
Abstracts

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Abstracts

*Michał Gulik,
Samuel Norwak*
**What's Left of
Cultural Studies?
Engaged Theory
Towards Materialism
and Posthumanities**

Key words: British cultural studies, posthumanities, materialism, theory, speculative realism.

The article is an attempt to position the British cultural studies tradition within contemporary academic debate. Although “cultural studies” is being used as a very broad term to describe theories situated between critical sociology, literary theory, media studies and philosophy, the authors point to the Birmingham School as the foundation of what subsequently evolved into the contemporary Theory. Drawing on the classics from CCCS, the article presents current theoretical discourses used to reinvigorate cultural studies and seeks new possibilities within posthumanities and speculative realism (object oriented-philosophy).

Michał Wróblewski
**Churchgoers as
Counter-Hegemonic
Resources. The
Cross Dispute
and the Theory of
Cultural Hegemony**

Key words: hegemony, ideology, common sense, Smolensk plane crash, Gramsci.

The first part of the text reconstructs the key elements of Birmingham school theory of culture in the context of Gramsci's conception of hegemonic power. The second part of the text focuses on applying the above mentioned interpretative tools to the selected case study – events which took place in Krakowskie Przedmieście after the Smolensk plane crash. The main purpose is to show how “the cross conflict” can be understood as a routine hegemonic practice. I will focus on: the role of the Polish Catholic Church in constructing hegemonic power; defenders of the cross as a counter-hegemonic resource; “the cross conflict” in the context of other “culture wars” which took place in Poland; the role of religion as a way of constructing resistance in symbolic realm.

Jacek Drozda
**Emancipatory
 Paradigm? On the
 Possibility of a New
 Political Turn in
 the Polish Cultural
 Studies Inspired by
 the CCCS**

Key words: cultural studies, Marxism, politics, critique, neoliberalism.

The intellectual tradition of the “Birmingham school” is without a doubt one of the fundamental ingredients of Polish cultural studies. Nevertheless, it had been inscribed into the Polish leg of this complex discipline in a very specific, sometimes distorted manner. This text explores the political dimension of cultural studies and their potential as a useful critical approach in the epoch of neoliberal hegemony. In spite of the fact that British cultural studies of the CCCS (Centre of Contemporary Cultural Studies) tradition and Polish academic approaches to modern culture had developed in very different political and social conditions and there had been very few, if any, direct interactions between them, they share many ideas. Today, the depoliticisation of Polish humanities, although not overwhelming, is remarkable. In the time of a multilayered crisis, researching culture should not be devoted only to the “politics of pleasure” but also to the relation between the contemporary politics, economics and culture in general. In this essay, the author proposes one of the potential ways of exit from this problematic situation which is based on juxtaposing and re-examining the scientific and political heritage of the cultural studies, some elements of Polish anthropology, Marxism and their postmodern re-interpretations. It takes form of an open framework, the “emancipatory paradigm”. New look at the CCCS tradition is proposed as a tool that enables the recapturing of crucial elements of political critique such as class analysis which has been almost abandoned by the practitioners of Polish cultural studies due to its historical burden generated by the vulgarised Marxism under the communist regime.

Arkadiusz Nyzio
**British Cultural
 Studies and Polish
 Politicophobia**

Key words: culture, politics, cultural studies, Poland, III RP.

Despite considerable change over recent years, British cultural studies and the work of the Birmingham Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies, the very cradle of this discipline, remain on the peripheries of Polish cultural studies. While the causes of this remain under debate, the author deduces that one of them is of

Aldona Kobus
**The Study of
 Popular Culture
 in Anglocentric
 Perspective**

utmost importance: the aversion to politics and politicians, observable in the Polish public discourse since 1989, which has amounted to a politicophobia. This phenomenon makes it difficult to accept “an ‘engaged’ set of disciplines”, as Stuart Hall put it. The author argues that overcoming this barrier is one of the key pieces of the development of cultural studies in Poland.

Key words: hegemony, pop culture, pleasure, reception, new media studies.

This essay considers the development of new media studies in the context of American academy as a result of transposition of ideas and categories central for British cultural studies made by John Fiske. It views Fiske’s theory of popular culture as mitigation of the class conflict dynamic that drives former concept of culture, especially Frankfurt School and Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies. Fiske changed culture studies from social criticism to text-based criticism and as a result he undermined the sense of counter-hegemony that he connected to all popular culture. The consequences of popularization of his conception, perceived as a continuation of CCCS studies, changed culture studies into studies of reception, shifting from ideology as a central category to pleasure. In the end culture studies has been depoliticized by the privileging of pleasure and confused active reception with political activity, seeking subversion in the acts of individual reception mostly represented by fan studies.

Mateusz Felczak
**The Objects’ Pleasure
 of Subjectivity. The
 Heritage of British
 Cultural Studies,
 Speculative Realism
 and Video Games**

Key words: video games, object-oriented ontology, British Cultural Studies, popculture.

The article deals with the subject of computer games seen from two perspectives: British cultural studies and speculative realism, represented by Graham Harman and Quentin Meillassoux. The author argues that video games are located in the area of interest between the anti-anthropocentric approach of object-oriented ontology, and pop-cultural approach according to the British cultural studies. The article analyzes the status of various objects present in computer games (such as tools to be found in digital environments, protagonists and players

Witold Filar Disco Polo Phenomenon and Polish Popular Music

themselves) and draws the conclusion that all the relations between them are of equal importance to the status of video games as pop-cultural artifacts in the modern society.

Key words: disco polo, popular music, folklore, economic transformation after 1989.

This article describes the cultural phenomenon of disco polo music from the perspective of post-structural cultural studies. Disco polo isn't only a genre of popular music, but also a cultural practice which has had a strong impact on sociocultural life in Poland of 1990s. The article explores the influence of popular culture on society: referring to the history of disco polo and characteristics of the political transformation in Poland, the author analyzes relations between culture and political system, the economy and social structure.