18). Grossberg sets himself the task of gleaning aspects of a theory of modernity from Williams' works. After showing how Williams' thinking was consistently opposed to any reductionism, Grossberg depicts Williams' struggle with the notion of experience and his refusal to view it as either only mediated or only individualized. He considers Williams' reformulation of the 'structure of feeling', which in his later work refers to the point at which an experience is not yet fully expressible in any conventional form, but still contributes to the 'feeling' of a generation or social formation and generating a sense of 'now'. What Grossberg offers is not so much a conventional

reading of Williams but an attempt to take Cultural Studies into a new millennium. Thus, Grossberg aligns himself with Williams in their mutual search for finding useful tools to analyse the problems at hand, in short for a way of 'making them real'.

Williams himself found fellow travellers in his readings of European theorists that 'made it real' for him. Lucien Goldmann was already mentioned at the beginning of this essay. It is in Williams' readings of Goldmann's sociology of literature that the first signs of his changing theoretical approach become visible. In an obituary of Goldmann published in the *New Left Review* (Williams 1971c) Williams traces the similarities between his concept of 'structures of feeling' and Goldmann's 'genetic structuralism' (see Goldmann 1975), above all because the latter was 'necessarily concerned not only with the analysis of structures but with their historical formation and process' (Williams 1971c: 12). Inherent in Goldmann's concept of structure is a relationship between literary and social facts, as Williams notes, adding that this relationship is not one of content but of 'mental' structures: 'the categories which simultaneously organize the empirical consciousness of a particular social group and the imaginative world created by the writer. By definition, these structures are not individually but collectively created' (ibid.).

It is self-evident that this is very close to Williams' ideas of the 'structure of feeling' as briefly outlined above. Inspired by Georg Lukács, Lucien Goldmann's sociology of literature investigates the relationship between consciousness and world, or, to put it in more general terms, the effectiveness of ideology and how it may be overcome. Goldmann, following Lukács, differentiates between the 'actual consciousness' of a social group and their 'potential consciousness' (see Goldmann 1975, 1976) Roughly speaking, 'actual' consciousness means the empirically provable, everyday consciousness, while 'potential' consciousness introduces a category of possibility. Such ideas are indeed reminiscent of Raymond Williams, and, even though he considers Goldmann's model too static, we can nevertheless see how, having been isolated to a great extent, he now finds confirmation of his theoretical practice in these continental European Marxist debates and his reading of Goldmann and Lukács (see Milner 2002: 87f).

His work on Antonio Gramsci was to have even further reaching consequences. A selection of the *Quaderni del carcere* had been available in English since 1971, translated and edited by Quintin Hoare and Geoffrey Nowell Smith (Gramsci 1971). In his essay 'Base and superstructure in Marxist cultural theory', published once again in the *New Left Review* (Williams 1973a), Williams looks at Gramsci in depth and sketches his first thoughts on cultural materialism.

But it was in *Marxism and Literature* (1977),[10] perhaps his last great work, that Williams hazarded an attempt at theorizing 'cultural materialism', using aspects of both neo-Marxism and structuralism. As he comments in

his introduction, he set out to incorporate the critical Marxism of thinkers such as Benjamin, Lukács, Goldmann, the late Sartre and above all Althusser and Gramsci, but he was also interested in semiotics as a method of textual analysis. As the title of the book suggests, his main aim was to situate language and literature in the material world. Referring to Rossi-Landi and Vološinov, he argued against the limitation of language to a system of signs as propagated by the young Wittgenstein and de Saussure, and insisted on characterizing it as a social practice and historical institution.[11]

In the second section of the book, Williams examined the ideas sketched out in his essay 'Base and superstructure in Marxist cultural theory'. He attempted to formulate cultural materialism within the traditions and developments of Marxism, that is to say, within 'historical materialism' (see Williams 1977: 5). Nevertheless, he rejected the classic base versus superstructure model of orthodox Marxism, whereby 'culture' in the final instance can be explained by the vicissitudes and logic of the economy. He emphasised the relative specificity of culture's internal dynamics, an approach that influenced his analysis.

The process of determination is, however, driven by certain mechanisms, and this is where ideology takes effect. With reference to Althusser's concept of ideology (ideology as effective practice) and in particular to his concept of 'overdetermination' (Althusser 1985), which leaves room for a relative autonomy of culture, Williams explained efforts to attain ideological dominance as the (never entirely successful) results of a struggle between contradictory and conflicting forces. The advantage of Althusser's term for Williams is that it acknowledges and takes into account the significance and complexity of real, lived experience:

> In its most positive forms – that is, in its recognition of multiple forces, rather than the isolated forces of modes or techniques of production, and in its further recognition of these forces as structured, in particular historical situations, rather than elements of an ideal totality or, worse, merely adjacent – the concept of 'overdetermination' is more useful than any other as a way of understanding historically lived situations and the authentic complexities of practice.
>
> (Williams 1977: 88)

However, in the final instance, a strict Althusserian model leaves no room for the concept of resistance. Part of Williams' aim was the conceptual exploration of possibilities of resistance, and so he abandoned Althusser's Marxist structuralist logic at this point and turned to Antonio Gramsci's theory of hegemony. Hegemony, that state of social (political/cultural) dominance that can never be fixed or stable, is described thus by Williams:

> The reality of any hegemony, in the extended political and cultural sense, is that, while by definition it is always dominant, it is never either total or exclusive. At any time, forms of alternative or directly oppositional politics and culture exist as significant elements in the society.
>
> (ibid.: 113)

John Storey's contribution '"All forms of signification" (p. 34) further investigates the idea of culture as a site of struggle in Williams' later work. Storey's article serves as an introduction to the ways in which all human interaction can be conceived as an exchange of meanings. However, Williams also emphasizes the 'materiality' of these meanings, as they shape social practice, and he never denies the existence of a reality outside of signification. Culture, in this view, is the process that gives meaning to the objects of this reality; but while Williams' earlier works seem to depict this process as a harmonious collaboration, he later insisted that these meanings are always also contested, and that their production is contingent on relations of power and pre-existing structures of signification. Culture and power thus emerge as cultural studies' primary objects of study.

Bearing in mind the idea of constant struggle, it can never be a case of establishing a particular hegemony in the abstract, but rather of investigating the ways in which the 'hegemonic' and the 'dominant' function, as Williams notes. According to Williams, the difficult, yet fascinating task of cultural analysis in complex societies is to comprehend the 'hegemonic' not only in its active and formative but also in its transformative processes.

Taking Gramsci's hegemony theory as his point of departure, Williams unfolds his model of 'cultural forces'. First there is 'the dominant', the hegemonically effective, operative cultural force in a particular society at a particular time. He adds to this 'the residual' and 'the emergent'. To simplify somewhat, these forces correspond roughly to ideological forms of the present, past and future, although that is not all they are.

> The 'residual', by definition, has been effectively formed in the past, but it is still active in the cultural process, not only and often not at all as an element of the past, but as effective element of the present.
>
> (ibid.: 122)

The category 'emergent' denotes 'that new meanings and values, new practices, new relationships and kinds of relationships are continually being created' (ibid.: 123).

And, ultimately, as all of these are moments of a cultural process, definitions of what is 'residual' or 'emergent' can only be formulated with reference to the dominant cultural force. The three 'cultural forces' outlined here

can contradict each other; difference, conflict and opposition are always apparent in their ever-changing relationship. Formulated thus, the room for manoeuvre delineated by these ideas is always to be understood as a process, a site of constant struggle and negotiation, which can be interpreted in a variety of ways by the individuals living in any given society. Therefore, it ultimately also permits a variety of alternative types of possible behaviour and practices.

To understand the three forces and their importance for Williams, we have to grasp his fundamental conviction 'that no mode of production and therefore no dominant social order and therefore no dominant culture ever in reality exhausts all human practice, human energy, and human intention' (Ibid.: 125). Nothing can ever be completely victorious, and the dominance of prevailing opinions is never total.

But let us pause here for a moment and look back. It is a long way from an understanding of 'culture as a way of life' to the concepts of cultural materialism, such as hegemony and never completely determined or determining 'cultural forces'. Nevertheless, a unifying theme runs through Williams' work, namely the deep conviction that culture is important and meaningful, although not as a noble attribute of the ruling classes, nor as a mere feature of the superstructure. Williams emphasizes culture as social practices; for him culture is effective as a constitutive social process.

Williams shared this fundamental insight with those representatives of Cultural Studies whose theoretical practice later diverged from his, often developing positions that were in part critical of central aspects of his earlier work.[12] The publication of Stuart Hall's seminal restrospective of the two paradigms of cultural studies (see Hall 1980b) in 1980 made it clear that Williams was not the only theoretical authority recognised by the CCCS. In an interview printed by *Radical Philosophy* at the end of 1997, Hall refers once again to the enormous significance that the debates on structuralist input had for the Centre's theoretical focus (see Hall 1997a: 25).

The tension between 'structuralism' and 'culturalism' meant that the Centre offered a productive atmosphere from the 1970s onwards for works as different as, for instance, Dick Hebdige's semiotic analysis of punk, Paul Willis's ethnographical studies on youth culture, Angela McRobbie's feminist criticism, Lawrence Grossberg's and Tony Bennett's studies on popular culture and politics as well as, last but not least, Stuart Hall's analyses of Thatcherism, and Hall and Paul Gilroy's ideas on ethnicity and racism.

Above and beyond the differences in theoretical approach and methodology, all of these endeavours are characterized by a binding basic understanding of culture as a site of conflict, or, to put it more clearly in the words of Stuart Hall, by an interest in combining research on symbolic forms and meanings with the forms and meanings of power (ibid.: 24).

There can be little doubt that this basic attitude has much to do with the influence of Williams. Raymond Williams himself wrote in one of his final

texts – on the future of Cultural Studies – that the project of Cultural Studies and its various incarnations should be understood as a '*common* disposition of energy and direction' (Williams 1989c: 151; emphasis in the original). 'One project, many formations' could be the motto. Contemporary Cultural Studies in particular and recent debates on culture in general both stand to benefit from a consideration of the political agenda of Williams' multifaceted project of cultural materialism.

Gilbert B. Rodman strives to recover the extraordinary political impetus of the project (not to be conflated with the academic discipline) of cultural studies in his polemical essay 'Cultural Studies is ordinary' (p. 153). While cultural studies was originally conceived as a theory-and-practice outside the academic field, namely in the worker education programmes taught by Williams in the 1950s, and despite the broader social and political orientation inherent in its fundamental tenets, Rodman describes it as having since congealed into an ordinary academic discipline that is more concerned with reproducing than with reinventing itself. To counteract this conformism with and within academic discipline, Rodman proposes to apply Williams' perspectives to theory, research, pedagogy, and (political) action in the cultural studies project: to acknowledge that neither theory nor research are exclusive to academia, to reach out to and make common cause with practitioners of cultural studies outside the universities, to try and make cultural studies relevant to the general public in the manner of critical pedagogy, that is, by daring to enter into a dialogue and a cooperation which will transform the project. Rodman claims that sealing off Cultural Studies from perspectives and materials from outside academia has led to a lamentable state of the art. The stalemate of professionalism that Williams attributed to English Studies in the late 1950s has meanwhile reached his very own project. Rodman and with him the editors of this volume hope that rather than allowing Cultural Studies to be shaped solely by the university, Cultural Studies might rather return to its project and listen to the voices from outside.

Cultural Studies is indebted to Williams who advocated a collective enterprise that should include academic and non-academic perspectives. Williams understood Cultural Studies as a series of snapshots, never providing a stable image. Rather, Cultural Studies should be subject to constant revision, appropriation and challenge. This collection is meant to provide such a challenge in the series of snap-shots the articles that follow will offer.

Notes

1 In his diary, Dutschke complains somewhat wearily of his struggle with these bureaucratic hurdles: on 3 June 1970, for example, he writes: 'hopefully all this shit will be over soon, I'd like to finally make a start with my studies' (Dutschke 2003: 130).

2 Cf. for example Miermeister 1986: 107ff.; Dutschke 1996: 246ff.
3 Cf. for example Milner 2002, Jones 2004.
4 This state of affairs seems impervious to even the most heatedly debated and critical texts. See Wright 1998: 33–56.
5 Williams himself refers to this in the foreword to the new edition of *Culture and Society* in 1987 (Williams 1990a: p. v). See also Sparks 1977: 16–30, Lindner 2000: 18, and Turner 1990.
6 Cf. Davies 1995: 6ff. It is interesting to note that in the case of the historian E. P. Thompson, Davies does not refer to the book mentioned above, but instead to Edward P. Thompson's *William Morris: From Romantic to Revolutionary* (1955).
7 These were the beginnings of the book *Keywords* which was to appear almost twenty years later. See *Keywords: A Vocabulary of Culture and Society*, London 1976.
8 Cf. Williams 1961e: 59. This emphasis on the relationship between the individual definitions of culture can also be found in Williams' late works, for example in a lecture given in Oxford in March 1986. See also Williams 1989: 164.
9 Cf. Dworkin 1997: 148ff, Milner 2002: 86ff, Higgins 1999: 110ff.
10 Cf. Williams 1977. In his sociology of culture – *Culture*, London 1981 and *Sociology of Culture*, New York 1982 – Williams returns to these ideas and formulates them in a more systematic way. The basic terms he uses can, however, be found already fully developed in *Marxism and Literature*.
11 Cf. for example O'Connor 1989: 109ff, Moriarty 1995: 91–116.
12 One of the most problematic aspects of Williams' work is a degree of blindness to ethnic issues, apparent for example in his idealization of the 'English working man'. This has been highlighted in no uncertain terms by Paul Gilroy, see *There Ain't no Black in the Union Jack*, London 1987.

Chapter 2

Raymond Williams and the absent modernity

Lawrence Grossberg

There is a paradoxical 'moment' in Raymond Williams' theoretical system. On the one hand, he clearly locates himself, albeit in complicated and often uncomfortable ways, in a tradition of and a relation to European modernity. If only because of his own argument that the invention of the very concept of culture, in all its complexity, was a response to the processes and forms of European modernization, Williams' own thought has to be understood in relation to the categories and development of forms of European modernity. And yet, while Williams had a great deal to say about the forms of modernism, especially in his often-brilliant cultural histories of literature and literary genres, and despite the fact that he put a great deal of weight on experience, he actually had surprisingly little to say explicitly about the broader questions of modernity. In fact, neither 'modernity' nor any of its variants warranted an entry in the first edition of *Keywords*, and the appearance of 'modern' (as an inclusive term) in the second edition is one of the shorter entries of the book, only slightly longer than that for 'medieval' (Williams 1983c). In this paper, I want to explore how Williams might have been thinking about modernity, and his possible contributions to a general theory of modernity, drawing especially on his concept of the structure of feeling. My point here is not so much to offer a reading of Williams but to use Williams to open up the possibilities of a cultural studies that speaks to the present and to the future. I want then to continue to think out loud, in public, with Williams as it were.

Raymond Williams, modernity, and the structure of feeling

One of the great achievements of Raymond Williams was to constitute another history, a history that we might simplistically see as the history of the humanities, or of the invention of culture as encompassing a wide range of discourses – not only of imagination and value but also of particular 'organic' renderings of the social – as yet another instantiation of the debates over modernity. Williams' argument is by now familiar: that the concept of culture was taken from the semantic field of agriculture and

made to bear an enormous weight. On the one hand, it held together aesthetic, ethical, anthropological (or what I would prefer to call a particular historical sense of the communal or collective), and certain transcendental meanings, the latter providing an answer to the modernist question of philosophical anthropology in which culture (as meaning or mediation) defines the specificity of the human. And, on the other hand, culture was constituted as a location, a stable point, from which one could both describe and judge the changes – social, political and economic – that were taking place and that constituted modernity as it were. Culture functioned as a descriptive and normative discourse about modernity in the West (see Williams 1958a, 1961c).

But consider the moment in which Williams was making his argument, the moment of the emergence as it were of cultural studies in England, a moment which Williams sees in largely national and class terms but which, in retrospect, was clearly a key moment in the transformation of modernity around the world, across the many dimensions and axes of power and collectivity. Williams understood, as did the Frankfurt School, that the moment embodied a significant reconfiguration of the social between both culture and the economy and the entire social formation. It was in this context that two of Williams' most fundamental and controversial assumptions took shape. Despite continuous attacks on both of these, Williams continued to assert them throughout his career: totality and experience.

Williams consistently understood materialism to involve a commitment to the study of the totality, or as he put it when defining cultural studies: the study of all the relations among all the elements in a whole way of life. While notions of totality (not quite the same as totalization, but often confused with it) have been generally dismissed in contemporary theory, his commitment to totality is crucial to his project as an effort to find a different position on modernity. Totality was his way out, so to speak, of the 'Culture and Society tradition' that he himself had constituted, a tradition predicated on the separation of culture and society, a separation enabled by and dependent on the reification of the categories resulting from the modern fragmentation of the social formation (a fragmentation continued as it were in Althusser's notion of the relative autonomy of the various levels of the formation). Thus Williams implicitly argued that the very separation of the social formation into relatively autonomous levels was an artefact of a particular configuration of modernity, one which continuously propels us into a search for primacy or hierarchy on the one hand, and a decontextualized search for the specificity of the levels on the other.

Instead, Williams continually pushed for a notion of a whole, lived social formation, which is only understandable as a set of processes (gathered eventually under the sign of hegemony). Thus Williams implicitly foregrounded the problematic of totality as a question and challenge of modernity. Of course, it has to be admitted that, in at least one sense, Williams

largely failed to realize his own project insofar as he seemed unable to avoid treating and even privileging culture as uniquely separable from the totality and identifiable and valued in its own terms. Nevertheless, I want to suggest that Williams' commitment to totality is often misread as a kind of residual element of modernist humanism. But I think it should be seen as an attempt to move away from the dominant (nineteenth-century) problematic of culture as the mediation of individual and society, to a different set of foci and problematics.

Or rather than thinking of it as a move away from the problematic of mediation, it may be more useful to think of it as an attempt to rearticulate the problematic into a set of contextually specific questions posed by the post-war formation including, importantly, the defence of culture and cultural knowledge against the prescriptions of scientism, opening an epistemological articulation of the problematic. This was, after all, the moment of the 'two cultures' debate in a slightly different context. This epistemological problematic defined science (scientism, positivism, functionalism, utilitarianism, scientific Marxism) as a fundamental challenge to the humanities and to political humanism. It pulled cultural studies back, if not into the 'Culture and Society tradition,' into the related traditions of the *Geisteswissenschaften* and the later *Methodenstreit*. But, unlike those traditions, Williams' project attempted to offer a new epistemology of social change, by bringing an epistemology of cultural interpretation to bear upon questions of historical social change (as lived, as social relations) and social agency (translated, for example, into a search for revolutionary agency in the post-war years). But cultural studies, in Williams' vision, goes even further, contesting any 'single vision' (as Hoggart, following Blake, was fond of calling it), whether political economy, or aesthetic formalism, or religion, etc., or, in more contemporary terms, cognitive theory, or chaos theory, or network theory, or cybernetics, etc. Cultural studies, according to Williams, rejects anything that, to put it rather simply, makes the intellectual's work easier than it should be; anything that reduces his or her ability to be surprised as it were.

Recognizing that Williams' early work is located in the problem-space of the post-war conjuncture (to use David Scott's term: Scott 2004) may help us understand something about the shape of cultural studies in his earliest work, including the way in which he understood the structure of feeling as a significant pattern of the organization of practices and experiences, present in every activity, yet uniquely expressed, crystallized and responded to in the best works of art. The structure of feeling makes the cultural text into a microcosm of the whole – to see the world in a grain of sand – through a notion of homology or correspondence. Yet at the same time, it refers to his less explicit but still important commitment to a radical contextuality, by which I refer to his argument that the meaning and politics of any cultural practice can only be understood when it is placed into the social totality, into the context as it were.

Yet there has not been as much discussion about the way in which the trajectory of his work and, in particular, the modulation of some of his key terms over time may say something crucial about Williams' efforts to constitute cultural studies in response to particular significant changes in the historical context.

We should approach Williams as having offered the concept of culture as an analytic category to be deployed on and even against English modernity, in a specific context, which he understood to implicate him in a moment of significant transition within the history of English modernity. That is, we should read Williams' project of cultural studies as emerging out of and responding to a transitional moment in which Britain could be characterized as moving from one configuration of modernity to another modernity – as yet unspecified and unspecifiable – a transition characterized by the multiple competitions, struggles and alliances of the post-war world. Minerva's owl was talking flight, and cultural studies was Williams' attempt to get a handle on it.

While in his earlier writings Williams did, too often, assume a seamless and harmonious totality, over time it seems his understanding of the conjuncture, of the context as a totality changed, so that he increasingly emphasized the totality as always multiple, fractured and incomplete. This no doubt enabled Williams to recognize, however unexpressed it remained, the multiplicity and contingency of modernity. As a result, by *Politics and Letters*, Williams was more explicitly acknowledging that the fundamental terms of modernity vary among different national contexts; for example, while English modernity is characterized most profoundly by and as industry, in France, it is democracy that provides the key to modernity, and, in Germany, the market (Williams 1979e: 115). But none of this suggests that Williams was ever willing to displace culture, as both a fragment and a dimension of the totality, from the centre of his analysis. He continued to maintain that the issue of modernity was deeply and complexly connected to notions of culture.

The second assumption that characterized Williams' work throughout his career, again despite vehement and continuous criticism, was the centrality – and the very explicit ambivalence – of the concept of experience. That ambivalence is, as many commentators have noted, constitutive of Williams' position: on the one hand, he claims that all experience is mediated; on the other, he distinguishes between what has always to be seen as some sort of originary experience and an ideologically constituted experience (what Thompson referred to as experience 1 and experience 2). This is sometimes carried to an almost phenomenological extreme in which it seems that, for Williams, not only must one affirm the reality of experience but even that experience is reality. So when Williams asserts in *Politics and Letters* that he is not claiming some unmediated or originary experience of reality, I think it is difficult to take this claim entirely seriously as a

retrospective fact. But it does make sense if Williams is rethinking – rearticulating – the central category of experience in response to the demands – both historical and theoretical – of the changing context.

Williams does not simply accept the anti-humanistic (structuralist, post-structuralist) arguments against the category of experience; he does not give up the privilege that he has always assigned to experience, nor does he agree to reduce it to the product of discourse. Instead, he quite clearly continues to separate himself from such arguments. In fact, he asserts, he is continuously wary of the 'danger of reaching the opposite point in which the epistemological wholly absorbs the ontological' (Williams 1979e: 168). That is, Williams rejects the reduction of experience to the culturally mediated. Instead he proposes seeing mediation as 'a positive process in social reality, rather than a process added to it by way of projection, disguise or interpretation' (Williams 1977: 98–9). Williams reaches for a very different concept of experience, one that is neither humanistic nor structuralist. For Williams, experience is not individualized. It does not belong to a subject, nor is it the mediating space of subject and object. This is not a straightforwardly phenomenological concept of experience (for which Williams has been so criticized) but one more akin to Heidegger or even perhaps Foucault.

Even as Williams was revising his concept of experience – and as previously mentioned, at least taking note of the category of the modern – at that same moment (and in the same works), he is also significantly reconceptualizing the structure of feeling. Our interest is in what Williams does with his revised notion of experience in relation to his efforts to rethink the structure of feeling.

In its original form, the concept of the structure of feeling was an analytically filled category that stood in for the specificity of the historical moment, the sign of the conjuncture as it were. It had a complicated and rather unclear relation to the category of experience for, on the one hand, it suggested a logic of homology that refused the privilege of experience so that Williams' could read the *structure* of feeling off of, for example, a particular deployment of a technology such as television. And, on the other hand, the fact that it was a structure of *feeling* suggested a special and privileged link to the affective dimensions of experience. But as his work moved into the 1970s – it is significant that the mid-1970s is often referred to in both postmodernist and post-Fordist discourses as a crucial moment in what I would call the history of the actualization of modernities – Williams offers an apparent critique of this understanding of the structure of feeling:

> None of the dualist theories, expressed as reflection or mediation, and none of the formalist and structural theories, expressed in variants of correspondence or homology, can be fully carried through to contemporary practice, since in different ways, they all depend on a known history, a known structure, known products.
>
> (Williams 1977: 106)

This is an interesting and rich statement, and there are three observations to be made about it. First, Williams must have known that his own work could be included under the signs of mediation and homology. Second, Williams' judgment of the inadequacy of such approaches seems to have depended not upon some absolute judgment of theoretical failure but upon the conjunctural specificity of the present moment into which the concept has to be moved. And, finally, in a somewhat roundabout return to the ontological, Williams seems to suggest that the inadequacy of such theoretical interpretations to the contemporary context depends upon their reduction of experience to the epistemological and more specifically, to that which is already known. Williams instead rereads the ambivalence of his own notion of experience into the complex relationship between the ontological and the epistemological (see Probyn 1993) and he further complicates the epistemological, dividing it into what he will call the known and the knowable.

This leads us back to the moment of the mid-1970s, when, in a number of books, articles and interviews, including *Marxism and Literature* and *Politics and Letters*, we can map out what seems to be a significant turn or redirection in Williams' work around the concept of the structure of feeling. In *Politics and Letters*, he redefines it as

> the peculiar location of a structure of feeling is the endless comparison that must occur … between the articulated and the lived. For all that is not fully articulated, all that comes through as disturbance, tension, blockage, emotional trouble, seems to me precisely a major source of major changes in the relation between the signifier and the signified.
>
> (Williams 1979e: 168)

In *Marxism and Literature*, Williams elaborates on this new, if still uncertain concept of the structure of feeling. It refers, he says, to 'the pre-emergent, that which moves at the very edge of semantic availability' (Williams 1977: 134), and which is yet social and material. There is then a kind of double sidedness to the concept. On the one hand, 'what we are defining is a particular quality of social experience and relationship, historically distinct from other particular qualities, which gives the sense of a generation or of a period' (ibid.: 131) – that is, a contextual and historical specificity, echoing the earlier use of the concept. And yet, on the other hand, it refers to what William quixotically calls 'changes of presence' (ibid.: 132). The structure of feeling then involves 'the hypothesis of a mode of social formation, explicit and recognizable in specific kinds of art, which is distinguishable from other social and semantic formations by its articulation of presence' (ibid.: 135).

> It is the embryonic, connected to all that is present and moving, all that escapes or seems to escape from the fixed and the explicit and the

> known … [it is] grasped and defined as the personal: this, here, now, alive, active, subjective.
>
> (Williams 1977: 131)

This is akin to the relation between what Williams has called the known and the knowable, a space between presence and emergence, but this is a presence that is no more recuperable in the temporal present than in the past. It sounds like what any number of contemporary theorists of the modern might call an ontological present, the present as a lived singularity.

How do we make sense of this complex concept in which a notion of presence plays a crucial role in the relation of the known and the knowable, between the epistemological and the ontological (the lived)? Perhaps we might take a hint from a rare discussion, buried in *The Politics of Modernism*, of the concept of 'the modern'. Williams identifies two active senses of 'modern': the first refers to a sense of historical time, with its specific and then changing features. This sense of the modern opens the present up to a sense of the future. The second refers to an 'eternal contemporaneity, that apprehension of the "moment" that overrides and excludes, practically and theoretically, the material realities of change until all consciousness and practice are "now" ' (Williams 1989f: 76). Williams, citing Medvedev and Bakhtin, rejects this second when the new becomes 'a generalization of the human condition' (ibid.) and, consequently, one's judgment of the modern then depends entirely on whether this condition has been realized or is being threatened.

Yet leaping to the conclusion that Williams has chosen the first over the second sense of the modern would be a mistake for it would seem more fruitful and in some sense true to the project to connect his discussion of the modern to his concept of the structure of feeling. That is, I suggests that the two can only be read together and that the latter provides us with the map we need to begin to imagine how Williams thought about modernity. Williams' efforts to think the modern through the concept of the structure of feeling (and vice versa no doubt) brings together, it seems, the two modes of temporality that Williams has indicated: history and presence.

If I may then be allowed, the structure of feeling is the endless construction and deconstruction of the difference between the known and the knowable, between culture and experience, between history and an ontological presence, but even that ontology is a historical, a contextual one, that can only be understood in its relation to a differentiation from culture as the site of history, but also of transcendence or possibility. In embracing such complexity, Williams points the way and opens up a cultural studies approach to modernity, one that embraces the complexity and the possibilities of the multiplicity of ways of being modern.

From the structure of feeling to the temporality of ways of being modern

This emergent theory of the structure of feeling seems to be standing in, as it were, for Williams' absent theory of modernity by suggesting that, in the concept of the structure of feeling, Williams then not only negotiates a constitutive relationship between the two chronotopes that constitute the centre of most Western theories of modernity – a more common sociological view and a more avant-gardist aesthetic view, but also, in bringing these together in the structure of feeling, which is not to say reconciling them, Williams opens the possibility of seeing modernity as a continually dynamic, emerging and even multiple possibility.

He allows us to see that modernity (or, at least, even Euro-modernity) was never complete and fixed, but was always on its way, always becoming. It always included any number of what he might have called emergent and residual modernities, and, therefore, it was always becoming something other as it came to rest at, reorganize and even produce a variety of spaces and places. That is, it was played out in different ways: it was becoming different things at different sites, even as it was being resisted, adopted, appropriated, etc. by other forces, struggles and vectors of determination.

But the question of how he allows us to think towards the possibility of a multiplicity of modernities requires us to describe how Williams implicitly answers the question of how a particular configuration can be asserted to be modern. That is, we should extrapolate from Williams' notion of the structure of feeling, to the task of defining modernity as a changing same or, adopting a phrase from Precarias a la Deriva, a 'singularity in common' (Precarias a la Deriva n.d.: 42). How do we, following Williams, conceptualize modernity, recognizing that it too often functions as an abstraction in need of specificity, and yet, too often, it is the universalization of its specificity that has given it over to the control of the European configurations of modernity?

For the sake of time (and space), we will not raise a whole series of questions about the politics or the status of modernity, but we will consider two different definitions or conceptualizations of the modern in Western discourses, based on two distinct chronotopes, or spatio-temporal matrices that form the conditions of possibility for the practices and structures of social and structural realities. The first, a topographical and sociological chronotope, defines the dominant understanding, the common sense, of the West, about modernity. The second, a topological, post-hermeneutic and anti-sociological[1] chronotope, is more common among certain more aesthetically oriented theorists of modernity. The structure of feeling already puts these two into a necessary relationship.

The common-sense description of modernity can take two different forms or emphases. The first thinks of modernity in terms of particular

macro-institutional structures, each assumed to be inherently distinguishable from its corresponding feature in traditional social orders. Such institutional identifications may be (and most commonly are) economic (capitalism or industrialization) but they are often also political (nation states, civil society and ideological politics) or cultural (professional institutions of knowledge production, and the production of mass culture).

The second version of common sense sees modernity in processual terms or as the realization of one or more social logics: commodification, democratization, individualism (new kinds of subjectivity), difference (as in various border productions, identity productions or the division of public and private spaces, traditional and modern times), bureaucratization, secularism, cosmopolitanism, urbanization, representation (e.g. Heidegger's world picture) and even historicization. Here we should include Giddens's important work on time–space distanciation, which he asserts affects the very nature of institutions (making them more disembedded and self-reflexive) and of experience, and Foucauldean arguments that modernity is defined by the introduction of new types of rationality/power, such as biopolitics. We might also include Jameson, who, building on the notion that modernity gave birth to history and historical consciousness, argues that modernity is a fundamental discursive trope of social self-referentiality, through its constant effort at self-definition, through the constitution of its own temporality.[2]

There is a common 'picture' of modernity at work here: modernity produces new modalities and machineries of politics, moving from absolute power to democracy, where politics becomes the struggle to produce consensus (agreement) through an ideology of ideology. Viewed from a darker, more Weberian and Foucauldean side, modernity involves new technologies for the control of the conduct of individuals and populations through governmentality.

Modernity produces new techniques and loci of sociality in which social relations are reorganized around particular versions of family, gender, generation, sexual life, etc. Such relations are incorporated into an equally profound logic by which modernity operates as a specific sort of difference machine – producing particular structures, through a logic of negativity or negation, of differences on top of multiplicity (fundamentally starting as it were with the distinction between the traditional and the modern or the primitive and the civilized) and then extending to cover the entirety of social life (especially constituting a new logic of identity and identification). At the same time, modernity produces new (logics of) individualities that are now seen to have existed prior to collectivities and that are taken to be the true objects and agents of history. Or, to put it differently, an economy of identity and difference becomes the means by which agency is constituted in history.

Modernity also produces new ways of producing and distributing economic resources, value and wealth, through the growth of specifically capitalist versions of market and commodity economies and new modes of

the appropriation of surplus value through technological, industrial and eventually consumerist and neo-liberal redefinitions of labour as value production. Finally, the modern produces new cultural economies including the proliferation of cultural literacy, expression and agency, the differentiation between high and popular or mass culture, the compartmentalization of the social totality, the new authority of secular knowledge (reason) over tradition and religion, the new sense of possibility and the desirability of change and experimentation, combined with a new faith in science, technology and progress.

Closely related, and underlying such descriptions, modernity is thought of as the production of new organizations of time and space; modernity is defined by its (topographical) chronotope. On the one hand, modernity moves from large-scale religious-based empires to smaller sovereign national states where the borders define the space of decision-making powers (and social identifications). It also reorganizes planetary space according to the relations of colonialism and racism. On the other hand, to put it simply, modernity invents History. Modernity is the acceptance, even the celebration and institutionalization of change; it stands against stasis (and tradition). Time itself, usually assumed to be linear, is reconceived as movement, from a past through a fleeting present into a future; the future passes into the past through an ever-disappearing present. In history, the present is the articulation of different temporalities – past futures and futures past, embodying the contingencies of the past and the future in the present.[3]

This discussion of time gets to the heart, the most basic level, of the West's common sense view of modernity. Modernity is, before all else, a new way of belonging to and in time. In a discursive reading of the West's common sense, modernity is the invention of a topographical time: the temporality of change itself. It is the time of Chronos. As Osborne says, modernity is 'a distinct but paradoxical form of historical temporality', which he identifies as 'the ceaseless process of temporal differentiation' (Osborne 1995: 5, 8). Of course, this temporality of change, of history, also has or is articulated to a spatiality; and Chronos is always a spatio-temporality. In general, the temporality of change is articulated to the spaces of sociality and institutional life: in Euro-modernity, history takes place in the space of the nation state.

But we have obviously ignored one of the most common understandings of modernity, where modernity, in a rather circular way, is defined via a particular experience of modernity as a particular attitude towards and experience of the actualizations of change at increasing speeds and densities:

> A mode of vital experience – experience of space and time, of the self and others, of life's possibilities and perils … To be modern is to find ourselves in an environment that promises us adventure, power, joy, growth, transformation of ourselves and the world – and at the same

> time, that threatens to destroy everything we have, everything we know, everything we are … To be modern is to be part of a universe in which … All that is solid melts into air.
>
> (Berman 1982)

This notion of experience, largely understood phenomenologically, poses an interesting challenge to the chronotope of change. Where is 'experience' located temporally? Even more problematic, where and how is its subject constituted? It seems to depend on a second chronotope. If the first chronotope is conjunctural and sociological, theorizing a social structure of identity and overdetermination, the second is affective, theorizing a structure of identification, investment and experience. It can be traced back to two significant theorists of the modern: Benjamin's 'other history,' what he calls messianic time as 'a cessation of happening … an enormous abridgement' (Benjamin 1968: 262–3); and Baudelaire's emphasis on the present and presence, on *the now*, as the key to modernity, rather than in a break between the old and the new, or in a notion of social change and movement.[4]

In this second chronotope, the modern is constituted as the construction of the now, the present, as a discrete moment of temporality (as in Heidegger's three ecstasies of time), as the event. The present is the ontological locus of the lived, and the temporal locus of the subject as the subject of experience. It is the present-ing of the individual as subject of his or her own experience. The now is the moment of experience as a way of being in time. Stuart Hall says that being modern bestows upon one 'the privilege of living to the full the potentialities of the present from the inside' (Hall n.d.). Foucault describes it thus:

> The present becomes the fullest moment, the moment of the greatest intensity, the solemn moment when the universal makes its entry into the real … The present is no longer the moment of forgetfulness … it is the moment when the truth comes out.
>
> (Foucault 2003: 227–8)

Each now, each moment, is unique unto itself. This notion of the present seems to have abandoned not only any notion of history and historical specificity, but of change as well. Instead, it emphasizes, following Benjamin and Bloch, the now as the 'nonsynchronous accumulation,' the repetitions of all times, of multiple temporalities, in the now (Bloch 1977).

But the event of the present itself is not merely the fleeting and disappearing portal through which the future becomes past; it has a being-structure of its own. It is the ontological reality, the discontinuity and contingency, the 'event-being' of the present or the now as a singularity, constituting the context of experience and subjectivity, which defines this second chronotope. The notion of the now as event is used to point to what Takeuchi calls the

permanence of the instant (Takeuchi 2005: 58). It is, in Heideggerian terms, the event as eventing or happening, as the being of the performative. This is the present as an ontological condition of the possibility of transition, of becoming, as the ontological between.[5] As Benjamin says, 'A historical materialist cannot do without the notion of a present which is not a transition, but in which time stands still and has come to a stop' (Benjamin 1968: 264).

As Foucault put it in his rereading of Baudelaire: 'the value of the present is indissociable from a desperate eagerness to imagine it, to imagine it otherwise than it is, and to transform it not by destroying it but by grasping it in what it is' (Foucault 1997: 311). Thus for Foucault, the permanent critique, the experimentalism of the modern, 'at one and the same time, marks a relation of belonging and presents itself as a task' (309). Similarly Derrida talks about the 'noncontemporaneity with itself of the living present' (Derrida 1994: xix). There is then within the very event of the present a kind of double presencing, not merely a presencing of discontinuity, contingency and fleetingness, but also the expression of, as Foucault describes it, the eternal, the heroic, in the present, the transcendent in the immanent.

In the chronotope of the event, then, there seems to be another practice of subjectivation, one that is literally an act of subjectification. The space of the event is the space of (phenomenological) experience and, hence, of the construction of the individual as the phenomenological subject of experience. This subjectivity is lived as both an interiorization of one's essence or individuality, as a self, that is – in metaphysical terms, 'spiritualized' and as the privileged author/possessor of its own experience. It is, we might say, the rationalization of the soul. This inner self is a self-aware subjectivity that stands in new relations to both the social order and the world.

Just as the chronotope of change is commonly articulated to a set of spaces – the institutional and social (both public and private) spaces of the nation state, so too the event of the now cannot be simply treated as temporal; it is always and already spatialized as well. The event must always have a spatial presence, and its singular temporality must always be understood as a spatial singularity as well. In fact, this eventalization is the articulation by which the present belongs with everyday life, an eventalization of the lived (as the site of experience).

And so Baudelaire locates the same 'marvelous' element of the present, or what he calls the 'intimation of the eternal in the ruins of our tradition,' in the spatiality of everyday life (cited in Gaonkar 2001: 5). While Benjamin suggested that the present was 'the actuality of the everyday' (and vice versa?) (Harootunian 2000: 3), Baudelaire was, at least implicitly, suggesting not the equivalence but the articulation of the present and everyday life, of the now and the here, as it were.[6] Thus, as Gaonkar puts his position, modernity is located at the crossing where the 'fugitive materiality' of everyday life impinges on a sharpened consciousness of the present (Gaonkar 2001: 4).

And, yet, neither chronotope, taken by itself, is capable of describing modernity as a way of being in the world, or of explaining the possibility of the multiplicity of modernities as ways of being modern (a locution suggested by Meaghan Morris). Thus, what constitutes a mode of being as modern, or to put it differently, what is the diagram of being modern? The modern describes and circumscribes, even as it constructs, a certain variability in the ways people can belong in the world, in what we might call the lived temporalities (and geographies) of existence, understood as simultaneously material, discursive, ideological and affective. In this way, we avoid defining it by a particular kind of subject, experience, logic or institution; we avoid conflating the modern with a social or structural norm. And we join with Talad Asad: 'Modernity is not primarily a matter of cognizing the real but of living in the world' (Asad 2003: 14). And with Paul Gilroy, for whom the modern is 'a distinctive ecology of belonging' (Gilroy 2000: 55).

It is here that we must take the lesson of Williams' concept of the structure of feeling as a way of bringing together the two chronotopes, and of arguing that the diagram of ways of being modern can be described – in part – as a configuration of the articulation of the doubled ways of temporal belonging. And while this doubled articulation must include the articulations of temporalities and spatialities, we will focus on the former – as did Williams unfortunately (another expression perhaps of his inability or his refusal to think outside the category of the nation state and leave the more complex version of the diagram to another time and place). Following Williams, being modern is defined by the ways in which Chronos and the now belong together (in the structure of feeling) as the expression of the ways one belongs in and to time (and we must not forget, even if we ignore it temporarily) space.

The modern is located as a way of being in the irreconcilable difference – it need not always be a negativity, a conflict – between, and the necessary belonging together of, the topography and the topology of the modern, between Chronos (historicality) and the event (phenomenological presentism) of the modern (and of Euro-modernity). The two temporalities, the temporal faces of the chronotopes, are always in relations – a structuration of the possibilities of change and a structure of belonging in the present. As Chakrabarty identifies it, modernity is located in the space where 'the urgency of the "now" [is] in tension with historicism's not yet' (Chakrabarty 2000: 8). Insofar as the chronotope of the event focuses entirely on now as it were, it gives up not only any notion of change, but of any possibility of theorizing the 'historical' specificity of the event itself. And insofar as the chronotope of Chronos focuses entirely on change, it gives up the possibility of understanding the immediacy – and hence, the subjectification – of the lived. In the contingent relation between the two modes of being-in-time, each of which is itself contingent and contextually specific, in this space of a life lived in a chronological and eventalized time, that human

life is opened to mediation of a multiplicity of material, affective and semiotic regimes. Seeing the articulation, Benjamin has written that 'History is the subject of a structure whose site is not homogeneous empty time, but time filled by the presence of the new' (Benjamin 1968: 263).

But this difference is always both generally articulated – event vs. change – and specifically articulated. The latter points to the way in which any point of the diagram, a virtual reality, is actualized. Thus, in Euro-modernity, presence as experience is constituted phenomenologically,[7] and change is constituted as History, which is always linear (and usually teleological if not always progressive), defined by its movement from a disappearing past through a (non-existent, fleeting) present, into an undefined (and often indefinable) future. History is constructed through difference and negativity: the past and the future are the not-now, the not-present. The only way the past can appear in the present is either as anachronism if unconnected to our lives, or as memory if connected. The only way the future can appear is as utopia if unconnected or prediction if connected. My argument, following Williams' use of the structure of feeling, is that such a construction of the temporality of change is not the only possible one and different actualizations of the diagram (different ways of being modern) will be defined as much by the specific ways in which these different articulatory points of the diagram are realized. (The diagram is also comprised of, doubled by, an axis of lived spatiality that is always differentiating itself into two forms, which are referred to as institutional space and the space of everyday life.)

The structure of feeling offers a vision of being modern that involves not a choice between either the event or change but a relationship between concrete actualizations of both. Insofar as each of these varied logics of belonging in time are never simply singular and universal, as if there were only one possibility of the event or of chronos, then we have to think of 'being modern' itself, like the structure of feeling, as a real and positive multiplicity.

While I do want to claim that this is a part of the axiomatic geometry as it were of modernities, I do not mean to suggest that it is in any way sufficient, either as a theory of modernity or as a description of any specific configuration. Even describing the geometry of a specific modernity would not be sufficient as an account of the constitution of the specific conjuncture, since its modernity is never all that defines it.

Nevertheless, this understanding of the modern as a diagram of virtual ways of being modern provides, let's hope, the beginning of a theoretical foundation for seeing the contemporary context – both in the US as well as in many other places, but also perhaps globally – as a struggle to reconstitute the possibilities of our ways of being modern. It enables us to recognize that there are always multiple ways of being modern, both actual and virtual. And this leads us to reconceive of the work of cultural studies,

not only to see the complexity of the contexts within which we are dealing, but, even more, to give us a way to both accept and reread de Sousa Santos's statement that we face 'modern problems for which there are no modern solutions' (De Sousa Santos 2003: 13).[8] Rather, we face modern problems that challenge us to think outside the possibilities of our own ways of being modern. It might enable us to accept the reality of a variety of struggles over the ways we live in time.[9] It might begin to enable us to admit that we do not even know what questions to pose for it is not merely that the practices have changed (although we have too often failed to carefully identify what is new, and what is an articulation) but that the context of struggle – even the diagram of modernity – is changing.[10]

Such a diagrammatic understanding of modernity – built in part on following the conceptual map offered in the notion of the structure of feeling – offers an ethical/political possibility as well, addressing, it seems, the contemporary need for a politics of hope. It introduces a different kind of universality, not a universal singular but the singular universality of the actualization of the virtual. If the former defines a hierarchical abstraction out of the particular against which all future particulars have to be measured, the latter sees universality as interdependent with the movement across particulars in a non-hierarchical position. The result is that universality is always qualified, so that every individual represents a universal only in its very dynamic and differentially constituted specificity. This is a universality that is neither teleological (developmental) nor expansive (totalizing), which may thus depend on the recognition that 'other temporalities, other forms of worlding, coexist and are possible' (Chakrabarty 2000: 95).

It is the intersection of two chronotopes, the singular event and change, through which the virtual gives itself over to expression and actualization. It is only in the imagination of other ways of being modern that we can at least begin to reimagine imagination itself. The virtual, unlike the possible, is grounded in the real, offering a different notion of imagination. Raymond Williams seems to have understood this, giving it substance in his concept of the structure of feeling. While the concept described affective homologies in his early work, in his later work it points to the necessary gap between the known and the knowable, experience and the discursive, the lived and articulation, the gap that is the site of emergence and creativity. The structure of feeling is the virtuality, the becoming, of the multiplicity of modernity.

Such an understanding of the complexities of the modern, recognizing that other ways of being modern are real (even if as yet unactualized), might offer us a different way forward, one that makes other pasts and futures – and hence, other presents – possible. If we are to find new ways of (re-) constituting the multiple presents as contexts of hope, I think we have to learn to 'hear that which one does not already understand' (Chakrabarty 2002: 37). This may reveal new ways to connect to the multiplicity not

only of disabling and pessimistic realities, but also of hopes, dreams and desires, and seek to define a new and collective project of reinventing the 'possibilities' of imagination and the ways of being modern.

Notes

1 I say it is anti-sociological because it cannot be reframed in terms of a relationship between the individual and society or between mind and body.
2 And, for that very reason, he eschews any effort to use modernity as an analysis of the present. See Jameson 2002.
3 Echoing Scott 2004: 220.
4 This discourse differs from the more common appeal to Baudelaire's concept of the flâneur as the figure or emblem of modernity, which ties Baudelaire back to the chronotope of change, albeit a radically contingent, almost random change.
5 Foucault distinguishes three ways philosophical thought reflects on its own present: the present represented as belonging to a certain era; the present interrogated for signs of a forthcoming event; the present as a period of transition into a new world (Foucault 1997).
6 Thus I do not agree with Osborne's statement that 'Everydayness is a temporal mode of existence' since I think it is also spatial, but I do agree that 'its mode of temporalization [is] a distinctive combination of presentness and repetition (Osborne 1995: 195).
7 Such non-phenomenological understandings of experience were articulated by pragmatists such as Dewey and James, as well as Whitehead.
8 The full quotation is: 'The conditions that brought about the crisis of modernity have not yet become the conditions to overcome the crisis beyond modernity. Hence the complexity of our transitional period portrayed by oppositional postmodern theory: we are facing modern problems for which there are no modern solutions … What is necessary is to start from the disjuncture between the modernity of the problems and the postmodernity of the possible solutions, and to turn such disjunction into the urge to ground theories and practices capable of reinventing social emancipation out of the wrecked emancipatory promises of modernity.'
9 It is in this context that the current prominence of the question of memory as a key cultural and political site becomes a question rather than a solution to an as yet unasked question. We can take note of the increasing need and speed of memorialization, to remember, in the face of the disappearance of the future. If the liberal way of being modern, the object of attack from all sides, emphasized the present–future relation, does the evidence suggest a shift into a new emphasis on present–past?

   Somehow we seem caught in the conflict between a politics of the present–future or even of the past–future (Walter Benjamin) to one of the past–present relation. It is not I take it coincidental that such work often fails to address the role of the state in producing not only the homogeneous empty time of historicism but also the remembered time of lived memory. One might further ask how this is linked to Mitchell's argument about the role of the state, in relation to the production of modernity via the production of the reality effect (the very distinction between the image and the real).
10 One might see this as an attempt to revive – ontologically – so-called 'medium theory:' that is, Innis and Mumford meet Heidegger and Deleuze, as it were.

Chapter 3

‘All forms of signification’

John Storey

I

This chapter suggests that Raymond Williams’ major contribution to cultural studies is his development of the idea of culture as ‘a realised signifying system’ (Williams 1981b: 209). We will explore and elaborate the development of this idea in Williams’ work, beginning with a discussion of his early formulations of culture as a signifying system, then charting the shift in Williams’ position from seeing culture as a network of shared meanings, to seeing it as consisting of both shared and contested meanings. The latter position is a result of the introduction in the 1970s of Antonio Gramsci’s (1971) concept of hegemony into Williams’ work on culture. Although the main focus will be to explain Williams’ concept of culture as a realized signifying system, there will be points where we will be using Williams to explain British cultural studies. To paraphrase a wonderful phrase from Williams himself, we will be working with Williams rather than under him.[1]

In all his definitions of culture (see especially Williams [1961] 1965a, 1981b, 1989b), Williams works with an inclusive definition of culture. That is, rather than study only what Matthew Arnold famously called ‘the best which has been thought and said’ (Arnold 2009: 6), Williams is committed to examining ‘all forms of signification’ (Williams 1984a: 240). This is a rejection of the Arnoldian/Leavisite mapping of the cultural field. The Leavisites (influenced by Arnold) divided the cultural field into minority culture and mass civilization.[2] The first, minority culture, consisting of Great Art and, crucially, the ability to appreciate Great Art, demands serious consideration. While the second, mass civilization, consisting of the remaining degraded mass culture, requires little more than a fleeting sociological glance, remaining long enough to condemn either the culture made *for* the ‘masses’ or (as in most versions) the culture *of* the ‘masses’. Against the Leavisite division of the cultural field into the minority culture of an elite and mass civilization of the masses, Williams, writing in 1961, proposed the social definition of culture, in which culture is defined as

> a particular way of life, which expresses certain meanings and values not only in art and learning but also in institutions and ordinary behaviour. The analysis of culture, from such a definition, is the clarification of the meanings and values implicit in a particular way of life, a particular culture … the characteristic forms through which members of the society communicate.
>
> (Williams [1961] 2006: 32)

This definition is crucial to the development of British cultural studies as an interdisciplinary project for three reasons. First, Williams' definition 'democratically' broadens the Leavisite definition of culture, producing a more inclusive definition, in which, instead of culture being defined as a body of only 'elite' texts and practices (ballet, opera, the novel, poetry, for example), it is redefined to include *as* culture television, cinema, pop music, advertising, for example. Second, culture as a particular way of life further broadens the definition of culture. So, for example, rather than culture being television as text, culture is embodied in the particular way of life that is involved in, say, the production and (and very importantly for cultural studies) the consumption of television.

These two aspects of Williams's definition are usually noted and the discussion ends there. However, there is a third element, one that is far more important than the other two. That is, the connection he makes between culture and signification. The importance of a particular way of life is that it 'expresses certain meanings and values'. In addition, cultural analysis from the perspective of this definition of culture 'is the clarification of the meanings and values implicit in a particular way of life'. The emphasis in discussions of this passage is always on a particular way of life, but the idea of cultures as networks of meanings (i.e. culture as a realized signifying system) makes a far more significant contribution to British cultural studies. Moreover, culture as a realized signifying system is not reducible to a particular way of life, but rather it is fundamental to the shaping and holding together of *all ways of life*. This is not to reduce everything to culture as a realized signifying system, but it is to insist that culture defined in this way should be seen 'as essentially involved in *all* forms of social activity' (Williams 1981b: 13). As Williams further explains, 'the social organisation of culture, as a realised signifying system, is embedded in a whole range of activities, relations and institutions, of which some are manifestly "cultural"' (ibid.: 209).

While there is more to life than signifying systems, it is nevertheless the case that 'it would … be wrong to suppose that we can ever usefully discuss a social system without including, as a central part of its practice, its signifying systems, on which, as a system, it fundamentally depends' (ibid.: 207). In other words, signification is fundamental to all human activities; signification saturates the social. Nevertheless, while culture as a signifying

system is 'deeply present' (ibid.: 209) in all social activities, it remains the case that 'other quite different human needs and actions are substantially and irreducibly present' (ibid.). Moreover, in certain social activities signification becomes dissolved into what he calls 'other needs and actions' (ibid.). To dissolve can mean two quite different things: to disappear or to become liquid and form part of a solution. For example, if a parliament is dissolved it ceases to exist. However, when we dissolve sugar in tea, the sugar does not disappear; rather it becomes an invisible but fundamental part of the drink. It is this second sense of dissolve which best captures Williams' usage. Nevertheless, the ambiguity of the term has allowed critics to suggest that signification (i.e. culture) is therefore absent in certain human activities. Terry Eagleton, for example, has claimed that certain activities fall outside Williams' definition: 'But if car-making falls outside this definition, so does sport, which like any human practice involves signification, but hardly in the same cultural category as Homeric epic and graffiti' (Eagleton 2000: 34).

Social activities do not have to signify in the same way to fall within Williams' definition of culture. Industrial manufacture and the works of Homer are not the same, do not signify in the same way, but they do both depend on signification. It may be true that car-making and sport do not signify in ways equivalent to, say, a sonnet by Shakespeare or a song by Lucinda Williams, but signification is still a fundamental part of both sport and the making of cars. We acknowledge as much when we use phrases like the culture of sport or the culture of the work place. In other words, signification exists in all aspects of human existence. Sometimes, it is the most important aspect of the activity, at other times it is overshadowed by more functional aspects. But it is never totally dissolved (i.e. it never disappears); culture always marks a human presence in the world. In my view, the logic of Williams' position is this: signification saturates the social, but in certain cases it becomes dissolved; it simply becomes less visible in certain human activities. Poetry is more obviously about signification in a way that, say, plumbing appears not to be. But we know that without signification plumbing would not be possible (there is a culture of plumbing). Moreover, we also know that plumbing, as a human activity, has a variable history of signifying different things: civilization, modernity, westernization, class difference, for example. Culture, therefore, as defined by Williams, is not something restricted to the arts or to different forms of intellectual production; it is an aspect of all human activities.

On the basis of Williams' redefinition of culture certain versions of British cultural studies have gradually come to define culture as the production, circulation, and consumption of meanings. As Stuart Hall explains,

> Culture … is not so much a set of things – novels and paintings or TV programmes and comics – as a process, a set of practices. Primarily,

> culture is concerned with the production and exchange of meanings – the 'giving and taking of meaning' – between the members of a society or group.
>
> (Hall 1997b: 2)

According to this definition, cultures do not so much consist of, say, books. Rather, cultures are the shifting networks of signification in which, say, books are *made* to exist as meaningful objects. For example, if I pass a name card to someone in China the polite way to do it is with two hands. If I pass it with one hand I may cause offence. This is clearly a matter of culture. However, the *culture* is not really in the gesture, it is in the *meaning* of the gesture. In other words, there is nothing essentially polite about using two hands; using two hands has been made to signify politeness. Nevertheless, signification has become embodied in a material practice, which can, in turn, produce material effects. As Williams insists, 'Signification, the social creation of meanings … is … a practical material activity' (Williams 1977: 34). Similarly, as Karl Marx observed, 'one man is king only because other men stand in the relation of subjects to him. They, on the contrary, imagine that they are subjects because he is king' (Marx 1976: 149). This relationship works because they share a culture in which such relations are meaningful. Outside such a culture, this relationship would be meaningless. Being a king, therefore, is not a gift of nature (or of God), but something constructed in culture; it is culture and not nature or God which gives these relations meaning: it makes them signify, and, moreover, by signifying they materially organize practice.

To share a culture, therefore, is to interpret the world, make it meaningful and experience it as meaningful in recognizably similar ways. So-called 'culture shock' happens when we encounter radically different networks of meaning, that is, when our 'natural' or 'common sense' is confronted by someone else's 'natural' or 'common sense'.

So far we have focused on culture as a system of shared meanings. This is more or less how culture tends to be presented in Williams' early work. It is not until 'Base and superstructure in Marxist cultural theory' (1980a; first published in 1973), *Marxism and Literature* (1977) and *Culture* (1981b) that his concept of culture as a realized signifying system is fully formulated. By fully formulated, I mean when Williams recognizes that signifying systems consist of both shared and contested meanings. Williams' mature formulation is massively influenced by Gramsci's concept of hegemony. Although I started with a quotation from *The Long Revolution* (1965a; first published in 1961), the idea of culture as a signifying system is in fact first suggested in his essay *Culture is Ordinary* (1989b; first published in 1958). The formulation is quite similar to that found in *The Long Revolution*: 'A culture is common meanings, the product of a whole people' (Williams 1989b: 8). Ten years later, in *The Idea of a Common Culture* (1989d; first published in

1968), he is even more explicit about the ordinariness of the making of meanings, 'culture is ordinary: … there is not a special class, or group of men, who are involved in the creation of meanings and values, either in a general sense or in specific art and belief' (Williams 1989d: 34). This recalls Gramsci's point about intellectuals: 'All men are intellectuals … but not all men have in society the function of intellectual' (Gramsci 2009: 77). But what is missing in Williams' formulation is Gramsci's insistence on questions of power.

When Williams said that 'culture is ordinary' (Williams 1989b) he was drawing attention to the fact that meaning-making is not the privileged activity of the few, but something in which we are all involved. However, this does not of course mean that we are all involved in it in the same way; meaning-making, like all other social activities, is always entangled in relations of power. While we may all be involved in the making of meanings, it is also the case that some meanings and the people who make them have more power than other people and other meanings. Having said this, Williams' early work is not totally unaware that power features in the circulation and embedding of meanings. For example, in *The Idea of a Common Culture* (first published in 1968) he observes,

> If it is at all true that the creation of meanings is an activity which engages all men, then one is bound to be shocked by any society which, in its most explicit culture, either suppresses the meanings and values of whole groups, or which fails to extend to these groups the possibility of articulating and communicating those meanings.
>
> (Williams 1989d: 35)

In fact it would be very unfair to Williams to suggest that even in this early work he is simply unaware of power. The essay 'Communications and Community' (first published in 1961) makes this absolutely clear:

> For in fact all of us, as individuals, grow up within a society, within the rules of a society, and these rules cut very deep, and include certain ways of seeing the world, certain ways of talking about the world. All the time people are being born into a society, shown what to see, shown how to talk about it.
>
> (Williams 1989a: 21–2)

What is the case, however, is that he had not yet found a fully adequate way of articulating the relations between signification and power. The problem with Williams' position in *The Long Revolution* and in these other early texts, certainly from the perspective of this argument, is that it does not yet fully connect culture with power. In *The Long Revolution* he is still able to claim that culture is 'the sharing of common meanings … [in] which

meanings that are valued by the community are shared and made active' (Williams [1961] 1965a: 55).

Williams' commitment to working people makes him insist that they are makers of meanings. In other words, to use the phrase which later became popular in cultural studies, he refuses to see ordinary people as 'cultural dupes'. The problem is that his democratic impulse tends to trap him in a form of populism (albeit a radical populism), in which power is made to appear invisible. Or to put it another way, there is agency here, but no recognition of structure. As Williams would later insist, we always need to keep in play the 'making' of meanings and the fact that we are also 'made' by meanings that are not of our making. To put it very simply, most meanings are not of our making, they are generated by dominant groups and dominant institutions. Moreover, these meanings tend to operate in the interests of dominant groups and dominant institutions. As Williams consistently argues from 1973 onwards, cultures are never simply shifting networks of shared meanings; on the contrary, cultures are always both shared and contested networks of meanings. Culture is where we share and contest meanings of ourselves, of each other and of the social worlds in which we live. For instance, to return to an example given earlier, people may recognize the meaning of the relations of kingship but reject and struggle against these relations. Such rejections and acts of struggle are part of the processes Gramsci (2009: 77) called hegemony.

It is when Williams embraces Gramsci's concept of hegemony that he changes how he understands culture as a realized signifying system. After the incorporation of hegemony into his work in the 1970s, culture as a signifying system is always understood as consisting of both shared and contested meanings. Moreover, it is when Williams embraces Gramsci's concept of hegemony that he locates culture and power as the object of study in British cultural studies.

Gramsci uses hegemony to describe processes of power in which a dominant group does not merely *rule by force* but *leads by consent*: it exerts 'intellectual and moral leadership' (Gramsci 1971: 57). Hegemony involves a specific kind of consensus, a consensus in which a social group presents its own *particular* interests as the *general* interests of the society as a whole; it turns the particular into the general. Hegemony works by the transformation of potential antagonism into simple difference. This works in part through the circulation of meanings, meanings which reinforce dominance and subordination by seeking to fix the meaning of social relations. As Williams explains,

> It [hegemony] is a lived system of meanings and values – constitutive and constituting – which as they are experienced as practices appear as reciprocally confirming. It thus constitutes a sense of reality for most people … It is … in the strongest sense a 'culture' [understood as a

> signifying system], but a culture which has also to be seen as the lived dominance and subordination of particular classes.
>
> (Williams 1977: 110)

In other words, hegemony involves the attempt to saturate the social with meanings which support the prevailing structures of power. In a hegemonic situation subordinate groups appear to actively support and subscribe to values, ideals, objectives, etc., which *incorporate* them into the prevailing structures of power: relations of dominance and subordination. However, hegemony, as Williams observes, 'does not just passively exist as a form of dominance. It has continually to be renewed, recreated, defended, and modified. It is also continually resisted, limited, altered, challenged' (Williams 1977: 112). Therefore, although hegemony is characterized by high levels of consensus, it is never without conflict; that is, there is always *resistance*. However, for hegemony to remain successful conflict and resistance must always be channelled and contained – rearticulated in the interests of the dominant (see Hall 2009, Storey 2009b).

2

There are two conclusions we can draw from Williams' concept of culture as a realized signifying system. First, although the world exists in all its enabling and constraining materiality outside culture, it is only in culture that the world can be *made to mean*. In other words, signification has a performative effect; it helps construct the realities it appears only to describe. Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe ([1985], 2001, 2009) have had a significant influence on cultural studies in Britain, especially through their impact on the work of Stuart Hall. They use the word 'discourse' in much the same way as Williams uses the word 'culture'. According to Laclau and Mouffe,

> If I kick a spherical object in the street or if I kick a ball in a football match, the *physical* fact is the same, but *its meaning* is different. The object is a football only to the extent that it establishes a system of relations with other objects, and these relations are not given by the mere referential materiality of the objects, but are, rather, socially constructed. This systematic set of relations is what we call discourse.
>
> (Laclau and Mouffe 2009: 144–5)

Williams would call these systematic relations culture. However, both positions share the view that to stress the discursive or the cultural is not to deny the materiality of the real. Again, according to Laclau and Mouffe,

> the discursive character of an object does not, by any means, imply putting its *existence* into question. The fact that a football is only a

> football as long as it is integrated within a system of socially constructed rules does not mean that it ceases to be a physical object.
>
> (Laclau and Mouffe 2009: 145)

In other words, objects exist independently of their discursive or cultural articulation, but it is only within discourse or culture that they can exist as meaningful objects in meaningful relations. For example, earthquakes exist in the real world, but whether they are

> constructed in terms of 'natural phenomena' or 'expressions of the wrath of God', depends upon the structuring of a discursive field. What is denied is not that such objects exist externally to thought, but the rather different assertion that they could constitute themselves as objects outside any discursive condition of emergence.
>
> (Laclau and Mouffe 2001: 108)

This way of thinking about culture or discourse is obviously not without its critics. Catherine Gallagher, for example, is critical of the way in which cultural studies in general and Williams in particular use the concept of culture. As she explains,

> The puzzling thing about these writings … is their almost programmatic refusal to tell us what culture is not. 'Nature' was once its most widely agreed-upon opposite, but since the category of nature is now itself often perceived as culturally created, even that broad distinction has been weakened.
>
> (Gallagher 1995: 308)

Williams had been aware of this type of objection as early as 1961:

> it is impossible for us to assume that there is any reality experienced by man into which man's own observations and interpretations do not enter … Yet equally, the facts of perception in no way lead us to a late form of idealism; they do not require us to suppose that there is no kind of reality outside the human mind; they point rather to the insistence that all human experience is an interpretation of the non-human reality … We have to think … of human experience as both objective and subjective, in one inseparable process … We create our human world.
>
> (Williams [1961] 1965a: 36, 54)

To argue that culture is best understood as a signifying system is not a denial that the material world exists in all its constraining and enabling reality outside signification. As Williams makes very clear, 'the natural world exists whether anyone signifies it or not' (Williams 1979e: 67). But

what is also absolutely the case is that the natural (or the material) world exists for us – and only ever exists for us – layered in signification.

The second conclusion we can draw from seeing culture as a realized signifying system concerns the potential for struggle over meaning. Given that different meanings can be ascribed to the same 'text' or 'sign' (i.e. anything that can be made to signify), meaning-making (i.e. the making of culture) is, therefore, always a potential site of struggle. The making of meaning is always entangled in what Valentin Volosinov ([1973] 1986) identifies as the 'multi-accentuality' of the sign. Rather than being inscribed with a single meaning, a sign can be articulated with different 'accents'; that is, it can be *made to mean* different things in different contexts, with different effects of power. Therefore, the sign is always a potential site of 'differently oriented social interests' (Volosinov [1973] 1986), and is often in practice 'an arena of … struggle' (ibid.: 23). Those with power seek 'to make the sign uni-accentual' (ibid.: 23): they seek to make what is potentially multi-accentual appear as if it could only ever be uni-accentual. When the Four Tops, for example, sing 'It's the same old song, but with a different meaning since you've been gone' they illustrate what Volosinov means by the multi-accentuality of the sign.[3] The song tells the story of how a song that once signified a loving relationship has now been rearticulated to signify only pain and regret. Nothing about the materiality of the song has changed (it's the same old song), but what has changed is the context in which the song is heard and made meaningful (with a different meaning since you've been gone). A new context has produced a new meaning, but the new meaning has a constituting effect: the new context generates a new practice (sadness, regret and the accompanying behaviour). In other words (in a less danceable discourse), a text is not the issuing source of meaning but a site where the articulation of meaning (variable meanings) can be produced as it is rearticulated in specific contexts. We continually acknowledge the multi-accentuality of the sign when we describe an interpretation as, for example, a feminist reading, a queer reading, a post-colonial reading, a post-Marxist reading. In such instances, we implicitly acknowledge that the text in question has been made to mean from the critical perspective of a particular reading practice.

Gender identities are also an example of the multi-accentuality of the sign. Masculinity, for example, has real material conditions of existence (we might call these 'biological') but there are different ways of representing masculinity, different ways of making masculinity signify.[4] Therefore, although masculinity may exist in biological conditions of existence, what it means, and the struggle over what it *means*, always takes place *in* culture. This is not simply an issue of semantic difference, a simple question of interpreting the world differently. The different ways of making masculinity mean are not an innocent game of semantics, they are a significant part of a power struggle over what might be regarded as 'normal' – an example of the

politics of signification; an attempt to make what is always multi-accentual appear as if it were simply uni-accentual. In other words, it is about who can claim the power and authority to define social reality to make the world (and the things in it) mean in particular ways and with particular effects of power. Therefore, rather than engage in a fruitless quest for the true or essential meaning of something, cultural studies should fix its critical gaze on how particular meanings acquire their authority and power.[5]

This makes culture and power, it could be argued, the primary object of study in cultural studies. As Hall explains,

> Meanings [i.e. cultures] … regulate and organise our conduct and practices – they help to set the rules, norms and conventions by which social life is ordered and governed. They are … therefore, what those who wish to govern and regulate the conduct and ideas of others seek to structure and shape.
>
> (Hall 1997b: 4)

Meanings have a 'material' existence in that they help organize practice, they establish norms of behaviour. My examples of masculinities and the passing of name cards in China are both examples of signification organizing practice. Moreover, as Hall indicates, those with power often seek to regulate the impact of meanings on practice. In other words, dominant modes of making the world meaningful are a fundamental aspect of the processes of hegemony. As Hall makes clear,

> The signification of events is part of what has to be struggled over, for it is the means by which collective social understandings are created – and thus the means by which consent for particular outcomes can be effectively mobilized.
>
> (Hall 2009: 123)

3

In the Introduction to *The Long Revolution*, Williams regrets the fact that 'there is no academic subject within which the questions I am interested in can be followed through; I hope one day there might be' (Williams [1961] 1965a: 10). In 1964, three years after the first publication of these comments, Richard Hoggart and Stuart Hall established the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies at the University of Birmingham. In the preface to the second edition of *Communications*, Williams draws attention to his support for these developments: 'I am particularly glad that work of a long-term kind is now going on, at the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies in Birmingham, under Richard Hoggart and Stuart Hall' (Williams

1968: 11). Williams' work was fundamental to these developments. But more than this, it was fundamental to the development of cultural studies.

This chapter has hopefully demonstrated the importance of Williams' concept of culture as a realized signifying system for the development of cultural studies. On the basis of Williams's redefinition of culture, cultural studies has gradually come to define culture as the production, circulation and consumption of meanings; meanings that are always entangled in questions of culture and power.[6] To paraphrase what Williams (1989a: 22–3) said about communication systems in 'Communications and community', we cannot think of culture as a realized signifying system as something which happens after reality has occurred, because it is through culture as a realized signifying system that the reality of ourselves, the reality of our society, forms and is interpreted.[7]

Notes

1 What Williams actually says is 'thinking with it rather than under it' (Williams 1981b: 185).
2 See Storey 2009a.
3 The Four Tops, 'It's the same old song', *Four Tops Motown Greatest Hits*, Motown Record Company.
4 For a discussion of the ways in which the 'biological' is always already cultural, see Butler 1999.
5 For example, over the last four years I have been doing research on opera. Not opera as a body of texts and practices but opera as a shifting network of meanings (i.e. the culture of opera); how in certain times and spaces opera is articulated as 'popular culture' and in others it is articulated as 'high culture'. What I try to do (Storey 2002, 2009b) is to track the development of opera as a signifying system: the construction of a particular discourse on opera. A discourse which enabled, constrained and constituted the meaning of opera and opera going. Opera's changing meaning is a question of culture and power.
6 When I describe the media as the dominant signifying institution I am thinking of the media in terms of Williams' (1980a) insistence on the need to recognize the existence of dominant, emergent, residual meanings. In other words, I am describing dominant meanings; there will always be emergent and residual meanings.
7 What Williams actually says is this: 'we cannot think of communication as secondary. We cannot think of it as marginal; or as something that happens after reality has occurred; because it is through the communication systems that the reality of ourselves, the reality of our society, forms and is interpreted' (Williams 1989a: 22–3).

Chapter 4

The perspectives of radical democracy: Raymond Williams' work and its significance for a critical social theory

Rainer Winter

Translated by Ilke Krumholz

1. Introduction

The following contribution deals with the significance of Raymond Williams' works for a critical social theory. Like Jean-Paul Sartre, to whom he has been compared frequently, or Pierre Bourdieu, Williams also does not live up to the cliché that a young radical usually turns into a reactionary as they grow older. Not only did all three of them remain true to their ideals, but both their social critique and their political involvement increased during the course of their lives. At first, Williams was committed to a left-wing reformism but his ideas became more radical towards the end of the 1960s. He showed his solidarity with both the student movement and the protest against the Vietnam War, he emphasized the dangers of the nuclear threat and reflected on a socialist democracy. Having belonged to the left wing in the tradition of Leavis first, he developed a cultural materialism after a long-lasting critical analysis of Marx's ideas. Science and politics merged in his works, which followed the intention of 'making hope practical, rather than despair convincing' (Williams 1989h).

It is the aim of a critical social theory to understand and to transform the socio-historic context of the (global) society (see Pensky 2005) along with its power dynamics and forms of social injustice by asking questions which are necessary for a thorough analysis and by searching for answers and solutions which establish social and economic justice and contribute to a radicalization of democracy (see Kellner 1989). However, critical theory must not be considered as a completed project with ultimate knowledge and ultimate answers. It is altered by the confrontation with new social circumstances as well as by the formation and the development of new theoretical insight and interpretations (see Winter and Zima 2007). According to Paolo Freire's oppositional pedagogy, it is sustained by the idea of a transformative dialogue, of the mutual creation and the sharing of meanings, knowledge and values which are supposed to contribute to living together in a constructive way, to altering power structures, to an 'empowerment' and to emancipation (see Hardt 1992; Fiske 1993; Denzin 2003; Kincheloe and McLaren 2005).

Raymond Williams' manifold, complex and inventive works offer a variety of starting points, ideas and conceptions for a project such as this. He has made very important and fundamental contributions to various areas such as the history of ideas, literary sociology, cultural studies, cultural sociology and media studies. No matter how Williams' work has been judged or classified in retrospect, he himself did not consider it as the isolated action of an academic but as a part of democratizing our entire way of living, as a historical project to which he dedicated his intellectual and political life. Williams was convinced that serious theoretical work is both important and relevant. He wanted to contribute to understanding the social reality in a critical and transformative way and to intervene in the current social struggles and conflicts. Williams aimed for a radically democratic and popular kind of socialism which realizes the idea of a common culture (see Milner 2002: 105).

Williams, much like the Frankfurt School in the 1930s or Pierre Bourdieu, represented a socially committed interventionist conception of science which connected the academic world with everyday life. He considered his work in the context of political movements which fight for a just and democratic society in a 'long revolution'. Williams' studies, which essentially influenced the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies (CCCS) in Birmingham (see Winter 2001), aimed at analysing the social order, which influences and regulates the lives of the people, beyond discipline borderlines. Furthermore, he wanted to create knowledge which could be used for solving urgent social, political and economic problems. He wanted this knowledge to be introduced into the cultural and political reflections of groups which fight against social injustice and for a transformation of the existent. Williams called this kind of collectivization 'knowable communities'. A current example is the 'social justice' movement which is fighting for an alternative globalization and radical democracy (see Leistyna 2005; Neate and Platt 2006). According to Williams, culture can be understood as a slow, yet steadily continuing process of active and creative generation of shared meanings. In this chapter, we will discuss central theoretical considerations and conceptions of Williams which are of significance for a critical social theory.

2. Culture and a democratic society

According to Williams, his most famous and most successful book *Culture and Society* ([1958] 1963a) has to be understood as an oppositional piece of work (Williams 1979d: 98). On the one hand Williams reconstructs the development of the idea of culture by means of a 'close reading' of several texts from the 'English' tradition, which developed in a critical opposition to utilitarian thinking. Ever since the beginning of the Industrial Revolution, this term has been connected to a social idea which describes and

interprets the novel experiences of the social transformation. Cultural texts express the kind of experience of life which can only be accessed through texts. Furthermore, they allow for sophisticated insight and contain utopian possibilities which have not been implemented yet. Williams deals with visions of the 'Noch-Nicht-Sein' (Ernst Bloch). Tendencies towards this concept can be found in cultural texts. Williams frames those hopeful moments which suggest a change, even though it is not clear what this change might look like. His immanent analysis also resembles the approach of ideology criticism of the Frankfurt School, which has complained that the emancipatory promises of ideologies, like the civil ideal of democracy and justice, have not been implemented thus far (see Jones 2004: 62ff.).[1] Just as Williams does in *Culture and Society*, Jürgen Habermas (1963) also proceeds methodologically in the lines of historic semantics in *Strukturwandel der Öffentlichkeit*.

On the other hand, Williams aimed at developing a critical and emancipatory version of culture in order to disassociate the term from the elitist, conservative tradition of Leavis and Eliot, who regarded culture as 'common intellectual property' which belongs to a 'minority elite' and which needs to be defended by it. Williams attacked this position, which uses the term 'culture' in opposition to the working class, to democracy or to socialism and, in doing so, has significantly shaped the contemporary way of thinking (Williams 1979d: 98). But, his project was set out not just to be reconstructive but deconstructive as well. For it aimed at presenting the complexity and the significance of the 'culture and society' tradition, criticizing the selective use of the term culture and replacing it with a democratically coined understanding of culture which rejects hierarchic classifications such as minorities or masses.

At the end of *Culture and Society* and after analysing Leavis's idea of a 'mass civilization' Williams concludes: 'There are in fact no masses, there are only ways of seeing people as masses' (Williams [1958] 1963a: 289). Whereas both Leavis and Eliot do not just relate culture to art but to an entire way of living, Williams goes even further by including a society's collective democratic institutions such as labour unions, associations or the political party of the working class into his idea of culture (Williams [1958] 1963a: 327). For Williams, their culture, which is founded on solidarity and helped create these institutions, represents the idea of social cohabiting which he opposed to the bourgeois–individualistic conception of society.

Thus, Williams used the term 'culture' in a critical and radically democratic way. In distinction from traditional conservative points of view on the one side and modernist vanguard opinions on the other, he postulated the assumption that 'culture is ordinary' in an early essay, first published in 1958, like *Culture and Society*.

> Every human society has its own shape, its own purposes, its own meanings. Every human society expresses these, in institutions, and in

> arts and learning. The making of a society is the finding of common meanings and directions, and its growth is an active debate and amendment under the pressures of experience, contact, and discovery, writing themselves into the land.
>
> (Williams [1958] 1989b: 4)

Williams' thinking revolved around the idea of a 'common culture'. Admittedly, it has only been implemented rudimentarily in a society which is marked by inequality, exclusion and subordination. It rather presents the normative ideal of a radically democratic society in which the central economic, political and cultural institutions are organized according to democratic principles. This ideal enabled Williams to criticize the existing social reality, to present (utopian) latencies and to show the necessity of a cultural and social transformation.[2] 'We need a common culture, not for the sake of an abstraction, but because we shall not survive without it' (Williams [1958] 1963a: 304).

Thus, for Williams, speaking of a common culture included criticizing the division and the fragmenting of the present culture and finding creative ways to overcome it. It is supposed to be generated and constructed by a community during its life process.

> A common culture is not the general extension of what a minority mean and believe, but the creation of a condition in which the people as a whole participate in the articulation of meanings and values, and in the consequent decisions between this meaning and that, this value and that.
>
> (Williams [1968] 1989d: 36)

Hence, for Williams, a common culture was closely related to the idea of a creative democracy in which every member of the society participates and can develop and learn. Both artistic and medial practices play an important role in this process.

Based on Great Britain's social situation at the beginning of the 1960s, Williams further developed his theoretical concepts about the relationship between culture and society and about the character of the cultural process in *The Long Revolution* (1961c), which was first meant to be published as *Essays and Principles in the Theory of Culture*. The 'long revolution', which, according to him, marks the beginning of the modern society, arose from the interaction of three processes, namely the Industrial Revolution, the democratic revolution and the cultural revolution. Since modern society is defined by manifold interactions between these processes like, for example, interactions between industry and democracy (Williams 1961c: XI), these processes cannot be considered independently from one another. Expanding and intensifying the communication leads to a profound cultural revolution.

> We speak of a cultural revolution, and we must certainly see the aspiration to extend the active process of learning, with the skills of literacy and other advanced communication, to all people rather than to limited groups, as comparable in importance to the growth of democracy and the rise of scientific industry.
>
> (Williams 1961c: xi)

Williams' sociological approach helped him develop two concepts which he had already used in earlier works. On the one hand, he shows that, as long as there is no common culture, a literary and cultural tradition is based on selections which are made in the present and which are shaped by value decisions and power interests. In doing so, Williams deconstructed the idea that the truth is inherent in a literary tradition (see Milner 2002: 70). Thus, for Leavis and his supporters a literary or cultural tradition was still an objective development of a nation's consciousness, the expression of an organic community. Milner rightly points out (ibid.) that Williams anticipates poststructuralist presumptions such as the idea that the production of knowledge is based on a social foundation and that cultural texts have manifold meanings (see Gergen 1999). On the other hand, based on the level of experience, Williams examines how forms or structures develop and can be defined.

> The most difficult thing to get hold of, in studying any past period, is this felt sense of the quality of life at a particular place and time: a sense of the ways in which the particular activities combined into a way of thinking and living.
>
> (Williams [1958] 1963a: 47)

In this case, Williams emphasizes the social nature of experiences which are embedded in communities or social relationships and he suggests the term 'structure of feeling' for the analysis. 'In one sense, this structure of feeling is the culture of a period: it is the particular living result of all the elements in the general organization' (Williams [1958] 1963a: 48). At the same time he points out that a 'structure of feeling' may not be equated with an ideology since it is neither specific to a class nor universal. This term, which rather emphasizes the dimension of the experience, also ties in with Leavis. So, in an interview with *New Left Review* at the end of the 1970s, Williams stated the following:

> Yes, 'experience' was a term I took over from *Scrutiny*. But you must remember that I was all the time working on historical changes in literary conventions and forms. Leavis's strength was in reproducing and interpreting what he called 'the living content of a work' … The notion of a structure of feeling was designed to focus a mode of historical and

> social relations which was yet quite internal to the work, rather than deducible from it or supplied by some external placing or classification.
> (Williams 1979d: 163f.)

In his later works Williams (1977) defines 'structure of feeling' as the tension between a consciously taken ideological position and a newly emerging experience. It indicates cultural and social changes, which can be counter-hegemonic.

3. The challenges of hegemony

Throughout his entire life Williams kept developing his cultural theory and, at the same time, continually specified and modified the meanings of terms which he had already applied in his early works. For instance, the main features of his attitude towards cultural materialism, which he convincingly elaborated in *Marxism and Literature* (1977), can already be found in his early culturalistic works. Hoping for a socialist society which is both organized democratically and popularly anchored has remained a fundamental motive of his entire work. During the 1960s and 1970s he occupied himself with studying translations about Western Marxism in *New Left Review*. Antonio Gramsci's research began to take a central role. This is especially true for his concept of hegemony, which significantly changed the CCCS's analysis of culture (see Winter 2001) but does not remain confined to the realm of culture. For it refers to the whole social process and how it is embedded into structures of power and authority.

> To say that 'men' define and shape their whole lives is true only in abstraction. In any actual society there are specific inequalities in means and therefore in capacity to realize this process … What is decisive is not only the conscious system of ideas and beliefs, but the whole lived social process as practically organized by specific and dominant meanings and values.
> (Williams 1977: 108f.)

A ruling class has succeeded in establishing a hegemony if their ideas of values and concepts have become generally binding for the entire society. This process is characterized by the dominance and the subordination of certain classes, as the example of common sense shows. Common sense appears to be a natural concept, but it has been constructed in accordance with those in power. However, constructing and preserving a dominant or hegemonic culture is an active process. Hegemony is neither ultimate nor unassailable, and it is prone to being challenged by alternative social powers.

This idea of Gramsci's became the centre of Williams' critical social theory. For he elaborated the idea that the dominant culture does not

include the lived culture as a whole. In doing so, he opposed both Althusser's ideology theory, which was prevalent in British thinking at that time, as well as the 'dominant ideology thesis', which was accepted in sociology.

> What has really to be said … is that no mode of production and therefore no dominant social order and therefore no dominant culture ever in reality includes or exhausts all human practice, human energy, and human intention.
>
> (Williams 1977: 125)

Choosing from the possibilities of human practice, every ruling regime establishes a central system of practices, meanings and values which is dominant and excludes other practices, meanings and values.

The incorporation, which is a constitutive practice executed by every hegemony, deeply penetrates the opinions and values of a society. For instance, a hegemonic culture selectively absorbs meanings and values which are an alternative to the dominant culture. According to Williams ([1973] 1980a), however, this is what also makes it vulnerable. In contrast to Stuart Hall's 'encoding–decoding' model (Hall 1973), he emphasizes that counter-hegemonic possibilities do not only exist in the realm of consumption or decoding but in the area of production as well.[3] That way, independently produced forms can be incorporated by the culture industry (Williams 1974) and still present possibilities for an oppositional or alternative 'encoding'.

4. Practices and agency

The attempt to appropriately theorize the concept of culture led Williams both to becoming intensively involved with the significance of culture for Karl Marx as well as to a new conceptual design of the Base-Superstructure-Model. According to him, it is Marx's opinion, 'to insist that all cultural processes were initiated by humans themselves, and, second, to argue that none of them could be fully understood unless they were seen in the context of human activities as a whole' (Williams [1983] 1989e: 201). Williams tied in with Marx's concept of the totality of social processes, which demands the examination of the interaction between those various forms of practices in a society. That way the material production is embedded in more extensive social ways of life.

In addition, Williams explained that the 'productive forces of "mental labour" have in themselves, an inescapable material and thus social history' (ibid.: 211). As he showed in a differentiated analysis of Marx's writings, cultural practices may not be understood as secondary in relationship to the material production but that they are part of the totality of the social-material processes. Since the superstructure itself has a material structure,

Williams demanded abandoning the opinion that only some of our productive practices are material. According to Williams, cultural practices in the realm of art, philosophy, aesthetic or ideology needed to be understood as 'real practices' (Williams 1977: 94) as 'elements of a whole material social process; not as a realm or a world or a superstructure, but many and variable productive practices, with specific conditions and intentions' (ibid.).

Williams did not exclusively assign the term 'productive forces' to the realm of economy but rather included every activity of the social process. It was not until capitalism that the idea of production in general was reduced to the production of goods, that is, the production in particular (see Williams 1977: 90ff.). Williams joins Lukács for whom the predominance of the economy was not a general characteristic of human life but a specific characteristic of the capitalistic economy (ibid.: 141).

Having dealt with Volosinov's language philosophy in a sophisticated way, he also identifies language as a material and social practice.

> Signification, the social creation of meanings through the use of formal signs, is then a practical material activity; it is indeed, literally, a means of production. It is a specific form of that practical consciousness which is inseparable from all social material activity.
>
> (Williams 1977: 38)

Williams resolutely rejects both subjectivistic and objectivistic theories of language. He especially criticizes Saussure's idea of language as an objective system which is based on the abstract binary distinction between 'langue' and 'parole' and the arbitrarity of the sign.[4] Following Volosinov's conception of the multi-accentuality he points out that the ambiguous meanings of signs depend on the social situation in which they are used. Using them in a creative way can result in novel accentuations and shifted meanings. Here, Williams anticipated opinions like the ones held in the approach of 'social construction'. In reference to Wittgenstein's language-game concept, Gergen (1999) points out that the playful and sometimes subversive process of signification, the 'différance', which Derrida postulates, is not unlimited and endless, because the possible ambiguity of signs is limited by a given social-historic situation. Ways of life and interpersonal relationships create, reproduce and stabilize meanings. Finally, Williams defined language as a 'constitutive human faculty: exerting pressures and setting limits' (Williams 1977: 43). It is a material practice of human sociality.

By critically dealing with Marx's thinking, Williams' cultural materialism approach succeeds in creating a 'radically novel theoretical position' (Milner 2002: 105) which assumes that practices are socially determined but still holds on to the idea of 'agency'. That way the potentials of practices, which are neither derived nor autonomous, are fathomed and their immanent potential is presented. Practices constitute the social process. Thus, to

some extent, Williams anticipates the current 'practice turn' in social and cultural studies.

5. Raymond Williams today

Our reason for explaining and discussing important concepts and perspectives in Raymond Williams' work is its significance for a critical social theory. Thus, relating his works, which deal with specific historic constellations, to the present, rereading them and readopting them in the face of current (global) relationships, is a necessary step. In our opinion, Williams' theoretical positions are of enormous relevance for the twenty-first century as well. They show a strong affinity to the perspectives of the new social movements.

For both Stuart Hall and Williams, theoretical work in the realm of culture did not replace political activism, which greatly distinguishes them from Adorno and Horkheimer. Williams aimed at supporting and promoting radically democratic movements with the help of his intellectual work. Furthermore, in the realm of adult education and the university, he wanted to represent positions which corresponded to his own political experiences and analyses and displayed counter-hegemonic perspectives. Thus, the university-based implementation of the Cultural Studies-project, which originated from adult education (see Winter 2005), created 'a certain significant intellectual difference in the university' (Williams [1986] 1989c: 155). Democratic ideals were introduced to the realms of learning and education in order to make culture accessible to everybody. Williams owes his radically democratic perspectives to his socialist ideals. They correlated with respective positions in the British working class (see Gilbert 2006: 184). Both *Towards 2000* (1983f) and *Resources of Hope* (1989h) show that Williams felt obliged to the democratic political movements of his time, supported them and, in dealing with them, he developed critical positions which were supposed to promote a creative, democratic culture.

By criticizing utilitarianism and carefully analysing anti-capitalist attitudes in Burke, Eliot or Caudwell, his book *Culture and Society* is also relevant for the emotional structure of today's generation. Furthermore, considering the predominance of neo-liberal beliefs and practices, which, bound to the ideological doctrines of a free market, preach and strive for an unregulated economic liberalization, it is alarmingly up to date as well. The global anti-capitalist movement, the 'movement of movements' which has emerged during the past couple of years, questions the hegemony by aligning with ideals of social justice and radical democracy and representing an emergent emotional structure in correspondence to Williams, which is both oriented in an oppositional and an alternative way.[5]

On the one hand they offer resistance to the neo-liberal economy politics and its effects by protesting against it. Both the Zapatista uprisings in

Mexico, which, by using the Internet, received global support for their opposition against the Mexican government and the North American Free Trade Agreement, as well as the organized campaigns against the WTO's policies in Seattle in 1999, are outstanding example of this resistance (Starr 2005). Richard Kahn and Douglas Kellner (2005) show that many forms of oppositional politics and alternative cultures develop and enunciate via the Internet.

One the one hand, by referring to the human collectivity, both the privatization and the commercialization of collective goods (such as water, health, education or the traffic system), as practised by today's governments, is criticized. This idea shows a great affinity with Williams' ideal of a 'common culture' in which competitive individualism is contrasted with the formation of communities. Considering this background, Williams can also be considered a precursor of Agamben's, Nancy's or Hardt and Negri's current occupation with the topic of community (see Gilbert 2006: 191f.).

On the other hand, alternative forms of economizing, of operational organization (see Wall 2005) or of trading, as practised in the *Fair Trade* movement (see Grimes 2005), are being tested. This occupation with a radical form of ecology, as it can be found in Friends of the Earth, had already been anticipated by Williams who not only dealt with the conception of nature early on in his works (Williams [1972] 1980b) but who commented on questions concerning ecology as well (Williams 1983f). In doing so, he laid the basis for an ecological criticism of capitalism and called for both taking responsibility for the human ecology and creating a new idea of society (see Williams 1973c).

The novel meanings, values and practices, which have developed in the context of criticizing neo-liberal globalization, are aimed at the implementation of an actual alternative with a radically democratic orientation. This idea clearly reveals a resemblance to Williams' concept of a 'long revolution'. 'This anti-capitalism is therefore not a revolutionary utopianism, but just the kind of open-ended, pluralistic refusal to endorse the hegemony of contemporary capitalism that the New Left always argued for' (Gilbert 2006: 190). Instead, it is rather about a gradual implementation of a creative democracy.

The foundation of the World Social Forum in Porto Alegre in 2001, which represents a novel form of a democratic institution, is an example for this. On the one hand, it is a platform on which various social movements can cooperate. On the other, it is a forum of deliberative democracy, which promotes counter-hegemonic alternatives from below, which are based on solidarity, and contrasts them with the market's neo-liberal utopia. It strives to become a cosmopolitan place of critical utopia. Analogies to Raymond Williams' work are obvious here as well. His analysis of emergent meanings, perceptions and practices already partly anticipates the work of the World Social Forum. For instance, the Portuguese sociologist Boaventura de Sousa Santos calls for a sociology of emergences.

> The sociology of emergences is the enquiry into the alternatives that are contained in the horizon of concrete possibilities. It consists in undertaking a symbolic enlargement of knowledges, practices and agents in order to identify therein the tendencies of the future (the Not Yet) in which it is possible to intervene so as to maximize the probability of hope vis-à-vis the probability of frustration.
>
> (De Sousa Santos 2006: 31)

Furthermore, Lawrence Grossberg (2007: 288) points out that the term 'structure of feeling' belongs to the realm of emergence and creativity in Williams' late work because it refers to the gap between the experience and the discursive, what is known and what could be known, the lived and the articulation. 'It is the event of the virtual!' (ibid.: 288). This is the starting point for the quest for other modernities, which Grossberg advocates.

> It is only in the imagination of other ways of being modern that we can at least begin to re-imagine imagination itself. The virtual, unlike the possible, is grounded in the real, offering a different notion of imagination. Raymond Williams seems to have understood this, giving it substance in his concept of the structure of feeling.
>
> (Grossberg 2007: 288)

The examples reveal how close the concepts and perspectives developed by Williams are to social movements and critical theory construction in the twenty-first century. His work itself is a reservoir of 'resources of hope', which, of course, need to be read and adapted in the context of today's social-historic situation. Thus, Steven Connor (1997: 175) is wrong when he believes that 'Raymond Williams's time is not our time'. We have tried to show that the work he has created is a work of and for the future of the twenty-first century. On this note: 'Towards 2050' (Milner 2002: 162ff.) along with Raymond Williams!

Notes

1 According to Williams, Herbert Marcuse's ([1937] 2004) essay 'Der affirmative Charakter der Kultur' published in *Zeitschrift für Sozialforschung* anticipated the ideas of *Culture and Society*. Culture preserves human values and needs which are oppressed by the current society and which create visions of a happy and free life (cf. Williams 1969b; Jones 2004: 64).

2 Parallels to the conception of the ideal speech situation and the rational–critical public sphere by Jürgen Habermas, which Milner (2002: 163f) synthesized, can be found here. 'Both subscribed to a kind of radical-democratic anti-capitalism which takes its inspiration partly from Marxism, partly from Post-Romantic idealism, in Habermas's case that of Weber, in Williams' that of Leavis. Both were as enthusiastically sympathetic to the postmodern "new social movements" (Habermas 1981) as they were suspicious of postmodern theoretical relativism'

(Milner 2002: 163). Admittedly, Habermas's theory of society is not oriented in an anti-capitalist way but it accepts the capitalist economic order.

3 Just like Walter Benjamin or Bertolt Brecht, Williams was interested in the emancipatory and democratic possibilities of new communication technologies. He wanted the public to be in possession of the means of communication (cf. Williams [1962] 1976a: 176ff.) and argued for a participatory use.

4 In *Politics and Letters* Williams (1979d: 330) criticized de Saussure's conception of language. 'But to describe the sign as arbitrary or unmotivated prejudges the whole theoretical issue. I say it is not arbitrary but conventional, and that the convention is the result of a social process. If it has a history, then it is not arbitrary – it is the specific product of the people who have developed the language in question'.

5 Cf. the documentation *We are Everywhere: The Irresistible Rise of Global Anticapitalism* (2003) edited by *Notes from Nowhere*.

Chapter 5

The *1968 May Day Manifesto*

Stephen Woodhams

Raymond Williams' engagement in politics remains a lesser-known feature of his life, yet he came from a political household, his father Harry being a parish councillor and effectively running the Labour Party in Pandy (Smith 2008: 59–60). That Raymond himself was nearer the edge of the Labour Party may be appreciated from his participation in the local Left Book Club, his membership in the popular pre-war Communist Party at Cambridge and the 1980s when he joined with his friend Gwyn Alf Williams to become a member of Plaid Cymru (Williams, D. 2003). Placed in the context of these activities, the initiative of the *May Day Manifesto* may seem less exceptional. However, what marks out the years 1966 to 1969 was that Williams was pressed into a public role to which he rose and assumed the mantel of speaker and organizer. In what follows, the *Manifesto* is linked back to the New Left of the early 1960s, and out to the convulsive politics of the years, in particular the anger raised by the American presence in Vietnam. The main part of the essay is concerned with the organizing around the *Manifesto* leading to a National Convention of the Left, the *Bulletin* that accompanied activities and those who were drawn to its support.

The *May Day Manifesto* appeared in its popular form in 1968. The year has come down in public memory as a time of progressive revolt in forms ranging through music, demonstration, dress, violence and sex. Yet it was also the year when the state responded to a possible movement of 'Asian' British citizens from Kenya by introducing legislation effectively setting barriers to non-white peoples (Miles and Phizacklea 1984). These contradictory histories form a context for the *Manifesto* and informed correspondence in the *Bulletin*. The effects of the conflicts and allegiances emanating from the changes at the *New Left Review* in 1962 had caused considerable waves. In content, the *Review* embarked on an international path engaging with theoretical and political currents across the world. A group of editors and contributors centred on Perry Anderson caused rifts and dissension but carried through the necessary task of establishing a journal that turned theoretical thinking into a political activity. Facilitating the change in direction, the new editorial group gained the support of Raymond Williams. An

adult education tutor, in 1959 he had joined the board of *New Left Review*, a year later moving to Oxford with all its connections to the journal, and then to Cambridge in 1961, making the ancient bastion a place from which to launch a succession of theoretical and political interventions.[1] In 1963, many in CND joined or rejoined the Labour Party and in Cambridge, Joy and Raymond followed this movement working to elect RMD Davies in 1964 to break the run of Conservative victories in the city.

Stuart Hall left the post of editor in 1962, moving to the newly established Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies. Meanwhile, John Saville was chair of the editorial committee during the transition period, passing the role over to EP Thompson before the whole committee was effectively made redundant. A different wave eventually took Raphael Samuel away from the *Review* and his enthusiasm in establishing the Partisan Club in 1958 was then channelled into creating the *History Workshop*. Meanwhile, having finished as chair of the *New Left Review* board, John Saville teamed up with Ralph Miliband, who had been a member of the previous *New Reasoner* Board, but left having opposed the merger with the *Universities and Left Review*. In time, the two were sought out by Martin Eve of Merlin Press and the outcome of the three mens' collaboration was the *Socialist Register*. The start or development of the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies, *History Workshop*, *Socialist Register* and *New Left Review* were then part of the circumstance of the New Left in the mid-1960s. If, however, these were advances, the losses were the greater. While the membership of local History Workshop groups may have overlapped with New Left clubs, the clubs themselves disappeared and the Partisan ceased to exist.

The demise of the clubs was also connected with events that went well beyond the journal. The clubs served as a network for the newly founded peace movement which in Peggy Duff's view used up their energies (Duff 1971). The fortunes of the campaign were determined as much by world events as those nearer home. In the Labour Party the debate on nuclear weapons was equally a barometer of contending wings as the conflict over Clause Four. Supported by the Transport and General Workers' Union, the 1960 conference passed a unilateralist motion only for it to be reversed the following year. A year later came the stand-off over the alleged transport of Soviet missiles to Cuba. However, by then the first American nuclear weapons had been based in Britain (Campbell 1984, Chalmers 1985), and, when in 1963 a partial test ban treaty had been signed by the USSR, USA and Britain, CND was in decline (Thompson 1983). It was not that people's commitment had lessened but rather fatigue had taken its toll.

After twelve years of Conservative rule, Labour won the 1964 general election but could only form a minority government. The situation changed in March 1966 when, following a further election, Labour had a large overall majority. By this time, the United States was hugely increasing its

presence in Vietnam and in Britain Labour gave Washington its support; Party MPs did not see international events as matters on which to oppose their own government. In Williams' view, this was typical of an inability to recognize how international relations and domestic policies were intimately linked and in July 1966 he left the Party (Williams 1979d: 366–73). Extra-parliamentary politics now focused on Vietnam. Open, spontaneous and non-hierarchical, the Vietnam Solidarity Campaign (VSC) allowed people to maintain a sense of belonging in the years between the clubs at the start of the decade and the *May Day Manifesto*. In his own recollections, Tariq Ali cites how Raymond Williams was one of the few older radicals to cross the generations and speak on VSC platforms (Ali 2005: 298). Affirming the connections, the demonstrations and Williams' part have been captured on film by the producer Colin Thomas (Thomas 2005). For his own part, Raymond recalls being part of a group which went to the House of Commons and a confrontation over the developments in Vietnam with the veteran Labour MP Stan Newens (Williams 1979d: 372).

Following his departure from the Labour Party, Williams conceived the idea of a *Manifesto* as a means of responding to the government's policies and proposed the idea publicly at a large gathering in August 1966. The editorial group of Williams with Stuart Hall and EP Thompson was deliberately engineered to reunite people between whom there was disunity after the *New Left Review* changed in 1962. The group were charged with writing the *Manifesto* with contributors' aid, though in the end most of the 47 plus pages were written by Williams. The launch of the *1967 New Left May Day Manifesto*, to give it its full title, was suitably on 1 May at Caxton Hall, with speakers including the editors and student leaders, signifying the growing exasperation with conventional politics emanating from that quarter. A few days previous Williams had written a piece for the traditional left paper *Tribune*, in which he outlined themes from the *Manifesto*, urging readers to consider the issues raised by way of open discussion. The *Tribune* article captures the spirit and intent of those surrounding the publication.

> The *Manifesto* offers no easy alternative, but insists that the political energies of Socialists must be decisively transferred to the issues themselves, and to new kinds of organisation, whatever effects this may have on the existing official machine.
>
> (*Tribune* 28 April 1967)

The defiant 'whatever effects' encapsulated one of the impulses running through the Manifesto movement and signalled where many allied themselves over the next two years. The article ends with a notice of forthcoming meetings around the country and of a national convention to take place in the winter of 1967/8. Notice of the Caxton Hall launch was carried elsewhere in *Tribune*. Other post-launch meetings occurred in several parts

of London, Birmingham and Cambridge, where not surprisingly there were energetic groupings.

After the Caxton Hall launch, a meeting was held at the offices of Merlin Press at 11 Fitzroy Square, and the publisher's rooms became an effective base for *Manifesto* activities. Beyond the Merlin connection the area was resonant with history, a short walk away was Noel Street where *Politics and Letters* and been edited in 1947 and Carlisle Street where the Partisan Club had been (Woodhams 2001). The meeting was significant for a contribution to the *1967 Manifesto* of a page of names supporting its publication. Not all the names were added at that moment but those present included: Peggy Duff (CND Secretary), Suzy Benghiat (Partisan Club Secretary), Mervyn Jones (*Tribune* writer), Robin Blackburn, a member of the NLR inner circle, Henry Milar, Iris Murdoch and RD Laing, while Arnold Whesker's name was added later.

The *May Day Manifesto* was two entities with the written *Manifesto* surrounded by numerous groups and meetings. These in turn forced a 'centre' to be realized. Raymond Williams became chair while Charles Swann became treasurer and Michael Rustin, secretary. From the Merlin Press rooms a *Bulletin* started in August 1967 while the regular activities of treasurer and secretary began. The achievement can be measured in the pulling together of groups of radicals, socialists and feminists for at least two years. Never a structured organization, the Manifesto enabled people to participate in informal meetings where an embryonic socialist movement could be experienced. While labels are always inadequate for explaining reality, we can identify four tendencies: Communist Party, Labour Party, Trotskyite and independent left. Organizationally the Communists as usual provided more than their share. The Labour people eventually withdrew from the Convention in 1970 when an election was called. The Trotskyists were as always diffuse and lacked the Communists' capacity for effective action. Finally, the independent left was a disparate configuration with feminists and peace campaigners important. Williams, his co-editors, the secretary and treasurer, Mike Rustin and Charles Swann, and most of the signatories welcoming the Manifesto, all belonged to this independent wing, the real spirit of the Manifesto.

If, despite three people being appointed, Williams wrote much of the *1967 New Left May Day Manifesto*, the famous Penguin version a year later was the product of a number of contributors. The most immediately relevant parts here are those dealing with organizations, both those already existing and that surrounding the Manifesto. In *Politics and Letters*, Williams comments:

> Our hope was that the Manifesto would be widely discussed in the Labour movement stimulating the creation of forums or left clubs in which people could start forming effective centres for common political debate and action, without giving up their own membership of existing

> political organizations. In that sense, the perspective was not so dissimilar to that of 1959–61. Initially a fair number of these forums were established … So it was decided to call a National Convention; we invited every socialist organisation we knew of to a preparatory commission to organise this convention, whose aim was to give the movement more national presence and to launch a wider and more vigorous resistance to the rightward trend of the Labour government – which had just issued its own 'Mid-term Manifesto' as what seemed to be a counter to ours. We got a very large take-up from different organisations, as well as individual delegates, for the preparatory commission. The Convention itself was a difficult occasion … but despite the conflicts, a substantial document did emerge from the Convention – and a call to members of all the organisations represented to set up left groups in their areas, which would be co-ordinated by the preparatory commission in London sitting with national representatives from all the groups.
>
> (Williams 1979d: 374)

The *Manifesto* was a comprehensive document that sought to draw together political dimensions which were usually presented as discrete and unrelated. Domestic policy operated, first, within economic parameters designed to prevent deep-seated changes, and, second, within international relations that establish the paradigm. It was this approach of relating the different parts of state and society with an economic framework and in turn international circumference which structured the *May Day Manifesto*.

> We believe the system we now oppose can only survive by a willed separation of issues, and the resulting fragmentation of consciousness.
>
> (*May Day Manifesto* 1968: 15)

The sentence epitomises the *Manifesto*; the wholeness of that against which the *Manifesto* was written, yet that system's ability to present itself as fragments related only by chance occurrence. At the same time is the address to consciousness. If the experience of reality is as something disjointed then any response to it is likely to be in similar vein. Finally there is the pointing to deliberate will. The fragmentary appearance is not accidental but the consequence of manipulation by those powers whose interests the system serves and for who opposition is best prevented. Media does not figure greatly in the *Manifesto*, yet there is no doubt that the sentence is a perfect description of this.

At the start of the *Manifesto* there is a discussion of its origins and, at the end, of the organizations around it. In between, the analysis is primarily economic and political, in the restricted sense of state power. Starting out with what it cites as the existing reality of people's lives, topics include housing, health, education, employment, communication, advertising and

social poverty. Moving in widening circles come the City, international corporations, markets and industry, which are then integrated with Cold War, military expenditure and the growing dominance of the United States. The attention then turns to the Labour government, devaluation and the labour movement.[2] The conclusion is an assessment of the organizations to which the *Manifesto* was directed.

Much of the actual writing took place in Williams' study at Cambridge and, as noted above, the *1967 Manifesto* was in large part written by him. However, despite the possible limitations of one person writing on such a range of subjects, it sufficiently achieved the aim of being a response to the government and a statement of a positive alternative, for it to receive a good reception and achieve the remarkable sales of at least 10,000 copies. The extensive sales stimulated the plethora of meetings, one outcome of which was the many contributors for the larger Penguin edition. With the range of expertise much extended, setting down substantial alternative political and economic policies became possible. Economic and social contributors to the new Penguin edition included Dorothy Wedderburn, Jennifer Platt, Michael Barratt Brown and Bob Rowthorne. Theirs and similar contributions enabled sections on social policy and economics. Signing up to health, education and housing could be just matters of degree, the further left along the continuum the larger the figures for spending on public investment. The *Manifesto* did not though simply say 'spend more' but changed the discussion to one of democratic control. The idea has a long pedigree and served to distinguish 'New Left' from 'old Labour', and at the time was being given life through the Institute for Workers' Control with which Manifesto people overlapped.

Given the *Manifesto* argued for Britain's position to be understood as a single whole, international alignment was a breaking point because it was this that set the parameters within which radical socio-economic change would become possible. The theme of non-alignment further distinguished New Left politics and gave it a real advance beyond the log jam of Communists and Labour which had typified the left for decades. Peter Worsley would have been a contributor here, continuing his path-breaking and influential book *The Third World* first published in 1964. The *Manifesto* identified Britain as a host nation for American corporations, and a door to European investments. This economic role is married to a military one as carrier for US bases, and provider of troops and weapons in strategic places. Among these were interests referred to as East of Suez – a legacy of empire in Asia – in particular Britain's continuing commitments in Singapore and Malaya (Malaysia). The Labour leadership had indicated its desire to withdraw forces from Asia, but once in government, withdrawal was put off until some time after 1970 (Campbell 1984, Chalmers 1985). The *Manifesto* was very clear that all overseas military commitments should be run down with immediate notice. Such action would reverse Britain's role of

being a principle enforcer of new imperialism, to actively working against the interests of US global capitalism. Economically withdrawal was crucial, the reality being that late imperial commitments were undermining efforts at social progress (Chalmers 1985).

The last sections of the *Manifesto* concentrate on organization and communications. In respect of the trade unions, the argument is for continued involvement and political struggle. Partially incorporated into the dominant structures of society, the *Manifesto* group still regarded the unions as indispensable because they were organized labour. The Labour Party is recognized as having become key to the stability of the social order, not least because its leaders could diffuse working-class action more easily than the Tories – as was to be demonstrated when the miners defeated the Heath Government in 1973/4. The *Manifesto* is necessarily flexible about the worth of working inside the Party and certainly open to the idea that a new organization might be necessary though the *Manifesto* goes to some length to stress that it makes no claim to forming any association of this kind. In discussing other groups, whether radical or socialist, the *Manifesto* looks forward to the growth of alternative parties in Wales and Scotland though stressing a radical nationalist path. In 1968 Raymond and Joy returned to Wales and in later years he spoke and wrote much on the problems of nationalism in the country. Of single issue groups, CND is cited as that which could afford a comprehensive working-through of economic and political structures, and movement beyond present circumstance. Of political organizations, the Communist Party is the most discussed. Reasons were twofold: the Communist Party was the largest and best established on the left and its organizational ability meant it was highly effective especially among the unions. In addition are cited co-operatives, tenants' associations, anti-colonial movements and anti-racist groups such as the Indian Workers' Association with its long associations with the left.

Specific work the *Manifesto* group saw as its contribution included research and publication (*May Day Manifesto* 1968: 184). While some work would be connected to particular situations, a Socialist National Plan setting down strategies and policies is advocated (ibid.: 184). Many around the *Manifesto* group had come from single issue campaigns, most commonly CND and from this experience came recognition of the need for a 'total description' (ibid.: 183). If to discuss this, Labour Party members, CND activists, communists and people from the independent left could be brought together, it was 'a real achievement' (ibid.: 186). Reflecting this belief, the writers state: 'We are interested in promoting a connecting process' (ibid.: 186) and to this end issued a *Bulletin*. Building on the collective assembled for the second issue of the *Manifesto* the possibility of a permanent body was being looked into (ibid.: 187). This was not fully achieved and in consequence much of the advance made by the *Manifesto* was allowed to come to a halt.

The August 1966 meeting had set up a timetable, with the *Manifesto* being presented in May 1967, and in the first issue of the *Bulletin*, which appeared in the summer, a Convention was signalled to take place in 1968. However, a dilemma as to the best means of proceeding caused a long delay, and the second issue of the *Bulletin* did not appear until February 1968. The whole project had entered something of a juncture with two views emerging as to the way ahead. One view was that the project should seek to draw on existing groups facilitating a Convention at which people could represent an organization. The other view was that the Convention should be a process of working up a grass-roots movement which would eventually express itself through a national gathering. In practice, the *Manifesto* committee took a path between the two, engaging with existing bodies and encouraging local growth.

Issue two stated that the *Bulletin* was from then on to be a monthly affair and issue three duly appeared for March. The timetable of monthly publication was maintained until number 7 in July 1968, after which it gave way to a rather strange procedure of apparently double issues every two months which yet were always produced as a single volume. The tensions in the *Manifesto* groups resurfaced with the first double issue, numbered 8/9 for August/September 1968, after which there was a break until the new year when issues 10/11 were published for January/February 1969. Regularity was again fairly maintained until issues 22/23 for May/June 1970 when the *Bulletin* abruptly stopped. During its lifetime the strain of organizing is evident from the breaks, in July/August and November/December 1969, yet to have published 23 issues over three extremely turbulent years while organizing at least two major gatherings and a series of 'quarterly conferences' should alert us to the very considerable substance of the *May Day Manifesto* organization.

The *Bulletin* acted as a forum, with its pages carrying articles and messages. Topics in the first issues included alienation and community, 'race' in Notting Hill, miners and state fuel policy, workers control and US 'Vietnam draft' refugees. However, the reports were the more interesting. Those originating from 'the centre' covered activities at Fitzroy Square, discussions about the *Manifesto* Movement's direction and groups meeting around the country. Those from elsewhere included reports of these meetings, but also activities and projects such as comprehensive schools in Brighton, an engineering factory closure in north London and rent rises in Cambridge.

Groups grew up in many quarters though London certainly dominated – a problem that has bedevilled every radical endeavour that sought to go beyond the local. Over the weeks, the timetable changed, and the Convention was put back in favour of a Conference set for October 1968. Notice of the Conference ran,

> On 27–28 April a Manifesto Conference is being held in the Botany Theatre, University College, Gower Street, London, WC1. The purpose

> of the Conference is to devise policies and organisation following publication of the new Manifesto.
>
> (*May Day Manifesto Bulletin No 4* April 1968).

Correspondence suggested that organizing was conducted from a number of addresses, several in an arch running north from Notting Hill toward Hampstead and down to Regents Park, extending the networks of radicalism existent in those areas of London.

The Conference met as planned and the outcomes were to be published in *Bulletin* No. 5, May 1968. However, the Conference Reports did not appear and the Editorial for the issue comments that, 'preparation of launching meetings [for publication of the Penguin edition of the *Manifesto*] in ten towns in the following week absorbed all surplus energy' *(ibid. Bulletin No. 5* May 1968). Instead, four position papers and two substantial policy statements appeared. However, the 'Main Resolution Adopted' at the Conference was printed in full and the essence of that should be quoted for the significance of the event to be appreciated today:

> 1. This Conference believes that the Labour Government has now become the agent of the new capitalist system, and accepts the need for a systematic political opposition, as outlined in the May Day Manifesto 1968.
> 2. We therefore commit ourselves to the formation of a political movement, radical and socialist, primarily extra parliamentary, but accepting the significance of a national presence, though rejecting the notion of Parliamentary socialism which the Labour Party represents.
>
> The analysis of the Manifesto should be developed into realisable socialist goals, the creation of a political 'Programme for a Generation'.
>
> A national convention should be called in the autumn of 1968 to launch a unified socialist movement.
>
> *(ibid., Bulletin No. 5* May 1968)

The Conference has no written record beyond the *Bulletin* – (the writer would be very pleased to be disavowed of this claim and hear otherwise). Its tone was apparent from the 'Main Resolution Adopted', but more than that was the unrecordable success of it actually happening. At any time it is difficult to assemble groups of people with strongly held beliefs, since part of that strength is in holding those beliefs in adversity to others, but the choice of chairs was likely to have helped, which, apart from the economist Dorothy Wedderburn, included the renowned CND organizer, Peggy Duff.

The Convention eventually met on 25–27 April 1969, the published outcome of which was a document headed 'Report and Proposals'. The gathering itself though was a noteworthy occasion. Some years earlier *Universities and Left Review* held a series of meetings initially at hotels and

then at its club in Carlisle Street. These were remarkable for the mix of people but best remembered for the profile of speakers (Woodhams 2001). The National Convention was noteworthy for bringing together otherwise very diverse groups in a deeply democratic process.

A record of the event counted 622 people present, of whom 246 were delegates from organizations, the rest being there in an individual capacity. Of course, it is likely that further people passed without record through the event but, even so, the number is impressive. The record gives a picture of the gathering with its list of organizations and branches. The figures reveal how seriously Communist Party members took the event and it is likely that some of these, uncertain as to the future of their Party after the events in Czechoslovakia the previous year, were seeking new outlets for their energy. The range of organizations is impressive with no less than three different Indian representations, a Spanish Defence committee, a Jewish–Arab reconciliation society and the Movement for Colonial Freedom. The last had been in existence for many years led by the veteran radical Fenner Brockway. Surprisingly only the Campaign for Peace in Vietnam appears, though *Black Dwarf* which was associated with the Vietnam Solidarity Campaign is listed under 'Radical Press, Journals'. Unity Theatre and Agitprop extended the gathering in artistic directions. The Institute for Workers' Control is missing from the record though this hides otherwise fruitful links. Community Action Groups and especially forums and Left Unity Groups were where the Convention most readily lived beyond the event itself. In this connection it is worth highlighting the note alongside 'Local Organisations' recording that 60 per cent of these delegates came from outside London.

A decade after the *Manifesto* in *Politics and Letters*, the editors of *New Left Review* asked Raymond Williams about organization around the project and parts of its content. In his reply, there is some distancing from the *Manifesto* built on a hardening of position by the time of *Politics and Letters*. The *Manifesto* is posited as something of the end of an era succeeded by a closer attention to Marxism. Certainly in the interviews, the state is conceived in a Marxist fashion which serves to push away arguments in the Manifesto. This is to be regretted since the effect is to detract from the project. This is wrong; it was a remarkable attempt to set out a socialist critique in a manner that has not been equalled since. Its shortcomings are real and should have been tackled through further work. Unfortunately the politics of the years immediately following 1968 were not conducive to this, with the National Committee breaking on the barriers of the 1970 General Election, when the *Manifesto* should have served as a base for more sustained work during the Heath Government. In fact, what happened was a loss of initiative among the New Left which was not regained until the end of the 1970s when the work had to begin again, this time under the umbrella of the Beyond the Fragments grouping. The *Manifesto* was

translated into several languages and enjoyed large international sales. That it inspired progress across the world in the 1970s is not in doubt; where it was let down was the lack of a dedicated body to deepen and extend its critique as an ongoing project of meetings and publications.

Acknowledgements

I am indebted to Tom Wengraf and Stan Smith for discussion of the internal workings and activities around the *May Day Manifesto*.

Notes

1 In a programme made following Raymond Williams' death, Stuart Hall refers to working with Raymond in his college rooms and how, while for others the fact of developing a socialist project in such surroundings seemed incongruous, for Williams it was simply a good place to do serious work (C4, 28 February 1988).
2 The Labour government had been forced to devalue the pound in 1967 following a fierce conflict in and around the Cabinet. Wilson had been strongly opposed but others such as George Brown had finally won the case. The devaluation was an impetus for the Manifesto project though addressed as only a symptom of those wider economic structures just outlined.

Chapter 6

Fellow-travellers at the conjunction: Williams and educational communicators

Christopher Joseph Westgate

When communication met education

Edward Said recalled Raymond Williams' contributions to culture, history, literature and society in a 1988 obituary from *The Nation*. One section of Said's column familiarized readers in the United States with the admirable authority of Williams' work on communication and education (see Said 1988). This brief mention reflects an even briefer presence of Williams' thoughts within pedagogical studies of print, film and related culture industries. Although his teaching methods sparked interest decades ago in cultural studies, communication and education, scholars have yet to evaluate Williams' writings on the culture industries, its messengers and their messages. Many of his adult education teaching plans confirmed a commitment to the reading and writing of mediated messages between 1946 and 1961 (see McIlroy 1990).

I suggest that Williams met educational communicators as fellow-travellers at an interdisciplinary conjunction. I define educational communicators as cultural workers, such as book publishers, television advertisers, magazine journalists or music critics who have continued to make their means of expression available for classroom criticism.[1] The means of expression include computers or other machines used by educational communicators such as writers and photographers to create commodities. The conjunction implies an interdisciplinary space in which communication and education converge and converse. The term suggests not fancy airs, but rather common affairs. Classroom criticism refers to an unhurried reading and writing of mediated texts as an exercise in what others have labelled media literacy (see Buckingham 2003). This claim holds larger implications for the unwritten history of engagement between communication and education as interdisciplinary fields of inquiry,[2] and contributes a founding chapter to that narrative by nominating Williams as a founder.

The conjunction's existence depends on three contexts that continue to surround educational communicators and their means of expression today: critical pedagogy, practical criticism and political principles. Critical

pedagogy promotes dialogue between teachers and students in the study of educational communicators and their means of expression; practical criticism suggests ways to slowly and closely read educational communicators and their means of expression as everyday texts; and political principles point to the power of educational communicators and their means of expression.

With these definitions in mind, I canvassed Williams' thought on communication and education through textual analyses of relevant books and articles written between the 1940s and the 1980s. Symptomatic reading inspired not so much a search for hidden meaning, but rather an opportunity to generate new knowledge. The analytical approach follows Louis Althusser's emphasis on ideological systems of representation that concern unasked yet implied questions (see Althusser [1969] 1971).

Select scholars identified a disregard for Williams' writings on teaching and learning decades after post-positivism eclipsed more humanistic contributions to the creation and development of communication and education as interdisciplinary formations in the United States (see Shapiro 1982).[3] Yet if we reserve his thoughts for specific cultural projects in twentieth-century British society, we will only threaten the advancement of transnational talk on educational communicators and their means of expression. Williams' observations remain timely today, particularly as we monitor their translation to nations in which educational communicators wield influence.

This chapter's first section enters a short conversation between communication and education from the former's disciplinary vantage point in order to historicize their conjunction. The argument unfolds with Williams' early insight into critical pedagogy, practical criticism and political principles across the remaining sections. Other writers in this volume present thoughtful perspectives from Austria, Germany, Portugal, the United Kingdom and elsewhere. As a humanist from the United States trained in communication and cultural studies, most of my scholarship has been influenced to some degree by Williams' meticulous analyses of mediated culture. I often revisit his writings, as I know others do, for direction on how to weather ideological hail storms in uncertain times.

A tale of two prepositions

The conjunction between communication and education co-evolved with a sub-discipline whose status has waxed and waned over the past sixty years. Critics have long questioned communication education's standing within departments of (speech) communication. However, such criticism could never negate the importance of learning how to refine parole through practice (see Morreale and Pearson 2008).

The Speech Teacher's contributors have covered most levels of education from 1952 through the journal's name change to *Communication Education*

in 1976. Other journals have addressed teaching and learning, including *Journalism and Mass Communication Educator*, known before 1995 by the abbreviated *Journalism Educator*. From 1986 through the time of this writing, *The Speech Communication Teacher* has published professional news under a truncated *Communication Teacher* title. Each name change reflects growing interdisciplinary concerns with matters that move beyond persuasion. Interestingly, not a single author from these journals has investigated Williams' writings on educational communicators and their means of expression as a central subject. We could and should not conclude that his ideas were absent, but rather invisible in their influences on sub-disciplinary discussions of communication education from the mid to the late twentieth century.

A clear delineation exists between communication education and instructional communication. The former tracks the teaching of message transmission and reception by the disciplinary conventions of communication, while the latter traces communication in classrooms across the disciplines. Communication education refers to curricular strategies designed for and by teachers within communication studies, including but not limited to syllabi construction for courses in telecommunication or interpersonal communication (see Roberts 2002; Rubin 2002; Sprague 1999). Communication education exists *for* the discipline of communication.

In contrast, instructional communication advances communication *in* education through encounters across departments and colleges. This area of scholarship takes up distance education in economics, physics or virtually any other area of study.[4] We must depart from either–or binaries and prepositional preferences. By framing the conversation in the same space with 'both–and' rather than 'either–or' terms, we will not only reach transdisciplinary audiences, but also bring educational communicators and their means of expression together with pedagogical ends (e.g. the creation and completion of an exam) and technological means (e.g. teaching and learning through distance education).

For Williams, *communications* connotes 'institutions and forms in which ideas, information and attitudes are transmitted and received', (Williams 1962: 17) while *communication* denotes transmission and reception between humans. I do not mean to collapse communication(s) into education or conversely zap the ghosts through 'better wiring' (Peters 1999: 9). Isolating the plural from the singular in idealist terms does not necessitate a materialist separation. Scholars may consider communication and communications as distinct constructs for the sake of analytical clarity. Yet we must also recognize experiences of transmission and reception as commonly and complexly mediated. *Communications* will become apparent through my use of *communication*, largely because the former is synonymous with educational communicators' means of expression.

In an underappreciated essay from the *Journal of Communication*, Williams claimed communication not only as a central principle for cultural studies,

but also as a primary practice in analyses of educational resources. For example, he regarded political pamphlets from the seventeenth century and contemporary government broadcasts as artefacts and acts worthy of equal attention (see Williams 1974). Newspapers, magazines, advertisements, film, radio and television programmes both affected and reflected public opinion. Educational communicators and their means of expression proved equally if not more powerful than politicians because of their unbounded influence on the production, preservation and contestation of cultural beliefs, attitudes, values and behaviours.

Apart from its communicative and educative characteristics, the conjunction rests on a set of suppositions. Williams might have characterized it as

> a method of association and cooperation in which the processes we separate out as politics, as economics, as communication, as education, are directly related to the reality of living together, and in which control over the processes is in the hands of the people who use them.
>
> (Williams 1961: 199)

A communicational–educational conjunction depends on the hope for equal management of any and every means of expression, including all sonic symbols and iconic inscriptions. These symbols and inscriptions may appear in moments of mobile privatization, such as when we listen to musical messages through private headphones on a public bus.

We can summarize the communicational–educational conjunction in one short sentence: 'for who can doubt, looking at television or newspapers, or reading women's magazines, that here, centrally, is teaching, and teaching financed and distributed in a much larger way than is formal education' (Williams 1962: 14). The culture industries have become important resources for permanent education. Pointed critique of educational communicators and their means of expression required an instructor with clearly articulated methods to engage learners from their own life-worlds. Williams inspired a kind of independent inquiry from his adult education students. This rings true with the aims, if not the actual accomplishments, of critical pedagogy today.[5]

Critical pedagogy

This project places poetics and politics within critiques of capitalist social relations. Critical pedagogy aims for social justice and extension outside the classroom. It also drums up democratic buzzwords of collaboration, cooperation, active teaching and student-centred learning. The teacher no longer fills empty vessels with authoritative knowledge morsels because the student becomes a legitimate constructor of knowledge in an ongoing dialogue

with himself or herself, peers, teachers and the social world (see Alanís 2006; Fassett and Warren 2006; McLaren and Kincheloe 2007).

Critical pedagogy receives criticism for not adequately addressing vocational goals of non-academically minded students. This alternate view portrays learners as quickly earning credit and entering the workforce. Critics claim critical pedagogy leaves the student vulnerable to study and surveillance by the assessing gaze of the teacher. The project thus becomes clandestinely conservative, disguised by outward appearances of a different sort. Didactic lectures seemingly absolve students from the lecturer's gaze and the responsibility to contribute, perhaps because non-verbal codes express almost anything and everything (see Durst 2006; Maton and Wright 2002).

As a scholar and teacher, Williams brought critical and didactic approaches to bear during distinct phases of his career. From 1946 to 1954, he expected a fair amount of independent thought from classroom dialogue: 'I have discussed newspapers with young trade unionists; discussed television with apprentices; to me these have been formative experiences and I have learnt as much as I have taught' (McIlroy 1990: 130). These words suggest a style of pedagogy that partially removes the sage from the stage in an effort to accommodate democratically minded and extemporaneously embodied knowledge construction.

It may seem difficult, then, to understand why Williams adopted a didactic approach to pedagogy in 1955. Although he began to dedicate more time to formal lectures than he had in previous years, we must heed a cautionary note: Williams frequently lectured, but did not completely eliminate all discussion and collaboration after 1955. Experimentation and student engagement continued to steer his intellectual development (see Woodhams 1999). To that degree we ought to think of Williams as an early participator in the benefits and limits of critical pedagogy. Here I extend Henry Giroux's observation of Williams as an influencer on to a participator in critical pedagogy because he created an environment conducive to discussion on the value and growth potential of educational communicators and their means of expression (see Giroux 1992).

Williams' thoughts on critical pedagogy as permanently unsettled seem timeless by today's standards:

> What [permanent education] valuably stresses is the educational force of our whole social and cultural experience. It is therefore concerned, not only with continuing education, of a formal or informal kind, but with that [which] the whole environment, its institutions and relationships, actively and profoundly teaches.
>
> (Williams 1962: 14)

By this line of logic, permanently unsettled education provides a full expression of meaning to ordinary cultural workers in a global village.

Lecture and discussion merely represent two operational means to larger conceptual ends concerned with the human condition and its potential for sociality (see Gray 2003).[6]

Tom Steele challenged the absence of quantification and instrumentation in Williams' writings on critical pedagogy, claiming that he did not publish any major articles other than occasional entries (see Steele 1996). I suggest we not draw conclusions on the merits of what Williams did not say on teaching and learning based on what he did say to Marxist or literary scholars, for to do so would perpetuate a harmful habit of associating him only with those areas of thought, 'precluding the recognition of the international influence of his early writing on drama, film, communications and social history' (Woodhams 1999: 241).

Observations of Williams' 'extreme vagueness about outcomes, little evidence of written work, and no systematic collection of feedback' (Steele 1996: 293) pay homage to post-positivistic proclivities. Surely Williams would have responded that scholars can also think of communication as a humanistic enterprise that not only explains, but also 'evaluates the arts of expression, exchange and influence through the ages and across culture.' (National Communication Association 2008: 2–3) His critical stance on educational communicators as suitable for interpretation and evaluation challenged omnipresent social–scientific effects research in the United States during the mid-twentieth-century. A penchant for prediction and explanation met its match in Williams' emergent and empathic processes of knowledge formation.

One final critique from Steele merits reconsideration: 'because he wrote no major professional texts, he could not therefore have been considered a specialist in the subject' (Steele 1996: 293). This remark does not grant us permission to discredit Williams from nomination as an expert in critical pedagogy for two reasons. The first is a definite matter of articles. Williams may not have been *the* specialist, but he certainly was *a* specialist on the collaborative analysis of mediated messages. Second, Steele does not adumbrate the criteria by which we might distinguish specialist from generalist texts of critical pedagogy. The reader consequently has no concrete way of assessing the basis for his criticism.

Several writers confirm that Williams tirelessly thought about critical–pedagogical methods and shared his teaching plans with those who cared enough to read them (see McIlroy 1993). Those plans included general suggestions for analyses of story types, adoption recommendations for essays, and inter-textual instructions on how to read and discuss a range of comics in relation to *Huckleberry Finn*. He offered advice on the writing of film reviews, and on how to handle values in magazine stories (see Williams 1963). Williams even taught methods, from how to 'access information, and [test] its reliability … [to] methods of note taking, [and] methods of organizing the knowledge one has gained' (Williams 1953: 249).

Some of Williams' colleagues and supervisors even claimed he inspired others more as a teacher than as a writer, including the Secretary of the Tutorial Classes Committee at Oxford: 'He had something else, not just an academic brain, but the personality and purpose of an inspired educator' (Fieldhouse 1993: 58). While I concede he did not publish tomes on critical pedagogy, Williams nonetheless introduced important methods for engaging students in discussion over educational communicators and their means of expression. His formative thoughts on the popular arts deserve serious attention by communication and education scholars today. We must not judge the merits of his contributions in degree (quantity), but rather in kind (quality), or else fail to recognize the danger in writing too much and ultimately saying nothing at all. In the next section, we will see how critical pedagogy's aims paralleled Williams' teaching of practical criticism in the Workers' Education Association's public expression tutorials.

Practical criticism

Practical criticism privileged a pre-literary analysis of educational communicators and their means of expression. Students evaluated mediated messages prior to reading 'serious' literature. Messages served as 'good places to start … they may be handled in a simple way … with less harm than on a piece of literature' (Williams 1979a: 78). The bulk of his learners' private reading lists did not include literary classics, but rather stories and other documents written by journalists and propagandists.

Educational communicators and their means of expression offered a mixture of ideas worth keeping and clearing. Students learned to distinguish invaluable from valueless content: 'a clearing process is important as a practical testing ground for values, and it is given point and worth by the discovery and affirmation of that small body of work which has permanent value' (Williams 1953a: 28). As an instructor, Williams stressed the importance of primary value-judgments in the analysis of educational communicators as if their messages were literary texts layered with meaningful and meaningless content (see Williams 1948).

Literary criticism was brought to bear on the shortcomings of film criticism and its disregard for aesthetic problems and procedures. 'Serious' magazines published by the British Film Institute failed to ably assist Williams and his colleagues in teaching the application of literary criticism to the motion picture. Institutional stock analyses merely summarized a film's narrative and discussed actors in broad biographical sketches, furthering a divide Williams attempted to bridge in his own writing between literary and film criticism (see Williams 1947). The application of literary methods to educational communicators and their means of expression remained highly experimental, particularly in earlier versions of his public expression tutorials.

Williams applied literary devices of tone and mood to film, approaching the moving picture as if it were a piece of literature:

> the normal written work, in this part of the course, consisted of full and detailed description of a brief sequence, and it was very noticeable how quickly most students were able to improve their capacity for observing and recording a total rather than a select content.
>
> (Williams 1953a: 33)

With attention paid to the whole and its parts, Williams instructed students to dynamically approximate what they would normally do when closely reading a novel. This could have involved turning back a page when necessary and proceeding at a slower pace, or stopping a dramatic scene to think through its structure. In addition to relying on literature, students offered testimonials as partial evidence in what he termed 'attentive seeing and listening' exercises (Williams 1953a).

Practical criticism became a form of social training in the slow reading of what filmic messages did or did not say. Preparation began with a series of questions on relations between typographic and filmic texts. Williams guided students in close readings of passages paired with sets of critical inquiries, including the typical triad of 'what does it say, how does it say it, and why does it say it.' Consonant with critical pedagogy, students constructed knowledge of the film industry and its texts on their own terms. Most assignments required adult learners to prepare arguments useful to their professions. For example, students drew on published evidence to produce their own workplace reports (see Williams 1947).

Based on his interpretation of the work of F.R. Leavis, I.A. Richards and E.P. Thompson, Williams claimed context as less important than a text's own problematic before 1955. He taught 'the text, the whole text, and nothing but the text' during this stage of his tutorial career. Williams believed knowledge could not readily reveal itself prior to reading a primary source. Before comparing a text with society at large, one had to carefully work through its core problematic. He experimented with different techniques to open up new possibilities for close criticism (see Inglis 1995).

It was not only his perspectives on reading and writing that allowed practical criticism to work. Williams also distinguished a democratic, missionary model of public educators from a kind of industrial humanism. The older humanist model framed education as a touchstone of elite values and agrarian life. Trainers matched workers with an appropriate job in industrial society. In contrast, public educators in the missionary model encouraged learners to think freely and invent new tasks for the common good (see Williams 1961a). Many conservatives judged the popular arts as risky educational endeavours, yet mutual trust between student and teacher

calmed reactionary anxieties, at least to some degree. Regardless of the perspective, Williams promoted the practical criticism of public expression throughout his adult education career. He fervently defended the potential for educational communicators to produce messages worthy of evaluation:

> If adult education cannot handle and assess an institution which weekly serves the leisure of twenty-five million British adults, and which deals well or badly, but at least with great emotive power, with the values of man and society, then adult education deserves to fade.
>
> (Williams 1947: 15)

Classroom exercises regularly accounted for educational communicators and their permanent potential to produce high and folk art, effectively blurring distinctions between classes.

With a backlash against elitism, Williams reminded us that pedagogues must fess up to their students' popular desires:

> In the classroom we are often very deferent about the past. We make nice remarks about the Essays of Elia, in an essentially genteel way, but when it gets to television, or the newspapers, or the advertisements, you wouldn't know us for the same men! How fierce we can be … We have almost assumed it is our birthright, because we are in education, to claim that the rest of this stuff is inferior.
>
> (Williams 1961a: 197)

He took great pains to challenge this tendency throughout his public expression and practical criticism tutorials for the Workers' Education Association. The next section's stress on politics complements the origins and outcomes of critical pedagogy and practical criticism.

Political principles

Classroom discussions on news images or comic books do not always compel us to consciously acknowledge our political ideologies. We need only recall Elizabeth Ellsworth's concise observation that political positions are usually stripped from classroom discussions (see Ellsworth 1989). Formative political beliefs that shape what we think and say are rarely voiced in the classroom. Yet we ignore the politics of pedagogy at our peril, for excuses of innocence will not spare us from the ideologies of family, friends, colleagues and mediated state apparatuses.

Scholars have merged educational communicators' means of expression with political principles. Henry Giroux refers to the culture industries as spaces for democratic education, with explicit references to new and old media institutions:

> I have stressed that these new sites of education, which I call the realm of public pedagogy, are crucial to any notion of politics because they are the sites in which people often learn, unlearn or simply do not get the knowledge and skills that prepare them to become critical agents.
> (Guilherme 2006: 171–2)

The new–old bifurcation appears outmoded today, largely because the surface has changed in so-called 'new media' while the substance underneath remains virtually the same. Whether we categorize conduits as new or old misses the political forms that shape their functions.

Williams interpreted education as an institutional act. He thought a cultural revolution would deepen democracy and encourage others to resist bureaucratic limitations imposed by educators who followed institutional mandates. Although both Williams and Paulo Freire acknowledged the inherent difficulty in understanding relations between teachers, students and society at large, the very nature of education as an institution required them to overcome that difficulty (see Freire 1998). Classroom practices have continuously absorbed, reflected and refracted institutional politics.

Stuart Hall described Williams' response to contentious or otherwise political issues as one rooted in 'particular preoccupations with broadly cultural questions' (Hall 1989: 65), situating his classroom teaching between politics and culture. These constructs proved inseparable for two reasons. First, politicians and propagandists have increased the amount of information disseminated by educational communicators and offered their own commentary, not necessarily telling us how to think, but rather what to think about. Second, teachers and students have repeatedly confronted political pressures between internal and external power blocs. One cannot negotiate or contest institutional scripts when the means of negotiation or contestation depend on those very institutions for their rhetorical power in society.

Administrators classified Williams as a social-democratic member of the independent left, distinct from an organized left. We might reasonably question his investment in politicizing pedagogy, considering Williams' earlier withdrawal from the Communist party and other administrative duties in 1949. Yet he criticized the press whenever it showed signs of pervasive or otherwise persuasive influence, drawing a distinction between propaganda and education. Along with his colleagues, Williams advocated Labour government funding of popular education in response to bourgeois press campaigns and their influence on public opinion (see McIlroy 1991).

At the end of the day, he reached two conclusions on the politics of educational communicators and their distribution of power: we cannot separate education from society, and we must trust in a full version of effective democracy, or one that includes the culture industries as opportunities for real education (see Williams 1959). By permitting politics to inform his pedagogical practices, Williams joined democracy with public

education in order to communicate the impact of social forces to his students, including the need for equitable ownership of the culture industries (see Giroux 2004; Patterson 2005).

Williams believed social forces would pave a path towards equality in the management of resources. Moreover, he hoped actor and worker guilds would distribute control over the means of expression through public ownership. The desire to create guilds was born not only across work sites, factories and office spaces, but in the culture industries of book publishers and film distributors. Williams lectured on ownership politics in an effort to socialize the relations of power distribution, effectively calling for a new system in which society owned the means of expression in trust (see Williams 1962).

Educational communicators have long functioned as carriers of ideology 'which all citizens in a democratic society ought to be educated on' (Masterman 1998: x). This idea downplays high-class claims of entitlement in favour of an egalitarian public sphere. We may only recover press freedom by continuously improving a political system that has become 'wholly unresponsive and inadequate to democratic life' (Stevenson 1997: 97). His long revolution referred in part to the creation of an educated and participatory democracy. Empowerment of the greatest number over the means of creation, circulation and consumption might even shorten its length.

Beyond 2000

This chapter has positioned educational communicators and Williams as fellow-travellers at an early conjunction, with larger implications for an unwritten history of engagement between communication and education as interdisciplinary projects. Recognition of Williams as a founding father of that history is not simply symbolic; rather, it holds epistemological consequences for a set of knowledge claims that originate in the academy. Whom we reference or discount as influences on our scholarly work signals a potential for trust and transference between author and reader. Future research on the conjunction will only benefit from a more reflexive history of ideas on the intersection between communication and education. The conjunction captures the contextual nature of a space in which critical pedagogy, practical criticism and political principles overlap.

Critical pedagogy illustrated the importance of student-centred learning and active teaching. Williams moved from a critical to a more didactic, though no less democratic, teaching style in the second half of the 1950s. A concern for learners' everyday interests proved central to his teaching method: 'the problem was one which students were better able to handle when their interest in the thing about which the statements were being made had been engaged' (Williams 1948: 96). Williams empowered his students to evaluate educational communicators and their everyday means of expression.

Practical criticism referred to Williams' method of close reading, or very slow analysis. The importance of his public expression tutorials was highlighted in the evaluation of educational communicators and their means of expression, discussing how he brought methods of literary criticism to bear on the silver screen. Williams designed several teaching plans based in the understanding of institutional processes. This section also distinguished a democratic, missionary model of public education from industrial humanism.

The next section demonstrated how ownership distribution, propaganda and institutional agreements continue to push politics into halls of learning. We cannot separate politics from pedagogy, just as preferred methods of teaching and learning do not easily divorce themselves from the ideologies of their teachers and learners. Williams' writing assignments created opportunities for adult education students to evaluate acts and artefacts manufactured by the culture industries (see Williams 1961a). A need to expose the hegemony of industry oligopolies continues in the United States today, for it is in this state of affairs that we witness homogeneity and apathy in action while the few control the means of expression. Conservative criticism only summons feckless threats to freedoms of the press; free thought thrives with equally distributed ownership over the means of expression (see Williams 1989a).

The phrase 'educational communicators' merits keyword status. We need only acknowledge its individual and collective resonance, somewhere between a drawing out of what is our own and a leading forth of what is not. Williams' work on educational communicators 'resounds with numerous examples of how the most individualistic of activities are marked by the presence of community' (Lloyd 2005: 99). Keywords are born in particular contexts and open themselves up to appropriation by transdisciplinary scholars. While his pregnant ideas on Marxism, politics and technology have already penetrated several disciplines, the time to write the interdisciplinary history of communication and education has arrived, for it is through educational communicators and their means of expression that 'our ideas of the world, of ourselves, and of our possibilities, are most widely and often most powerfully formed and disseminated' (Williams 1962: 16). Our very identities depend on working through real and imaginary perceptions of mediated reality. These perceptions coalesce in the popular forms we know them by: film, advertising, books, magazines, music and so forth. Evaluations of educational communicators and their means of expression challenge what one discipline alone could ever hope to achieve.

Acknowledgments

I wish to thank Justin Mann, Ben Peters and Andy Ellis for useful comments on earlier drafts of this chapter. I am also grateful to Lawrence Grossberg, Roman Horak and Monika Seidl for their revision suggestions.

Notes

1 A very brief mention of 'educational communicators' by Alan O'Connor provoked my question of what was behind and in front of this potentially fruitful term. Roger Fieldhouse and others have associated 'fellow-travellers' with the lexicon of McCarthyism, and the search for communists in Britain at the outbreak of the Cold War. Williams was largely spared from the hunt. I exercise some degree of artistic licence and neutralize the descriptor to link Williams instead with the teaching of culture industries and their mediated messages.
2 Asa Briggs's volume on communications and education provides a starting point for this project, though mostly from a British perspective. Gavriel Salomon's work on communication and education has crossed disciplinary boundaries, though from a social and psychological perspective.
3 Here I am grateful to Shapiro for vocalizing a US neglect of Williams' work on education, yet I hope our mutual surprise by its absence will not continue for long.
4 The goals of communication education include transmitting cultural knowledge, developing students' intellectual and career skills, and reshaping the values of society. This last goal holds the greatest political potential.
5 By the canon of critical pedagogy I refer to the work of Paulo Freire, Henry Giroux, Michael Apple, Peter McLaren, Antonia Darder, bell hooks and Ira Shor, among others. Giroux is one of the few who has credited Williams as an important inspiration for critical pedagogy.
6 Gray's description of pedagogy as an active and reflexive dialogue between students and teachers resonates with those who closely followed Williams' own classroom practices.

Chapter 7

The pedagogy of cultural materialism: Paulo Freire and Raymond Williams

Hywel Rowland Dix

Paulo Freire was one of the most significant radical progressive pedagogues in twentieth-century history. His work in adult education in Brazil, Switzerland and certain Portuguese-speaking post-colonial societies in Africa was joined with his left-wing socialist aspirations for improving political structures in those societies. Freire's attitude to education is not separable from his attempt to address political challenges. It was through education that the impoverished peoples of Brazil or Guinea-Bissau would learn to confront the causes of their oppression and hence take the first steps towards being able to alleviate them.

In the work of twentieth-century British intellectual Raymond Williams, too, there is an important conjunction between a revolutionary educational programme and the reform of political institutions. Williams, like Freire, worked in adult education during the formative years of his career. Williams sought to demystify political and cultural structures by emphasizing the ordinariness of participation in the cultural sphere. His suggestion that railwaymen and coalminers had made as important a contribution to human culture as painters with princely patronage was made explicitly in order to demonstrate the rightness of universal participation in public cultural and political life.

In the work of Williams and Freire, the boundary between political and cultural activities is systematically eroded. Both writers suggest that participation in the cultural activities most present in daily life and work brings a particular awareness of political needs and political situations. Culture and education, in other words, are themselves political things. The name Raymond Williams gave to this overhaul of the traditional demarcation was *cultural materialism*.

This chapter will consider some important biographical parallels between the lives and work of these two important socialist intellectuals and educators. It will go on to compare some of the explicit proposals made for a revolutionary education by both Freire and Williams, and conclude by exploring the ways in which both men examined the connections between a revolutionary political education and the wider crisis in capitalist society.

Biographical parallels

Paulo Freire

Paulo Freire was born in Recife, the capital of Pernambuco, Brazil, in 1921. After a particularly loving and happy childhood, he studied law in that city between 1943 and 1947. His leftist political sympathies were already becoming apparent during these years and in fact he never practised law. After attempting to open a small practice, his only client was a creditor seeking distraint of equipment from a dentist in a relatively poor area. Freire could not bring himself to carry out such work.[1]

Instead, after marrying elementary schoolteacher Elza Oliveira he became a teacher of Portuguese. This was also not precisely the area in which he felt most able to reconcile the possibility of a professional career with his sense of the need for a thoroughgoing reform of Brazil's social structure. Freire was becoming deeply impressed by the need to confront the matter of adult education in general, and adult literacy in particular, across the country.

In August 1947 therefore he began working as a director of Pernambuco's Division of Education and Culture. His commitment to the educational goals of the organization, combined with the ability to address major challenges energetically, resulted in a rapid rise. In 1957 he was transferred to the national section of the Division, although he continued to serve Pernambuco as a 'Pioneer Council Member' of the State's Council on Education. In 1958 he firmly established himself as a forward-thinking – if not yet revolutionary – educator, when his 'Education of adults and marginal populations: the Mocambos problem' was presented at the second national conference on education in Rio de Janeiro in July of that year. A promising career as an educational reformer seemed destined to follow.

This early success did not come without a price, however. Freire, like many of his colleagues and friends at the national conference, did not see education simply as a tool to provide certain skills and therefore offer the student entry into a certain area of paid work. His approach to education was rather to use education as a space in which an increasingly impoverished and subordinate population could explore and understand the conditions creating their oppression, and therefore to take the first steps towards alleviating those conditions. He was one of the founders of Recife's Movement for Popular Culture, which sought to increase the participation of a greater number of people in the social and public life of the country, primarily by combating the image of an ignorant, uneducated mass.

These activities did not sit well with the work of the military junta that seized power in Brazil in 1964. Freire was dismissed *in absentia* from his role as "Pioneer Council Member" of Pernambuco's State Council on Education, and was in effect retired from his pedagogical role at the University of Recife. He went into exile, first in Bolivia, and then in Chile, until he was

invited to travel to the USA to teach at Harvard during 1969 and 1970, and to work for the World Council of Churches. It was in the employment of the World Council that he made longer sojourns to former Portuguese colonies in Africa: Cape Verde, Angola, and especially Guinea-Bissau. It was in this anti-colonial and post-colonial context that Freire's attempts at reforming adult literacy, and his efforts to use this as a means of increasing political consciousness among the people, reached revolutionary levels. In Guinea-Bissau he met and advised Mario Cabral, education commissioner of the country's revolutionary anti-imperial government.

Freire carried out similar work across Africa and parts of Asia, but not – to his sorrow – in Brazil until the political thawing of 1979–80. Even then, the political climate prevented him from returning to his home in Recife. It was as a professor at the relatively distant university of São Paulo that he returned to public life in Brazil, and he held this post until his death in 1997. This was not before two significant late achievements. He played a prominent part in achieving the election of a Worker Party candidate as mayor of São Paulo in 1988, and subsequently worked as Secretary of Education for that city. Perhaps more personally significant was the symbolic restitution that was made for his dismissal from the University of Recife in 1964. This came in March 1991 when he was reinstated as professor at the University of Pernambuco (as the university had recently been renamed). Although he was immediately retired from this reinstated post, the reappointment enabled Freire to achieve a late reconciliation with his home and with his people.

Raymond Williams

British socialist intellectual and educator Raymond Williams was born, like Paulo Freire, in 1921. Williams was born and brought up in the village of Pandy, on the 'virtual' border between England and Wales. Indeed, later in life, Williams' commitment to redefining social democracy would at times become complicated by a confused sense of Welshness and Britishness. It would come to seem too tempting to equate 'England' with 'ruling class imperium' and 'Wales' with working class oppression. It was to avoid such simplistic constructions that Williams grappled with his sense of his own Welsh identity during the 1970s and 1980s, in the face of a capitalist political onslaught from London. This dual commitment to one particular place and something much greater than it perhaps recalls Paulo Freire's work both for the state of Pernambuco and for the Brazilian nation more generally up until 1964.

Raymond Williams, like Freire, appears to have enjoyed an unusually warm and close family childhood, before being exiled from that home environment with important implications for his subsequent life and work. For Williams, however, the conditions of exile were subtle and indirect. In

1939, he left Pandy to enter the University of Cambridge as an undergraduate reading English – despite never having applied to enter the university. His schoolmaster, spotting his intellectual potential, had arranged an application to Trinity College, Cambridge, in league with his father. They had chosen to keep Williams uninformed of the application in order to avoid potential disappointment. Moreover, in 1961, when Williams was working in adult education with the extramural delegacy of Oxford University, he received a letter informing him of his election to a fellowship at Jesus College, Cambridge. A postal mix-up resulted in him only subsequently receiving the letter inviting him to apply. Thus on each occasion Williams entered the university without having sought to do so.

This exile of sorts is recorded in Williams' autobiographical novel, *Border Country*. Williams himself asserted later in life that the novel was produced at a time when his intellectual and social alienation from Pandy and hence from the whole Welsh working class was most complete. The scene in *Border Country* where the protagonist returns from Cambridge to confront a childhood sweetheart is frigid and bitter. Perhaps even more significantly, the novel itself was written as Williams' way of making peace with his father, who passed away in 1958 before Williams had become reconciled to him.

1958 was a crucial formative year for Williams. The protracted illness and death of his father threw him into a drama of contradictions surrounding his own class and professional alienation. Moreover, that year, the same year that Paulo Freire delivered his important address to Brazil's second national conference on education also saw Williams preparing the manuscript of his career-making book, *Culture and Society*, for publication (Williams 1958).

Countries, cities, and spoken books

Culture and Society is a Marxist critique on the capitalist process of reification. In it, Williams analysed British culture and writing from the Romantic period onwards. His goal was to identify how the concept of *culture* came to be understood as an essentially different category from that of *society*. By demonstrating how this separation became entrenched, Williams undertook a theoretical critique of the capitalist ideology of the autonomy of different spheres of activity. He undertook this critique in order to demonstrate the deeper political and historical connections between cultural forms and social and historical processes.

Like Freire's work in the Movement for Popular Culture, *Culture and Society* sought to establish the possibility for widening the participation of a greater number of people in public cultural and political life. As with Freire, Williams sought to do this by attempting to re-evaluate the contributions made to culture by members of the working class, and hence by combating the common prejudice against the common people as an ignorant mass.

Williams began *Culture and Society* by drawing attention to five words which had come into English usage at around the end of the eighteenth century: industry, democracy, class, art, culture. To Williams, the emergence and historic variation in meaning of these words was evidence of a wider shift in social relations. 'Industry' had ceased to be understood as a general term for work, and had come to refer solely to the mechanized production of material goods in factories, with implications of danger, dirt and poor living conditions. 'Class' was then a term used in a rather rigid and deterministic way to refer to the people involved in this work – usually with negative connotations, as in the nineteenth-century phrase, lower class, and in contradistinction to the assumed refinement of a social elite, the upper class.

At the same time, 'art' had ceased to mean 'skill', and had instead come to refer to things such as painting, literature and music – although the extreme vagueness of definition was one of the stimuli to Williams' dissatisfaction with these terms. The same is true of 'culture', which had ceased to be used to refer to the cultivation and growth of crops, and was now being used instead as a synonym for 'civilisation'. Yet the metaphoric appeal of the earlier meanings, 'growth' and 'cultivation', still retained a powerful general appeal, so that culture had implications of natural growth, beauty, harmony and peace. Culture was in short the opposite of industry. It was radically dissociated from the lives of people who worked in industry – that is, from the lives of the majority of people in Britain. 'Democracy' on this reckoning was tantamount to a dirty word. By offering to include people in social, political and cultural formations, it appeared to threaten the very structure of those formations.

Culture and Society concludes with a series of insights into how an extended educational franchise is necessary to a functioning democracy, and vice versa. These included the then path-breaking proposals that a critique of newspaper-reading and commercial advertising should be included in a critical education, in order to enable the subjects of that education to operate in a fully functioning democracy. Williams' educational aspirations, in other words, are not separable from his political aspiration to broaden the concept of socialist democracy. As he expounded in his 1961 study, *The Long Revolution* (Williams 1961), increased access to education would help to improve the political maturity of the people and therefore enable them to participate more fully in the political sphere by identifying their common needs and acting according to them.

Culture and Society and *The Long Revolution* are the books which established Raymond Williams as an important activist in the fields of cultural politics and progressive education. Paulo Freire's (1973) *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* was another such landmark in the history of radical educational reform. It was in this study that Freire first began to provide a detailed theory of what he called *education for critical consciousness*. Raymond

Williams' erosion of the traditional demarcation between culture and politics, and his attempt to undermine the entrenched distinction between elite minority artistic movements and popular cultural forms, are paralleled in the work of Freire. In Freire, the separation of human life into differentiated activities – education, work, culture – is overcome via an emphasis on the pedagogical content of all activity. It is the emphasis of Freire's education for critical consciousness that learning takes place concurrently with other activities.

The publishing careers of both men can be mapped onto each other with striking consistency. Freire's work to improve adult literacy in the post-colonial world gave rise to a deeper concern for the problem of urban poverty, and how education has a part to play in tackling this. Freire's *Pedagogy of the City* was an attempt to record the insights into adult education that he had gleaned from working in different African countries, and to transform them into a more general theoretical approach for understanding the imbrication of urban poverty with under-education. Raymond Williams was meanwhile moving in a different but not unrelated direction.

Williams' 1973 study, *The Country and the City* ostensibly began life as a study of the origins and history of the pastoral mode in English literature. Williams used the city/countryside distinction as a controlling metaphor to describe a general set of capitalist relations, dividing the world up into controlling city and controlled country estate. This metaphorical pivot enabled Williams to extend the scope of his work to encompass a much broader range of capitalist relations than would ordinarily be found in pastoral poetry. At the conclusion of *The Country and the City*, Williams extends the country house/working hinterland metaphor, and suggests that the dominance of country house over sprawling estate, and of metropolitan city over hinterland, is comparable to the dominance exerted by the imperial nations over their colonies:

> The 'metropolitan' states, through a system of trade, but also through a complex of economic and political controls, draw food and, more critically, raw materials from these areas of supply, this effective hinterland, that is also the greater part of the earth's surface and that contains the great majority of its peoples. Thus a model of city and country, in economic and political relationships, has gone beyond the boundaries of the nation-state, and is seen but also challenged as a model of the world.
>
> (Williams [1973] 1985a: 279)

Just as the industrial and agricultural labour on which a country house depends is entirely written out of the country house tradition in pastoral poetry, so too the industrial labour in the developing world on which the lifestyles of the prosperous nations depend is distanced, dissociated from

daily life in the metropolis. In post-colonial and post-industrial Britain, industrial work is devolved upon the developing world, which is thus metaphorically assigned the status of hinterland, or enormous rural estate, providing provisions and sustenance for the country house/first world. Williams concludes that 'a model of city and country' is 'seen but also challenged' as a model of the world. The phrase 'seen but also challenged' is central to the theory and practice of cultural materialism. The whole point of the work of both Williams and Freire is that education can be used to garner a clear understanding of the capitalist relations which structure the world, and hence to set about challenging them.

This challenge became registered in the work of Williams and Freire via the formal innovations they introduce to their work as writers. In 1979, Williams published *Politics and Letters*, a series of transcribed interviews with the editors of Britain's radical intellectual journal, *New Left Review*. It took the form of a review of Williams' career up until that point, but it is more than a simple biography. The questioners themselves make long and often critical contributions to *Politics and Letters*, so that rather than simply recording Williams' life and work, the book was also an important critical exploration of it.

Politics and Letters, in other words, is a dialogical book. Rather than being single authored, or indeed, rather than being authored at all in the traditional sense, Williams enters into a number of different intellectual debates with three different interlocutors. The discussions of culture, drama, literature, politics and history then comprise the published form of the book.

This dialogic form was what Paulo Freire considered appropriate for publishing his own theoretical insights in education. The ultimate goal of both Williams and Freire was to inaugurate a kind of educational practice that would overcome the hierarchical distinction between teacher and taught, and therefore overcome also the social and political practice of dividing people up into leaders and led, masters and men. Achieving this requires an educational practice where the teacher does not exercise unquestioned authority over the student body. Rather, it requires that the distinction between active teacher and passive student be broken down, and that the teacher enter into dialogue with the students.

Since this was the insight of Freire's pedagogical theory, dialogue also became an apposite form in which to publish his written work. His *For A Pedagogy of Questioning* (Freire 1989) is a series of biographical, intellectual and theoretical interviews between Freire and his compatriot, Antonio Faundez. It is, like *Politics and Letters*, a spoken book. To both Williams and Freire, the spoken book enabled a dialogic form which was appropriate for conveying their ideas for how to democratize education and society. Freire in *For a Pedagogy of Questioning* expounded the importance of an educational praxis which encourages students to question sources of authority around them. When it functions in this way, rather than simply recreating existing

social and cultural hierarchies, education can really enable critical consciousness and so contribute to the transformation of social relations. An educational praxis which promotes the asking of questions is a democratic praxis. This is mirrored in the dialogic form of the book in which Freire elaborated upon it.

Politics and Letters and *For a Pedagogy of Questioning* both provide internal questioning of the theoretical suggestions that Williams and Freire propounded throughout their careers for revolutionizing education and hence the democratic structure of society. This commitment to internal questioning is entirely consistent with the educational practice advocated by each man. Rather than assigning a scriptural status to the value of their published work, each continually revisited and revised the findings of that work. Williams, like Freire, continually held his proposals for how to radicalise education and society open to introspection and revision.

The people's university: Có, Birmingham and the Open University

In the work of both Williams and Freire, the simplistic notion that education will enable participation in a democratic culture is held up to critical scrutiny. Freire in particular takes issue with an instrumental version of education, whereby students are equipped to perform certain functions in society without questioning the fundamental structures of that society. Freire refers to this instrumental education as a 'banking' concept of education, depositing in students only so many skills over a specific period of time as are necessary to enable them to carry out certain tasks. He elaborates upon the concept of banking education in *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* in the following way:

> Education … becomes an act of depositing, in which the students are the depositories and the teacher is the depositor. Instead of communicating, the teacher issues communiqués and makes deposits which the students patiently receive, memorize, and repeat. This is the 'banking' concept of education, in which the scope of action allowed to the students extends only as far as receiving, filing, and storing the deposits. (Freire 2000: 67–8)

Freire's banking model sees education as a short-term transfer of specifically deposited units of information or skills, which will equip students to perform specific tasks within a society. This occurs at two inter-related levels. There is the manifest *content* of an educational programme. This is inseparable from the cultural and institutional *carrier* in which that content is conveyed. Banking education instils in its students the skills necessary to fulfil a particular role within the capitalist order. At the same time, the

competitive system of examination by which that education is assessed also instils simultaneous assent to the world of competition. 'Verbalistic lessons, reading requirements, the methods for evaluating "knowledge", the distance between the teacher and the taught, the criteria for promotion: everything in this ready-to-wear approach serves to obviate thinking,' writes Freire (ibid.: 71). The system of banking education occupies a specific place within the capitalist social order. It prepares its students to perform certain tasks within that order by equipping them with specific skills. At the same time, it nurtures them into a general acceptance of that order through the gradual exposure to a system of hierarchical relations where individual progress is measured by competition.

The manifest content of banking education is thus mirrored in latent form by the institutional carrier of that education. The world of competition to which students are exposed in education is precisely the world they will encounter outside it. Banking education, in other words, promotes the virtues of free-market capitalism. As a result it systematically fails – often despite the commitments and efforts of individual teachers – to communicate anything beyond these concerns. Williams says of this:

> The failure is due to an arrogant preoccupation with transmission, which rests on the assumption that the common answers have been found and need only be applied. But people will (damn them, do you say?) learn only by experience, and this, normally, is uneven and slow. A governing body, in its impatience, will often be able to enforce, by any of a number of kinds of pressure, an apparent conformity.
>
> (Williams 1961b: 302)

Williams' idea of conformity describes the phenomenon whereby the transfer of education on a top-down model instils in its recipients a kind of assent to the fundamental structuring of competitive society. Williams was opposed to this instrumental concept of a university, and sought ways to replace it with the kind of institution that might be used to promote thinking more sceptical of the capitalist order. As Fazal Rizvi says, it is not only that Williams wanted to use education to democratize society; Williams also showed that 'education itself has to be democratised' (Rizvi 1993: 146–7).

Paulo Freire opposes the banking concept of education with a *problem-posing education*, where dialogical relations are indispensable. Problem-posing education disavows the idea that educational authorities can limit in advance what knowledge and skills are to be transferred to the students. The obvious question that his theoretical insight leaves is: What institutional form could such an education take?

Freire advocated the development of what he called people's universities, which would relate directly to the world experienced by the people at every point: 'A people's university is born at the heart of the life of the working

people, based on their productive labour and dedicated to systematizing the knowledge resulting from their own daily experience' (Freire 2000: 150).

Freire found such a university when he travelled to Guinea-Bissau and visited the Maxim Gorky Training Centre for teachers in the town of Có. This centre was the brainchild of Guinea-Bissau's post-independence revolutionary leader and Educational Commissioner, Mario Cabral. It was established ostensibly to lessen the impact on the new nation's culture and economy of the alienating and divisive education system that had been introduced by the former colonial power, Portugal. It sought to inaugurate a kind of education which would enable the people of Có to develop the skills applicable to their own reality. Freire describes the foundation of the centre in the following way:

> The educators at Có involved the neighbouring populations in the development of their dream for a training center. They interpreted the project and mobilized the population around both the idea and the necessary practical activities. People came from all around to clear the land, bringing their own work tools. The team and the local people worked side by side. The growing dialogue between them was sealed in their mutual activity on behalf of the center.
>
> (Freire 2000: 150)

In other words, the centre at Có did not begin with social and economic division as its founding premise. There was not an *a priori* intellectual hierarchy dividing the population into governors and governed. The process of constructing the centre itself militated against this approach to education. In this sense, those who shared in the construction of the centre were already its students, before it had even opened its doors for classes. The experience of participating in a joint project where each individual could offer different skills and so contribute to a non-hierarchical whole enabled the participants to value each other's knowledge, skills and experience, and hence to view each other as comrades rather than competitors. This is a fundamental difference from the strict examination system of education which had existed during the period of Portuguese occupation and which had educated only a tiny proportion of the population for induction into government service and hence had operated according to a logic of divide and rule.

The education of the Có centre was not limited either spatially or temporally to a kind of banking education. Instead of drawing a tiny section of the population from every part of the country and so severing those students from their local communities, the centre and its students were an intrinsic part of the local community. Again, therefore, it resisted the imperative of a colonial period education, where indigenous people would have been educated only on the assumption that they would use their education to serve the colonial power and hence create an elite division in the Guinean population.

It enabled people who attended the centre to continue in their previous social relationships and social roles for as long as they needed to receive an education. In other words, the centre did not determine in advance how long its students could attend for, before sending them on to other kinds of work. It allowed them to work and learn as parts of the same activity:

> Whatever activity gives rise to political consciousness raising – whether it be health education, means of production, or adult literacy efforts – there is a basic unity of approach. The director stressed that all of the activities are planned and carried out in cooperation with the local committee in every village.
>
> (Freire 2000: 152)

Whereas the limited educational centres provided in the era of colonialism deliberately sent students to institutions physically distant from their homes in order to divide them from their own solidarities, the system that Freire describes here is different. It imagines a training centre in every village, so that Guinea-Bissau's educational system could be described as a national network of such centres, spread evenly around each village, with no sense of hierarchy emerging among them. Each institution is equal in the sense that each relates directly to the work of the area in which it is located. This is not to say that the people's university is exclusivist or parochial, but merely that it values the ways of life of the population from which its students are drawn.

A university which supports the capitalist order practises a programme of banking education and contributes to the continual reproduction of the dominant cultural order through mobilization of a competitive ethic and selective promotion. Its courses last for a fixed (and pre-determined) period of time, after which the process of education is assumed to be complete. Its syllabus is also pre-selected and barring the occasional choice of course varies little according to the needs or ideas of the individual student.

This is not how Paulo Freire imagined a university, or in another context, how Raymond Williams envisaged a practice of critical education. Williams' concept of the university, following Paulo Freire, can therefore be described as a people's university. A people's university is not restricted to one location. On the contrary, if it is really to be democratized, then what happens in the university must have an active relation with the rest of the society. Williams' valuation of the Open University, which he thought was the most important legacy of Britain's Labour government of the 1960s, is an example of a people's university. Its students 'insisted' that 'the relation' of the university 'to their own situation and experience had to be discussed' (Williams 1989f: 156).

A 'hard' university offers students courses which run for a prescribed period of time, after which their education is deemed to be complete and the educational process is terminated, without regard to the progress or

achievement of the students. A people's university by contrast would not determine in advance how long it will take students to reach an acceptable level of educational fullness. Instead, a 'soft' or people's university enables students to continue learning at the same time that they engage in important creative and critical work. Again, the Open University can be seen as an example of this. It provides a 'range of formal learning systems, which people can use in their own time and at their own pace' (Williams 1985b: 151).

Moreover, whereas a 'hard' university selects the content of its programme in advance, giving its students little or no input into that selection, a people's university equips students with the resources to decide for themselves what educational programme has most direct and immediate relevance to their own lives. An example of this in Williams' writing would be his praise for the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies at Birmingham University, which drew its materials from different aspects of contemporary British culture and continually updated its syllabus. 'The supply of facilities to teachers willing to undertake this work, and the support necessary in its early stages, are the responsibility of local education authorities, and it is good to see that some of these authorities are willing to assume it' (Williams 1976a:149).

The most significant proposal Williams makes for education is to teach discussion. This models education on an idea of exploration and mutual interchange of ideas. This is in sharp contrast to banking education, which is a tool of the competitive capitalist order and relies on the all-knowing teacher handing whatever knowledge or skills are deemed appropriate on to passive and dependent students. A discussion-orientated education will remain constantly open and flexible, able to modify its curriculum as the needs, interests and abilities of the students vary. The kind of education system Williams envisaged runs something like this:

> changing the educational system from its dominant pattern of sorting people, from so early an age, into 'educated' people and others, or in other words, transmitters and receivers, to a view of the interlocking processes of determining meanings and values as involving contribution and reception by everyone.
>
> (Williams 1989h: 36)

Williams' terms 'transmitters' and 'receivers' recall the deposit boxes of Freire's banking education. Freire's career-defining book *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* has direct relevance to Williams' interest in the long revolution towards an educated participatory democracy. To both writers, the important theme is education as a site for resistance to cultural domination. This was the case in the context of the late colonial societies in which Freire worked in Africa, and continued to be the case, in a different context, in the world of developed capitalism from which Williams worked.

What the work of Raymond Williams adds to our understanding of Paulo Freire is an insight into how the boundaries between elite and popular cultural forms might be eroded, allowing fuller participation in public cultural and political life. What Paulo Freire adds to our knowledge of Raymond Williams is a revolutionary insight into the political work of the university. What they have in common is a commitment to a pedagogical practice with important implications for the structuring of a democratic society. A pedagogy, that is, of cultural materialism.

Notes

1 I owe much of this information about Freire to Ana Maria Araújo Freire and Donaldo Macedo's 'Introduction' to their *Paulo Freire Reader* (Freire and Macedo 2000).

Chapter 8

Raymond Williams and online video: the tragedy of technology

Georgiana Banita

In his time, Raymond Williams was an elusive public figure whose attempts to secure a wider media audience for his social diagnoses met with limited success. Perhaps due to the characteristics of his dense, occasionally opaque prose, he never reached the level of popular notoriety of other intellectuals in Britain, such as George Bernard Shaw or Christopher Ricks (see Gorak 1988: 1). In addition, his views on the evolution of the media sharply conflicted with those of a critic who went on to become one of the most revered figures in the study of communications, namely Marshall McLuhan. Yet Williams' ideas on media causality, determinism and agency have shaped debates around the emergence of new media and their impact on society for many decades, whether it be television or, more recently, the Internet. Today, thirty-five years after Williams challenged his readers to reconsider those factors which shape the future of the media, the terms of the debate remain as he identified them.

This chapter relates Raymond Williams' writing on communications technology with his reflections on the nature of tragedy to achieve a better understanding of his significance for contemporary architectures of media and communication, such as user-generated online video. Williams emphasized the subordination of technology to the social context of its implementation, which is a determining factor in the uses to which technologies are put. For him, technology hinges on the complex social and political texture of the world from which it emerges, even in the case of those innovations such as the Internet that seem least dependent on their social environment and promise an endless expansion of free, democratic interconnection. A study of contemporary media from the perspective provided by Williams' theories yields new insight into how technological advances are shaped by the world into which they enter and which they, in turn, help to recast. Williams' grasp of technology as 'at once an intention and an effect of a particular social order' (Williams 1974: 128) sheds light on the rising accessibility of recent innovations such as popular video sharing, especially YouTube, a marketplace of ideas which is becoming the most prominent platform for video online in English-language media.

Specifically, I investigate the transformation of what Williams would term the 'technique' of video recording and web-sharing (the application and development of particular skills) and YouTube 'technology' per se as 'the body of knowledge appropriate to the development of such skills and applications and, second, a body of knowledge and conditions for the practical use and application of a range of devices' (Williams 1981a: 227).

This chapter shows a particular interest in web-sharing platforms as a social institution bound to the concrete historical circumstances of the early twenty-first century, but also in the specific conditions that shape the transformation of an innovation into a full-fledged technology as 'necessarily in complex and variable connection with other social relations and institutions' (Williams 1981a: 227). This innovation was demanded by a structure of feeling defined by an impulse towards self-fashioning and authenticity on the one hand, and the impact of a traumatic mass-experience on the other hand, which reached its audience through visual channels – primarily television – and prompted an explosive self-dissemination: YouTube was launched three and a half years after 11 September 2001, or 9/11. The political circumstances which dictated that the attacks consisted not only in physical but also visual violence against the entire world are closely related to the psychological climate that led to the creation of the Internet video-sharing technology. Moreover, traumatized reactions to 11 September reinforce Williams' view of tragedy as more than an academic questioning of rituals and closer to ordinary human suffering.

In keeping with Williams' conception of how technologies are modified by prevalent social interests, YouTube has indeed been used and abused by media industries, audiences and communities of interest in ways that challenge conventional understandings of how media platforms are produced and consumed. Further, the format and distribution patterns of online video has been inflected by recent developments in the nature of public spheres and their implicit communications processes towards an acceptance of non-rational, performative aspects of personal and political expression. As Chantal Mouffe and Henry Giroux have argued, a greater focus on the emotional subtext of conflict building and conciliation may prove essential to an understanding of how contemporary media effectively mediate among individual views; in other words, how the proliferation of online video technologies demands an appropriate grassroots commitment to relational rather than rational politics.

Williams warned against what Jürgen Habermas called the 'refeudalization' of the public sphere, which entails the manipulation of debates by powerful interests (Habermas 1991: 231). The idea that the democratic potential of online political debate can be hindered by the encroachment of corporate capital and other power structures on the online community is not new (see also Freedman 2002). Yet little attention has been given so far to the specific potential of a communications channel that is both textual

and visual, instantaneous and repetitive, deliberative and affective, one that exemplifies the type of interpersonal communication that Walter J. Ong termed 'secondary orality' (Ong 1982). The shift from a culture of literacy to a culture of orality derived to some extent also from the expansion of interactive visual media as an addition to textual communication, a cultural phenomenon that further enhances what Williams identified as the profoundly social nature of technology.

The medium is not the message

Williams organizes his arguments about the present and future of the media around a twofold rejection. Firstly, he refutes the determinist arguments which insist that technologies emerge exclusively from a process of research and development independently of all social conditions and political interests:

> The basic assumption of technological determinism is that a new technology … 'emerges' from technical study and experiment. It then changes the society or sector into which it has 'emerged.' 'We' adapt to it because it is the new modern way.
>
> (Williams 1985b: 129)

Far from being driven by an abstract process of innovation, technologies are, according to Williams, the result of human interests and intentions – a view that is grounded in Williams' fundamental belief in the effectiveness of human agency and its capacity to disrupt technological determinism.

Secondly, he dismisses the idea that technologies can determine profound changes that are, again, untarnished by social and historical complications, such as capital or public interests: 'The sense of some new technology as inevitable or unstoppable is a product of the overt and covert marketing of the relevant interests' (Williams 1985b: 133). In refusing to acknowledge the impact of new technologies as massive and irreversible, Williams also criticizes the formalism propagated by McLuhan, which fails to factor in the social and historical context (and content) of technological progress.[1] Broadcast communication, for instance, provided a response to the 'mobile privatisation' (Williams 1974: 26) of a social world that encouraged both isolation and participation. YouTube, in fact, is the product of a very similar mediated sociability, operating at the interface between the personal and the public, the state and the citizen. An important cultural transformation that intervened between the time dominated by television as a source of stable media products and the age of YouTube is what Aleida Assmann has referred to as a shift from a culture of memory to a culture of attention (or multitasking), in which closed referentiality is replaced by open performativity of products in their interplay with an audience (Assmann 2006). This focus on attention in the moment rather

than the material repository of the past nicely encapsulates the simultaneity of YouTube as a medium of free-floating signifiers that can be combined and reassembled ad infinitum. Most visual and verbal utterances on the YouTube platform can indeed be classified as ephemera, or instances of what the linguist Roman Jakobson termed 'phatic communication' (Jakobson 1960), which serves to re-establish relationships between speakers rather than create new knowledge. Blogs (and vlogs, their video counterparts) display such affective, community-defining communication most clearly.

More importantly, the evolution of YouTube offers an invaluable instance for testing what Williams (1967: 33) defined as democratic communications systems premised on 'the sharing of human experience' as opposed to the abusive propaganda and marketing instrumentalization carried out by capitalist societies. Although initially based on democratic principles comprising 'the right to transmit and the right to receive' (ibid.: 128) of contributors who have control over their own means of expression, in a process that at least superficially unfolds at a remove from the market and the state, the participative YouTube technology shows that the social forces it energizes cannot remain atomized and neutral, but invariably and inescapably converge into movements that favour one particular political or market entity. Contemporary bloggers refer to the defining characteristics of old and new media as pyramid and spherical models respectively (O'Brien 2004: 12), yet the two paradigms often converge to create more nebulous formations. In other words, while YouTube has certainly enhanced the communicative potential of civil society and deepened the connections among disparate individuals and groups, often in opposition to centralized state and corporate control, it has also reinforced the very patterns by which state and transnational corporations obtain and establish their monopolies in the first place.

Youtube: a social genealogy

YouTube was not invented in a single flash of inspiration, but developed during an extended process of experiment and innovation. In the late 1990s, increased access to cameras, coupled with greater availability of editing devices, lead to a dramatic growth in online video sharing and distribution. Immediate and widespread filming were further facilitated by a digitally literate younger generation of so-called 'digital natives' (or 'Millennials'; see Winograd and Hais 2008), as well as by the proliferation of mobile technologies with video capabilities such as webcams and mobile phone cameras. A Pew Research Center study published in 2004 revealed that increasingly American households accessed the Internet at broadband speeds; also, broadband Internet users incorporated being on the Net into their daily activities, making the Net more of an integrative experience than a disruptive one (ibid.: 142). All these factors of media propagation

coagulated into a seedbed of creativity and enterprise at a time when traditional forms of broadcasting were facing dwindling audiences, and a new infrastructure of communication materialized that required personal investment from the audience (wikis, blogging, social networks, text-messaging, iPod technologies, gaming). What helped these disparate attempts coalesce into a coherent technology was the necessity for a medium that could draw simultaneously on the increased flexibility of the media and the deepening social atomization of its target audience.

At the time of its conception, YouTube was a sum of what Williams called 'incentives and responses within a phase of general social transformation' (Williams 1974: 18). As early as 1979, Christopher Lasch pointed out the difference between individualism and individuality, explaining how the evolution of consumption-oriented, personally liberating modern technologies encouraged a sense of narcissistic pseudo-individuality (Lasch 1979). Wider economic upheavals in society, such as the dot.com bubble, also called for new forms of communication. Yet it wasn't until the technological stability of the 1990s was interrupted by the events of 9/11 that web-sharing devices generated a new and extremely popular technology, one that is linked to wider social forces such as current practices of surveillance in the war on terror. These practices and other preventive strategies of visual and social control were already in place before 2001, but were exacerbated by the terrorist attacks and their political aftermath. Or, to put it with Williams, the implementation of the technique relied 'on already existing political and economic dispositions in the societies concerned, since the technology, obviously, was compatible with any or all of them' (Williams 1985b: 131). Moreover, more than being merely compatible with already existing social conditions, YouTube was made possible and its future secured by legislative provisions dating back to the mid-1990s. The Online Copyright Liability Limitation Act, passed in 1997, exempts 'systems of networks at direction of users' (i.e. user-generated content or Web 2.0) from copyright liability. Behind this provision was the desire of content owners to have the option of allowing pirated exposure for purposes of publicity before exercising their legal right to expose the copyright infringement and have their property taken down. Under the protection of this safe harbour, YouTube is certain to defy the fate that other similar services (such as Napster) have succumbed to.

The popularity of YouTube, whose telling slogan is 'Broadcast yourself,' literally skyrocketed within the past years, partly due to its extreme simplicity and accessibility. By the end of 2008, user statistics indicated that the site, the third most accessed on the Internet, was receiving more than 100 million views per day, making up nearly 17 per cent of all traffic on the Internet, 60 per cent of all online video traffic, and engaging 81 million unique visitors each month.[2] The upshot of this universal accessibility is that each viewer is privy in a single month to many more visual events than

they would otherwise experience in a lifetime; Williams refers to this intensified exposure as 'living in a dramatized world' (Williams 1989g). The determinism that Williams sought to expose emerged soon after the technology had reached a mass audience and found its place among similar participatory systems in cyberspace. Already in 2006, *Time* magazine celebrated 'Time's person of the year: you,' with an apt synecdoche which, however, overstates the impact of public Internet platforms on social interaction and the redistribution of media hegemony:

> It's about the many wresting power from the few and helping one another for nothing and how that will not only change the world, but also change the way the world changes … This is an opportunity to build a new kind of international understanding, not politician to politician, great man to great man, but citizen to citizen, person to person.
> (Grossman 2006)

Despite the unbridled enthusiasm of such statements, YouTube closes off as many routes as it opens. The voice of the individual, dipped into the semiotics of mass expression, eventually loses its sharpness and conforms to whatever parameters are accepted by a user community. Attempts to control hostile behaviour (or cyber-bullying) clash against the right of every user to freely express their views, which are as often puerile and destructive as they are genuinely involved and useful. While YouTube emerged at the intersection of a focus on the self, on the one hand, poignantly illustrated in the very first video posted on the site – 'Me at the zoo' by co-founder Jawed Karim – and global distribution, on the other hand, both the concept of 'individual' participation and globalism were changed in the process. The singular pronoun highlighted by *Time*'s eulogy acquires a plural connotation, while the very idea of a self dissolves in the mass of its global reproducibility across user communities engaged in endless participation.

Despite the originality of their assemblage, many of the forms employed by YouTube were borrowed from other media; the technology remains, however, unique in its directness and closeness to everyday life, which is in turn modified by the potential opened up by the technology of user-generated content. Yet it is not the sum of its internal characteristics that has shaped YouTube but the involvement of specific social interests which nudge this system towards entertainment, witness value and political engagement, successively or at the same time. Although it initially resisted the concept of corporate ownership, profit-making, and censorship, the digital network eventually gave in to market pressures and traditional forms of regulation. On 9 October 2006, YouTube was purchased by Google for $1.65 billion, a sale that provoked enormous media coverage and confirmed the wave of corporate interest for consumer-generated Internet content. In 2005, Rupert Murdoch stated that 'young people don't want to rely on a Godlike figure

from above to tell them what's important … They want control over their media, instead of being controlled by it' (cited in Winograd and Hais 2008: 152). Then he promptly purchased MySpace, another user-generated platform, for $580 million, not fully resisting the temptation to become that Godlike figure.

Since then, countless media conglomerates have supplemented their output with web access and blogging facilities, and plans are currently in place to adapt the traditional television format to selective and interactive viewing on the Internet, complete with live streaming devices, live blogging and other participatory media platforms. CNN, whose traffic details rank much lower than YouTube's, has launched an effort to attract YouTube's media-savvy audience by inviting so-called iReports, which are then incorporated into the mainstream news programmes. In fact, the platform has already been adopted as second market by commercial television, as popular television productions (especially comedy programmes) such as *Saturday Night Live* or *The Daily Show* extend their media visibility through their YouTube presence, one that attracts millions of viewers within a single week. The impact of the programme is further enhanced by the site's viewer-oriented design, offering the opportunity for free and anonymous comment, rating and interlinking.

Political interests have also begun to determine the content of online video, as the transnational distribution of television has encountered political setbacks. In 2007, YouTube emerged as an important political route channelling currents of opinion into people's homes after the English-language arm of Qatar-based Al Jazeera signed a deal to launch a channel on YouTube's video site, following several failures to connect with American cable providers due to political opposition. Essential Al Jazeera programmes such as *Inside Iraq* would thereby gain more recognition in the West and help shed the brand's reputation as a terrorist propaganda machine. Other politically motivated instances of Web video promotion include the launching in 2007 of the European Union's YouTube channel (called EUTube), which features such self-promoting and aesthetically bland productions as *Flying and the Environment – the EU Leads the Way*. It was only a short step from such harmless bureaucratic propaganda to ethically questionable 'stealth viral' video ads, mainly corporate commercials that carry out subliminal forms of persuasion, or what the industry calls 'murketing' (a merger of murky and marketing). In May 2008, a public relations company based in Paris created YouTube user accounts and posted videos that revealed the health dangers posed by cell phone radiation. After they had been viewed ten million times, a wireless headset manufacturer admitted its involvement with the videos and went on to use them in their official advertising campaigns. The company's marketing director confessed that traffic on the website was instantly scaled up by the announcement that the firm had commissioned the videos.

Beyond the political interests that drive these instrumentalizations of YouTube, the platform has also enhanced civil awareness to the point of playing the role of a cultural watchdog that can skirt issues of censorship and alert the global community to instances of injustice or abuse. In this sense, YouTube has contributed to the rise of what has been termed 'sousveillance' – the reverse pattern of surveillance as hierarchically inflected observation from the top down – also known as the 'participatory panopticon' as a form of watchful vigilance involving individual participants. It also added an ethical component of advocacy to practices that for a long time were used primarily for entertainment purposes and trivial pursuits. As human rights suffered an instant devaluation since the beginning of the war on terror, YouTube has emerged as a platform for the promotion of human rights, helping stories of torture and abuse go viral, and thereby calling for prompter action to redress injustice. Videos that depict daily scenes in wars being waged around the world or terrorist attacks also find their way onto the YouTube website, offering a solution to what Williams deplored as 'the culture of distance,' epitomized by the absence of alternative views on current events, beyond the polished slickness of television news (Williams 1989g: 13–21).

Youtube at Ground Zero

Indeed, the events of 11 September 2001 marked a significant turning point in the evolution of Web 2.0 technology, which can be attributed to the unfolding of the attacks along two narrative trajectories: melodrama and tragedy. 9/11 as a catalyser for mass melodrama sparked an upsurge in visually heroic behaviour and moralizing self-display, forging communities of involvement that later exploded into user communities. Essential in this context is Elisabeth Anker's compelling argument that media coverage of 9/11 produced a specific American collective identity through a melodramatic plotline, which allowed the US to emerge as a morally powerful victim forced to transform victimization into heroic retributive action (Anker 2005). While Anker successfully pursues this line of inquiry and demonstrates the appeal of a narrative profiling America's dual role of victim and hero, she overlooks the distinct function of Web 2.0 media in perpetuating melodramatic scenarios and underplays the role of emotionality as an inherent means of media dissemination itself. Not only official media coverage of 9/11 tended toward amplifying the heroic victimization of America and its resulting self-righteousness, but the bulk of 9/11 materials on the YouTube platform suggests that identity politics in transnational media tends to rely on the demonization of an other whose incessant threats must be either fought or ridiculed (see for example the countless vituperative videos and jokes at the expense of Arab characters or mascots). Yet in the years following the 2001 attacks and especially after the start of the Iraq

War, the tone of public discourse shifted from an unquestionable faith in the moral imperative of state power towards a more nuanced view of the ramifications of the attacks in terms of individual responsibility. YouTube picked up a large portion of these complex debates.

The 'tragedy' of 9/11 should thus be considered in the context of its technological reproducibility, both in nonstop loops on television – strictly controlled by TV producers – or, more effectively, in its online media appearances, endlessly replayable on personal computer screens. This should not detract from the fact that 9/11 was a tragic event in a secular era, one that remains otherwise impervious to classical forms of tragedy. As George Steiner argued in *The Death of Tragedy* (Steiner 1961), tragic art must involve the struggle of noble heroes and the metaphysical lessons which their fate imparts. Judging by this definition, late modernity can hardly provide the necessary conditions for tragedy due to the fundamental untethering of the individual from higher powers (religion, destiny) that lie beyond the individual's control. In contrast to Steiner, Williams does not confine tragedy to elitist art forms and superior social castes, but expands the concept to include not only texts but also events and experiences, regarded in a perpetual flux of institutional conventions and the changing attributes of human nature:

> Tragedy is then not a single and permanent kind of fact, but a series of experiences and conventions and institutions. It is not a case of interpreting this series by reference to a permanent and unchanging human nature. Rather the varieties of tragic experience are to be interpreted by reference to the changing conventions and institutions.
>
> (Williams 1966: 45–6)

The democratization of tragedy is nowhere as obvious as in the unrestricted accessibility of online video platforms where everyone, regardless of class, can respond to tragedy. With the advent of this new media, the focus has thus shifted from metaphysical debates on the inescapability of pain to public displays of emotion prompted by suffering. As Judith Butler has argued, such collective responses to tragic loss evolve from a feeling of social interdependence and vulnerability. In the aftermath of 9/11, individuals – but also sovereign nations – began to acknowledge their dependence on and vulnerability to each other. Tragedy, then, is the recognition 'that we can be injured, that others can be injured, that we are subject to death at the whim of another' (Butler 2004: xii). Likewise, the YouTube community rests on its members' imaginative capacities for empathy. Being a transnational platform that allows individuals to interact across geographic borders, YouTube stresses the limits of individual autonomy and the embeddedness of individuals in social relations, their 'vulnerability to a sudden address from elsewhere' (ibid.: 29) – literally, a digital

interpellation – that cannot be prevented. While it is possible to control these connections, and YouTube does foster the creation of affinitive communities, the more general relationality they denote is inescapable. This media-driven intermingling of fates has therefore replaced 'fate' writ large as the engine of tragedy, illustrating Williams' suggestion that tragedy follows the trajectory of institutional changes and must be placed in that context, or may even emerge from the nature and impact of those changes themselves.

Democracy, citizenship and viral politics

YouTube can also function as a potential countermovement to what Henry Giroux (2003) in *Public Spaces, Private Lives: Democracy Beyond 9/11* deplores as the commercialization of public life and an increasing disinvestment in public goods since 9/11. According to Giroux, we are witnessing and participating in 'the collapse of public discourse, the increasing militarization of public space, and the rise of a state apparatus bent on substituting policing functions for social services' (ibid.: 31) resulting in a thorough dislike for all things social, public and collective (ibid.: 55), whose first casualty is the language of social responsibility. Undoubtedly, the melodramatic scenarios in 9/11 media representations emphasized by Anker contributed to the rising indifference in the US toward critical consciousness. In arguing for 'educated hope', a concept that rests on a more expansive concept of pedagogy in a variety of cultural sites (ibid.: 129), Giroux gives us ample reason to pause over the simultaneously utopian and concrete format of YouTube-like platforms. It may seem troubling to position the appeal of user-generated content on a par with Giroux's 'socially engaged citizenship' (ibid.: 3), predicated as it is on knowing, understanding and reform. YouTube, however, provides the most solid, freely accessible video database of recent historical events such as 9/11 and the war in Iraq, and has seen its role as instant recorder and historiographer speedily gaining in significance and culminating in 2008 with a tremendous impact on public policy and political marketing in the US and abroad.

During the American presidential campaign in 2008, YouTube was widely used to promote campaign material, whose key messages became more compelling merely by virtue of their video repetition. Yet the platform was also used to publish candid campaign moments, which forced the candidates to be constantly alert to the content and form of their messages, and to avoid serious 'gaffes' – a permanent attraction on YouTube and on the daily comedy shows. Barack Obama was among the first to recognize YouTube's capacity to rival primetime power by uploading his response to George W. Bush's last State of the Union Address on YouTube, which went on to become one of his campaign's major battlegrounds, periodically set in motion by viral hits such as the immensely popular song *Yes, We*

Can, by the artist Will.i.am, or the fan production *I Got a Crush on Obama*, by Internet star Obama Girl. Not all YouTube coverage was favourable to the candidates though; in fact the most popular campaign videos displayed a combination of humour and malice. Some of these – especially those featuring the Reverend Jeremiah Wright, or Hillary Clinton's false statement on having ducked sniper fire in Bosnia – haunted the candidates and the presidential debates. But this has not deterred Obama from embracing the medium as a presidential tool, similar to President Roosevelt's use of radio during his administration. In a November 2007 interview with YouTube's news and politics editor Steve Grove, Obama announced his intentions of becoming the first Web 2.0 president: 'We're going to have 21st century fireside chats where I'm speaking directly to the American people through video streams because it allows me to interact directly in a way that I think will enhance democracy and strengthen our government' (cited in Ramirez 2008). This incentive toward transparency in government corresponds to the democratizing effect that Williams attached to media technologies. What Williams may not have anticipated is the involvement of parties and institutions in democratic networks that had initially aimed to circumvent precisely these dominant centres of political power.

More ambivalent than Giroux but equally convinced by the necessity for public deliberation and engagement, Chantal Mouffe came closer than Giroux to actually calculating the effects of new media towards streamlining or stalling the democratic agenda. Mouffe emphasizes the value of mobilizing people's passions, their 'libidinal investment' and collective identification in partisan conflicts (Mouffe 2005). Democratic politics is thus premised on domesticating hostility and defusing the recurrent danger of potential antagonism in human relations. The nature of YouTube would support her contention that collective identities should be formed by relational rather than rational means. Despite pointing out the possibility of new media to facilitate the realization of direct democracy, Mouffe also recognizes that they might replace rational debate by the instant expression of private prejudices and transform public decisions into private, consumerist choices. Overriding her own repeated emphasis on the benefits of private involvement with the political, Mouffe then raises the puzzling question of whether new media development should be left to the markets (as is the case today) or be regulated through political decisions. This is where her stance contrasts sharply with Williams' assumption that control of media technologies is not an option but a given. Both Mouffe and Williams have insisted that democratic, participatory technologies do not necessarily result in a swifter or more radical democratization of public discourse or of society as a whole. To assume such an idealist position would only be a further illustration of what Williams called technological determinism. Recognizing the naivety of this view is not equal to what Williams himself criticizes as unproductive 'cultural pessimism' (Williams 1985b: 135), but a

necessary step in probing the consequences of new technologies for contemporary society and democratic citizenship.

Conclusion

Raymond Williams insists that the development, implementation and use of technologies are contingent on the social relations of the world into which they enter. This theory has been illustrated here by an analysis of YouTube's contagious evolution from an eccentric technique into a widely available technology. Although the issues of citizenship and democracy in the age of viral communication have been broached by critics such as Giroux and Mouffe, Williams offered a perspective derived from his careful observations of the television medium, a view that seems perfectly applicable to today's complex digital ecosystems. Moreover, this vantage point allows for fruitful connections between America's recent history, its tragic events and the rampant proliferation of online video as a vehicle for unbridled emotion and public debate. In the mosaic of contemporary media, YouTube has offered new opportunities that were temporarily outside the sway of transnational capital and the grasp of media corporations, opportunities that ushered in, above all, a new age of emotional participation and political expression. Gradually, however, YouTube has been captured by dominant interests and its communities are becoming fronts for commercial enterprises (viral marketing), before being overwhelmed by global media conglomerates. Rather than an empowering technology seeking to break the shackles of corporate and ideological interests in the media and public life, YouTube has also proved to be an instrument of social atomization and decentralization. Its capacity for creating positive social phenomena has shown how relative any criticism of mass media movements must be, but also how the powers of cyberspace are eventually harnessed by forces whose direction of flow – top-down or bottom-up – is in current flux.

Notes

1 See McLuhan [1964] 1998: 'Our conventional response to all media, namely that it is how they are used that counts, is the numb stance of the technological idiot. For the "content" of a medium is like the juicy piece of meat carried by the burglar to distract the watchdog of the mind' (ibid.: 18).

2 This information is provided by the web information company Alexa (www.alexa.com).

Chapter 9

Cultural studies and common culture: Raymond Williams' approach towards media cultural studies

Udo Göttlich

1. Introduction

Since Curran's (1990) critique of the 'New Revisionism' in mass communication research or McGuigan's (1992) critique of 'Cultural Populism', we in cultural studies are emphatically told that political or economical questions are lacking in our analyses of communication or that sociology has to be put back on the agenda of media and communication analysis. What is seldom mentioned in such critiques of cultural studies is Raymond Williams' own detour towards a critical theory of culture via his approach of cultural materialism. This theory allows one to come to terms with some of the crucial questions that are being debated in recent critiques on mass culture (cf. Hoggart 2004) as well as media culture and/or society (cf. Kellner 1995b).

In this chapter we will consider what implications Williams' 'cultural materialism' as his interpretation or understanding of a sociology of culture and communication has for a re-evaluation of our understanding of media culture in cultural studies. To achieve this aim, we have to follow the connection between cultural materialism and an earlier concept in Williams' writings, the concept of a common culture (cf. Williams 1989d).

We will consider some of the interpretations that Williams' concept of a common culture has received over the past forty years. With these interpretations in mind, we will discuss some limitations of the traditional terminology of media (section 3). We will also outline the extent of media change which necessitates a new understanding of media culture when we think that Williams' critical approach will help us fully grasp actual shifts and changes in communication as well as in media culture.[1] In the second part (sections 4–5) we will discuss an initial suggestion for a solution which derives from the meaning of 'media as *passageways of social practice*', developing this suggestion from Williams' cultural materialism (cf. Göttlich 1996, 2004). This idea aims at an understanding and critique of recent media concepts and communication models and can be linked to existing problems concerning ideas of a common culture.

2. Culture and common culture

In Williams' cultural theory and analysis, the question 'What is a common culture?' is too fundamental for the problem in which his concept of communication and culture is involved. It thus cannot be settled with a new definition of media or media culture only. It has to do with the ideal of a 'knowable community' versus the concept of a 'known community', an opposition that derives from his critique of Victorian fiction and is used for the critique of culture. It was Terry Eagleton who put this idea in the broader context of the nineteenth century and Williams' (1958) book *Culture and Society*:

> What the work did, in effect, was to take the only viable tradition Williams had to hand – the Romantic radical-conservative lineage of nineteenth-century England – and extract from it those 'radical' elements which could be ingrafted into a 'socialist humanism'. That is to say, the elements extracted – tradition, community, organism, growth, wholeness, continuity and so on – were interlocked with the equally corporatist, evolutionary discourse of labourism, so that the organicism of the language reproduced and elaborated the organicism of the other.
> (cited in Jardine and Swindells 1989: 122)

Nowadays, we have to think of a translation of this idea concerning questions of how to make connections and how to stay connected in a global media culture so that a common culture in Williams' sense can come true. To build such a bridge means not only a challenge in a pragmatistic perspective, following and analysing processes of 'doing culture' (Hörning and Reuter 2004).[2] It is at least a question of facing new forms of class antagonism, as Richard Hoggart reminds us in his latest book:

> We remain a divided, not – which could be healthy – a diverse, society; we are a society moving towards a new or, by now, new-ish form of the old three-tiered divisions: minorities at top and bottom, with the persuaders' prime target, of about seventy-five per cent, in the middle.
> (Hoggart 2004: 19)

From this background, dealing with questions of a common culture in the face of new ways of exploitation – not only by the advertisement industry – means looking for new ways of doing and making in our media culture, a culture that can bridge the new forms of class antagonisms. If there is no translation of the concept of *common culture* in the older sense according to this new challenge, the organicism of the language can turn into a minefield very quickly, Eagleton reminds us. But the way in which Williams – and also Hoggart – use the idea of a common culture does not include organicism. It includes the idea of a 'knowable community'. In this, Williams

> holds before us an image of the larger society which has to show care for the actual and diverse communities it contains. If it does not, then, … it is destroying actual communities in the name of the 'community' or 'public'.
>
> (Eldridge and Eldridge 1994: 205)

Against this background, a common culture in Williams' own words means

> an educated and participating democracy … It is this emphasis on a mutual determination of values and meanings that I think one has to remember in considering one possible meaning of a common culture … In this common process, the only absolute will be the keeping of the channels and institutions of communication clear, so that all may contribute, and be helped to contribute.
>
> (Williams 1989d: 37f.)

In this understanding, the function of culture is invariably linked to the possibility of 'community', to the prospect that a common existence – a shared subject-position 'we' – can be formed or recovered from the reified social relations of the present; that 'culture' can, in other words, produce the 'communal' body of a people. This shift goes back to an understanding that people can make culture only in the very acts of consuming it and living it. And this is also true for communication.

To sum up: the term 'media culture' as such is not enough to grasp the changes that occur in the field of social communication and that influence people's understanding of culture and communication. There is rather the danger of similar limitations to those found in the terms of 'mass culture' when we do not come to terms with the critique that lies in Williams' concept of 'common culture'. It is this concept that can enlarge our understanding of media culture and/or society and that we can use as a background for our critique within cultural studies. This critique can be useful concerning the role of public media within the future of communication markets as well as within public spheres in Europe, because for all the processes that will lead to a future public sphere in Europe the question of a common culture as the educated and participating democracy that Williams has in mind still remains. The meaning of this concept can also be helpful in understanding Hoggart's current critique of mass culture, in which he emphasises the losses suffered by mass culture development at the end of the twentieth century (cf. Hoggart 2004: 158–76). Whereas Williams fully rejected the concept of mass culture, it is interesting for our critique within cultural studies that Hoggart not only sticks to this concept but obtains the strongest arguments against the 'new times' from a critique of the forces that nowadays create and control mass culture.

3. The culture of the media = media culture?

Compared with the tasks, discussed above, of a theory on media culture, the meaning of media found in the context of mass culture debates is more closely linked to metaphors. But we can hardly find any metaphors of culture or media culture at all, and there is none that reminds us of a knowable community and of the role of public spheres within this process. Numerous different terms are used to describe the mediation carried out by the media between the individual and reality. The description of media as channels to transport a message is probably the most well-known metaphor. The purpose and efficiency of media are emphasised here. Denis McQuail (1994) cites in a list a number of further metaphors for media (cf. 65f.):

- media as a window on events,
- media as a mirror of social events,
- media as a filter or gatekeeper, sorting out experiences for special purposes,
- media as a signpost, guide or interpreter giving the events their meaning,
- media as a forum or platform for the presentation of content, and,
- media as a screen or barrier, which indicates that media can cut us off from reality.

The metaphors cited are each connected to a communication model corresponding to that of mass communication in its present form. This model concerns the transport of messages or news to a receiver and the problems which arise or have to be overcome so that the message reaches the receiver. The main priority is to determine the factors that affect the efficiency of communication via a particular medium. But do those concepts tell us anything about culture or media culture?

As every one of us knows, the field of mass communication has changed over the past thirty years – even if mass communication will not be completely eradicated as a result – and thus the media terms arising from the aforementioned traditional debates are losing their power of description. These facts can be seen most clearly in the discourse of ethnographic media studies. The trend towards the active audience already indicates future developments in which, together with the formation of interactive media, aspects of activity and creativity will play an even more important role in communication. But what *culture* will develop out of these processes? Which practices will become possible within which media formations?

To come to terms with those changes the concept of media culture is nowadays used in different theory trends. In Germany, the formulation and use of this concept goes back primarily to the contribution of constructivism to media theory in the writings of S. J. Schmidt (Schmidt 1992a,

1992b). This approach is partly based on systems theory and combines it with cognitive psychology as well as literary theory and aspects of a sociology of culture. The achievement of constructivism lies mainly in bringing out the constructions of media messages by the recipient and demonstrating the meaning of reality construction for culture and society. The apparent decline of fields of unmediatized experience caused by the increase of media variety may represent the main reason for the term media culture. Here, however, the danger exists that those cultural fields of experience which are not mediatized may be ignored. In everyday life, in the so-called *Lebenswelt*, unmediatized fields are still in the majority, even if the topics and questions in those fields are increasingly obtained through the media. In a seeming contradiction, the increasing presence of media messages intensifies the desire for unmediatized experience.

Within this context, the topics of media and communications studies are the *realities* that arise or are constructed in media communication and not *reality* itself. Another problem deals with the step by step formation of 'entgrenzte Medien' in which borders of particular media are dissolved, that is, 'interwoven media' (Schulze 1995: 364). 'Media realities' thus formed are becoming more and more important in everyday life and they have to do with our understanding of reality: they become the forms of our experience.

Within the framework of this chapter, however, we should go briefly into an approach on media culture connected with the writings of Douglas Kellner, which can be used as an example to clarify the basic problem from a further cultural studies perspective. Kellner (1995b) describes the advantages of the term media culture in his book *Media Culture* as follows:

> The term 'media culture' has the advantage of signifying both the nature and form of the artifacts of the culture industries (i.e. culture) and their mode of production and distribution (i.e. media technologies and industries). It avoids ideological terms like 'mass culture' and 'popular culture' and calls attention to the circuit of production, distribution and reception through which media culture is produced, distributed and consumed. The term breaks down artificial barriers between the fields of cultural, media and communications studies and calls attention to the interconnection of culture and communications media in the constitution of media culture, thus breaking down reified distinctions between 'culture' and 'communication'.
>
> (Kellner 1995b: 34f.)

In the first part of his explanation we can see some of the reductions which seem to be inherent in the term media culture. These in no way satisfy the theoretical claims that are raised by Kellner in the second part of his statement and that should actually be achieved. This is not a criticism of Kellner's

theoretical approach to mass communication or his methods of critique. But the term media culture is meant to explain more, and must explain more, when we follow Williams' idea of a *knowable community*, than the well-known question 'how texts are produced within the context of the political economy and system of production of culture, as well as how audiences are produced by a variety of social institutions, practices, ideologies and the uses of different media' (Kellner 1995a: 170). The interconnection between the cultural constitution of the media and their role in social communication, which is necessary to understand media culture, is only inadequately treated, even where it is accepted as existent, even where it is the focus of theory.

But it is just this interconnection which is changing in quality in the present development of media. It is this 'new quality' of connectivity which the concept of media culture did not get right, as when Kellner addresses this quality in terms of media spectacle. So we should ask if we can come to terms with Williams' concept of common culture to give an understanding not only of the yet unknown outcome of the process but also of the challenges we have to face. Following Milner (2002), Williams' concept of a common culture, in dealing with the problem of mutual access, draws upon the idea of a 'participatory democracy' as prerequisite of a knowable community. In a more theoretical and not so much practical vein of solidarity, it is the idea of a totality and of the different ways of connection within it. Facing this theoretical question, we have to ask: Is the term media culture linked with questions of access and connection to a totality? If not, how can Williams' idea of a common culture help us to come to terms with this problem? With these questions in mind we will start the second part of the discussion, where – as stated above – we will develop from Williams' theoretical work the idea of media as *passageways of social practice* ('Durchgangspunkte sozialer Praxis', cf. Göttlich 1996: 253ff).

4. Raymond Williams' concept of media and communication

Following Raymond Williams' theory of cultural materialism, in which he understands 'each' form of signification as a moment of practice, an extended understanding of media necessary for the term 'media culture' emerges. The connection between culture and communication, also sought with the term media culture, is found in Williams with a view to the position of cultural practice in signification. Williams says:

> Signification, the social creation of meanings through the use of formal signs, is then a practical material activity; it is indeed, literally, a means of production. It is a specific form of that practical consciousness which is inseparable from all social material activity … It is … at once a distinctive material process – the making of signs – and, in the central

> quality of its distinctiveness as practical consciousness, is involved from the beginning in all other human social and material activity.
>
> (Williams 1977: 38)

In theoretical terms this perspective concerns the examination of social signification and communication processes which should be explained, with a view to the social and cultural relationships that lead to, or determine, their form, as an entirety. This means that media are not mere channels with the task, function or role of social (re)production (as stated in the cited metaphors), but practices in and by which social reproduction is 'conveyed' through the processes and formations of communication and cultural signification. In this view media are *passageways* for communication processes whose social form results from the triad of technology, social institutions and communication, based on the material organization of sign systems; but, in addition, these related processes then engender a specific practice which is decisive for the social mode of communication.

The idea of *passageways* within the concept of cultural materialism is linked with Williams' idea that media are, at the same time, more

> than new technologies, in the limited sense. They are means of production, developed in direct if complex relations with profoundly changing and extending social and cultural relationships: changes elsewhere recognizable as deep political and economic transformations.
>
> (Williams 1977: 54)

So media are first of all 'material organizations of specific systems of signs' (Williams 1976b: 505) and no longer mere channels for the transmission of messages. At the same time, then, the moments of practice that regulate this relationship can also be understood as forming meaning. The 'channel' itself is already culturally formed and this cultural formation leads to communication. With regard to this step, which is necessary to reach a new understanding of media culture, Williams goes on: 'For if we have learned to see the relation of any cultural work to what we have learned to call a sign-system … we can also come to see that a sign-system is itself a specific structure of social relationships' (Williams 1977: 140). This again exemplifies a view of the whole interconnected process of a common culture that includes mediated and unmediated experience as well as experiences that tend to be more and more divided between groups, so that the question of mutual access – or in newer terms 'connectivity' – remains.

With regard to the history of communication the interaction described in this observation becomes differentiated through the fact that: 'each transition is a historical development of social language itself: finding new means, new forms and then new definitions of changing practical consciousness' (Williams 1977: 54). Principal attention is thus given to the role of 'specific

cultural technologies' in the communication process, which play an important part as a condition for the development of new forms of behaviour and practice, that is, 'specific forms of practical consciousness'.

A good example can be found in Williams' (1990c: 26) own concept of *mobile privatisation*, a concept that he uses to describe the consequences of television from the 1970s onwards. Approaching the technology via themes of privacy and mobility, of home and travel, he was beginning to explore broadcasting's position within – and in its reciprocal role in serving to shape – the organization of space and time in modern societies. He saw the medium, on the one hand, as both a sought-after consequence of an effective facilitator for the historical tendency to a dramatic retreat of social life into privatized settings and as a withdrawal to interior space. On the other hand, he saw that it accentuates far greater opportunities for travel and a vastly expanded sense of community. Both possibilities concern the central role of routine in dealing with forces of mobile privatization in everyday life: habit, seriality, framing and, of course, the role of television in defining and sustaining these routines (cf. Göttlich 2006). In this view, media not only establish new relationships between different social and cultural fields – as implied by the term media culture – but also are already based on individuals' specific forms of behaviour and ways of interaction in modernity. The term media culture should focus on exactly this point, more precisely than it can achieve with the underlying term media, if it is not only to give a factual description of the contemporary social and cultural development but at the same time to assess the possibilities of a practice which changes society.

The view of 'media as passageways of social practice' has implications for the term media: media are accordingly not objects or artefacts by which and with which social practice takes place and through which it is conveyed. Media are rather themselves the expression of practical consciousness and thus figuratively form passageways, rather than points of intersection, of social and cultural practices and of their mediation. Thus it is the cultural form of the medium itself that can also form a basis for contact and criticism. This orientation does not mean that the term media has been eliminated and that only the cultural practices or sign-systems in their relation to social practices are emphasised. The point is rather to be able to work out that the specific properties of the different media and their respective technologies can be seen in connection with specific historical and cultural circumstances, intentions and interests which are supported by and formed in institutions and formations.

As a priority task of 'media research' understood in this way it follows that this is 'necessarily concerned, in historical and materialistic ways, with the specific technologies which are now their dominant forms, but with these technologies as systems of signs and not an abstracted technical level' (Williams 1976b: 505). Moreover, since at this level the technologies are

necessarily seen as new and advanced forms of social organization, there is a basis for reworking not only the analysis of content (which is always a content of relationships) but also the analysis of institutions and formations (which are never independent) 'that are necessary for communication and aspects of participation' (Williams 1976b: 505).

The task of communication research understood in this way can be realized, for example, through the following steps of analysis: it concerns the examination of specific information and signification processes and of their development into institutionalized information or communication systems which are to be explained by changes in society, economy and technology. Part of this is also the observation of media content, whose change and development are to be understood as arising from different organizational demands and changing interests (which are an expression of social power and ruling structures). Exactly these social and cultural practices form the cultural signification and achievement of media and offer points of contact for a criticism of the media and the processes that work against a knowable community. The problem of media culture thus stays related to social power and control structures. But the question of social reproduction is shifted not only to the symbol-mediated level of culture and the material aspects involved in its development. Here is where the concept of common culture can be introduced into the debate. It should stay in the background and it underlies Williams' critical approach at this point. In Milner's view, the concept is 'much more amenable to alignment with an emancipatory than an exploitative or oppressive politics' (Milner 2002: 173). From this stance, it has to be the task within our analyses of media culture to draw on situations in which decisions are made concerning strengthening or loosening the possibilities for mutual access and communicative action in understanding cultural change and its influence on a knowable community.

5. Public media and common culture

From the beginning with *The Long Revolution* (1961c) and *Communications* (1962), Williams was interested in the role of public broadcasting. It is with this institution that we can get an idea of how useful Williams' reflections on media and communications are as a perspective on the influence of the media change on a common culture when we enter the era of European media. At this decisive moment, the historical solution, that of supporting public television and media as democratic institutions, is brought into question and with this the idea of common culture is also questioned (cf. Libération 2008: 1–4).

All this means a changing agenda for thinking about issues of identity and community. It now appears likely that, over a considerable period and in uneven patterns, discrete national cultures will be progressively eroded. The globalizing pressures of transnational media distribution and the

impact of new communication technologies suggest an emergence of new image spaces and 'reimagined communities'. What does the idea of a common culture mean in this broader context and which role will media have in fostering such a perspective, when we have to resist against a trading culture in a global perspective? A trading culture is a kind of culture that looks on television and the other media as goods for exchange, namely in the advertisement branch. In the late 1970s Williams summarised the question of the growth and role of the mass media as follows:

> The point is that we are faced with very specific phenomena of late capitalist society which we are very often still describing in the terms of early capitalist society. In terms of their economic structure, the increasing movement towards corporate monopoly ownership, the exclusion of media which do not meet their economic criteria, the steady control (of which we should be increasingly reminded) of the so-called independent public corporations by the very fact of appointment from the state at their controlling levels – all these phenomena demand the most detailed investigation. My argument is that we look at their historical evolution we can find the material for this analysis and so learn a new language for addressing ourselves to the problems of the media in our own times.
>
> (Williams 1979c: 24)

This critical position has a strong link to his older idea of a common culture, of which his thinking on and interest in communication is an essential part, because 'a common culture is not the general extension of what a minority mean and believe, but the creation of a condition in which the people as a whole participate in the articulation of meanings and values' (Williams 1989d: 36).

Some people may call this hope or position abstract romanticism. But the concept has nothing to do with harmonism, even when the concept sounds old-fashioned. It has to do with the right to participate and the fighting for this right, which means addressing questions of solidarity in media culture. The desire for community is thus presented as the desire for independence of free human activity. With this critique in mind it is for cultural studies to empower ordinary people to take control over their own lives and to fight for participation as cultural studies intend to do.

But the reflection on the role of the media cannot be solved with studies of media reception alone. We have to deal with the production of media as well as with the political dimension of the media in an audio-visual European public sphere to come. Here one must ask which ideas of a future European society and culture we can find in actual theories. Do they address problems of access and solidarity as elements of a common culture?

The kind of analysis that characterises *Culture and Society* (1958) as well as *The Long Revolution* (1961) or that later found in *Television, Technology and Cultural Form* (1974) is formed by a persistent historical grappling with the concept of culture that leads to the theory of cultural materialism. Williams shows us in his perspective that it is impossible to carry through any serious cultural analysis without reaching towards a consciousness of the concept of culture within history itself: that means a consciousness which must be historical. The experience and communication of the social order are made possible by culture. Cultural studies nowadays uses the term 'articulation' to come to terms with what is in Williams' understanding of culture. While articulation does not belong to Williams' vocabulary of social and cultural analysis, it is perhaps the most adequate term to describe his sense of the idea and creativity of culture. By the articulation of culture, the social is (re-)produced; and by learning to read the articulation of culture, the social may be critically explored. Coming to terms with this idea under actual conditions, we meet the above mentioned 'doing-culture' concept. Within cultural studies such a pragmatic concept not only has to do with the appropriation of texts but as well with social practices in the form of daily routines and habits that can lead to the (re-)creation of a common culture, when the critical tools and concepts are known. This critical perspective has to do with an understanding that people cannot but make culture in the very acts of living it. In the variety of its modes, practices and undertakings, the 'doing' as creation of new ways of making and producing culture realigns, reforms and transforms the present.

Notes

1 This does not mean that these limitations can be found equally in all concepts of media culture – for reasons of presentation omissions are necessary to bring out the core idea more concisely.

2 The concept of 'doing culture' (cf. Hörning and Reuter 2004) appeared in recent debates on the future role of the pragmatic theory within German sociology. Compared with cultural studies there are similarities in analysing and understanding routines and habits on everyday life and culture. The concept is interested in the complex ways daily routines or habits lead to the (re-)creation of new ways of doing and making.

Chapter 10

'Even the dead will not be safe': on dis(re)membering Williams

John Higgins

In one of his many striking *aperçus*, Walter Benjamin wrote of how every period 'must strive anew to wrest tradition away from the conformism that is working to overpower it'; he further noted how the 'only historian capable of fanning the spark of hope in the past is the one who is firmly convinced that *even the dead* will not be safe from the enemy if he is victorious' (Benjamin 2006: 391).[1] Aside from simple recognition of the many ways in which the entire academic career of Raymond Williams – in books such as *Culture and Society* and *The Country and the City* – can be read as successfully instantiating just such a 'wresting of the tradition away from conformism' (the subtitle of Williams' final essay collection, *The Politics of Modernism*, was *Against the New Conformists*), and underlining the consequent importance of Williams' stress on the cultural and political dynamics of the 'selective tradition', we might return to Benjamin's words from 1940 in order to ask just how safe from a demeaning or belittling conformism the legacy of Raymond Williams' work is some twenty-odd years after his death?[2]

In this chapter, attention is drawn to one powerful mode of this conformist cultural memory as a mode of *disremembering*. Disremembering is not some chance error or mistake in memory: it enjoys too deliberate or systematic an effect for what we call misremembering. Disremembering comes through, rather, as an attempt at effacing or dismembering cultural memory through the dismissal or 'dissing' of someone's memory and reputation. Here we will examine just three such instances of disremembering Williams.

We begin with an apparently slight instance of this dynamic of effacement (as in painting over graffiti, something of the original remains, but hardly discernible) because its casualness is testimony to the more dominant modes of effacement and disremembering that seem to be generally at work in ways that suggest the relevance of Benjamin's observation.

A falsifying selection

The first example is, then, important precisely because of its casually derogatory nature. It is a reference to Williams' work in a review essay by

the distinguished historian Linda Colley, in *The London Review of Books* (Colley 2003). What is interesting here is the very casualness of the reference, since this bespeaks a strong sense of the disremembering of Williams' work: it presumes a conventional or orthodox understanding of that work as *already-read* rather than requiring attentive reading or careful attention. In so doing, it can only really be challenged by an active reading that sets out to resist this disremembering, and, at this point of active reading, we can better see what it means (in Benjamin's phrase) to wrest tradition from an emerging conformism.

Let's see what happens if Colley's presentation of Williams' work as already-read is confronted by an actual reading of it. Her references come from one of Williams' final studies, the compact monograph *Cobbett*, published as one of the first of the Oxford Past Masters series in 1983.[3] The two quotations that she uses come from the beginning of the third chapter of that study, where Williams is in fact outlining the two versions of Cobbett's work that he is setting out to contest.

Colley takes a phrase from these opening paragraphs that describes Cobbett as 'a good brave old chap' and uses it as textual evidence for the general argument of her own review, that the first task of the contemporary reader of Cobbett is to rescue him in particular from 'a succession of socialist expositors' (including Williams), whose sentimentality and nostalgia distort the real historical picture. She writes: 'As Williams's remark suggests, Cobbett has been cherished but confined by some of his most influential 20th century interpreters' (Colley 2003). The implication of Colley's phrasing is that the quoted phrase expresses Williams' own view of Cobbett, writing as one of those influential but rather sentimental interpreters.

That this implication in fact represents a significant distortion – a disremembering – of Williams' own views and arguments only becomes apparent if we take the trouble to return to the detail of that argument, and the ways in which Colley's quotation of the phrase ('good old chap') is in fact embedded within it. Reading it in context reveals its real force in Williams' own argument. For here it is clear that he is deploying the description ironically, as he voices – and takes to task – a trend in critical opinion in which Cobbett is (to give the full quotation) 'patted on the head. A good radical, a good democrat, but he did not understand what was happening, in the new industrial England … A good brave old chap, who lived just before modernity' (Williams 1983a: 57). *Pace* Colley, the idea of Cobbett as a 'good brave old chap' is definitely not Williams' view, but rather a somewhat parodic presentation of the viewpoint his book is setting out to challenge and contest.

Similarly, we shall see that Colley's choice of a second, longer quotation from Williams similarly misrepresents – through the either deliberate or gross misunderstanding that helps to constitute acts of disremembering – the real point of his argument as she suggests that he 'wonderfully evoked

certain pastoral particulars of Cobbett's vision'. The implications of Colley's 'wonderfully evoked' suggest that Williams joined in the celebration of what she calls Cobbett's 'Little Englishness'. But, once again, an actual reading of the passage she cites in context reveals a quite different argument than the one she attributes to him.

Williams writes that 'Cobbett can be preserved in amber as the figure of what is called Olde England' (Williams 1983a: 55). 'In one way, not unjustly' he adds, because Cobbett 'offered himself … as its spokesman' (ibid.). 'To this specific claim', he continues, 'can be added all the particulars' (ibid.). What follows – presented by Colley as Williams' own view of Cobbett – is largely a paraphrase of a section of Cobbett's own *Rural Rides*: 'the smell of baking bread, the glow of the cheek at the oven' and so on.

What Colley does not appear to grasp is the point of this paraphrase, or perhaps – if I may invent a clumsy term – parody-phrase. For here Williams is parody-phrasing Cobbett's own self-presentation, the better to question and interrogate it in this, the concluding chapter of the monograph. 'It is only by falsifying selection that he can be enrolled for that now common nostalgia' (Williams 1983a: 56), he writes, in a conclusion which is precisely the opposite of the conclusion Colley ascribes to him, and close (perhaps too close?) to the thrust of her own argument.

All in all, we have to conclude that an actual reading of Williams' arguments, as opposed to Colley's presentation and disremembering of them, suggests that it is only by a similarly 'falsifying selection' that Williams can be enrolled in the 'succession of socialist expositors' whose nostalgia Colley places her own work against and takes to task in her unreliable review. At work in her writing is precisely the work of effacement from the cultural and historical record that Benjamin suggested it was the task of progressive criticism to reject and resist.

It seems that the casualness of this disremembering would not be so serious if it were not amplified or supported or even made possible by more sustained examples, taken more directly from writing specifically on Williams, and, in the instance which follows, from an apparently politically more aligned grouping than Colley's anti-socialist position. Here, the general dynamics of disremembering take on the form of what – to borrow Hegelian terms – we might call a false supersession.

False supersession

If there is a sense of point-scoring against the left that appears to motivate Colley's remarks, how has Williams' reputation fared with those purportedly on the left? One dimension of this may be grasped by attending to the ways in which a particular conversation was overheard or *over-read* (if you will accept the term), the disremembering of a particular discussion between

Williams and Said that took place in London in 1986. The discussion took place at a conference entitled 'Cultural Studies, Media Studies and Political Education', held at the Institute of Education in London. It commenced after the showing of two documentary films dealing with Williams' and Said's work respectively. The first was Mike Dibbs' 1979 account of Williams' *The Country and the City*; the second Mike Dunlop's exemplification of the main themes of Said's *Orientalism, In the Shadow of the West*.[4]

After some discussion between the two, questions were taken from the floor. One question in particular provoked laughter from the assembled audience, being 'a bit like an exam question to you both' (Williams 1989f: 189). The question was this: 'Do you see yourselves as engaged in similar intellectual projects and where should you place your differences?' ''laughter'' (Williams 1989f: 18).

On this occasion, emphasis was given to the similarities. Williams and Said each described the ways in which their academic work sought to respond to the slightly different cultural and intellectual pressures of the respective political contexts set by Thatcherism in Britain and Reganism in the USA (though Williams acknowledged, with characteristic openness, that it would indeed be interesting to carry the discussion far enough to be able to examine differences). What is particularly interesting with regard to the disremembering that is happening to Williams' work is how, some years later, the differences between the two began to be weighed, and found, as it were, in Said's favour, and against Williams. The differences came into focus around the issues of colonial and post-colonial culture addressed by Said's *Orientalism* and largely neglected in Williams' writing. What we will address here is the intellectual and theoretical substance of this particularly selective comparison and the working of it, and we will examine some of the distortions it creates.

The general point is that there is something notably ambivalent and even contradictory in the reception of Williams' work amongst post-colonial theorists and interpreters. For students trained in post-colonial studies, his work is likely to be encountered in two different, quite contrasting ways. Firstly, he is remembered as the respected reference point for the great anti-structuralist point that no cultural order entirely exhausts resistance.[5] Said was one of the first to articulate this, and repeats it in the London conversation: 'I have learned so much from Raymond, I feel I am simply resorting to quoting him, in this case from the seminal essay he wrote on base and superstructure' (Williams 1989f: 192).[6] Yet, at the same time, as we shall see, his work is now generally denigrated by Said's avowed followers for not matching closely enough the template of research and writing in post-colonial studies.

The discussion here is limited to the disremembering of Williams' work that this involves, focusing on a particular collection of articles assembled in 1993 by D. L. Dworkin and Leslie Roman (Dworkin and Roman 1993a).[7]

The title of the volume itself already speaks something of the critical stance towards Williams' work present in it as a whole: *Views Beyond the Border Country: Raymond Williams and Cultural Politics*. In *Views Beyond*, the emphasis throughout is very much on superseding Williams, in the sense of taking a step beyond the scope of his work. But it is as well to remember that, as Hegel had originally emphasized, any true act of supersession means a retaining and preserving as well as a going beyond, a laying by as well as a getting rid of.[8] In this sense, I shall argue, the volume only achieves a false supersession of Williams' work: through its over-emphasis on going beyond his work, the moment of retaining is ignored, and this results all too often in distortions of argument and evidence systematic enough to deserve the name of a disremembering.

The general tone of false supersession is set by the editors of *Views Beyond the Border Country* in their introductory essay, 'The cultural politics of location' (Dworkin and Roman 1993b). Here they note how many of their contributors 'remain critical of [Williams'] failure to employ psychoanalysis, deconstruction, and other avant-garde approaches to theorize the relationship between colonial and post-colonial formations' (Dworkin and Roman 1993b: 13). What is interesting here is the depth of the almost unconscious assumption that the focus of attention is or should be the theorization of colonial and post-colonial formations, as, most famously, it was in Said's great *Orientalism*. The assumption is evident in several of the key essays in the volume, and forms something like a leitmotif in the book as a whole. But, in holding to this assumption, the contributors have a tendency to marginalize and, indeed, fundamentally misunderstand – disremember – key aspects of Williams' work. This is particularly so in terms of the central comparison between Said and Williams, which is often invoked as a framing mechanism for their respective accounts.[9] One of the editors of the collection, Leslie G. Roman, puts it most forcefully (and, in proportion to that force, most misleadingly) as she makes her central assertion that

> Edward Said distills the main problem of Williams's conception of culture … [He] argues that throughout his work Williams mistakenly presumes that culture has been used almost exclusively as a 'cooperative and communal term' (PM, 194). According to Said, the obverse is just as real, depending on one's location: *culture is also a term of exclusion, exportation, and imposition*.
>
> (Roman 1993: 181)

In this critical emphasis – which we shall consider in a moment – Roman leads a chorus of voices in the collection that assert the limitations of Williams' own work and interests when compared with Said. For Gauri Viswanathan, for example, in her essay 'Raymond Williams and British colonialism: the

limits of metropolitan cultural theory', Williams 'obfuscates imperialism's relation to British economic production and, by extension, its cultural formations' (Viswanathan 1993: 220). (It is worth noting in passing that the choice of verb 'obfuscates' here is strong enough to suggest an intentional desire on Williams' part to cloud the issue of the politics of colonial oppression that would need much more evidence than the choice of verb alone can give.) In similar tone, Forest Pyle, in his article, 'Raymond Williams and the inhuman limits of culture' writes of the 'symptomatic absence of empire in the work of Raymond Williams' (Pyle 1993: 261). Meanwhile, in the single most aggressive essay 'Cultural theory and the politics of location', R. Radhakrishnan charges that Williams is a 'romantic humanist who is still wedded to the idea of an authentic and universal human experience' (ibid.: 286), and thus 'tends to oversimplify the disjunctures and asymmetries produced by the uneven histories of colonialism and imperialism' (Radhakrishnan 1993: 288). Indeed, in the enthusiasm of arguing the case, Radhakrishnan goes so far as to conclude that Williams' work as a whole amounts to no more than 'yet another act of colonial violence from the centre' (ibid.: 277).

In terms of the dynamic of received ideas, the effect of such mutually supporting voices is a powerful one: it works to create an air of achieved consensus, as each critical voice draws support and volume from its fellows. But what exactly is the score of evidence on which this chorus is based? Just how true are these claims and criticisms? At this point, we return to the overhearing or over-reading of the conversation between Said and Williams in 1986.

Let's take, first of all, Roman's claim, and examine some of its detail. Her central claim is that 'Edward Said distills the main problem of Williams's conception of culture' (Roman 1993: 181). According to Roman, Said argues that throughout his work, Williams 'mistakenly presumes that culture has been used almost exclusively as a "cooperative and communal term"', and here she cites page 194 of the conversation ('Media, margins and modernity') between Said and Williams as her source. 'According to Said,' she concludes, 'the obverse is just as real, depending on one's location: *culture is also a term of exclusion, exportation, and imposition*' (Roman 1993: 181). The general drift of the argument is clear: Said accuses Williams of a mistaken view of culture as a 'cooperative and communal term', and of not recognizing that its use has often been, on the contrary, exclusionary.

But two things are striking and peculiar here to the careful reader. First, there is the apparently simple fact that the page referencing is mistaken – the quotation from Said is taken from page 196 and not 194 of the book. Second – and checking the mistaken reference makes this absolutely clear – Roman's assertions misrepresent the force and direction of Said's criticisms of the idea of culture in a way that actually reading page 194 makes impossible to miss! The (mistaken) referencing both conceals and exhibits a

distortion and misrepresentation of the discussion between the two. Only a minor slip of the pen or stroke of the keyboard? Perhaps; but then, as Freud suggested – most famously in *The Psychopathology of Everyday Life* – every bungled action is still an action, and may have its unconscious raison d'être.

For, in reality, Said's actual point is more precise, and expresses less of a rejection of the whole of Williams' work than Roman makes out. Yes, Said does draw attention to Williams' well-known and acknowledged failure, in the *Culture and Society* of 1958, to pay adequate attention to the dynamics of empire; but this is far from being a rejection of Williams' thinking *in toto*, and certainly does not signal a rejection of later writings such as *The Country and the City* and *Marxism and Literature*.[10] Indeed, one has only to read the remarks with which Said introduces his critical comments to get a sense of his general endorsement of Williams' work while making a particular criticism of a moment of it. 'I just wanted to say something very quickly about culture', he begins, 'I am glad Raymond has spelled it out' (Williams 1989f: 196). What is crucial and obvious – but obscured/highlighted by the mistaken referencing is that Said says 'Raymond has spelled it out' because – on page 194! – Williams had 'spelled out' just the case for considering culture as a highly ambivalent and exclusionary term that Roman attributes to Said against Williams.[11] What is actually said on page 194?

Here Williams is responding to something like the very criticism that Roman purports to be dealing with, a query about the contemporary resonance or usefulness of his key phrase from the late 1950s and early 1960s, a 'common culture'. His response points to the situated historicity of all theoretical reflection that forms the core of his cultural materialist approach. He points out in reply that his use of the phrase 'common culture' in 1958 was a deliberately interventionary and polemic one in the context of the cultural political of the time. It was a moment when

> precisely the concepts of a common culture and of culture in common were being deployed against the then dominant, the only then dominant, notion of culture; I mean a strict equivalence between culture and high culture, and this phrase 'common culture' – culture in common – was strictly a position against that.
>
> (Williams 1989f: 193)

In other words, the general argument was something very similar to that which Roman attributes solely to Said and against Williams, the argument

> that culture was both produced more widely than by the social elite which appropriated it, was disseminated more widely than this notion presumed, and that the ideal of an expanding education was that what had been restricted in distribution and access should be opened out.
>
> (Williams 1989f: 193)

Hence Said's comment that Williams had already 'spelled out' and anticipated his own main arguments! Williams' main point – and one deeply appreciated by Said in general – regards the sheer situatedness of all and perhaps especially theoretical argument. That the editors and contributors of *Views Beyond the Border Country* appear almost deliberately blind to Williams' remarks suggests the almost constitutive blindness necessary to their desire to supersede him. Indeed, Williams' main point goes right to the heart of the complexities of discussions of culture that Said in fact endorses rather than finds lacking in Williams. 'As often happens with phrases', he continues,

> they get circulated in contexts outside their immediate base of argument, I mean, what I have mostly been writing about since that time has been divisions, problems, inside the culture; things which *prevent* the assumption of a common culture as a thing which now exists.
>
> (Williams 1989f: 194)

Culture was a keyword for Williams, bearing all the complex and even deconstructive force he found in keywords as components of an always contested (and never simply neutral) vocabulary for discussing society. Indeed, one of the hallmarks of Williams' thinking was his constant attention to the ways in which language is thoroughly saturated with contestation and the political. It is a very deep and damaging error that Roman and her contributors seem as if unaware of this aspect – perhaps even best described as the core – of Williams' thinking.

Disremembering keywords

For the third example of the general pattern of remembering Williams' work in a way that makes it unlikely that it will be reread, we will examine the particular disremembering that Williams' *Keywords* appears to be suffering.

Keywords, first published in 1976, represents something like a central work in Williams' *oeuvre*. Subtitled a *Vocabulary of Culture and Society*, it extends the discussion of the changing meanings of words and concepts under the pressures of social and political change. While Williams' classic study *Culture and Society 1780–1950* had focused on the shifting senses of words such as industry, democracy, class, art and culture (Williams [1958] 1979a: 13), *Keywords* extended the same method of historical semantics to a much broader series of terms, ranging from 'aesthetic' and 'alienation' to 'work' and 'science'. In both books – as in Williams' work as a whole – the guiding principle remains the same. Attention to the fact that 'our vocabulary, the language we use to inquire into and to negotiate our actions, is no secondary factor, but a practical and radical element itself' (Williams [1958] 1979a: 323).

Yet while *Keywords* has remained one of the most abidingly popular of Williams' works, it has also proved one of the more contentious. For the professional lexicographer Ronald Burchfield, Williams' book was over-reliant on the *Oxford English Dictionary* and its methods were completely amateurish (Burchfield 1976), while Patrick Parrinder criticized the book in terms of its 'general deconstructive tendency' (Parrinder 1987: 82). More recently, Williams' biographer Fred Inglis found the book 'vitiated by nonchalance about the whole question of ideological distortion on the author's part, and by a series of more or less grievous errors, for which he was much castigated by Quentin Skinner' (Inglis 1995: 247).

One of the things of interest here is the way in which Inglis's deployment of Skinner is one that shores up Skinner's assertions without in the least examining them. It provides another example of disremembering and, in so doing, it exemplifies just the kind of conformism of which Benjamin warned, and the consequent need for interpreters of Williams to be precise in their treatment of general representations of his work. What was, in fact, the detail of Skinner's critique of Williams, and how well does it stand up to critical scrutiny?

Quentin Skinner's arguments against *Keywords* first appeared in a review of the book in the journal *Essays in Criticism* in 1978, and subsequently reappeared in a slightly revised version in 1980. His criticisms of Williams are, indeed, damning and appear to demolish the structure and arguments of *Keywords* as he concludes that while 'the special techniques of the literary critic have – or ought to have – a central place in the business of cultural criticism', this is a place which 'a book like Williams's *Keywords* has scarcely begun to recognize' (Skinner 1988: 132). For Skinner, Williams is in fact guilty of two related mistakes, only the first of which we shall examine here.[12] First, he shares the Marxist emphasis on economic determinism, and this makes it impossible for him to give an account of the constitutive force of language in social change; and, secondly, he persistently fails to grasp the difference between words and concepts.

For any actual reader of Williams, what is so striking is the fact that Skinner's claim that Williams maintained some kind of determined Marxist view of language as 'the mirror of reality' (Skinner 1988: 130) is likely to be treated with considerable scepticism, given the fact that a significant part of Williams' work was devoted to arguing against just such a position! *Marxism and Literature* had, after all, started its chapter on language with the observation that 'Marxism has contributed very little to thinking about language [other than the] underdeveloped versions of language as a "reflection" of "reality"' (Williams 1977: 188). Throughout his work, Williams maintained a cautious attention to the constitutive force of language that is closer to Skinner's own position than his disremembering will allow.[13]

But, once again, it may be that the best way to counter this disremembering is through a precise attention to the textual work of elision (quite literally in this instance, as we shall see) that is involved in it.

In support of his prime contention that Williams sees language in Marxist terms as the 'mirror of reality', Skinner offers the following paraphrase of and citation from the entry on class in *Keywords*: 'And in commenting more specifically on "the economic changes of the Industrial Revolution", he notes that these produced a "greatly sharpened" and extended "vocabulary of class"' (Skinner 1988: 130). The implication is clear, and, as regards the case that Skinner is arguing, apparently damning: the economic changes of the Industrial Revolution produced a greatly sharpened and extended vocabulary of class. But, even as we perform this surely intended paraphrase, we might notice that it is Skinner, and not Williams, who uses the crucial determining verb 'produced'. And, once we have noticed that it is Skinner who uses this verb and not Williams, we are likely to ask what verb Williams did use, and why Skinner avoided it?

The full sentence in fact reads as follows: 'Under the pressure of this awareness, greatly sharpened by the economic changes of the Industrial Revolution and the political conflicts of the American and French Revolutions, the new vocabulary of class began to take over' (Williams [1976] 1983b: 53).

As we read the effaced original, we can see that Skinner's paraphrase distorts the actual argument through its use of a selective quotation which – whether deliberate or accidental – produces a textual disremembering. For Williams, the new vocabulary is not some Marxist reflex of the determined mind, some mirroring in language of economic reality (the Industrial Revolution), as Skinner would have us believe.[14] The new vocabulary of class is rather the result of a new awareness, the pressure of a complex new awareness. To be sure, this is an awareness 'greatly sharpened by the economic changes of the Industrial Revolution', but not entirely produced by it. The awareness is also sharpened by the 'political conflicts of the American and French revolutions'. And these conflicts – as Williams, just as much as Skinner, was aware – took place discursively.

What reader would now turn to *Keywords* after Skinner's demolition job, echoed as it has been by critics such as Patrick Parrinder and Fred Inglis? What student interested in post-colonial theory would see any use in attending to Williams after his apparent dismissal by Edward Said? And, having read Linda Colley's dismissal of Williams as one of a band of sentimental socialists, who would be likely to read him now on Cobbett (and discover that one of Colley's own key points about Cobbett's work either unknowingly echoes or deliberately plagiarizes Williams)?[15]

Disrememberings such as these are so dangerous because they present the terms of someone's work in ways that are likely to keep the books themselves firmly closed by new generations of readers. The very fact that challenging such acts of disremembering almost seems to require prior knowledge of the body of work in question in order to disentangle the distortions and displacements involved is perhaps what made for

Benjamin's bitter comment on the general situation of cultural memory: the fact that 'the enemy has never ceased to be victorious' (Benjamin 2006: 391).

Notes

1 In this, I acknowledge Maria Cevasco's striking deployment of the same passage from Benjamin in her own work on Williams (Cevasco 2000).
2 For further arguments regarding the centrality of Williams' own wresting of the tradition from conformism, and the consequent emphasis on the selective tradition, see especially Higgins 1999, pp. 65–90 and Higgins 2001, pp. 87–93.
3 In fact, Williams returned repeatedly to Cobbett throughout his work, including in *Culture and Society* and *The Country and the City*.
4 *In the Shadow of the West* was one of a series of ten documentaries made for Channel 4. For further discussion, see 'In the Shadow of the West' in Said 2002.
5 I argue elsewhere that the argument was particularly important at a moment when emphasis of structure over subject was dominating much cultural and political discussion in the wake of Althusser's and Foucault's writing. See Higgins 1999, esp. pp. 119–21 and Higgins 2001 pp. 154–7.
6 Or, for instance, see Gayatri Spivak's more recent acknowledgement of the importance of Williams' work. In *Death of a Discipline* she notes how '[a]s usual, Raymond Williams's system of residual-dominant-emergent-archaic-preemergent gives me the best handle on mapping culture as a process' (Spivak 2003: 106).
7 Dworkin went on to write a useful study of Williams' work in the context of British New Left thinking, more historically sensitive and theoretically nuanced than his remarks in the essay. See Dworkin 1997.
8 Indeed, 'supersession' is perhaps one of the most difficult points of translation for Hegel (and following him Marx). In English, it always has a distinctly cumbersome and high-theoretical tone. Hegel's own usage – as he reminded his readers in the first volume of the *Encyclopedia* – was, in contrast, deliberately homely (Hegel 1975: 142). See also the commentary on 'sublation' in Inwood 2003: 283–5.
9 A further development of my argument here is to be found in Higgins 2004.
10 The point was first made by Victor Kiernan, in his 1959 review of *Culture and Society*; see Higgins 1999: 76–7.
11 This, of course, is not even to mention the whole body of Williams' work, which, in many ways, can best be considered as an argument against 'official English culture' (Williams 1979d: 316).
12 I examine the latter in my essay, 'Raymond Williams and deconstruction' (Higgins 2008), from which some of the formulations below are borrowed and adapted.
13 For further discussion of the constitutivity of language in Williams, see Higgins 1995 and 1999.
14 The classic instance of this mirroring as a reflex activity is to be found in a passage from Marx and Engels' *The German Ideology*, where they situate their materialist approach in 'direct contrast to German philosophy which descends from heaven to earth … not setting out from what men say … but setting out from real, active men, and on the basis of their real life-process demonstrating the development of the ideological reflexes and echoes of this life-process. The phantoms formed in the brains of men are also, necessarily, sublimates of their material life-process, which are empirically verifiable and bound to material

premises' (Marx and Engels 1998: 42). Of this passage, Williams notes but does not endorse the fact that the 'language of "reflexes", "echoes", "phantoms" and "sublimates" carries the inescapable implication of a secondary activity' (Williams 1983e: 202).

15 In the conclusion to her review, Colley writes that 'the real, unexpurgated Cobbett is at once less attractive … and far more interesting'; his real importance lies in the way his writing 'transformed British journalism and has left a mark even today' though his 'true successor', she remarks, 'may be the violent, undeferential, hugely popular and not unimportant *Sun* newspaper'. But in 1958 Williams had already written – against too celebratory accounts from the Left – that Cobbett 'is, in large measure, the type of the very worst kind of popular journalist', full of 'arrogance', 'crudeness' and powered by 'an appetite for a class of men he could hate' (Williams [1958] 1979a: 32).

Chapter 11

Raymond Williams in the South Atlantic

Clara Masnatta

in memoriam parentum dilectissimum

> There are ideas, and ways of thinking, with the seeds of life in them, and there are others, perhaps deep in our minds, with the seeds of a general death. Our measure of success in recognizing these kinds, and in naming them making possible their common recognition, may be literally the measure of our future.
>
> (Williams [1958] 1961b: 324)

At least once did Raymond Williams write on the South Atlantic. In 1982, a piece entitled 'Distance' appeared in the *London Review of Books*, in which Williams reflected on the ongoing war between Argentina and the UK in the Malvinas/Falklands Islands. Yet Williams would be surprised to know (indeed, he was) how closely and prolifically his thinking had been followed in the South Atlantic since the 1970s. Perhaps without irony, faithful to his peripheral quality in the Oxbridge intellectual milieu, Raymond Williams' thinking burgeoned in the periphery of capitalism. In contrast to his solitary grammar – Williams rarely quoted, or made explicit a genealogy of influences – it would be virtually impossible to trace an intellectual history of the South Atlantic without mentioning him.

'South Atlantic' here is to be understood not in a mere geographical sense, but as a cultural term, much in the critical appraisal of spaces that Williams inaugurates with *The Country and the City*. Originally coined by the outstanding Uruguayan critic Ángel Rama, it refers roughly to the area ranging from São Paulo to Buenos Aires. In sketching a partial history of Williams' reception in the region, this chapter is intended to contribute to the history of cultural studies.

A caveat or two are in order regarding the present and the past of cultural studies, a tainted name now that 'every humanistic discipline is hastening to transform itself into something called "cultural studies"' (Jay 1998: 2). Let us remark here only some critical differences between cultural studies in the North and the South, since it would require a separate study to cogently foil them in the multiple aspects of their definition – a rather difficult enterprise in itself. Only to austere accord, cultural studies may be

pinned down to the endorsement of a methodological approach, the postulation of a new archive rather than an established topicality.

Without question, the history of the formation of cultural studies in Latin America is very different from the same in the US. Taking into account how a critical tradition has reflected upon literature along with social and political processes, one could posit cultural studies *avant la lettre* in Latin America if such a title is allowed for the terminology that was conceived in Birmingham being itself, as they all are, *après coup*.

In this sense, one may argue that in Latin America cultural studies represent not only an epistemological break but also a certain continuity with the great essayistic tradition of the nineteenth century. To the twentieth-century horizon of their emergence one should antedate an illustrious genealogy that wrote their fundamental concern with culture in conjunction with the political in texts of jumbled genres known as 'essays of ideas'. This list of ancestors (the term is more fitting than *precursors*) could include Andrés Bello, Domingo F. Sarmiento, José Martí, José Enrique Rodó, Pedro Henríquez Ureña, Carlos Mariátegui. If not going as far as to state that these thinkers reflected on texts in the anthropological sense – as the symbolic production of reality, or positing culture with Williams 'as a whole way of life' – so as to postulate a new archive, their musings in fact encompassed topics that resonate with those of cultural studies, such as the country and the city, the role of intellectuals and institutions, the national and the continental question.

The legitimate founding fathers of Latin American cultural studies, dating from the early 1960s, are Ángel Rama and Antônio Cândido in Brazil. Albeit supported by different conceptions of literature, both critics delve into the specificity and density of meanings of literature in culture and culture in literature, in a way Williams would distil as theory. Rama's endeavours to construct a literature of *América* were to be anchored ultimately by the notion of transculturation; Cândido's efforts aimed beyond the subcontinent, and were consistently propelled by the dialectics of the local and the universal, which literature should reveal. Both reach back to colonial times; their revision of history supports a conception of the present.

This historical scope is an important difference with cultural studies elsewhere that deal with contemporary culture and more recent processes of globalization, mass culture or the postmodern question. In Latin America we could name the work of George Yúdice, Néstor García Canclini, Jesús Martín Barbero as pertaining to these issues, which were actually the first to receive the official cultural studies badge. Working in the early 1980s within the context of the post-dictatorship that witnessed the expansion of cultural studies in Latin America and the world, they endorsed a democratization of the concept of literature breaking the boundaries between elite and popular. But this point of view proves valid perhaps as it

remains internal to the nation or the subcontinent, for when the relationship North/South or centre/periphery is at stake, this same trace becomes a controversial geopolitical mark.

This controversy has recently compelled Beatriz Sarlo, who introduced Williams to Argentina and is perhaps the most important critic in Spanish America today, into calling cultural studies 'an avatar of new Latin Americanism' (Sarlo 2002). This qualification intends to denounce the strongly ideological North American machine that would dissolve all specificity and, effectively breaking down borders epistemological and beyond, end up engulfing the whole Latin American field, sweeping by it with political (more often banal) markers, and not tending to the formal complexities a work of art offers almost in spite of its Latin American origin.

Asymmetries can impossibly be set aside. Marx ignored Latin America in his writings – a fact that, in the words of Brazilian critic Roberto Schwarz (Cândido's finest disciple), was paid back with 'distinguishing malice': inventing Marxist categories to adapt them to a reality different, but not foreign to them (Schwarz 1996: 34). Such malice may be a useful guide into the particular geography of Williams' diffusion, and towards the horizon of emergence of cultural studies in the South Atlantic.

Indeed, the 'regional' tradition has been supplemented by the fact that the thought of Antonio Gramsci and Walter Benjamin, together with Adorno, circulated early in Latin America, as Schwarz's candid remark also indicates. Along with Sartre, Frantz Fanon and Pierre Bourdieu, whose translation was almost simultaneous to French publication, these perspectives would start laying the heterogeneous ground that would crystallize the sublation of the sociology of culture as practiced to that date. To all these thinkers, who were intellectual references previous to reaching such status in the United States – and perhaps also in the larger Anglo-Saxon world – one should add the early reception and enormous impact that Raymond Williams had, followed by Richard Hoggart and later Stuart Hall, on the local intellectual field. Let us also include, to avoid all populist suspicions (and facile extrapolations), Barthes's *Mythologies* as a necessary part of the roster in the local genealogy of cultural studies.

At first glance, a reader unfamiliar with the discipline may wonder how this pantheon that dealt with the culture of the centre (with the exception of Fanon, and arguably Gramsci) could remotely speak to the problematic of the peripheral South Atlantic. Take, on the one hand, the theoretical efforts – with Walter Benjamin as the illuminated precursor of thinking culture in a way Williams would define as ordinary – towards a de-hierarchization between copy and original, or popular and elite cultures. These contributed to theorizing the relationship between the terms that are central to a culture of the periphery, and have been the constant concern of local intellectual endeavours in the face of practices that are appropriated and reformulated to fit in the scene.

Imagine, on the other hand, the resonance of the country and the city considered as the geographical embodiment of civilization and barbarism in these 'regional' traditions. These two terms form the absolute fundamental cultural binomial upon which Latin American culture has been reflected, ever since Domingo F. Sarmiento's foundational *Facundo: Civilization and Barbarism* (1845).

Effectively consolidated upon the invention of spaces, and governed by the centrality of the political and the problem of aesthetical values, the succeeding articulations of the cultural field offer problems that would, to borrow Deleuze's words, make machine with cultural materialism at face value. But being on the periphery of capitalism does not suffice to account for the attraction exercised by Williams.

In general, cultural studies in Latin America managed to articulate a 'social redemption' of literary criticism as they included what the elite of the lettered city had left out of national culture, serving as a coming to terms with the canon as well as with colonial formation. In this sense, Neil Larsen is right when he affirms that, as their importation coincided with the democratic transition, the reflections springing out of the Birmingham school that were originally in response to post-Marxian intellectual necessities in the UK served more conveniently to post-revolutionary politics in Latin America (Moraña 2000). Yet there is a very particular operation with Williams in the South Atlantic, which is previous to this importation moment, one that hits another spot, by grace of which his work becomes truly exemplary.

I am not designating the exemplary as that which Williams comes to incarnate, the – universal in its first definition – intellectual. There is an identification with Williams in this role that he radiantly represents, a profound sympathy for the sense of responsibility that shines through his sentences. Politics and aesthetics are ciphered in the figure of the intellectual; the welding of their terms would become central in Latin America, if not beforehand, in the face of the Cuban Revolution. History had its course; yet, however residual, the feeling that being committed (or being a leftist, for that matter) is synonymous with being an intellectual remains alive.

By far a more interesting or politically relevant a case, Williams offers a rare instance of appropriations of the particular. A body of work constructed within such insularity – the literature of the British Isles – would offer an unprecedented productivity well beyond its own universe of cultural references. Yet one could emblematically seal work and figure in an 'intellectual affinity'. The image returned by the South notwithstanding, Williams may have not thought of himself as the intellectual incarnate. In the francophobic spirit that relegates universality to a French province, British culture gauges this figure rather negatively, as we learn in *Keywords*. With Williams, a renewed constellation of culture, politics and a certain francophobia came to be formed under the southern stars.

But first we need to introduce a distinction within the vast territory that we are trying to map. 'South Atlantic' does name a common culture – the culture of the gaucho in the flatlands delimited by the cosmopolitan cities of São Paulo and Buenos Aires – yet Brazil and Argentina also offer differences as to their colonial history and socio-cultural formation and, more specifically in the intellectual field, the traces of cultural materialism. For in what regards the reception and effect of Williams' work, one could overemphasize the terms of its contingency as marginal machine-making only at the risk of belittling the enterprise of a group of intellectuals nucleated around a little magazine called *Punto de Vista* that came to prove Argentina – Brazil not so much – to be faraway, so close.

Consider that Borges, the indisputable Argentine cultural icon, has been read through Williams. This refers to Beatriz Sarlo's reading (originally given as her Cambridge lectures, later to become the book *Borges: A Writer on the Edge*), which has placed Borges effectively on the margins against those cosmopolitan interpretations that effaced the problems of the national. Consider also that Williams had impossibly written with Borges in mind, because he had, in fact, never read Borges (see Altamirano 1998: 33). Of course Sarlo's reading of Borges through Williams – a culmination of sorts – has a more intricate history of its own. The point to be made is that Williams' ideas bore critical fruits in faraway lands, and, with the seeds of life in them that he always sought, they did mark the measure of a future, in ways unforeseen to him. *Punto de Vista*, the magazine under the direction of Sarlo which was first to discuss Williams in Buenos Aires, found in his texts a breath of fresh air and solid ground for rearticulating the political and the cultural and at the same time a strategy to go through the turbulent decade of the 1970s: under the military dictatorship, thinking with Williams became literally vital.

Before unravelling that history, let us consider the fortune of cultural materialism in Brazil. Williams' work was not as successful in Brazil, it seems, because it was primarily channelled through English departments. Williams' work is firstly introduced and perhaps limited to scholars of Anglophone Literatures, such as Fernando Ferrara in Italy, Maria Elisa Cevasco in Brazil. Neither has turned out to have a widespread readership.

One should not exaggerate positing Williams' status in Brazil as a mere British literary critic, whose work one must know as one should the criticism of one's corpus. But his success in Brazilian classrooms seems restricted in comparison to the Argentine. At the University of Buenos Aires, no one graduates in Literature without having read Williams – this is from experience, that notion he invested with formal appreciation.

This partial diffusion does not necessarily obey the fact that translations have been unavailable in Portuguese, or the fact that Williams' work remains 'unexplicated', or utterly foreign in the sense of a readership potentially missing out on the context of production. To prevent such

ignorance, in 1985 Maria Elisa Cevasco wrote a solid explanatory book, *Para ler Raymond Williams*. Most remarkably, *Culture and Society* (1958) was available in Portuguese translation as early as 1969. This is significantly earlier than the time Williams' work first became available in Spanish – *Drama from Ibsen to Brecht* appeared in 1975; you had to wait until 1980 for *Marxism and Literature* to read his cultural criticism in Spanish translation. This rate holds if we compare the translations of his entire oeuvre to date. One would need to conclude that, in spite of the history of translations, the impact and circulation of Williams was both earlier and greater in Argentina than in Brazil.

At stake we find a question of ethos that may help illuminate this process. At the time of publication of Cevasco's introductory study, Sarlo was extrapolating a premise of Williams' to another case. In other words, only two years after it had appeared, Williams' considerations on the regional novel included in *Writing in Society* were being productively translated, in the larger sense of the word, to another set of coordinates, namely, to sentimental novels in Argentina. Odd as it may sound, Cevasco actually seems to set aside the practicability of Williams' theory for Brazilian cases. Could not this 'effectivity test' driven by the spirit of the German *Wirklichkeit* rather than by reification add to the reality of Williams? Cevasco's dismissal rests on a reluctance to partake in the base utilitarianism of the market or, concurrently, that line of cultural studies along it that we distinguished earlier. But using Raymond Williams' theory here is no more utilitarian than doing things with words, the necessary speech act.

Cevasco regrets the distance from which she writes, as if the professional distance so crucial to the critical task – one that Bruce Robbins has nicely elaborated prompted by the same Williams piece we started with – could be confused with a contemptible non-belonging. Practising cultural studies 'under the dark shadow of the centre', as Cevasco writes elsewhere, tinges her critique with a certain inferiority complex vis-à-vis Williams' 'central' literature. Contrast her grafting of the critical tradition of Cândido with Williams' cultural materialism, poorly articulated by rhetorical convergence (describing the Bloomsbury group with a term of Cândido's – used for Brazilian writer João do Rio – as '*radicais de ocasião*') to the unbiased breeding together of Bourdieu and Williams actively brought by the group of Argentine intellectuals in the pages of their magazine *Punto de Vista*.

A veritable translation of Williams' work has not been achieved in Brazil, that is, an importation made culturally viable. Writing on Williams and cultural studies from a Brazilian perspective, Cevasco bestows a similar 'awareness that culture is not separate from socio-historical reality' that joins Williams with the local tradition just by the shibboleth of analogy (Cevasco 1998). Convergence is even granted – one that might have been pre-emptive since the culturalist spot needed not be filled – a convergence that is beyond jargon and related to a way of thinking literature, if not so

much touching upon the national question, in its intersection with the global processes of capitalism. In truth, Cevasco effects more a ventriloquizing than a translation, and thus fails to exploit perhaps the sole felicity of the periphery, that of conforming a practice that is already part of the tradition – Borges's Pierre Menard thrives in the paroxysm of this juncture. On a closer look, it has been a problem of translation since the beginning. The 1969 Brazilian version of *Culture and Society* had three different translators: no wonder such a non-organic enterprise did not find fertile ground, while Williams flourished in English in the land of Borges.

If writers and intellectuals in the margins have often been translators, *Punto de Vista* has paid homage to this tradition functioning as a translating machine not only *sensu lato*. It has offered in translation texts such as Andreas Huyssen's 'Mapping the Postmodern' (1984, appeared in the July 1987 issue) or Peter Bürger's 'The decline of modernism' (1992, appeared in the August 1993 issue) within months of original publication. The vibrancy of this magazine, its will to be in touch and up to date correspond to the intellectual concern that has been its motor since inception – the present, and the urgency of its issues. It is, in this sense, very different from scholarly journals. In Williamsian parlance, it represents a formation or an intellectual collective, as they would call themselves with Bourdieu, that to this day slants on its title – *Point of View* – and that was born with the purpose of putting forward a perspective away from the cloisters of the university and against the larger barracks cloistering Argentine society during the dictatorship (1976–82).

The emergence of Williams' thought describes a non-linear movement in the South Atlantic, perhaps an index of the mysterious ways in which readings from the centre move in the periphery. What are, in fine, the social, cultural and political processes and which the map of symbolic routes that enabled a felicitous importation of Williams' thinking?

Williams enters the Argentine intellectual field in a random way – a bookish stumbling upon him in a footnote reference, then traced – and continues permeating it by following the sole rule of whatever one can get, both in terms of understanding a language and getting a hold of editions. In Williams' obituary in *Punto de Vista*, Carlos Altamirano listed the order in which Williams reached the magazine all along the second half of the 1970s: *Culture and Society*, *The Long Revolution*, *Marxism and Literature*. The conspicuous absence of *The Country and the City* in this dis-order of readings points to the years we had to wait (almost a decade) for this seminal text to facilitate a critical construction of spaces and the elaboration of a peripheral modernity, and of Borges in it.

In a sense, two beginnings should be identified in the history of Williams in the South Atlantic. The first, an inaugural moment proper, is the groundbreaking interview in 1979 that marked Williams' first discussion in print by *Punto de Vista*. The second is a beginning that Auerbach called

Ansatzpunkt, a handle for literary history. The amount of meaning that Auerbach found in *La cour et la ville* is comparable to what was excavated in the country and the city – or rather between them, where Sarlo locates an ideologeme, as she called it, of the margins. In their conjunction, Sarlo ciphers the Argentine national difference.

In *Una modernidad periférica: Buenos Aires 1920 y 1930*, the margin becomes that critical instrument which allows Sarlo to cross the previously non-negotiable pathways of the past and the modern, spatialized as the local and the universal, that conform a peripheral modernity – her *Ansatzpunkt*. Her reading of Borges is itself an offspring of this cardinal postulation that encompasses the literature and culture of those first decades of intense modernization in Argentina.

Sarlo's book, published in 1988, may be considered the finest, but not final, part of a larger cultural studies triptych. Alternatively putting to work the idea of structure of feelings, the critical construction of spaces or searching in literature for traces of an emerging culture, Sarlo composes the most lucid and the most *williamsiano* analysis in Argentina to date. It is the most particular book that offers the most particular appropriations – a virtue that rests on the merit of thinking literature in the intersections of the old English home and the global expansion processes of capitalism. It is by the spell of the specular that Sarlo believes – although she does not use this term – *The Country and the City* to be Williams' *Ansatzpunkt* as his work gets reordered in this book, for it accomplishes the articulation of historical studies of *Culture and Society* and *The Long Revolution* together with the conceptual investigation of *Marxism and Literature* and *Culture*.

The encounter in real-life between Sarlo and Williams testifies to a two-fold beginning, and echoes this mirroring with a reciprocal (albeit non-simultaneous) story of surprise. In 1981, calling on him as a connoisseur of his oeuvre, Sarlo paid Williams a visit at his Jesus College office in Cambridge. Williams was then surprised to hear about the processes his work had absorbed in the South Atlantic. Sarlo, in turn, to her own surprise, was caught unawares by Williams' interrogation on *The Country and the City*, which she had not read. Once on the train out to London, a signed copy of this book started its long journey to the South Atlantic, only to come back to Cambridge in 1992 with its germs transmuted into *Borges: A Writer on the Edge*.

This scene, which speaks of displaced gazes, seems to be a sort of primary scene, or at least one that contains suggestive meanings beyond the anecdotal. But let us now turn to the inaugural moment, and begin with the beginning.

Beginnings, wrote the great Edward Said, are acts of historical understanding, epistemological moments that authorize a discontinuity. This description very much captures the force of the first blow that introduced Raymond Williams and Richard Hoggart to the Argentine intellectual field, in an interview by *Punto de Vista* in July 1979:

> How to define them? They are not only sociologists of culture, nor historians or critics *tout court*. Both, whose work is already consolidated, take issue with the history of ideas, cultural history, sociology of popular culture and mass media, literature.
>
> (Sarlo 1979: 9)

The editorial on the interview consciously marks an epistemological break. In keeping with the wonder at a suitable title, it announced that neither Williams nor Hoggart, practically unknown in Argentina, said things that could be readily assimilated to the tendencies in literary and cultural criticism or that could give them a 'family resemblance' and, consequently, an assuaging effect. But what did the family album look like at the time? What are, in fine, the configurations of the cultural field that Williams and Hoggart were to face off?

It is hard to exaggerate the centrality of the political in the Latin American cultural field of the time. Upon the Cuban Revolution, that central mark was heightened and solidified in the stark relationship between literary practices and revolutionary practices, around which the intellectual debate would keep gravitating for years to come.

In the late 1950s, the local intellectual field had thrived under the influence of Lukácsian Marxism, the structuralism of Jakobson, Saussure and Barthes, and the psychoanalysis of the newly introduced Jacques Lacan. Under the auspices of Sartrean existentialism and the model of *littérature engagée*, the intellectuals of a magazine called *Contorno* published all their efforts in thinking literature *and* political reality, and in constructing a new national literary pantheon under this motto. The advent of the revolution in 1959 was to radicalize this configuration. For the entirety of Latin America, the scene is set by the political consistently throughout the 1960s and 1970s. The idea that a work of art is eminently political asserts itself together as continent-consciousness expands with a certain feeling of brotherhood. Imminent times would bring together the whole of Latin America under the sign of the political.

Both in content – the question of the revolutionary character of a work – and in form – polemics abound – the intellectual field is organized around politics. Let us note that the revolutionary injunction for works of art was not protracted in the facile terms of ideological content; rather, it had the tone of the search for a poetics or form that would weld its relationship with history. Great works of literature, such as *A Hundred Years of Solitude*, give us a taste of that first euphoria. The debate on the political or ideological foundation of aesthetic values became unavoidable to the point that almost all writers – including Gabriel García Marquez, Julio Cortázar, Jorge Luis Borges – were required to pronounce on this central relationship in the episteme. (Needless to say, Borges drew a line.)

The political came to define everything in every field. The extent of this dominion is eloquently inscribed in the vigilant words that Ricardo Piglia

pronounced against dogmatics. 'The problem', wrote Piglia, 'is to analyze the specific reasons that make "The Dead" a great story *in spite of* the political guidelines and the conception of the world that Borges has' (Piglia 1965: 1). This reaction denounces a second moment, starting around 1965 and coinciding with the US invasion of Santo Domingo. At this turning point, the tone of the political either escalated to a dogmatism in culture or plainly marked the insufficiency of literature for the politics of revolution. Remember what Che Guevara famously replied when asked what writers could do for the revolution: 'I *used to be* a doctor.' Eventually, politics would completely assimilate aesthetics, oppressing until dissolution the place and specificity of the literary or artistic, to the point of its evacuation. By the end of the 1960s and into the early 1970s, after much water-shedding, the drought arrived. For some, it did amount to radically abandoning literature because of its bourgeois essence. The case of Rodolfo Walsh is emblematic; he could echo Che, saying that he used to be a writer, had he not 'disappeared'.

Against this backdrop, it becomes almost too easy to foil Williams' phrasing of culture as ordinary and to apprehend the importance of Williams' *Marxism and Literature* (1977) for the local intellectual field as a non-dogmatic yet rigorous reflection in the episteme of the New Left. Produced upon the awareness of the variety of selection and alternative traditions in Marxism, this book raised the question of a dismissal of a body of work as non-Marxist, neo-Hegelian, or bourgeois. Williams' well-founded position furnished the *Punto de Vista* collective with an opportunity for revising Marxism and the insidious forms it took in the 1970s (and to which the magazine members had subscribed in the flesh), and equally with the joyful promise of guarding-off dissolution.

Williams served the healing purpose of suturing the twofold cut in the tissue of culture and politics in the second half of the 1970s. The suffocating dogmatism of Marxism and the equally suffocating formalism of structuralism had dominated the scene since the 1960s. On the one hand, an injunction to turn to political action; on the other, the consecrated death of the subject at the hands of Kristeva, Althussser, Foucault and a certain Barthes, and the expulsion of history and experience which Althusserism stigmatized as ideology, hence ruled out of the theoretical or 'scientific'. In the face of both, the intellectual had to cease actually being one, either by abandoning representation for the sake of taking arms and orders or by giving up having social signification.

Williams' reformism in politics and theory, his positing of a continuum between culture and politics, obliterated the structure–superstructure issue, and was used as an effective antidote against the autarchy of structuralism and the absorption by the political that attacked culture under the reign of radicalism. Whether in politics or in matters of epistemology, Williams, as the thinker of continuity that he was, envisioned revolution as a process, a

long metamorphosis rather than a jump or break. This continuity is inscribed in his notion of structure of feelings – unanimously appraised as his most important theoretical contribution, although he abandoned it in the end – which also allows for the heterogeneity of dominant, residual and emergent formations. In the constant revision of its postulates, Williams offered a critique where totality was closest to an embrace of forms that could remedy the dogmatism and populism affecting the literary.

Like the image Adorno composed on theoretical thought in its circling around the concept, Williams opened the lock of the South Atlantic safe not by means of a single key or a single number, but by a combination of numbers. Culturalism provided the magazine with a strategy out of the deadlock: the culturalist perspective joined culture and politics in a relationship in which culture could gravitate autonomously but connected to a socio-ideological and political network. Concocted under the oppressing conditions of the military dictatorship in Argentina, *Punto de Vista* found in Williams not only a way of going about culture but one that by grace of the culturalist juncture made literary criticism relevant, and thus enabled their young members to recuperate their place of intellectuals with a vision devoid of political scepticism and with social signification. In the face of a ban of the present by the junta (that also reached academia where 'contemporary' literature in the syllabi scraped the border of the century) they simultaneously bridged the long distance with history and profited with a revisionist return to the archive, which proved to be not an escape but rather a shrewd way of grasping the present. It is remarkable that the way in which Williams' thinking gave *Punto de Vista* a future in so many senses bore the marks of the archaic at his own home university, where the upcoming generation found its own theoretical modernity in the writings of Kristeva, Barthes or even Althusser. When shaping histories, circumstances can make monsters.

Conjured under the blessings of continuity, *Punto de Vista* discloses a certain disavowal regarding that first blow – a punch of a different kind – brought by the interview to Williams and Hoggart. Simultaneously suggesting a new beginning and dodging the language of the break, the editorial articulates a '*flexion* in the space of theoretical debates on literature and society' (Sarlo 1979: 9–10). This is indeed a point that should be considered prospectively, and in retrospect. Today, the apprenticeship is over and definitely long past beginning – *Punto de Vista* has announced its end after thirty years of stimulating intellectual debate. Still untapped at the time of its appearance, the article curiously footnotes *The Country and the City*, a book which we know did not reach their hands until three years later. It is as if the seeds of that other beginning – that was referred to previously as the *Ansatzpunkt* enabling the postulation of a peripheral modernity – were somehow unknowingly hidden in the marginalia.

Ostensibly not in line with local culture, *The Country and the City* proved to be a seminal text. In the face of a book such as *The Politics of Modernism*,

which deals with a movement thought to be global, the most particular book offered the most particular appropriations, perhaps against all expectations. Again, this virtue rests on Williams' merit of thinking literature at the intersections of the national and the global. It rests equally in the unending richness of translating at large, the astute adaptation strategies of the poor, and in the happy possibilities of an adopted family.

Chapter 12

Williams and ecology

H. Gustav Klaus

I first consciously heard, or rather misheard, the word 'ecology' some thirty years ago, from the mouth of Stuart Hall whom I was interviewing for a radio station. We were talking about the work of the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies in Birmingham, first under the aegis of Richard Hoggart, and then the new direction it was taking under Stuart Hall once Hoggart had left to become the Assistant Director-General of the UNESCO. In describing the Centre's approach to youth subcultures Stuart referred to the local school as an institution where the dominant and the subordinate cultures intersected. While the dominant culture penetrated into working-class life by means of the teacher and the syllabus, the 'school was yet a part of the parent culture of the working class, part of the neighbourhood, part of the ecology of working-class life' (cf. Hall 1977). This actually came across to me as the 'economy' of working-class life, which didn't make much sense but had a more familiar ring. I now wince with embarrassment at my ignorance.

To talk about Cultural Studies at the time was to talk not only about Hoggart and Hall, but also about Raymond Williams. A cross-section of Williams' work had appeared in German translation[1] almost simultaneously with the said radio interview.[2] More to the purpose here, 1976 was also the year of publication of Williams' lexicon of *Keywords*, in which, however, one looks in vain for an entry on ecology or environment. Williams remedied this in a later edition of the book, but the omission, and my own misunderstanding, may be taken as symptomatic of a lack of felt urgency of these matters. And one could also cite here the *New Left Review* interviews conducted with Williams in 1977 and published two years later as *Politics and Letters*. None of the interviewers – Perry Anderson, Anthony Barnett and Francis Mulhern – took the author up on environmental issues. Clearly such an agenda, far less a materialist literary or cultural criticism with a 'green' awareness, was just not the order of the socialist day.

One reason for the Left's aloofness from 'green' issues may have been the rightwing domination of the ecological debate spilling over from the United States where, following Rachel Carson's eye-opener *Silent Spring*

(1962), such influential publications as Paul and Anne Ehrlich's handbook *Population, Resources, Environment* (1970) had expressed white middle-class fears of overpopulation and the Club of Rome's *The Limits of Growth* (1972), authored at the MIT, had come straight from managerial concerns about the future of capitalism. Both typically discussed ecological matters in terms of Spaceship Earth.

Yet, in retrospect, it is evident that in *The Country and the City* (1973) Williams had provided a range of topics, demarcated areas of research and discussed authors that were to figure prominently in the ecocritical debates of the 1990s: the historicizing of 'nature' and nature writing, the theory of pastoral, urban–rural relations, John Clare and 'A language that is ever green', Richard Jefferies and Edward Thomas. And even while he was writing this second *opus magnum*, Williams displayed his acute sensitiveness to the natural and the man-made habitat in a lecture on 'Ideas of Nature' delivered in 1971 at the Institute of Contemporary Arts in London and published a year later in a collection entitled *Ecology: The Shaping Enquiry*.[3]

In this historically wide-ranging essay Williams traces the evolution of humanity's triumphalist attitude towards the physical world back to the separation of man from nature, and God from nature, in the early modern age. Once natural processes could be observed, described and learnt from, in their own terms, independent of a divine design, the groundwork for a subject–object relationship had been laid, from which to gather knowledge and make it useful for human purposes. Thus man could hope to move from a passive dependence on, or mere adaptation to, the environment to a position of mastery and control. Or, as Bacon put it in concluding his *Novum Organon*: if nature could be 'at length and in some measure subdued to the supplying of man with bread; that is, to the uses of human life', then 'there cannot but follow an improvement in man's estate, and an enlargement of his power over nature', though he was cautious to concede that for 'nature to be commanded [she] must be obeyed' (Bacon [1620] 1858: 13, 247–8). The language in which, from Bacon and his contemporaries onward, we have dressed the outcome of that transformed relationship is telling: 'It is very significant that most of the terms we have used in this relationship – the conquest of nature, the domination of nature, the exploitation of nature – are derived from real human practices: relations between men and men' (Williams [1972] 1980b: 84). Such a dominative vocabulary should alert us on two counts. Not only does it betray a ruthlessly instrumental view of the earth and its life forms as raw materials for production, at no other than labour and machinery costs; it also points to what is simultaneously going on in society. The detection of natural laws was mirrored by the discovery of new continents, the conquest of nature by the taking of possession of new lands, the mastering of nature by the subjugation of races and classes, the looting of the earth's resources by the plundering of the

colonies. To talk abstractly about 'Man', then, to deplore sweepingly humankind's interference with nature is to brush over the bitter divisions within and between societies. Interestingly, the early Wordsworth makes the connection in the refrain 'What man has done to man' of his poem 'Lines written in Early Spring'.

But the divorce of nature from human activity has had further consequences. We tend to overlook that

> A considerable part of what we call natural landscape … is the product of human design and human labour, and in admiring it as natural it seems to me to matter very much whether we suppress that fact of labour or acknowledge it.
>
> (Williams [1972] 1980b: 78)

From hedges to forests, from fields to wastelands, from artificial lakes to regulated rivers, humans have left their mark on the landscape. A cleared stretch of land today may have been a wilderness yesterday. 'And this also', muses Marlow at the beginning of Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*, as night falls over the Thames, 'has been one of the dark places of the earth' (Conrad 1980: 9). His utterance has, of course, many other resonances as well.

Williams also takes a long historical perspective when he seizes on the Greek root, *oikos*, of ecology and economics in an attempt to think the two disciplines together, as sensible household management. Translated into practical politics, in order to tackle environmental problems you have to take on the economy, and more precisely the prevailing economic order and its pervasive ideology. Both the 'Ideas of Nature' essay and *The Country and the City* conclude with an indictment of capitalism and its rarely questioned priorities, profit and growth. For while it is true, as 'deep ecologists' will argue, that it makes no difference to the ecological systems 'if the oil spills, the pesticides, the radioactive wastes, the industrial toxins they must cleanse are socialist or capitalist in origin', if the damage is caused by an 'evil' society or by a 'good' one 'that shares its wealth fairly and provides the finest welfare programs for its citizens' (Roszak 1978: 33),[4] this is to take the perspective of the helpless victim as sole vantage-point. But human beings are not inanimate matter or all dumb oxen. It matters very much whether they are able to identify the source of the problem, look for solutions and take counter-action.

Pinpointing the root causes of environmental degradation in our day did not blind Williams to the fact that eco-damage had occurred both before the advent of capitalism and was being perpetrated outside its umbrella, in what went under the name of 'actually existing Socialism'. One of the delusions he had set out to dispel in *The Country and the City* had been precisely that rural economies had left the natural environment intact:

> Since the dramatic physical transformations of the Industrial Revolution we have found it easy to forget how profoundly and still visibly agriculture altered the land. Some of the earliest and most remarkable environmental effects, negative as well as positive, followed from agricultural practice: making land fertile but also, in places, overgrazing it to a desert; clearing good land but also, in places, with the felling of trees, destroying it or creating erosion. Some of these uses preceded any capitalist order, but the capitalist mode of production is still, in world history, the most effective and powerful agency for all these kinds of physical and social transformation.
>
> (Williams 1973b: 293)

The case for an ecological socialism today could thus never rest on a simple opposition between an ugly industrialism and an unspoilt pre-industrial order. Arresting the industrial process and reverting to a kind of plain-living simplicity, as a 'green' William Morris had envisaged (with the reluctant concession that some machinery for the reduction of tiresome or dirty work might be necessary) or as, among others, Theodore Roszak has urged in our time, may hold its local attraction, but offers no viable solution.

But Williams also critically reviewed the incomparably more powerful tendency in socialist thought and practice to lean towards its own version of mastering nature. There are countless references to this in classical Marxism, despite Engels' important caveat in his *Dialectics of Nature*:

> Let us not, however, flatter ourselves overmuch on account of our human conquest over nature. For each such conquest takes its revenge on us. Each of them, it is true, has in the first place the consequences on which we counted, but in the second and third places it has quite different, unforeseen effects which only too often cancel out the first. The people who, in Mesopotamia, Greece, Asia Minor, and elsewhere, destroyed the forests to obtain cultivable land, never dreamed that they were laying the basis for the present devastated condition of these countries, by removing along with the forests the collecting centres and reservoirs of moisture.
>
> […]
>
> Thus at every step we are reminded that we by no means rule over nature like a conqueror over a foreign people, like someone standing outside nature – but that we, with flesh, blood, and brain, belong to nature, and exist in its midst, and that all our mastery of it consists in the fact that we have the advantage over all other beings of being able to know and correctly apply its laws.
>
> (Engels 1973: 291–2)[5]

But, as Williams notes, this valuable insight – that man and nature are one, and that in damaging one you eventually damage the other – did not guide the economic policies of countries run by Communist or Social Democratic governments. With varying degrees, socialists of all shades came to see vastly increased production, no matter its environmental consequences, as the key to solving the problems of hunger, poverty and social inequality. In times of upheaval, such as in post-revolutionary Russia, threatened by famine, civil war and foreign invasion, or the necessary post-1945 reconstruction of a Europe in ruins, this is a perfectly understandable position, but as an ingrained habit of thinking and planning it becomes in the end indistinguishable from capitalist reasoning. For that matter, the case of the most powerful capitalist economy in the world demonstrates that spectacular growth *per se* does not spell the end of spectacular poverty.

But Williams goes further by questioning the very notion of 'growth', which, in the public discourse, has been stripped of its human and social dimensions. Nakedly economist, it has effaced 'the full effects of certain kinds of production; the relations between certain forms of production and consequent forms of distribution: all these real considerations have been overridden by an appropriation of the idea of growth as indiscriminate expanded production' (Williams 1983f: 213–14). This comes from *Towards 2000*, that hotchpotch of 'condition-of-Britain' inventory and social theory, analysis of the political and economic world order and socialist platform, written after the two eminent neo-liberalisers in London and Washington had taken office. There is sometimes an uninspiring abstractness in Williams' style, in his expository no less than in his fictional works, but this should not distract from the radical implications of the just quoted sentence. In Williams' political thinking, ecology has now moved centre-stage to join Socialism redefined, among other things, in terms of place and the nurturing and caring capacities, especially by women, in the sphere of reproduction.[6] It is not enough, he argues, to warn of the extinction of this or that species, to avoid local waste or pollution, to install renewable energy systems, or in general to demand an ethical reorientation in our relations with the earth, worthwhile though these individual efforts are in themselves. But the scale of the problems, from the scarcity of the resources to the capacity of the atmosphere and the oceans to absorb the emissions, is such that more drastic measures are needed. Williams proposes nothing less than that at every level and stage economic reason should be coupled with ecological considerations. This takes up the historical semantics of *oikos*, but gives it a sharp political edge. For taking this path would entail large-scale planning and effective state intervention, but above all international agreements with a transnational governing body to enforce their application. Needless to say that such proposals run counter to the free-market dogma, until the onset of the world economic crisis in 2008 even more firmly entrenched than at the time of writing.

Williams harboured no illusions either. As he acutely observed in 'Socialism and ecology' (1982):[7]

> The shortage of certain key raw materials and commodities, which are necessary to maintain existing patterns of production and existing high levels of consumption, will create such tensions within societies which have got used to these patterns that they could in majority be prepared to resort to every kind of pressure – not only political and sub-military, but openly military – to assure what they see as the supplies necessary to the maintenance of their order of life. This is already a dangerous current of opinion in the United States.
>
> (Williams [1982] 1989i: 223)

Almost three decades and two Iraq Wars later, not forgetting the several hundred thousand killed or maimed in the process, few will want to deny the truth of these affirmations.

As long as there is no equitable distribution of the earth's resources and the economies of the poor countries remain geared to, not to say coerced into, the consumerist desires of the rich,[8] all attempts to 'Make Poverty History' such as debt cancellation are bound to fail. For if it isn't blunt military action, it is the workings of the giant multinational corporations, harmlessly dubbed 'global players', combined with financial capital that wreak environmental havoc, from deforestation to the devastation of river deltas such as that of the Niger. Once again, the damage done doesn't only affect a landscape, it directly uproots the inhabitants of the place. On a current estimate, some 250 million people of all colours, officially called 'environmental refugees', are in flight from ecocide, the systematic pulverization of their dwelling places (Ziegler 2005: 116). But economic growth statistics, abundantly quoted, do not measure these adverse effects.

In *The Fight for Manod*, a novel Williams had begun much earlier but was finishing in the late 1970s, we get an intimation of how the flow of capital jeopardizes a reform project with a social and ecological orientation. Manod, a fictitious village in mid-Wales, has been proposed as the site for a new kind of model city that is to accommodate more humane, more communally and environmentally satisfying forms of living and working. A pilot scheme, backed by European money, its novelty lies in the proposed integration of physical structures and natural spaces and alternative energy patterns. This 'dispersed city' of the future, 'conceived, from the beginning, in post-industrial terms and with a post-electronic technology' (Williams 1979b: 13, 77), would practically abolish commuting. No return to rurality here; the distinction between rural and urban living would simply become irrelevant.

If realized, the settlement could have a major impact well beyond its immediate precincts. It could help 'to sustain mid-Wales, by organic development, more assistance to the farms, bringing some light industry … and above all improving transport' (ibid.: 136–7). It is of a piece with ecological considerations that the rural community portrayed in the novel does not consist of tourists or weekenders, for whom the countryside means beauty and recreation, but of small producers who wrest a living from the soil without recourse to industrial farming.

But so far the project exists on paper only, and *The Fight for Manod* charts the various responses to it, from Whitehall politicians to Welsh nationalists, from local farmers to socially and ecologically minded reformers. Since information about the scheme has leaked through, land speculation is afoot, stretching from the local entrepreneur to an obscure international trust operating in London and Brussels. Do these manoeuvrings invalidate the project, or can enough resistance be put up to give the original plan a chance? The novel raises rather than answers these questions. At the end the future of Manod hangs in the balance.[9]

Raymond Williams' other fiction with an environmental claim is *People of the Black Mountains* (1989, 1990), a work of vast historical sweep, whose main action starts in 23,000 BC; the action is centred on man, that is, cavemen and women. But, as the title indicates, the novel is as much about place, a single landscape. It is altogether less anthropocentrically organised, foregrounding, up to a point, the non-human environment. Early on, we therefore have action with man left out, a brief history of the place before humans roamed and settled in it, of the vast movements of the earth and the sea and of ice, of shifting geological layers, of a changing flora and fauna (Williams 1990b: 37–9).

As we follow the fortunes of the hunters and gatherers, herdsmen and planters, the lords and slaves that peopled these mountains, we can never forget the overawing presence of that environment, even as they leave their traces: ancient dugouts, animal tracks of times immemorial, mounds of stone-age graves, much later roads and fortresses and dykes.

In one interesting episode Williams varies the famous phrase from Thomas More's *Utopia* to 'The trees are eating the people' (ibid.: 71)[10] in order to describe the spreading of bushes and trees, which becomes a hindrance to hunting, thereby seriously threatening the very livelihood of the extended family. Contrary to More's avaricious landowners, who require the land for grazing their sheep, there is no greedy human origin to this menace. The wilderness encroaches on the traditional subsistence patterns of the stone-age people, but out of this challenge arises a new stage of civilization, the beginnings of husbandry. And so it is in another story about an earthquake, which is seen by some mountain-dwellers as Mother Earth's revenge for the ripping of metals from her bowels, but for other more

sagacious observers provides an opportunity to mark off certain untouched areas as places 'of safety and fertility' (ibid.: 222).

In a 'Postscript' to the second volume of the planned trilogy Joy Williams clearly formulated the ecological concerns of her husband's work:

> The Neolithic people had lived in the Black Mountains within the limits of their own resources, with full awareness, from the experience of many generations, of what they could do to nature and what nature could do to them. Elis [one of the contemporary characters] would have argued that people can only survive if they live in harmony with each other and with their land.
>
> (Williams, J. 1992: 322)

In other words, they have found a way of cohabiting with their natural environment.

Over and above the emphasis on the physical geography of the place and its treatment in its own right, and not as nature waiting to be subjugated to human purposes, Williams uses another device valued by ecocritics: the naming of places. Naming as a gesture of assimilation to, and familiarisation with, a location; but naming also as an act of recording and preservation. In this spirit Jonathan Bate has celebrated Wordsworth's 'Poems on the Naming of Places' from the second edition of *Lyrical Ballads* as the beginning of Romantic ecology. And he sees the same impulse at work, if with a greater emphasis on loss, in John Clare, whose poem 'Remembrances' is a case in point:

> When I think of old 'sneap green' puddock's nook and hilly snow
> Where bramble bushes grew and the daisy gemmed in dew
> And the hills of silken grass like to cushions on the view
> Where we threw the pismire crumbs when we'd nothing else to do
> All levelled like a desert by the never weary plough
> All banished like the sun where that cloud is passing now
> And settled here for ever on its brow.
>
> (Clare 1967: 175)[11]

The poet names his favourite boyhood haunts and thereby preserves the memory of a landscape that in his lifetime had changed beyond recognition under the intensive capitalist agriculture hastened in during the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars. And in so doing Clare dramatizes how much they matter to him.

Williams proceeds along similar lines. Through extensive naming, places are called into being in an emotionally intense act:

> See this layered sandstone in the short mountain grass. Place your right hand on it, palm downward. See where the summer sun rises and where it stands at noon. Direct your index finger midway between them. Spread your fingers, not widely. You now hold the place in your hand.
>
> (Williams 1990b)[12]

This reads like an echo from Richard Jefferies' 'On the Downs':

> *Stoop and touch the earth*, and receive its influence; touch the flower and feel its life; face the wind, and have its meaning; let the sunlight fall on the open hand as if you could hold it. Something may be grasped from them all, invisible yet strong. It is the sense of a wider existence – wider and higher.
>
> (Jefferies 1938: 121–2)

The feeling for the physical world is there, the green language, yet also the mystic tendency into which Jefferies lapses as often as not and which has no place in Williams. Instead we get the detailed naming process:

> This is the hand of the Black Mountains, the shape first learned. Your thumb is Crib y Gath. Your first finger is Curum and Hateral. Your second finger is Ffawyddog, with Tal y Cefn and Bal Mawr at its knuckles. Your third finger is Gadair Fawr. Your outside finger is Allt Mawr, from Llysiau to Cerrig Calch, and its nail is Crug Hywel. On the high plateau of the back of your hand are Twyn y Llech and Twmpa, Rhos Dirion, Waun Fach and Y Das. You hold their shapes and their names.
>
> (Williams 1990b: 1)

These are contemporary Welsh place-names, but their strangeness (to other than Welsh ears) prepares us for the otherness of the past, as the narrative dives into our mysterious history and the place-names keep changing. For while it is true that naming, above all, presupposes knowing, which in turn requires rootedness in a place, there can also be naming, and especially renaming, without knowing. Conquerors and colonisers rename their new possessions in an act of imposing their order and exercising control. Williams demonstrates this in the case of the Romans who indiscriminately lumped all the diverse inhabitants of the island together as 'Britons'. Marlow's above-quoted remark and his subsequent empathy for 'the decent young citizen in a toga … coming out here in the train of some prefect, or tax-gatherer, or trader even' only to find himself 'in a swamp, march through the woods, and in some inland post feel the savagery, the utter

savagery' (Conrad 1980: 9), reveals how more than one half of his being colludes with the Romans' view of the primitive peoples as 'barbarians'.

Where older sprawling novels sometimes contained a list of characters, *People of the Black Mountains* has a list of place-names complete with maps. But the characters' names are no less strange. Naming the 'people' becomes as important as marking their habitats. It is a way of connecting with our distant ancestors, of rescuing 'ten thousand generations of conscious life and memory' (Williams 1990b: 325) from 'the enormous condescension of posterity' (Thompson 1968: 13). This should be the business of historiography, but historiography rarely honours the nameless, which is where historical fiction comes in. Every fresh episode in the story-cycle, in recreating a small lost world, introduces new names, of the 'men and women on these mountains, handling earth, stone, trees, grass, animals' (Williams 1990b: 12).

The book lets the reader partake of two different approaches to the past, one empathetic, the other scholarly. The stories and parables dramatise human lives. They enact the creative capacities of human beings in response to a natural environment, and show them participating in and, often enough, defeated by the historical process – including natural disasters such as plague or earthquake. By contrast, the linking passages, set in the present, allow for a modicum of history as rational enquiry and informed speculation. The two approaches meet in the student, Glyn, whose search for his grandfather, lost during a mountain walk, turns into a quest for the past. In touching the sandstone, Glyn at once imitates the handling of the materials by the former dwellers of the mountains and establishes contact with them. It is in his mind that the voices from the past are heard and the scenes from across the ages imagined. The longer he traverses the landscape, the more immersed he becomes in the past; and the more powerfully the voices from our ancestors resonate in his (and the reader's) mind, the closer to his own understanding of history they appear. In this convergence of inner and outer narrative, dramatised action and historical grasp, empathy and analysis, the idea takes shape that the human adventure is one, that the passions and conflicts of a long-buried past are closer to us than is generally acknowledged. But we are left in no doubt that any such construction of human continuity, while not wilful, remains imperfect.[13]

In *People of the Black Mountains*, time and place, history and geography, the social and the spatial interact in a complex design, if not without tension, but none is allowed to cancel the other. The novel is a fictional equivalent, on a micro-level, of Fernand Braudel's magisterial history of the Mediterranean, paying close attention to the determining, quasi-immovable structures of a landscape and the *longue durée* of economic cycles.

One last aspect of the book's environmental sensibility deserves a brief mention: the many different forms of human dwelling in which a space is converted into a place. To provide some kind of shelter, making oneself at

home in the world, is a primeval urge. Of this we get numerous examples in *People of the Black Mountains*, especially in the first volume, from the cave to 'a stack of leaning branches' (Williams 1990b: 107) to the earth-walled hut to sacred places such as the Long House, a burial chamber raised over several generations. Tony Pinkney was the first to comment, if not explicitly in ecological terms, on the prevalence of the nest imagery in the novel (Pinkney 1991: 120–4), and he drew, as Jonathan Bate was later to do in his discussion of Clare's endless fascination with birds' nests, on Gaston Bachelard's notion of an 'original shell' behind every human dwelling (Bachelard 1989). For Bate the nest is 'the natural world's analogue of the human idea of home' (Bate 2000: 157).

But the nest is also a place of hatching, of giving birth, of nurturing and tending, in short, a female space. There is no doubt that women command a stronger presence in *People of the Black Mountains* than in Williams' earlier fictions. And that presence is not merely subsidiary, limited to domestic and reproductive chores, but shows their work, for example the combing, spinning, washing and weaving of the wool, as an essential part of the families' keep.[14]

This willingness to meet challenges to his own position either in the form of trenchant critique, theoretical debate or changing social and political conditions, for example through the rise of what was once called the 'new social movements' (of, among others, women and environmentalists), was a strength of Williams' working mode. Yet engaging with a previously underplayed dimension of political or cultural analysis, while leading to a rethinking or redefinition of the socialist project, never shook his commitment to the cause. Thus a social and an ecological agenda were for Williams not, as in some versions of environmentalism, separable or irreconcilable concerns but required to be brought together and thought through together. This was already the underlying message of *The Country and the City*, an enduringly important and powerful work. Similarly, adapting and refining his own cultural materialist approach had clear priority over any methodological contribution to the evolving critical practice now known as 'ecocriticism', whose second more vigorous and successful take-off in the 1990s he did not live to see.

Notes

1 Raymond Williams, *Innovationen: Über den Prozeßcharakter von Literatur und Kultur*, ed. Gustuv Klaus (Frankfurt: Syndikat 1977)
2 Broadcast on 19 June 1977 on WDR 3 and published, likewise in German, in *Gulliver*, 2 (1977), pp. 54–67.
3 Edited by Jonathan Benthall (Benthall 1972); American edition: *Ecology in Theory and Practice* (Benthall 1973); reprinted in Raymond Williams, *Problems in Materialism and Culture* (Williams 1980c).

4 The author (Theodore Roszak) belongs to the libertarian Left rather than with the adherents of deep ecology, but his argument at this point is close to it.
5 Frederick Engels, *Dialectics of Nature* [wr. 1873–6, pub. 1925, trans. Clemens Dutt 1940]. This particular passage from Engels' fragment dates from 1876, hence follows on the heels of John Ruskin's environmental and social turn in the 1870s, starting with Letter V of *Fors Clavigera* (1871). Engels also discusses Ernst Haeckel's *Generelle Morphologie der Organismen* (1866), in which the term 'ecology' makes its first appearance. Williams refers to *Dialectics of Nature* in 'Problems of Materialism' in his *Problems in Materialism and Culture* (Williams 1980c: 110–11), as well as in 'Socialism and ecology' (Williams [1982] 1989i: 214).
6 See also Francis Mulhern's review essay of the book 'Towards 2000, or news from you-know-where': Mulhern 1989, esp. 79–81.
7 'Socialism and ecology' (1982), reprinted in Raymond Williams, *Resources of Hope: Culture, Democracy, Socialism*, ed. Robin Gable (Williams [1982] 1989i).
8 A case in point is the current push towards biofuels in countries such as Indonesia, Malaysia and Brazil, engineered by giant transnational agro-companies in the interest of the energy-consuming economies of the West, but at the cost of price increases in food in the local economies and grave environmental risks. See Eric Holt-Giménez, 'Sprit vom Acker: Fünf Mythen vom Übergang zu Biokraftstoffen', *Le Monde diplomatique* (German edition), June 2007, pp. 12–13. The food riots in Egypt and Haiti in 2008, while linked more generally to the implementation of neo-liberal policies, may be taken as the first warning signs of greater disasters to come.
9 For a more extended treatment of the novel, see my essay 'Material grounds: border and place in Raymond Williams's fiction' (Klaus 2002).
10 More as translated by Ralph Robinson (1551): 'shepe that were wont to be so meek and tame and so smal eaters, now, as I heare saye, be become so great devowerers and so wylde, that they eate up, and swallow downe the very men them selfes' (Book I of *Utopia*), quoted from the Everyman edition (More 1910: 23).
11 'Remembrances' (c. 1832). Williams' continual interest in Clare is illustrated by his and his daughter's collection of the poet's writings, *John Clare: Selected Poetry and Prose*, eds. Merryn Williams and Raymond Williams (London: Methuen, 1986).
12 This and the next Williams paragraph open both volumes of *People of the Black Mountains*.
13 For a short incisive reading of *People of the Black Mountains* see Head 2002a: 197–9; see also Head's in part identical essay 'Beyond 2000: Raymond Williams and the ecocritic's task' (Head 2002b).
14 This treatment combined with the move to nurture and reproduction in *Towards 2000* goes some way towards meeting the feminist critiques levelled against Williams' work and summed up in Morag Shiach's essay 'A gendered history of cultural categories' (Shiach 1995).

Chapter 13

Cultural studies is ordinary

Gilbert B. Rodman

> If this is thought through now, if we fight for it, even if we fail we shall have done something to justify ourselves before the future. But I don't think we need fail at all; I think the results will be uneven and scattered, but this is where the challenge now is. If you accept my definition that this is really what Cultural Studies has been about, of taking the best we can in intellectual work and going with it in this very open way to confront people for whom it is not a way of life, for whom it is not in any probability a job, but for whom it is a matter of their own intellectual interest, their own understanding of the pressures on them, pressures of every kind, from the most personal to the most broadly political – if we are prepared to take that kind of work and to revise the syllabus and discipline as best we can, on this site which allows that kind of interchange, then Cultural Studies has a very remarkable future indeed.
>
> (Williams, 1989c: 161–2)

Cultural studies is ordinary: that is where we must start. More crucially, that is where we must finish. Understood one way, my refashioning of one of Raymond Williams' most famous titles describes the nature of cultural studies' current malaise: its transformation from what was once an extraordinary approach to intellectual and political work into something predictable and boring. Inflected a different way, however, 'cultural studies is ordinary' stands as a deliberate provocation: a polemical attempt to jolt us out of our limited understanding of what cultural studies is, where it can be found, and who actually does it.

When Williams wrote 'Culture is ordinary' half a century ago, he was trying to promote a more expansive and democratic understanding of what counts as culture. Rejecting the pervasive notion that culture is something possessed only by educated highbrows, Williams insisted that culture is a phenomenon common to all people, regardless of their position in the social hierarchy. A truly democratic society, Williams argued, cannot be built around the elitist assumption that 'the masses' possess nothing more

than a watered-down version of 'real' culture – or, even worse, that they lack culture completely. In fact, the very notion of 'the masses' was foreign to Williams' project. 'There are … no masses,' he insisted, 'but only ways of seeing people as masses' (Williams [1958] 1989b: 11).

Though Williams is often acknowledged to be one of cultural studies' foundational figures – and though his writings continue to be cited and taught in cultural studies circles – the radically democratic vision of culture and politics that characterized his work is surprisingly difficult to find in most contemporary formations of the enterprise. This is not to say that cultural studies no longer values democracy but that, on the whole, cultural studies has distanced itself from the broader public that it ostensibly struggles alongside. While there are numerous definitions of cultural studies in circulation – with an astonishing amount of variation between them – most of these competing maps of the territory share the fundamental assumption that cultural studies is necessarily an academic endeavour.

On the face of it, cultural studies' entrenched position in the university would seem to place it well outside the range of human activity that might typically be considered 'ordinary', especially when one considers the tendency of cultural studies scholars to brandish theoretical abstractions and disciplinary jargon as if they were lethal weapons. Concepts such as 'affective alliances' and 'hegemonic blocs' may be useful tools for helping to make sense of the complicated interweavings of culture and politics, but they also build imposing fences around cultural studies that keep 'ordinary' people on the outside looking in – or, more likely, alienated enough from the whole affair that they find something more palatable to look at. To be sure, Williams often produced his own dense thickets of scholarly prose, and he was certainly happy to see cultural studies win a small measure of space for itself within the university. But neither the 'astonish[ing] … theoretical fluency' (Hall 1992: 286) that has come to characterize much of cultural studies nor the gradual but steady sedimentation of cultural studies into a discipline of its own are quite the direction that Williams wanted the enterprise to take.

Williams' hopes for cultural studies' future were based largely on its prior efforts to use the concerns of 'ordinary people' as a set of guidelines for reshaping the dominant institutional practices of education and criticism. More specifically, Williams wanted cultural studies to avoid repeating the mistakes that English studies had made in moving from the fringes of British academic life to a position at the very heart of the beast. For Williams, that move had proven to be a Faustian bargain, in which the original endeavour ultimately traded away the noble democratic impulses at its core for the acquiescent stability provided by formal disciplinarity:

> Having got into the university, English studies had within twenty years converted itself into a fairly normal academic course, marginalizing

> those members of itself who were sustaining the original project. Because by this time what it was doing within the institution was largely reproducing itself, which all academic institutions tend to do: it was reproducing the instructors and the examiners who were reproducing people like themselves. Given the absence of that pressure and that demand from groups who were outside the established educational system, this new discipline turned very much in on itself. It became, with some notable advantages, as always happens, a professional discipline; it moved to higher standards of critical rigour and scholarship; but at the same time the people who understood the original project … were marginalized.
>
> (Williams 1989c: 153)

Unfortunately, Williams' warning fell on deaf ears. Or perhaps it simply came too late. Change but a single word in the first line – 'English' to 'cultural' – and this passage is an uncannily prescient description of what has happened to cultural studies in the two decades since Williams' death.

In that time span, cultural studies has grown increasingly (and disturbingly) comfortable with the idea that it has matured into a discipline of its own. In spite of the lessons it should have learned from its contentious past, cultural studies has managed to acquire an unusually settled sense of its own history – and, even worse, of its own future. It is in this sense that cultural studies has become ordinary: just another undergraduate major, just another academic career choice, just another cog in the university's disciplinary machinery. And so it's not surprising (though it is disappointing) that the benchmarks for cultural studies' success are now more often about reproduction than about invention, more about finding one's place within the system than about remaking that system in significant ways or forging new paths for intellectual and political work.

One of the most obvious signs of this shift is the dramatic proliferation of cultural studies textbooks. It wasn't that long ago that the generic 'What is cultural studies?' publication was a 20–30 page essay that was as prescriptive in its focus ('this is what cultural studies *should* be') as it was descriptive ('this is what cultural studies *is*'). John Storey's (1996) marvellous anthology, *What Is Cultural Studies?*, gathers together nearly two dozen of these essays, and except for the couple that focus on the history of the Birmingham Centre ('this is what cultural studies *was*'), all of them define cultural studies in ways that suggest a future very much in flux. These essays can be understood as vectors: definitions *in motion* that aim to map out an ideal future direction for cultural studies as much as they attempt to describe the existing state of the terrain.

By way of contrast, the standard 'what is cultural studies?' publication today is a 200–300 page introductory textbook aimed at undergraduates. As mutually incompatible as individual titles in this rapidly expanding genre

often are, what they generally have in common is the sense that cultural studies is already an established discipline. In these volumes, if the future of the endeavour comes into play, it almost never does so in ways that suggest that cultural studies could (or should) deviate significantly from where it is right now. That future depends on how well cultural studies students can build professional academic careers around the blueprints provided by their forebears – and so presumably that future will look an awful lot like the present. Whatever these books are – and not all of them actually deserve to be thought of as 'cultural studies' – they're certainly not vectors: they're still lifes that provide a survey of cultural studies' 'greatest hits', capture them in amber, and then repackage them for mass consumption and further reproduction.

Textbooks are but one example of cultural studies' increasingly settled status as an ordinary academic enterprise. Cultural studies has now embraced virtually all the major trappings of scholarly professionalization: undergraduate majors, university departments, research centres, scholarly journals, academic conferences, disciplinary associations. As recently as a decade ago, the notion that cultural studies might secure a more stable position for itself within the university was still an open-ended question that could provoke heated debate. Today, however, cultural studies is sufficiently well established as a member of the disciplinary family that it's no longer news when fresh examples of cultural studies' institutionalization emerge: it's simply business as usual.

Lest I be misunderstood, I should emphasize that I don't want to see cultural studies abandon the spaces it has carved out for itself in the university, nor do I want to deny the very real intellectual and material gains that cultural studies' institutionalization has produced. There is certainly nothing noble or desirable about marginalization for its own sake, and cultural studies shouldn't retreat from the academy simply to avoid the taint of privilege that the institution brings. What concerns me is the sense that cultural studies' success within the university has come to define the outer limits of what the enterprise can and should be: that, having got into the institution, cultural studies is now content to do nothing more that reproduce itself.

In many respects, my argument here is an attempt to wrestle with a polemical question recently posed by Larry Grossberg: 'How did cultural studies get so f****** boring?' (Grossberg 2006: 8, ironically boring asterisks in the original). For Grossberg, 'boring' isn't an aesthetic or intellectual assessment as much as it's a political one: a pointed assessment of cultural studies' inability to intervene productively in the 'real world' contexts where it most hopes to make a difference: cultural studies' current centre of gravity 'pulls a lot of work into its orbits, posing questions, offering theories and validating methods that may not strengthen our engagement with or our ability to address questions to, the current conjuncture' (Grossberg

2006: 8). Up to this point in his argument, Grossberg's diagnosis of cultural studies' current shortcomings rings true, but then he takes an unusual detour:

> That center, maintained increasingly by the institutional power of the academy and by the growing tendency to fold cultural studies back into disciplines, is built upon a certain limited ambiguity of the concept of culture, as cultural studies moved out from Williams' famous dichotomy: (1) culture as a limited set of signifying and textual activities – sometimes referred to as aesthetic or expressive culture; and (2) culture as a whole way of life, as a material organization of practices.
>
> (Grossberg 2006: 8)

From here, he goes on to offer an extended analysis of how cultural studies built itself around (and became trapped within) Williams' dichotomous model of culture, and of why it needs to find its way past the limitations of that model.

Where I want to pry apart Grossberg's diagnosis and pursue a different line of reasoning is at the point where he identifies – but then turns away from – 'the institutional power of the academy' and 'the growing tendency to fold cultural studies back into the disciplines' as the set of interlocking forces responsible for cultural studies' current crisis. Grossberg's analysis helps us to rethink the question of *what* cultural studies does, but the role of the university in cultural studies' current crisis suggests that we also need to rethink the interrelated questions of *who* does cultural studies and *where* they do so.

It's here that the second sense of my title comes into play, as I want to argue that cultural studies is not necessarily an academic enterprise at all. The variable cocktail of intellectual and political work that we call 'cultural studies' can be – and already is being – mixed together with some regularity outside of the university, but cultural studies scholars have not been particularly adept at recognizing such work as a legitimate form of the enterprise. Cultural studies is ordinary: you should not have to go to the university to find it.

It is worth remembering that cultural studies did not originally arise in response to the needs and desires of the university, and that its early years within the university were far from comfortable. As noted above, Williams' musings on cultural studies' future dwell extensively on cultural studies' pre-Birmingham roots in post-Second World War workers' education programmes and the challenges those programmes deliberately posed to the British university system. Similarly, Stuart Hall describes the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies as 'the locus to which we *retreated* when that conversation in the open world could no longer be continued: it was politics by other means' (Hall 1990: 12, emphasis in original), and he has

noted on multiple occasions that the more established departments at Birmingham spent years looking upon the Centre with open scorn – when they deigned to take notice of it at all. If cultural studies is now primarily an academic enterprise, it's not because it has always been such a thing, or because its earliest practitioners' highest priority was to move the fledgling project into the academic mainstream.

Perhaps the most direct way to rethink the current location of cultural studies is to look more closely at what cultural studies actually claims to do. Read the various meta-commentaries on cultural studies (excepting, perhaps, those problematic textbooks) and most of them will argue – rightly – that there is no particular theory or method or object of study or political stance that is unique to the enterprise. Nor is there some simple litmus test one can use to determine the provenance of a given text or practice *vis-à-vis* cultural studies. The mere presence (or absence) of, say, post-colonial theory or ethnographic methods or Marxist politics can never guarantee that a particular project is (or isn't) an example of cultural studies. In essence, cultural studies encompasses four major spheres of activity:

(1) Theory: the construction of abstract models that attempt to explain the workings of culture, politics, the economy, the media, etc.
(2) Research: the production of new bodies of knowledge about culture, politics, the economy, the media, etc.
(3) Pedagogy: the public dissemination of all that theory and research, with the specific goal of helping 'ordinary people' come to a more robust understanding of the world around them.
(4) Action: the attempt to intervene in matters of public policy, opinion, and behaviour in order to promote social justice.

Significantly, the two spheres that cultural studies has been most heavily invested in – theory and research – are also the two that are most readily articulated to the institutional practices of the university. Meanwhile, the two spheres where cultural studies has been less successful – pedagogy and action – are also the two where various non-academic endeavours that deserve to be (but typically have not been) recognized as cultural studies have often outperformed their scholarly counterparts. Let me offer a few brief comments about each of these four spheres of activity and their respective relationship to cultural studies, both inside and outside the university.

Theory

Cultural studies scholars typically reserve the word 'theory' for a particular genre of prose that describes an abstract model of how the world (or some significant piece of it) works. More specifically, this brand of theory is

primarily crafted by a relatively narrow range of academics: philosophers and other humanities types are welcome here, but most social and behavioural scientists need not bother applying. Abstract maps of culture and society, however, are already an integral part of most people's daily lives, and so theory isn't the exclusive province of professional scholars. Michael Bérubé poses the question this way:

> Is gender performativity something concocted in an academic laboratory, or is it something you can see in *Paris Is Burning* – or down the street? … Is it discourse-besotted metahistorians or campaign managers who know that representations are social facts? Do we have to introduce publishers, futures traders and real estate agents to the idea that there's no such thing as 'intrinsic' merit, that merit is a social phenomenon? … I don't think so. I think, to put it plain, that all these constituencies are doing the stuff we talk about in a different voice. One of the primary reasons 'cultural studies' names such a volatile enterprise is that it finds itself examining populations that have their own descriptive languages for themselves, which don't always mesh very well with de Certeau or Laclau and Mouffe but which serve the purposes of enunciating group identities, practices and self-definitions.
>
> (Bérubé 1994: 166)

To be sure, not all maps of the world are equally accurate or valuable, and so we can – and should – still draw qualitative distinctions between different theories. And, when it comes down to actual cases, we may find academic theory to be more valuable than 'quotidian' theory. This, however, is an empirical question to be tested in the context of specific projects, rather than an axiom we should simply accept in advance. The value of theory for cultural studies, after all, is to provide us with better maps and tools for the political projects that (allegedly) motivate our work. Given that mandate, one of the advantages that 'quotidian' theory often has over academic theory is that it tends to arise very much in the service of 'real world' issues and problems, rather than as a self-justifying phenomenon. 'Ordinary people' theorize their lives and their world all the time (culture, after all, is ordinary), and they often do so in more grounded ways than academics do. And so we should not dismiss those maps of the world as unworthy simply because they've been produced by people who lack graduate degrees.

Research

In the context of academic cultural studies, 'research' typically refers to scholarship that is necessarily informed by some form of disciplinarity – that is, a rigorous adherence to a fixed range of established conventions and methods – even while cultural studies loudly (if often disingenuously)

distances itself from the very notion of academic disciplines. As such, what typically counts as legitimate cultural studies research are the sorts of investigative practice already valorized by traditional scholarly fields, while other investigative practices – particularly those associated with journalism or the arts – are either dismissed out of hand or, at most, welcomed as the sort of 'raw' primary material that can serve as the *object* for 'real' cultural studies research. Even in those instances when cultural studies scholars stretch beyond their home disciplines, they typically only do so to engage with other disciplines: that is, they produce *inter*disciplinary, rather than *extra*disciplinary or even *non*disciplinary, research.

As Stuart Hall notes, however, the main reason why cultural studies practitioners should do research is so that we can 'know more than the traditional intellectuals do: really know, not just pretend to know, not just to have the facility of knowledge, but to know deeply and profoundly' (Hall 1992: 281). That sort of 'deep and profound' knowledge, however, will not always be ours if we assume in advance that the only knowledge worth having comes from the university. As is the case with theory, the production of knowledge is something that happens outside the university as much as it does within it, and any good journalist or policymaker or historical novelist or political activist or documentary filmmaker can – and should – do good research as a routine part of their ordinary business.

Pedagogy

Insofar as 'pedagogy' typically refers to classroom-based instruction, it would seem to be the most academic sphere of activity under discussion here, and so it may seem odd to place it on the non-academic side of the fence. Pedagogy, however, is an activity that universities honour much more on paper than in practice. While campus administrators often speak reverently about the value of good teaching, they rarely match those noble words with policies that demonstrate a meaningful commitment to what happens in actual classrooms. Faculty members may be denied tenure because their teaching is weak, but they'll rarely (if ever) be granted tenure solely because their teaching is superb. And academic cultural studies has embraced this philosophy all too fully. To be sure, cultural studies scholars often invoke critical pedagogy as a worthy set of educational practices, and I'm willing to believe that many of us actively work to embody those values in our classrooms. Even within cultural studies' circles, however, we tend to celebrate research and theory much more than we do teaching.

More crucially, I would argue that the sphere of pedagogy extends well beyond the sort of formal teaching that happens in college and university classrooms: that it encompasses a vast range of communicative practices – from op-ed columns to documentaries, from public art installations to blogs – where a diverse range of intellectuals (broadly defined) attempt to

share the knowledge they've produced with a broader public. And, in this sense of the term, pedagogy is an arena where non-academics have generally been much more effective than professional scholars.

Action

Cary Nelson has taken Jan Radway to task for her claim that 'the definition of cultural studies should be expanded to include a whole range of political activities' (Nelson 1996: 278). For Nelson, this notion is so absurd that he can't believe that any reputable scholar would utter it. 'It should not be necessary to say this,' he writes, 'but apparently it is: Cultural studies is *a set of writing practices*; it is a discursive, analytic, interpretive tradition' (ibid.: 278).

Insofar as there's much more to doing cultural studies than being a good activist, Nelson is right to argue that 'political action and cultural studies are not interchangeable' (ibid.: 278). One shouldn't get to claim that one does cultural studies simply because one shows up at progressive demonstrations or volunteers for leftist causes. Where Nelson's argument runs aground, though, is in his insistence that cultural studies is merely just 'a set of writing practices.' And though it should not be necessary to say this, apparently it is: the distinction that Nelson makes between 'political activities' and 'writing practices' is not just false, it's precisely the sort of simplistic either/or choice between mythical opposites that cultural studies has struggled against for half a century. Put plainly, we don't have to choose between 'writing practices' and 'political activities', as if the two were mutually exclusive, or as if this thing we call 'cultural studies' were too cramped and inflexible to accommodate worthy examples from both categories.

By way of comparison, other noteworthy enterprises manage to embrace both theory and action simultaneously, and it's not a coincidence that there's significant intellectual and political overlap between many of those endeavours and cultural studies. As is the case with 'feminist' and 'Marxist', there's no necessary reason why 'cultural studies' can't – and shouldn't – be more broadly used to modify 'theory' *and* 'practice', 'scholarship' *and* 'politics', 'research' *and* 'activism'. Many cultural studies scholars do extensive (and valuable) activist work of one sort or another. And, presumably, much of the theory and research that they gladly call 'cultural studies' informs such work in significant ways. And yet, curiously, the 'cultural studies' label rarely travels with them when they leave do that work, even though it could. And should.

I give myself three wishes, even if I have nothing nearly as majestic as 'the swans I have just been watching on the lake' (Williams [1958] 1989b: 14) to wish upon. I ask for things that are part of the ethos of our cultural studies tradition. I ask that we may be strong and human enough to realize them. And I ask, naturally, in my own fields of interest.

My first wish is for cultural studies scholars, individually and collectively, to do a better job of reshaping the university than the university has done to reshape cultural studies. This is not to deny the small victories that cultural studies can already claim on this front, but the fact remains that cultural studies' 'infiltration' of academia has not revolutionized the university nearly as much as it has transformed (and diluted) cultural studies. Bill Readings' assessment of cultural studies as the ideal quasi-discipline for the 'university of excellence' (1996) is, lamentably, all too accurate. Transforming the university, of course, is much easier said than done, especially given that cultural studies scholars are not always eager (or invited) to move into the sorts of administrative position where such changes might most readily be effected. And I have no illusions that cultural studies is singlehandedly capable of reversing the tide of political, economic and cultural forces that have led to the increasing corporatization of the university.

I continue to believe, however, that cultural studies can and should still serve as the proverbial fly in the university's ointment, and that it's important for cultural studies academics to remain vigilant about holding the institution's feet to the fire as circumstances warrant. As Radway has put it:

> The reason I continue to stay in the academy is that I don't think we can simply afford to walk out … We can't simply give up on the academy. If we do, there are other people ready to make it an even purer space of domination.
>
> (Radway 1992: 529)

My second wish is that cultural studies practitioners working across a broad spectrum of institutional spaces, both on and off campus, learn to recognize – and make common cause – with one another. Perhaps most obviously, cultural studies scholars need to be better about reaching out to kindred spirits who don't normally travel in academic circles. As much as cultural studies scholars like to celebrate Gramsci's notion of the 'organic intellectual,' when we actually encounter such figures, we seem reluctant to embrace them as fellow practitioners of cultural studies – unless, of course, they cross over into 'our' world and spend several years immersed in the peculiar pain of pursuing a graduate degree or two.

And this strikes me as a failure of nerve and imagination that we need to get beyond. The university continues to matter to cultural studies because it affords people a measure of freedom to produce sophisticated combinations of rigorous intellectual and political work, but it's by no means the only place where such work is possible. In certain contexts, it's not even necessarily the most valuable or effective place for such work. But if we're unable to imagine (much less locate, or embrace, or learn from) people who actually do cultural studies outside of university settings, then Williams'

fear that cultural studies would become just another career option for bourgeois academic professionals may already be true.

Given my argument to this point, my final wish may be predictable: that cultural studies takes the task of reinventing and extending itself much more seriously than it has. This means more than just broadening the range of disciplines that intersect with cultural studies' orbits, more than just building new theoretical models to guide our scholarship, and more than just finding new research questions to meet the demands of a changing world. These are all valuable tasks, and a cultural studies worthy of the name will not shirk from them. But, on their own, none of them is likely to shake cultural studies out of its current doldrums, as none of them is likely to do much to reconfigure cultural studies' current relationship to the university in any significant fashion.

Larry Grossberg (2006) refers to Gramsci's notion that the first job of the intellectual is to know more than 'the other side', and he suggests that cultural studies hasn't done a very good job of living up to that ideal. Insofar as those of us who do cultural studies in academic settings could be better about producing the sort of rigorous scholarship and richly contextualized knowledge that allows us to make crucial interventions in public debates, I would agree with Grossberg's criticism.

But I actually think that cultural studies' *real* failing has more to do with the second half of Gramsci's comments: that is, not just knowing more than the other side, but communicating that knowledge effectively to a broader public. The professional scholars who occupy the centre of cultural studies, after all, already spend much of our time and energy engaged in the production of knowledge. And while it's fine to urge cultural studies to produce *better* knowledge than it has, if we've failed to live up to this aspect of Gramsci's imperative, it's not because we've left the business of *trying* to produce better knowledge off our agendas.

So while I, too, hope that cultural studies can know more than the other side, I think the need to improve how – and how far – we spread that knowledge is more important and more pressing. Of course, this is by no means an easy process and it's certainly *not* reducible to a sort of missionary project where we simply deliver our pre-packaged insights to a public waiting for us to tell them the truth about their lives. It is, instead, a process that will require us to listen as well as (and probably better than) we speak, and to do so with publics with whom we don't normally share the fruits of our intellectual labours. Here, I would want to echo 'Culture is ordinary' quite explicitly:

> We should not seek to extend a ready-made [cultural studies] to the benighted masses. We should accept, frankly, that if we extend our [cultural studies] we shall change it: some that is offered will be rejected, other parts will be radically criticized. And this is as it should be,

> for our [studies], now, are in no condition to go down to eternity unchallenged. There is much fine work; there is also shoddy work, and work based on values that will find no acceptance if they ever come out into the full light. To take our [studies] to new audiences is to be quite certain that in many respects those studies will be changed. I, for one, do not fear this.
>
> (Williams [1958] 1989b: 16)

Acknowledgments

I would like to thank Margaret Werry, Greg Seigworth, and Jillian Clements for their helpful feedback on earlier drafts of this chapter.

Chapter 14

Raymond Williams: reading novels as knowable communities

Ana Clara Birrento

His work is still 'in time for us', Stephen Connor wrote in 1998 about Raymond Williams. In fact, twenty years after his death, Williams' intellectual legacy is, indeed, still in time for us. Williams remains an influential figure and a source of inspiration for any theorist or practitioner of cultural studies, into whose grammar he engraved a set of fundamental concepts and relevant analytical tools. In the perplexity of understanding (Inglis 1993), Williams reflected, revised and developed his critical positions about the nature of culture, the politics of literature and social relations, rehearsing them to find new definitions which enable us to know the modes of how and what a text expresses about a culture.

Out of the body of knowledge and critical intervention, two core legacies have engaged my attention: the concepts of 'structure of feeling' and 'knowable community'.[1] The alliance of these methodological and analytical tools helps us to apprehend the active processes involved in the social and cultural changes and to clarify the textures of historical experience. As cultural categories, they have allowed us to reassess and to recontextualize novels as cultural constructions, putting into perspective what have been two torn halves: the great tradition of high, institutional, canonical culture; and the common, exterior culture, product of a democratization process of culture and society, a process which has connected human beings and the social, political and economic structures of the great arch of history.

Williams brought together what modern thought has separated in the relation between culture and society. The study of the literature and the analysis of the culture of a period are recurrent in Williams' critical work. His use of literary texts to exemplify the concept of 'knowable community', as well as the concept of 'structure of feeling' is one of his achievements. The latter allows Williams to examine the interrelation between areas of individual experience and social experience, allowing him also to examine interrelations between public and private processes and between historical formations and social structures, turning these active and communicable (John and Lizzie Eldridge 1994).

Considered by Michael Pickering (1997) as one of the most opaque concepts in cultural studies, structure of feeling has an inestimable value in the consideration of the relations between the personal and the social, between the affective and the institutional (Eagleton 1998: 28). Williams revised this concept while he was reflecting upon the nature of culture and social relations, and simultaneously established it as a theoretical problem and a practical question applied to liminal forms of experience. He articulated the relations between literature and the totality of the social experience by connecting the values and forms of expression, inherent to the internal structure of any literary text, with the experience of human beings in a certain time and place.

In 1954 (*Preface to Film*) Williams had already addressed the relations between the conventions of artistic communication and the lived experience of an epoch, arguing that there is a close connection between structure of feeling and the notion of change operated by younger generations, but it was in 1958 that the concept gained theoretical substance. In *Culture and Society, 1780–1950* (Williams 1958), he established a contrast between the feelings and the quality of peoples' lives in relation to formal and ideological systems of society – *structure of feeling* seemed to equal the ideology of a period. In *The Long Revolution* (Williams 1961), he developed and broadened the concept, leaving behind the artistic sphere, heading towards the social one. From a notion of fixed, explicit, linked to the past concept, he reaches a definition that refuses homogeneity of social and discursive practices. Seven years later, in *Drama from Ibsen to Brecht* (Williams 1968), he took a step further in that structure of feeling was now to be understood as the formation of a new way of understanding ourselves and the world: the structured set of answers an author finds for a vision of himself and the world.

Among the varied revisions of the concept one conclusion is clear: structure of feeling refers to the agency of the subject in the transformation of cultural practices. Williams' concept is centred on relational experience, on continuity, on recognition of an experience shared by different elements. Structure of feeling has become both a theoretical proposition in the understanding of the culture of a period and an analytical tool which allows establishing communication between the object and the subject.

This twofold quality of the concept frames criticism on literature and opens the path to critical work on the novel, to studies on relational experience and discursive alliances. The double articulation between culture and discourse and the need to understand literature *in* society (O'Connor 1989: 68) led to Williams' proposition that 'most novels are in some sense a knowable community' (Williams [1970] 1984b).[2] He was sure that, taking the readers beyond itself themselves (Young 1996), literature codifies patterns and structures of feeling which carry the marks of the processes that produce them. Literature is the only form able to represent the precipitates

of the social experiences in solution. Williams' proposition allows us to understand that, constituting itself a social presence in the world, literature produces meanings and represents realities. Refusing its constraining role as an absolute value of art and of culture, Williams focussed on literature as discourse, as a form of signification within the real, effective conditions of its production.

Underlying the project of the knowable community is Williams' cultural theory, which questions the tradition inaugurated in English thought by Coleridge and Carlyle and continued by Arnold. Williams' contribution to the development of a theory of culture springs not from a high, elitist, formal, abstract and absolute culture, creator of a hegemonic sense of the dominant classes, but rather from a theory of relationships between elements in a whole way of life, claiming for the reinsertion of peoples' everyday lives into the wholeness of that way of life.

To read novels as knowable communities is to study the relationships of the self and the others and to study the means by which those relationships are communicated: the use of language that is made, the methods and conventions. It is a question of strategy in discourse (O'Connor 1989: 68); a practical mode to describe the changes in the contexts of experience, the answers and the ways they communicate: the subjects and the forms of communication (Williams [1968] 1973d: 20).

A knowable community is a community with no other existence than the one of its shared common space of the literary text. Such invention is the product of the writer's consciousness and capacity to trigger processes of affective investment which, in turn, allow the readers to perceive that space as a recognizable community of relationships and experience. Consequently, to create a knowable community is to create a space of communication of experiences: the experience of the composition of the social formation and the experience of the subjects involved in the communication. In the material practice of the texts, we find the feelings and values lived and shared in the social experience of the group. Thus, literature creates a sense of community between different elements of a text and between those elements and the readers.

Separated by an interval of three years, Williams redefined and revized his own proposition: first, he vindicated the new and flourishing generation of writers mediating between 1840 and 1920, claiming that they elevated the novel to a major form of artistic and cultural expression and brought to the fictional universe a new consciousness, a consciousness derived from the changes that were occurring in society.[3] These changes were, according to Williams, the product of a long process initiated not only by the Industrial Revolution, but also by the democratic revolution and urban development. Secondly, he attributed great importance to the dynamic relationship between reader, text and writer, thus opening conditions of possibility for critical thought on the novel as a shared discursive strategy.

Tracing a history of the *English Novel from Dickens to Lawrence* (1970), Williams made a crucial contribution to the study of the novel which would figure prominently in the narrative of cultural studies. Explaining this new form of writing novels as an answer to the 'crisis of experience', he claimed that it explored the substance and meaning of community (Williams [1970] 1984b: 11) and answered questions such as: What is a community? What has it been and what will it be? How does it relate to individuals? How do men and women see the shape of a society? (ibid.: 12).

The 1840s saw a revival of the novel, now representing the common experiences of common people. It became democratic, nourishing the avid needs and tastes of a vaster and vaster reading public. The writers drew creative impetus from the crisis and translated it into creative work, into discovery, transformation and innovation. This impetus triggered the articulation of new feelings, new people and new relationships; of new rhythms, unknown until then (ibid.: 11). The representation of particular and signifying social relationships created new maps of meaning (Pina 2000), and defined society in knowable ways.

To know a community and to find a convincingly experienced position from which this community can be known was one of the major developments of the English novel of the nineteenth century. This development created new realities in its double articulation between the known and the knowable – concepts which are, on the one hand, in opposition to the immediate experience and its description, and, which have, on the other hand, a dialectic relation where the knowable goes beyond the limits of the known, beyond the mere description and interpretation of known and absolute experiences.

Establishing a community as an epitome of direct relations, of face-to-face contacts, the novelists found the material to create a fiction of personal relationships (Williams [1970] 1984b: 17). This emphasis on the study and the exploration of the substance and meanings of the community was justified because in the first decades of the Industrial Revolution the meaning of living in a community was uncertain and disturbing.

> The making of a community is always an exploration, for consciousness cannot precede creation, and there is no formula for unknown experience. A good community, a living culture, will, because of this, not only make room for but actively encourage all and any who can contribute to the advance in consciousness which is the common need. Wherever we have started from, we need to listen to others who started from a different position. We need to consider every attachment, every value, with our whole attention; for we do not know the future, we can never be certain of what may enrich it; we can only, now, listen to and consider whatever may be offered and take up what we can.
>
> (Williams [1958] 1961b: 320)

Assuming the emergence of a new kind of consciousness in the 1840s, originating in new experiences, Williams argued that the relations between elements in the whole way of life changed as well. Society no longer framed the individual; the individual itself became a form of cultural agency, comparable to an actor or a character (Williams [1970] 1984b: 13). This argument substantiated Williams' project of reading novels as knowable communities and enabled him to make it an intrinsic part of the social history of the nineteenth century.

In 1973, in *The Country and the City*, Williams followed a different intellectual orientation and redefined the concept, transforming it from a problem of object into a problem with a subjective face. Knowable community was then not only defined in terms of the objects which can be knowable, it was also a function of the subjects, of the observers – of what they need and desire to be known (ibid.: 17).

A knowable community became the product of the authors' consciousness, ideology and critical positioning, of their selection of what has to be said explicitly and what remains implicit, left in the margins. Williams argued that the path to the knowable has to be opened by the immediate experience of actions and relationships. In other words, it has to be opened by means of the active and democratic participation in the whole way of life. The opening of knowable relationships is connected to the understanding of language as a window to and from the world.

Language contains the cultural, intellectual and literary tradition and has the capacity of renovation and reassessment originating in experience (Williams [1958] 1961b: 308). As a constitutive historical and social element of human life it enables, in the material process of signification, the production of commonly shared meanings and ideas. To understand that there is a common language and a common culture is to realize the double articulation of the known and the knowable. It is an understanding based on the premise that everything that is founded on acquired social and cultural heritage, during processes of social interaction and relationship, is known; whereas all that depends on the experience of the moment and on the expectations of the experience of the future can only be knowable.

As new experiences and changes are expressed by means of language, understanding language and culture not only as constitutive, familiar and known human processes, but also as growth, change and creativity, we open possibilities to the known and to the knowable. It is of vital importance for culture (Williams [1958] 1961b: 309) that the common language knows no decline, does not lose richness or flexibility; it always has to be able to express new experiences and to clarify changes. In the knowable we not only find the theme, yet unknown since the consciousness of the moment never precedes the act of creation, but also the individual's capacity to communicate, to make that experience knowable to the other(s).

Relationships and communication are integral parts of the complex social organization and are even more important when the individuals involved in these relations share the community of process. The knowable is based on the interactivity of communication, where the creative act of the artists is but the process of communicating an organized experience to others. Only the author's capacity to communicate knowable experiences to the readers enables the tripartite relationship between author, text and reader as a lived and shared experience.

> To succeed in art is to convey an experience to others in such a form that the experience is actively re-created – not 'contemplated', not 'examined', not 'passively' received, but by response to the means, actually lived through, by those to whom it is offered.
>
> (Williams [1961] 1965b: 51)

Accepting that art represents the social character of the experience, we should also accept that it creates new perceptions and responses through which the knowable community develops and generates the consciousness of new and different structures of feeling (ibid.: 86).

> One generation may train its successor, with reasonable success, in the social character or the general cultural patterns, but the new generation will have its own structure of feeling, which will not appear to have come 'from' anywhere. For here, most distinctly, the changing organization is enacted in the organism: the new generation responds in its own way to the unique world it is inheriting, taking up many continuities, that can be traced, and reproducing many aspects of the organization, which can be separately described, yet feeling its whole life in certain ways differently, and shaping its creative response into a new structure of feeling.
>
> (ibid.: 65)

Giving form to new structures of feeling, art articulates dominant and hegemonic pressures. It articulates the residual values of the previous generation with the emergent institutions and formations. Each new generation, each new present, each new experience contains an emergent character; it comprises new meanings, values and practices, new relations in a continuum of creation (Williams 1977). The search for new forms or for adaptations of forms that can articulate what is not yet articulated, what is pre-emergent, becomes the knowable community. Between 1840 and 1920, novels and novelists created an alternative narrative and gave voice to different, varied and new people, fighting against the hegemonic power.

The project of reading novels as knowable communities is a cultural proposition which points to the simultaneous consideration of society and

culture as a means of interpretation of the common experience of human beings. It comprises a reading formation based on a discursive strategy of interaction between the 'culturally activated text' and the 'culturally activated reader' (Bennett: 2007), where text and reader are inscribed and structured by social, ideological and institutional relationships, as Bennett explains:

> If we study real relations, in any actual analysis, we reach the point where we see that we are studying a general organization in a particular example, and in this general organization there is no element that we can abstract and separate from the rest. It was certainly an error to suppose that values or art-work could be adequately studied without reference to the particular society within which they were expressed, but it is equally an error to suppose that the social explanation is determining, or that the values and works are mere by-products. We have got into the habit, since we realized how deeply works or values could be determined by the whole situation, in which they are expressed, of asking about these relationships in a standard form: 'what is the relation of this art to this society?' But 'society', in this question is a specious whole. If the art is part of the society, there is no solid whole, outside it, to which, by the form of our question, we concede priority. To study the relations adequately we must study them actively, seeing all the activities as particular and contemporary forms of human energy … It is then not a question of relating the art to the society, but of studying all the activities and their interrelations without any concession of priority to any one of them we may choose to abstract.
>
> (Williams [1961] 1965b: 61–2)

The cultural project of reading novels as knowable communities is Williams' contribution to a practice of cultural analysis where all the subjects involved in an imagined space of communication operate at different levels of experience and reality: the reality of the community, built and represented by all elements in solution in a whole way of life; the reality of the readers who aspire to make sense of what is said or created in an interpretative context where the information before their eyes can be placed, and also the reality of the authors in the poetic act of writing. It is a question of object, of evident fact, a question of physical expansion, and a question of consciousness and point of view. It is the representation of a new sense of society as not only the carrier, but also the creator and active destroyer of values and relationships (Williams [1970] 1984b: 26).

In the interviews given to the *New Left Review*, Williams expanded his argument, claiming that all novels that manage to attain an effective degree of social experience by manifesting immediate relationships are knowable communities.[4] They illustrate the particular form of a narrative complete in

time, a narrative which is no ideological illusion but a form of experience and of perception which relates to the common situation.

Williams' critical intervention and consideration of the novel as a knowable community stopped in the 1920s with D.H. Lawrence's earlier works which he considered to reveal 'a miracle of language … a man feeling with others, speaking in and with them' (Williams [1970] 1984b: 172).

He then turned to other media, such as television and film, probably because he acknowledged and regretted the fact that by reducing the text to a mere object, literary analysis had lost the specific social and historical agency of its creation (Williams 1989h).

O'Connor (1989) claims that Williams' argument has been understood better outside the departments of literature. In fact, Williams has left an undeniable legacy to anthropology and ethnography, but his important contribution to the study of literary texts still remains alive and meaningful.

Literature is still a vital category in our global, economy-driven contemporary world. Like our ancestors of the 1840s, ours is a time of crisis of experience; we are also living in a new world order. It seems that the long revolution is over, and we are living in a time of egocentrism, of violence and of collapse of the known structures of feeling. The sense of community is hard to sustain, modern man witnessed fragmentations, isolated himself from the others. But some contemporary novelists have been able to create novels which connect to a community of speech, where observation and participation (O'Connor 1989) are the fundamental lines of development of the narrative process. These novels maintain their quality as a privileged space of communication of experiences. In the contemporary panorama and under this critical perspective, one novel comes to my mind: *Saturday* by Ian McEwan.

The novel follows the successful London neurosurgeon Henry Perowne during one day, a day that starts early, witnesses a fire plane landing and continues with sounds of a demonstration against Blair and a meeting with the underclass, the violent thug Baxter.[5] It ends with a family reunion, with considerations on Perowne's dislike for literature, on the growth of his children and finally the disruption of his well-to-do, upper-class lifestyle when the house is broken into by criminals.

With *Saturday*, McEwan achieves an irrefutable position in the gallery of great novelists. In this novel, he is able to condense some of the major characteristics Williams traced in the construction of the novel as a knowable community.[6] His creative work leads characters and readers into a journey of discovery of new feelings, new rhythms and new relationships. Through his transformative and innovative narrative strategy, McEwan answers to the crisis of experience of our current society as he has that 'new consciousness that we again have an opportunity to make and remake ourselves, by a different kind of intervention' (Williams 1983f: 265). He is well aware that times are different. The postmodern world is made of evident

facts and evident identity. The postmodern human being is selfish, living isolated from others. Perowne and his family ignore those who do not belong to the same social and economic stratum, showing no sense of community.[7] This upper-middle class cosmopolitan family overlooks the underclass. But McEwan is well aware that a certain privileged lifestyle has to 'address itself to a modern *future* in which community may be imagined again' (Williams 1989j: 35). Only by knowing the self and the others are human beings able to become actual subjects in changing the conditions of possibility of new formations of community.

Perowne is then taken into a different stage of experience, a stage in which the author is both observer and participant: like Dickens, McEwan shares with his readers and with his protagonist the experience of the city and charts maps of meaning. He traces a knowable community, selecting what he wants to be seen and making known new structures of feeling. The meeting with Baxter reveals another world and another self with whom Perowne has to learn to relate. In the texture of the narrative, we find subjectivities in relation within a shared space of communication. Like Hardy, McEwan shows the underlying patterns of change, in this case of the London society post 9/11; he makes knowable the nature of the other's identity. Like Lawrence, McEwan operates a miracle of language and writes *with* experience (Williams [1970] 1984b) – author, text and readers share a community of speech.

In *Saturday*, we find an 'active mutual responsibility' (Eagleton 1998: 29) because McEwan speaks the same language as his character and his readers, crossing the border between the affective and the structural. If we consider that the knowable community has to do with the perception of the self and the others, we easily accept that this novel depends on the writer's capacity to find ways of understanding the place each one of us occupies in society. Creating valid and communicable ways of expressing experiences by means of artistic conventions and notations, the writer is involving the readers as cooperative critics in the task of making a knowable community.

When analysing *Saturday* as a knowable community, we have to consider the modes of how writer and readers create discursive strategies that are able to articulate configurations of practices (Grossberg 1997), conceived to define effective cultural relations. We have to consider that this analysis explores the modes these alliances define not only where and how individuals live specific practices, but also how they enable the comprehension of everyday life. The cultural construction of a knowable community is found in the authorial selection, exposition and interpretation of events, and in their representation. The centrality of the experiences produces a rearticulation of the relationship between text, writer and reader, in a dynamic process of discursive alliances.

Viewed from this critical stance, *Saturday* opens new possibilities to the imagined community, possibilities in the process and the strategies of

communication, and observed beyond themselves by the modes in which the readers read them, bringing their horizons of expectation to the communicable sphere of experience. The literary and cultural construction of a community is also a question of reception, where the readers try to find a common structure of meanings and of values, looking for the conditions of plausibility (Sinfield 1992) of the text, aiming at a better understanding of themselves and of the others.

Both writer and readers share the ideological production of interpretations of experiences which seem plausible to them, involving themselves in a continuous process of negotiation of the social reality. The knowable community is also a community of process, based on a common shared culture and language. The trust in a knowable world is based not only on the existing community between writer and theme but also on the relationship between writer and reader, communities and relationships which are established by means of a prose directly related to the common language of the world.

> Human community grows by the discovery of common meanings and common means of communication. Over an active range, the patterns created by the brain and the patterns materialized by a community continually interact. The individual creative description is part of the general process which creates conventions and institutions, through which the meanings that are valued by the community are shared and made active. This is the true significance of our modern definition of culture, which insists on this community of process … The ability to live in a particular way depends, ultimately on acceptance of this experience by others, in successful communication. Thus our descriptions of our experience come to compose a network of relationships, and all our communication systems, including the arts, are literally parts of our social organization. The selection and interpretation involved in our descriptions embody our attitudes, needs and interests, which we seek to validate by making them clear to others … Since our way of seeing things is literally our way of living, the process of communication is in fact the process of community: the sharing of common meanings and thence common activities and purposes; the offering, reception and comparison of new meanings, leading to the tensions and achievements of growth and change.
>
> (Williams [1961] 1965b: 54–5)

To conclude, we can say that the project of reading novels as knowable communities comprises a project of cultural construction based on Williams' refusal to consider the separation between culture and society. To understand that 'most novels are in some sense knowable communities' is to understand and work under the light of a cultural theory applied to the

study of literature, in an attempt to discover the nature of the organization which composes the relations between elements in a whole way of life.

Modernity has in part developed from the separation of culture and society, where the former has emerged as an answer and alternative to a new social reality, and as an activity separated from the latter. It was a consequence of new methods of production, of the kinds of personal and social relationships originating in new concepts of modern history. It aimed at creating a separate body of moral and intellectual activities above the social relations and everyday life.

Only by unlearning the dominant, hegemonic mode of culture, dislocating old constellations (Hall 1980b) can we learn to read novels as knowable communities, novels where we can find representations of the moral codes and common behaviour of all elements of society, which is, in turn, represented as a social organization that fully belongs to culture.

To read novels as knowable communities is not to hesitate between tenses (Williams 1991); it is to give a future tense to the imagination of the authors and of the readers. Making use of this cultural proposition, the critics will be able to know past structures of feeling in new ways and find new ways to give shape to alternative structures of feeling, uniting past, present and future tenses (Williams 1991). As active subjects in the process of communication and of the cultural construction, experience helps us to participate in the texts, to interpret them according to our own structures of feeling, to be ourselves within a cultural theory. Moreover, echoing Williams' lessons and practices from 50 years ago, when we consider novels as knowable communities we are rethinking literature as both a cultural representation of society and relationships and as the product of the artist's creative capacity of language.

Notes

1 For a full comprehension of the work of revision on the key concepts of *structure of feeling* see *Preface to Film* (1954); *Culture and Society* (1958), *The Long Revolution* (1961), *Drama from Ibsen to Brecht* (1968), *Marxism and Literature* (1977) and the interviews given to the *New Left Review* (1979) published in *Politics and Letters*; the concept of *knowable community* is mainly developed and revised in *The English Novel from Dickens to Lawrence* (1970) and *The Country and the City* (1973).

2 Williams first used the concept in an article on George Eliot: 'The knowable community in George Eliot's novels' (Williams 1969a).

3 Similar to Leavis, but grounded on a different political frame of mind and critique, Williams created his own great tradition in the English novel: Charles Dickens, the Brontë sisters, George Eliot, Thomas Hardy, Joseph Conrad and D. H. Lawrence. In all, Williams found different voices and new ways of creating novels as knowable communities.

4 Williams used the expression again, on 26 January 1987, in the W.D. Thomas Memorial Lecture entitled 'Country and city in the modern novel', at University College of Swansea.

5 Critics have pointed to the similarity of structure with Woolf's *Mrs Dalloway* (cf. review in *The New York Times* by Michiko Kakutani, 18 March 2005).
6 Cf. *The English Novel from Dickens to Lawrence* (Williams 1984b), where Williams identifies particular narrative strategies in each of the chosen novelists in the making of a knowable community.
7 In *The English Novel from Dickens to Lawrence* (Williams 1984b), Williams explains that, in Jane Austen, community means to belong to a class, based on selective, social recognition. At first, McEwan seems to engage with this strategy only to show its dangers.

Bibliography

Alanís, J. (2006) 'How much are you willing to risk? How far are you willing to go', *Cultural Studies < = > Critical Methodologies*, 6: 166–84.

Ali, T. (2005) *Street Fighting Days*, London and New York: Verso.

Altamirano, C. (1998) 'Raymond Williams 1921–88', *Punto de Vista* 33.

Althusser, L. (1971; 1st edn 1969) 'For Marx', in *Lenin and Philosophy*, New York: Monthly Review Press.

—— (1985) *For Marx*, London and New York: Verso.

Anker, E. (2005) 'Villains, victims and heroes: melodrama, media, and September 11', *Journal of Communication* 55(1): 22–37.

Arnold, M. (2009) 'Culture and anarchy', in Storey, J. (ed.) *Cultural Theory and Popular Culture*, 4th edn, London: Pearson.

Asad, T. (2003) *Formations of the Secular*, Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Assmann, A. (2006) 'The printing press and the Internet: from a culture of memory to a culture of attention', in Gentz, N. and Kramer, S. (eds) *Globalization, Cultural Identities, and Media Representations*, Albany: State of New York Press.

Bachelard, G. (1989) *La poétique de l'espace*, Paris: Presses Universitaires de France.

Bacon, F. (1858; 1st edn 1620) 'The new organon', in Spedding, J., Ellis, R.L. and Heath, D.D. (eds) *The Works of Francis Bacon, vol. IV: Translations of the Philosophical Works*, London: Longman.

Bate, J. (2000) *The Song of the Earth*, London: Picador.

Benjamin, W. (1968) *Illuminations*, New York: Harcourt Brace & World.

—— (2006) 'On the concept of history', in *Selected Writings Vol. 4, 1938–40* (trans. Jephcott, E. et al.), Cambridge, MA, and London: Belknap Press of Harvard.

Bennett, T. (2007) *Critical Trajectories, Culture, Society, Intellectuals*. Blackwell, Oxford.

Benthall, J. (ed.) (1972) *Ecology: The Shaping Enquiry*, London: Longman.

—— (ed.) (1973; 1st edn 1972) *Ecology: The Shaping Enquiry*, New York: Viking.

Berman, M. (1982) *All That Is Solid Melts Into Air*, New York: Simon and Schuster.

Bérubé, M.(1994) 'Bite size theory: popularizing academic criticism', in *Public access: Literary theory and American cultural politics*, London and New York: Verso.

Bloch, E. (1977) 'Non-synchronism and the obligation to its dialectics', *New German Critique* 11: 22–38.

Briggs, A. (1991) *Serious Pursuits: Communications and Education*, Champaign: University of Illinois Press.

Buckingham, D. (2003) *Media Education: Literacy, Learning and Contemporary Culture*, Cambridge: Polity Press.
Burchfield, R. (1976) 'A case of mistaken identity: *Keywords*', *Encounter* 46: 57–64.
Butler, J. (1999) *Gender Trouble*, London and New York: Routledge.
—— (2004) *Precarious Life: The Powers of Mourning and Violence*, London and New York: Verso.
Campbell, D. (1984) *The Unsinkable Aircraft Carrier*, London: Michael Joseph.
Cevasco, M. E. (1998) 'Raymond Williams and cultural studies: a Brazilian perspective', *Pretexts: studies in writing and culture* 7(2): 235–49.
—— (2000) 'Our best man', *Pretexts: literary and cultural studies*, 9(1): 119–23.
Chakrabarty, D. (2000) *Provincializing Europe*, Princeton: Princeton University Press.
—— (2002) *Habitations of Modernity*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
Chalmers, M. (1985) *Paying for Defence*, London: Pluto Press.
Clare, J. (1967; wr. *c*. 1832) 'Remembrances', in Robinson, E. and Summerfield, G. (eds) *Selected Poems and Prose of John Clare*, London: Oxford University Press.
Colley, L. (2003) 'I am the watchman', *London Review of Books* 20 November 2003: 16–17.
Connor, S. (1997) 'Raymond Williams's time', in Wallace, J., Jones, R., Nield, S. (eds), *Raymond Williams Now: Knowledge, Limits and the Future*, New York: St. Martin's Press.
—— (1998) 'Raymond Williams's time', *Key Words: A Journal of Cultural Materialism* 1: 12–27.
Conrad, J. (1980) *Heart of Darkness*, Harmondsworth: Penguin.
Coopey, R., Fielding, S. and Tiratsoo, N. (eds) (1993) *The Wilson Governments 1964–1970*, London: Pinter.
Cowan, K., and Valentine, G. (2006) *Tuned Out: The BBC's Portrayal of Lesbian and Gay People*, London: Stonewall.
Curran, J. (1990) 'The new revisionism in mass communication research: a reappraisal', *European Journal of Communication*, 5(2–3): 135–64.
Davies, Ioan (1995) *Cultural Studies and Beyond: Fragments of Empire*, London and New York: Routledge.
De Sousa Santos, B. (2002) *Toward a New Legal Common Sense*, London: Butterworths.
—— (2006) *The Rise of the Global Left: The World Social Forum and Beyond*, London and New York: Zed Books.
Denzin, N. K. (2003) *Performance Ethnography: Critical Pedagogy and the Politics of Culture*, London/Thousand Oaks/New Delhi: Sage.
Derrida, J. (1994) *Specters of Marx*, London and New York: Routledge.
Duff, P. (1971) *Left, Left, Left*, London: Allison and Busby.
Durst, R.K. (2006) 'Can We Be Critical of Critical Pedagogy?' *College Composition and Communication*, 57: 110–13.
Dutschke, G. (1996) *Wir hatten ein barbarisches, schönes Leben: Rudi Dutschke: Eine Biographie*, Cologne: Kiepenheuer & Witsch.
Dutschke, R. (2003) *Jeder hat sein Leben ganz zu leben: Die Tagebücher 1963–1979* (ed. Gretchen Dutschke) Cologne: Kiepenheuer & Witsch.
Dworkin, D.L. (1997) *Cultural Marxism and Postwar Britain: History, the New Left, and the Origins of Cultural Studies*, Durham, NC, and London: Duke University Press.

Dworkin, D.L. and Roman, L.G. (eds) (1993a) *Views beyond the Border Country: Raymond Williams and Cultural Politics*, London and New York: Routledge.

Dworkin, D.L. and Roman, L.G. (1993b) 'The cultural politics of location', in Dworkin, D.L. and Roman, L.G. (eds) *Views beyond the Border Country*, London and New York: Routledge.

Eagleton, T. (1988) 'Resources for a journey of hope: the significance of Raymond Williams', *New Left Review* 168: 3–11.

—— (1998) 'Raymond Williams, communities and universities', *Key Words: A Journal of Cultural Materialism*, 1: 28–34.

—— (2000) *The Idea of Culture*, Blackwell: Oxford.

Eldridge, J. and Eldridge, L. (1994) *Raymond Williams: Making Connections*. London and New York: Routledge.

Ellsworth, E. (1989) 'Why doesn't this feel empowering? Working through the repressive myths of critical pedagogy', *Harvard Educational Review*, 59: 297–324.

Engels, F. (1973) *Dialectics of Nature* (trans. Dutt., C.), New York: International Publishers.

Fassett, D.L. and Warren, J.T. (2006) *Critical Communication Pedagogy*, London/Thousand Oaks/New Delhi: Sage.

Faundez, A. and Freire, P. (1992; 1st edn 1985) *Learning to Question: A Pedagogy of Liberation*. Trans. Tony Coates. New York: Continuum.

Fieldhouse, R. (1993) 'Oxford and adult education', in Morgan, W.J. and Preston, P. (eds) *Raymond Williams: Politics, Education, Letters*, Houndmills: The Macmillan Press.

Fiske, J. (1993) *Power Plays – Power Works*, London and New York: Verso.

—— (1995) *Media Matters: Everyday Culture and Political Change*, London and Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Fiske, J. and Hartley, J. (2003; 1st edn 1978) *Reading Television*, London and New York: Routledge.

Foucault, M. (1997) 'What is enlightenment', in *Ethics, Subjectivity and Truth*, New York: New Press.

—— (2003) *Society Must Be Defended*, New York: Picador.

Freedman, L. (2002) '"A technological idiot"? Raymond Williams and communications technology', *Information, Communication & Society* 5(3): 425–42.

Freire, A.M.A. and Macedo, D. (2000) 'Introduction' in Freire, A.M.A. and Macedo, D. *The Paulo Freire Reader*, New York: Continuum.

Freire, P. et al.(1985) *Por uma pedagogia de pergunta*, Rio de Janeiro: Paz e Terra.

Freire, P. (1998) *Teachers as Cultural Workers: Letters to Those Who Dare Teach*, Boulder, CO: Westview Press.

—— (2000) *Pedagogy of the oppressed*. New York and London: Continuum.

Gallagher, C. (1995) 'Raymond Williams and cultural studies', in Prendergast, Ch. (ed.) *Cultural Materialism: On Raymond Williams*, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Gaonkar, D.P. (2001) 'On alternative modernities', in Gaonkar, D.P. (ed.) *Alternative Modernities*, Durham: Duke University Press.

Gergen, K. J. (1999) *An Invitation to Social Construction*, London/Thousand Oaks/New Delhi: Sage.

Gilbert, J. (2006) 'Cultural studies and anti-capitalism' in Hall, G. and Birchall, C. (eds) *New Cultural Studies: Adventures in Theory*, Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

Gilroy, P. (1987) *'There Ain't No Black in the Union Jack': The Cultural Politics of Race and Nation*, London: Hutchinson.
—— (2000) *Against Race*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
Giroux, H.A. (1992) 'Resisting difference: cultural studies and the discourse of critical pedagogy', in Grossberg L., Nelson, C. and Treichler, P. (eds) *Cultural Studies*, London and New York: Routledge.
—— (2003) *Public Spaces, Private Lives: Democracy Beyond 9/11*, Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.
—— (2004) 'Cultural studies and the politics of public pedagogy: making the political more pedagogical', *Parallax* 10(2): 73–89.
Goldmann, L. (1975) *Towards a Sociology of the Novel* (trans. Sheridan, A.), London and New York: Tavistock.
—— (1976) *Cultural Creation in Modern Society* (intr. Maryl, W.; trans. Grahl, B.), New York: Telos.
Gorak, J. (1988) *The Alien Mind of Raymond Williams*, Columbus: University of Missouri Press.
Göttlich, U. (1996) *Kritik der Medien: Reflexionsstufen kritisch materialistischer Medientheorien am Beispiel von Leo Löwenthal und Raymond Williams*, Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag.
—— (2004) 'Medienkultur', *Kulturbuch quadratur*, 5(5): 32–7.
—— (2006) 'Cultural studies und das Konzept der "mobilen Privatisierung" im Spiegel der Medien-und Öffentlichkeitskritik', in Becker, B. and Wehner, J. (eds) *Kulturindustrie Reviewed: Ansätze zur kritischen Reflexion der Mediengesellschaft*, Bielefeld: Transcript.
Gramsci, A. (1971) *Selections from the Prison Notebooks* (eds & trans. Hoare, Q. and Smith, G.N.), London: Lawrence & Wishart.
—— (2009; 4th edn) 'Hegemony, intellectuals, and the state', in Storey, J. (ed) *Cultural Theory and Popular Culture*, London: Pearson.
Gray, A. (2003) 'Cultural studies at Birmingham: the impossibility of critical pedagogy', *Cultural Studies*, 17: 767–82.
Grimes, K. M. (2005) 'Changing the rules of trade with global partnerships: the Fair Trade movement' in Nash, J. (ed.) *Social Movements*, Oxford: Blackwell.
Grossberg, L. (1997) 'Cultural studies, modern logics, and theories of globalisation', in McRobbie, A. (ed.) *Back to Reality? Social Experience and Cultural Studies*, Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press.
—— (2006) 'Does cultural studies have futures? Should it? (or What's the matter with New York?): Cultural studies, contexts and conjunctures', *Cultural Studies* 20 (1): 1–32.
—— (2007) 'Cultural Studies auf der Suche nach anderen Modernen', in Winter, R. (ed.) *Die Perspektiven der Cultural Studies. Der Lawrence Grossberg Reader*, Köln: Herbert von Halem.
Grossman, L. (2006) '*Time*'s person of the year: you', *Time*, 25 December 2006.
Guilherme, M. (2006) 'Is there a role for critical pedagogy in language/culture studies? An interview with Henry A. Giroux', *Language and Intercultural Communication*, 6(2): 163–75.
Habermas, J. (1963) *Strukturwandel der Öffentlichkeit*, Neuwied: Luchterhand.
—— (1981) *Theorie des kommunikativen Handelns, 2 Bände*, Frankfurt a.M.: Suhrkamp.

—— (1991; 1st edn 1962) *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society*, Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
Hall, S. (n.d.) 'Modernity and its others', unpublished manuscript.
—— (1973) 'Encoding and decoding in the television discourse' *CCCS Stencilled Occasional Paper*, 11.
—— (1977) 'Über die Arbeit des Centre for Cultural Studies', *Gulliver: Deutsch-Englische Jahrbücher* 2: 54–67.
—— (1980a) 'Cultural studies and the centre: some problematics and problems', in Hall, S., Hobson, D., Lowe, A. and Willis, P. (eds) *Culture, Media, Language*, London and New York: Routledge.
—— (1980b) 'Cultural Studies: two paradigms', *Media, Culture & Society* 2: 57–72.
—— (1989) 'Politics and letters', in Eagleton, T. (ed.) *Raymond Williams: Critical Perspectives*, Boston: Northeastern University Press.
—— (1990) 'The emergence of cultural studies and the crisis in the humanities', *October* 53: 11–23.
—— (1992) 'Cultural studies and its theoretical legacies', in *Cultural Studies*, ed. Grossberg, Lawrence et al., London and New York: Routledge.
—— (1995; 1st edn 1980) 'Cultural studies: two paradigms' in Munns, J. and Rajan, G. (eds) *A Cultural Studies Reader: History, Theory, Practice*, New York: Addison Wesley Longman.
—— (1997a) 'Culture and power: interview with Stuart Hall. Interviewed by Peter Osborne and Lynne Segal', *Radical Philosophy* 86: 25.
—— (1997b) 'Introduction', in Hall, S. (ed.), *Representation*, London/Thousand Oaks/New Delhi: Sage.
—— (2009; 4th edn) 'The rediscovery of ideology: return of the repressed in media studies', in Storey, J. (ed.) *Cultural Theory and Popular Culture*, London: Pearson.
Hall, S., Williams, R., and Thompson, E. (eds) (1967; repr. 1968) *1967 New Left May Day Manifesto*, London; Williams, R. (ed.) *May Day Manifesto 1968*.
Hardt, H. (1992) *Critical Communication Studies*, London and New York. Routledge.
Harootunian, H. (2000) *History's disquiet*, New York: Columbia University Press.
Head, D. (2002a) *The Cambridge Introduction to Modern British Fiction, 1950–2000*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
—— (2002b) 'Beyond 2000: Raymond Williams and the ecocritic's task', in Parham, J. (ed.) *The Environmental Tradition in English Literature*, Aldershot: Ashgate.
Hegel, G.W.F. (1975) *Encyclopedia of the Philosophical Sciences Vol 1: The Science of Logic* (trans. William Wallace), Oxford: Clarendon Press.
Higgins, J. (1995) 'Forgetting Williams', in Prendergast, Ch. (ed.) *Cultural Materialism: On Raymond Williams*, Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P.
—— (1999) *Raymond Williams: Literature, Marxism and Cultural Materialism*; London and New York: Routledge.
—— (ed.) (2001) *The Raymond Williams Reader*, Oxford: Basil Blackwell.
—— (2004) 'Superseding Williams: critical literacy in Williams and Said', *The Review of Education, Pedagogy and Cultural Studies* 26: 3–4.
—— (2008) 'Raymond Williams and deconstruction', in McQuillan, M. (ed.) *Deconstruction Reading Politics*, New York and Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
Higgins, J. (ed.) (2001) *The Raymond Williams Reader*, Oxford: Basil Blackwell.
Hoggart, R. (2004) *Mass Media in a Mass Society: Myth and Reality*, London and New York: Continuum.

Hörning, K.H. and Reuter, J. (eds) (2004) *Doing Culture: Neue Positionen zum Verhältnis von Kultur und sozialer Praxis*, Bielefeld: Transcript.
Inglis, F. (1993) *Cultural Studies*, Oxford: Blackwell.
—— (1995) *Raymond Williams*, London and New York: Routledge.
Inwood, M. (2003) *A Hegel Dictionary*, Oxford: Basil Blackwell.
Jakobson, R. (1960) 'Closing statement: linguistics and poetics', in Sebeok, T.A. (ed.) *Style in Language*, Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
Jameson, F. (2002) *A Singular Modernity*, London and New York: Verso.
Jardine, L. and Swindells, J. (1989) 'Homage to Orwell: the dream of a common culture, and other minefields', in Eagleton, T. (ed.), *Raymond Williams. Critical Perspectives*, Cambridge: Polity Press.
Jay, M. (1998) *Cultural Semantics: Keywords of Our Time* Amherst, MA: University of Massachusetts Press.
Jefferies, R. (1938; wr. 1883) 'On the Downs', in Looker, S.J. (ed.) *Jefferies' England: Nature Essays*, New York: Doubleday.
Jones, P. (2004) *Raymond Williams's Sociology of Culture. A Critical Reconstruction*, London: Palgrave.
Kahn, R. and Kellner, D. (2005) 'Internet subcultures and political activism' in Leistyna, Pepi (ed.) *Cultural Studies: From Theory to Action*, Oxford: Blackwell.
Kellner, D. (1989) *Critical Theory, Marxism and Modernity*, Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press.
—— (1995a) 'Media communications vs. cultural studies: overcoming the divide', *Communication Theory* 5(2): 162–77.
—— (1995b) *Media Culture: Cultural Studies, Identity and Politics between the Modern and the Postmodern*, London and New York: Routledge.
Kincheloe, J. L. and McLaren, P. (2005) 'Rethinking critical theory and qualitative research', in Denzin, N. K. and Lincoln, Y. S. (eds) *The Sage Handbook of Qualitative Research*, London/Thousand Oaks/New Delhi: Sage.
Klaus, H.G. (1983) 'Über Raymond Williams', in Williams, R. *Innovationen: Über den Prozesscharakter von Literatur und Kultur*, Frankfurt/M: Suhrkamp.
—— (2002) 'Material grounds: border and place in Raymond Williams's fiction', in Juraga, D. and Booker, M.K. (eds) *Socialist Cultures East and West: A Post-Cold War Reassessment*, Westport: Praeger.
Laclau, E. (1979) *Politics and Ideology in Marxist Theory*, London and New York: Verso.
Laclau, E. and Mouffe, C. (2001; 1st edn 1985) *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy*, London and New York: Verso.
—— (2009; 3rd edn) 'Marxism without apologies', in Storey, J. (ed.) *Cultural Theory and Popular Culture*, London: Pearson.
Large Door Productions (1988) *Raymond Williams: A Tribute*, Channel 4, 28 February 1988.
Lasch, C. (1979) *The Culture of Narcissism: American Life in an Age of Diminishing Expectations*, New York: Norton.
Leistyna, P. (ed.) (2005) *Cultural Studies. From Theory to Action*, Oxford: Blackwell.
Libération (2008) 'Vive la télé sans pub?' 13 February 2008, No. 8327: 1–4.
Lloyd, G. (2005) 'Education', in Bennett, T., Grossberg, L. and Morris, M. (eds) (2005) *New Keywords: A Revised Vocabulary of Culture and Society*, Malden, MA: Blackwell.
McGuigan, J. (1992) *Cultural Populism*, London and New York: Routledge.

McIlroy, J. (1990) 'Border country: Raymond Williams in adult education Part I', *Studies in the Education of Adults*, 22: 129–67.

—— (1991) 'Border country: Raymond Williams in adult education Part II,' *Studies in the Education of Adults* 23: 1–24.

—— (1993) 'Teacher, critic, explorer', in Morgan, W.J. and Preston, P. (eds) *Raymond Williams: Politics, Education, Letters*, Great Britain: The Macmillan Press.

McLuhan, M. (1998; 1st edn 1964) *Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man*, London: MIT Press.

McQuail, D. (1994) *Mass Communication Theory*, London/Thousand Oaks/New Delhi: Sage.

Marcuse, H. (2004; 1st edn 1937) 'Über den affirmativen Charakter der Kultur', in *Aufsätze aus der Zeitschrift für Sozialforschung 1934–1941, Schriften Band 3*, Lüneburg: zu Klampen.

Marx, K. (1976) *Capital, vol. 1*, Harmondsworth: Penguin.

Marx, K. and Engels, F. (1998) *The German Ideology*, New York: Prometheus Books.

Masterman, L. (1998) 'The media education revolution', in Hart, A. (ed.), *Teaching the Media: International Perspectives*, Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Maton K. and Wright, H.K. (2002) 'Returning cultural studies to education', *International Journal of Cultural Studies*, 5(4): 379–92.

May Day Manifesto Bulletin, issues 1–22/23, August 1967 – May/June 1970.

Meyrowitz, J. (1993) 'Images of media: hidden ferment – and harmony – in the field', *Journal of Communication* 43(3): 55–66.

Miermeister, Jürgen (1986) *Rudi Dutschke*, Reinbek bei Hamburg: Rowohlt.

Miles, R. and Phizacklea, A. (1984) *White Man's Country*, London: Pluto Press.

Milner, A. (2002) *Re-Imagining Cultural Studies: The Promise of Cultural Materialism*, London/Thousand Oaks/New Delhi: Sage.

Moraña, M. (eds) (2000) *Nuevas perspectivas desde, sobre AmÕrica Latina: el desafÚo de los estudios culturales*, Providencia, Santiago: Editorial Cuarto Propio; Instituto Internacional de Literatura Iberoamericana.

More, T. (1910; 1st ed. 1551) *Utopia, Book I* (trans. Robinson, R.), London: Dent.

Moriarty, M. (1995) '"The longest cultural journey": Raymond Williams and French theory', in Prendergast, Ch. (ed) *Cultural Materialism: On Raymond Williams*, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Morreale, S.P. and Pearson, J.C. (2008) 'Why communication education is important: the centrality of the discipline in the 21st century', *Communication Education*, 57(2): 224–40.

Mouffe, C. (2005) *On the Political*, London and New York: Routledge.

Mulhern, F. (1989) 'Towards 2000, or news from you-know-where', in Eagleton, T. (ed.) *Raymond Williams: Critical Perspectives*, Oxford: Polity.

National Communication Association (2008) *Communication Scholarship and the Humanities: A White Paper*, Washington, DC: NCA.

Neate, P. and Platt, D. (eds) (2006) *Culture is Our Weapon: AfroReggae in the Favelas of Rio*, London: Latin America Bureau.

Nelson, C. (1996) 'Always already cultural studies: academic conferences and a manifesto', in *What is Cultural Studies? A Reader*, Storey, J. (ed.) New York: Arnold.

Notes from Nowhere (eds) (2003) *We are Everywhere: The Irresistible Rise of Global Anticapitalism*, London and New York: Verso.

O'Brien, B. (2004) *Blogging America: Political Discourse in a Digital Nation*, Wilsonville, Or.: William, James & Co.

O'Connor, A. (1989) *Raymond Williams: Writing, Culture, Politics*, New York: Basil Blackwell.

Ong, W.J. (1982) *Orality and Literacy: The Technologizing of the Word*, London: Methuen.

Osborne, P. (1995) *The Politics of Time*, London and New York: Verso.

Parrinder, P. (1987) 'Utopia and negativity in Raymond Williams', in Parrinder, P. *The Failure of Theory*, Brighton: Harvester Press.

Patterson, A. (2005) 'Keywords: Raymond Williams and others', *English Studies in Canada (ESC)* 30(4): 66–80.

Pensky, M. (ed.) (2005) *Globalizing Critical Theory*, Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield.

Peters, J.D. (1999) *Speaking into the Air: A History of the Idea of Communication*, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

Pickering, M. (1997) *History, Experience and Cultural Studies*, London: Macmillan Press.

Piglia, R. (1965) 'Literatura y sociedad', *Literatura y sociedad*, Buenos Aires1 (Oct–Dec 1965), trans. Masnatta, C.

Pina, Á. (2000) 'Williams's cultural studies project, and Grossberg's critique: an exploration'. Online. Available at <http://www.comm.umn.edu/~grodman/cultstud/columns/ap-07-08-00.html> (accessed 20 March 2009).

Pinkney, T. (1991) *Raymond Williams*, Bridgend: Seren.

Precarias a la Deriva (n.d.) *A la deriva por los circuitos de la precariedad femenima*, Madrid: Traficantes de Suenos.

Probyn, E. (1993) *Sexing the Self*, London and New York: Routledge.

Pyle, F. (1993) 'Raymond Williams and the Inhuman Limits of Culture', in Dworkin, D.L. and Roman, L.G. (eds) *Views beyond the Border Country*, London and New York: Routledge.

Radhakrishnan, R. (1993) 'Cultural theory and the politics of location', in Dworkin, D.L. and Roman, L.G. (eds) *Views beyond the Border Country*, London and New York: Routledge.

Radway, J. (1992) 'Mail-order culture and its critics: the book-of-the-month club, commodification and consumption, and the problem of cultural authority', in Grossberg, L., Nelson, C., Treichler, P. A., Baughman, L., and Macgregor, Wise J. (eds) *Cultural Studies*, London and New York: Routledge.

Ramirez, J. (2008) 'The big picture', *Newsweek*, 10 November 2008.

Readings, B. (1996) *The University in Ruins*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Rizvi, F. (1993) 'Williams on democracy and the governance of education', in Dworkin, D. (ed.) *Views Beyond the Border Country: Raymond Williams and Cultural Politics*, London and New York: Routledge.

Roberts, M.M. (2002) '*Communication Education* and communication education: on editing and teaching', *Communication Education*, 51(4): 360–63.

Roman, L.G. (1993) '"On the ground" with anti-racist pedagogy and Raymond Williams's unfinished project', in Dworkin, D.L. and Roman, L.G. (eds) *Views beyond the Border Country*, London and New York: Routledge.

Rosenberg, B. and D.M. White (eds) (1957) *Mass Culture: The Popular Arts in America*, New York: The Free Press.

Roszak, T. (1978) *Person/Planet: The Creative Disintegration of Society*, New York: Anchor Press.

Rubin, D.L. (2002) 'Binocular vision for communication education', *Communication Education*, 51(4): 412–19.

Said, E. (1978) *Orientalism*, Harmondsworth: Penguin.

—— (1988) 'Edward W. Said', *The Nation*: 312–14.

—— (2002) 'In the shadow of the West', in Said, E., *Power, Politics and Culture: Interviews with Edward W. Said*, New York: Vintage.

Sarlo, B. (1979) 'Raymond Williams y Richard Hoggart: sobre cultura y sociedad', *Punto de Vista* 2(6).

—— (2002) 'The new Latin Americanism: cultural studies', paper presented at New Latin Americanism Conference (The University of Manchester), June 2002. Online. Available at <http://www.llc.manchester.ac.uk/clacs/events/past/Conferences/new-latinamericanism/NewLatinAmericanismConferencePapers/Sarlo/ >.

Schmidt, S.J. (1992a) 'Medien, Kultur: Medienkultur: Ein konstruktivistisches Gesprächsangebot', in Schmidt, S.J. (ed.) *Kognition und Gesellschaft: Der Diskurs des Radikalen Konstruktivismus 2*, Frankfurt/Main: Suhrkamp.

—— (1992b) 'Media, culture: media culture: a constructivist offer of conversation', *Poetics* 21: 191–210.

Schulze, G. (1995) 'Das Medienspiel', in Müller-Doohm, S. and Neumann-Braun, K. (eds) *Kulturinszenierungen*, Frankfurt/Main: Suhrkamp.

Schwarz, R. (1996) 'Un seminario de Marx', *Punto de Vista* 54.

Scott, D. (2004) *Conscripts of Modernity*, Durham: Duke University Press.

Shapiro, H. S. (1982) 'Society and education in the work of Raymond Williams: aspects of the theory of the long revolution', *Journal of Thought* 17(4): 39–55.

Shiach, M. (1995) 'A gendered history of cultural categories', in Prendergast, Ch. (ed.) *Cultural Materialism: On Raymond Williams*, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Sinfield, A. (1992) *Faultlines: Cultural Materialism and the Politics of Dissent Reading*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Skinner, Q. (1988) 'Language and social change', in Tully, J. (ed.) *Meaning and Context: Quentin Skinner and his Critics*, Cambridge: Polity Press.

Smith, D. (2008) *Raymond Williams: A Warrior's Tale*, Aberteifi, Caerfyrddin: Parthian.

Spivak, G.C. (2003) *The Death of a Discipline*, New York: Columbia University Press.

Sprague, J. (1999) 'The goals of communication education', in Vangelisti A.L., Daly, J.A. and Friedrich, G.W. (eds) *Teaching Communication: Theory, Research and Methods*, Mahavah: Lawrence Erlbaum.

—— (2002; 1st edn 1990) 'The goals of communication education', in Vangelisti, A. L., Daly, J. A. and Friedrich, G.W. (eds) *Teaching Communication: Theory, Research, and Methods*, Mahwah: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Starr, A. (2005) *Global Revolt: A Guide to the Movements Against Globalisation*, London and New York: Zed Books.

Steele, T. (1996) 'Book reviews: Raymond Williams: our best man', *Studies in the Education of Adults*, 28.

—— (2008; 1st edn 1996) 'Book reviews: Raymond Williams: our best man', *Studies in the Education of Adults*, 28; National Communication Association, *Communication Scholarship and the Humanities: A White Paper*, Washington, D.C.: NCA: 2–3.
Steiner, G. (1961) *The Death of Tragedy*, New York: Alfred A. Knopf.
Stevenson, N. (1997) 'Rethinking human nature and human needs: Raymond Williams and mass communications', in Wallace, Jones, J.R. and Nield, S. (eds), *Raymond Williams Now*, New York: St. Martin's Press.
Storey, J. (1993) *An Introductory Guide to Cultural Theory and Popular Culture*, Athens/GA: University of Georgia Press.
—— (ed.) (1996) *What is Cultural Studies? A Reader*. New York: Arnold
—— (2001) 'The social life of opera', in *European Journal of Cultural Studies* 6(1): 5–35.
—— (2002) 'Expecting rain: opera as popular culture', in Collins, J. (ed.) *High-Pop*, Oxford: Blackwell.
—— (2006) 'Inventing opera as art in nineteenth-century manchester' *International Journal of Cultural Studies*, 9(4): 435–56.
—— (2009a) *Cultural Theory and Popular Culture*, London: Pearson.
—— (2009b; 4th edn) 'Rockin' hegemony: West Coast rock and America's war in Vietnam', in Storey, J. (ed.) *Cultural Theory and Popular Culture*, London: Pearson.
Suoranta, J. and Vadén, T. (2007) 'From social to socialist media: the critical potential of the wikiworld', in McLaren, P. and Kincheloe, J.L. (eds) *Critical Pedagogy: Where Are We Now?* New York: Peter Lang.
Takeuchi, Y. (2005), *What is Modernity?* (trans. Richard Calichman), New York: Columbia.
Thomas, C. (2005) *Border Crossing: The Journey of Raymond Williams*, BBC4, 26 January 2005.
Thompson, D. (1983) *Over Our Dead Bodies*, London: Virago.
Thompson, E.P. (1968) *The Making of the English Working Class*, Harmondsworth: Penguin.
Tribune, 28 April 1967.
Viswanathan, G. (1993) 'Raymond Williams and British colonialism: the limits of metropolitan cultural theory', in Dworkin, D.L. and Roman, L.G. (eds) *Views beyond the Border Country*, London and New York: Routledge.
Volosinov, V.N. (1986; 1st edn 1973) *Marxism and the Philosophy of Language*; trans. Matejka, L. and Titunik, I. R., Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
Wall, D. (2005) *Babylon and Beyond: The Economics of Anti-Capitalist, Anti-Globalist and Radical Green Movements*, London: Pluto Press.
Walton, P. and Hall, S. (1972) 'Introduction', in Hall, Stuart and Walton, Paul (eds) *Situating Marx*, London: Human Context Books.
Williams, D. (2003) *Who Speaks for Wales?*, University of Wales Press.
Williams, J. (1992) 'Postscript', in Williams, R. *People of the Black Mountains, Vol. II*, London: Paladin.
Williams, R. (1947) 'Some experiments in literature teaching', *Rewley House Papers* 11: 9–15.
—— (1948) 'A note on Mr Hoggart's appendices' *Adult Education* 21: 96–8.
—— (1953a) 'Film as a tutorial subject', *Rewley House Papers* 3:2: 27–37; reprinted in McIlroy, J. and Westwood, S. (eds) (1993) *Border Country: Raymond Williams in Adult Education*. Leicester: National Institute of Adult and Continuing Education.
—— (1953b) 'The teaching of public expression', *The Highway*, April: 42–8.

—— (1958) *Culture and Society, 1780–1950*, London and New York: Columbia University Press.
—— (1959) 'The press and popular education', *The Highway*: 183–88.
—— (1961a) 'The common good', *Adult Education*, 34: 192–99.
—— (1961b; 1st edn 1958) *Culture and Society, 1780–1950*. Harmondsworth: Penguin.
—— (1961c) *The Long Revolution*, New York: Columbia University Press.
—— (1961d) *The Long Revolution*, Westport: Greenwood Press.
—— (1961e) *The Long Revolution*, London: Chatto & Windus.
—— (1962; 3rd edn 1976) *Communications*, Harmondsworth: Penguin.
—— (1963a; 1st edn 1958) *Culture and Society*, Harmondsworth: Penguin.
—— (1963b) 'What Kind of Education?', *The Listener* 70: 91.
—— (1965a; 1st edn 1961). *The Long Revolution*, Harmondsworth: Pelican.
—— (1965b, 1st edn 1961) *The Long Revolution*. Harmondsworth: Penguin.
—— (1966) *Modern Tragedy*, Stanford: Stanford University Press.
—— (1967; 1st edn 1962) *Communications, Rev. edn*, New York: Barnes & Noble.
—— (1968; 1st edn 1962) *Communications*, Harmondsworth: Pelican.
—— (1968) *May Day Manifesto*, Harmondsworth: Penguin.
—— (1969a) 'The knowable community in George Eliot's novels', *Novel* 2: 255–68.
—— (1969b) 'On reading Marcuse', *Cambridge Review* May 30: 366–8.
—— (1971a) 'Downhill to Dutschke', *The Nation* Feb 15: 210–12.
—— (1971b) 'Dutschke and Cambridge', *Cambridge Review* Jan 29: 94–95.
—— (1971c) 'Literature and sociology: in memory of Lucien Goldmann', *New Left Review* 67: 3–18.
—— (1973a) 'Base and superstructure in Marxist cultural theory', *New Left Review* 82: 3–16.
—— (1973b) *The Country and the City*, London: Chatto & Windus.
—— (1973c) *The Country and the City*, St Albans: Paladin.
—— (1973d; 1st edn 1968) *Drama from Ibsen to Brecht*, Harmondsworth, Penguin.
—— (1974) 'Communications as cultural science', *Journal of Communication*, 24: 17–25.
—— (1976a; 1st edn 1962) *Communications*, Harmondsworth: Penguin.
—— (1976b) 'Developments in the sociology of culture', *Sociology* 10: 497–506.
—— (1976c) *Keywords: A Vocabulary of Culture and Society*, London: Fontana.
—— (1977) *Marxism and Literature*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
—— (1979a; 1st edn 1958) *Culture and Society, 1780–1950*, Harmondsworth: Penguin.
—— (1979b) *The Fight for Manod*, London: Chatto & Windus.
—— (1979c) 'The growth and role of the mass media', in Gardner, C. (ed.) *Media, Politics and Culture*, London: Macmillan.
—— (1979d) *Politics and Letters: Interviews with* New Left Review. London: New Left Books.
—— (1979e) *Politics and Letters: Interviews with* New Left Review, London and New York: Verso.
—— (1979f) *Politics and Letters: Interviews with* New Left Review, Thetford, Northfolk: Lowe and Brydone Printers Limited.
—— (1980a; 1st edn 1973) 'Base and superstructure in Marxist cultural theory', in *Problems in Materialism and Culture*, London and New York: Verso.
—— (1980b; 1st edn 1972) 'Ideas of nature', in *Problems in Materialism and Culture*, London and New York: Verso.

—— (1980c) *Problems in Materialism and Culture*, London and New York: Verso.
—— (1981a) 'Communication technologies and social institutions', in Williams, R. (ed.) *Contact: Human Communication and Its History*, London: Thames & Hudson.
—— (1981b) *Culture*, London and Glasgow: Fontana.
—— (1982) *Sociology of Culture*, New York: Shocken.
—— (1983a) *Cobbett*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.
—— (1983b; 1st edn 1976) *Keywords: A Vocabulary of Culture and Society*. London: Flamingo.
—— (1983c; 1st edn 1976) *Keywords: A Vocabulary of Culture and Society*. London: Oxford University Press.
—— (1983d; 1st edn 1976) *Keywords: A Vocabulary of Culture and Society*, London and Glasgow: Fontana.
—— (1983e) 'Marx on Culture', in Williams, R., *What I Came To Say*, London: Hutchinson Radius
—— (1983f) *Towards 2000*, London: Chatto and Windus.
—— (1984a; 1st edn 1981) 'Crisis in English Studies' in *Writing in Society*, London and New York: Verso.
—— (1984b; 1st edn 1970) *The English Novel from Dickens to Lawrence*. London: Hogarth.
—— (1985a; 1st edn 1973) *The Country and the City*, London: Hogarth.
—— (1985b; 1st edn 1983) *Towards 2000*, Harmondsworth: Penguin.
—— (1987) 'Country and city in the modern novel', University College of Swansea.
—— (1989a) 'Communications and community', in Gable, R. (ed.) *Resources of Hope: Culture, Democracy and Socialism*, London and New York: Verso.
—— (1989b; 1st edn 1958) 'Culture is ordinary', in *Resources of Hope: Culture, Democracy, and Socialism*, London and New York. Verso.
—— (1989c; 1st edn 1986) 'The future of cultural studies', in *The Politics of Modernism: Against the New Conformists* (ed. Pinkney, T.), London and New York: Verso.
—— (1989d; 1st edn 1968) 'The idea of a common culture', in *Resources of Hope: Culture, Democracy, and Socialism*, London and New York. Verso.
—— (1989e; 1st edn 1983) 'Marx on culture', in *What I Came to Say*, London: Hutchinson Radius.
—— (1989f) *The Politics of Modernism: Against the New Conformists*, ed. Pinkney, T., London and New York: Verso.
—— (1989g) *Raymond Williams on Television: Selected Writings*, ed. O'Connor, A., London and New York: Routledge.
—— (1989h) *Resources of Hope: Culture, Democracy, and Socialism*, London and New York: Verso.
—— (1989i; 1st ed. 1982) 'Socialism and ecology', in Williams, R. *Resources of Hope: Culture, Democracy, Socialism* (ed. Robin Gable), London and New York: Verso.
—— (1989j) 'When was modernism?', in *The Politics of Modernism: Against the New Conformists* (ed. Pinkney, T.), London and New York: Verso.
—— (1989k) 'The uses of cultural theory', in Pinkney T. (ed.) *The Politics of Modernism: Against the New Conformists*, London and New York: Verso
—— (1990a; 1st edn 1987) 'Foreword to 1987 edition', in Williams, R. *Culture and Society*, London: Hogarth.
—— (1990b; 1st edn 1989) *People of the Black Mountains, Vol. I: The Beginning*, London: Paladin.

—— (1990c; 1st edn 1975) *Television: Technology and Cultural Form*, London and New York: Routledge.
—— (1991; 1st edn 1983) *Writing in Society*, London and New York: Verso.
—— (1992; 1st edn 1961) *The Long Revolution*, London: Hogarth.
—— (1993; 1st edn 1973) *The Country and the City*, London: Hogarth, 1993.
—— (1997; 1st ed. 1958) 'Culture is ordinary', in Gray, A. and McGuigan, J. (eds) *Studying Culture: An Introductory Reader*, London and New York: Arnold.
—— (2001; 1st edn 1973) 'Prefatory note: Lucien Goldmann and Marxism's alternative tradition', in Higgins, John (ed.) *The Raymond Williams Reader*, Oxford: Basil Blackwell.
—— (2003) *Television: Technology and Cultural Form* (ed. Williams, E.), London and New York: Routledge.
—— (2006; 1st edn 1961) 'The analysis of culture', in Storey, J. (ed.) *Cultural Theory and Popular Culture*, London: Pearson.
Williams, R. and Orrom, M. (1954) *Preface to Film*. London: Film Drama.
Winograd, M. and Hais, M.D. (2008) *Millennial Makeover: MySpace, YouTube, and the Future of American Politics*, New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press.
Winter, R. (2001) *Die Kunst des Eigensinns: Cultural Studies als Kritik der Macht*, Weilerswist: Velbrück Wissenschaft.
—— (2005) 'Critical pedagogy' in Ritzer, G. (ed.) *Encyclopedia of Social Theory, Vol. I*, Thousand Oaks/London/New Delhi: Sage.
Winter, R. and Zima, P. V. (eds) (2007) *Kritische Theorie heute*, Bielefeld: transcript.
Woodhams, S. (1999) 'Adult education and the history of cultural studies', *Changing English*, 6: 237–49.
—— (2001) *History in the Making*, London: Merlin Press.
Worsley, P. (1967; 1st edn 1964) *The Third World*, London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson.
Wright, H.K. (1998) 'Dare we de-centre Birmingham? Troubling the "origin" and trajectories of cultural studies', *European Journal of Cultural Studies* 1(1): 33–56.
Young, R. J. C. (1996) 'The dialectics of cultural criticism', *Angelaki* 2:2: *Authorizing Culture*: 9–24.
Ziegler, J. (2005) *Die neuen Herrscher der Welt und ihre globalen Widersacher*, Munich: Goldmann.

Index

Page references to endnotes will have the letter 'n' following the number. 'RW' stands for Raymond Williams