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German Cultural Studies And Cultural Sociology: Connections And Interactions

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Abstract

German cultural studies has evolved during the past three decades, with new perspectives emerging in response to and in contrast with those of other disciplines, including literary studies, ethnology, anthropology, sociology, and cultural sociology. Because of its multidisciplinary nature, German cultural studies have experienced these shifts and frictions. One reason for this is the academic community's growing fascination with cultural studies and the methods it uses to analyze celebrity culture, mass media, and common practices. However, there are still holes in the humanities and social sciences, therefore the results of cultural studies are contested and not universally accepted. This talk will center on the perspectives and applications of cultural studies professionals and cultural sociologists. I'll also talk about how conflicts and cultural transformations are often used as themes in cultural studies, and how that may be used to show how inextricably linked politics and culture are.

Keywords: Media and Cultural Studies; Inter- and Transdisciplinary Research; Cultural Sociology; the Study of the Humanities.

Introduction

Over the past 30 years, culture studies have been accepted in Germany and the German-speaking area in three different ways.¹ The first phase started in the 1970s and focused on ideology and youth culture analysis, with a focus on youth culture forms of resistance and styles that emerged in the 1980s and were different from the norm in ethnography, educational science, and cultural sociology (see Gottlich & Winter, 1999). In the late 1980s, the focus of the second phase was on popular culture in general. However, at the beginning of the 1990s, the focus changed to media and TV studies. About television texts and audiences, both established media and communication studies and culture studies had different ideas. In cultural studies and media and communication studies, problems of media reception, the use of Hall's "encoding/decoding" paradigm, and the analysis of a "active audience" in the works of Morley, Ang, and Fiske were especially difficult.

The third phase, which started in the late 1990s, is focused on identity and everyday culture. This is backed by many ethnographic and cultural studies research projects.

At the turn of the century, these ideas of power and identity in a global media environment were central to media studies courses. Aside from these basic topics that are closely related to both media and communication studies and cultural studies, gender studies and the recording of qualitative research methods were also very important to cultural studies. In a similar way, people often think that the words "cultural," "practice," and "performative turn" have something to do with cultural studies, even when they don't.

Attitudes in cultural studies have grown with and against a wide range of fields, such as anthropology, educational science, sociology, cultural sociology, media studies, and literary studies. This short history of how cultural studies were received in the German-speaking area will be the starting point for my talk of how cultural studies relate to Kulturwissenschaft(en) and/or Kulturosoziologie (the study of culture) today.

Academics are very interested in how cultural studies looks at and studies popular culture, media culture, and everyday life. This is clear from the fact that the field has become so popular over the past thirty years. So, culture studies in Germany and other places where German is spoken can't be called "newcomers." Surprisingly, none of the professorships, chairs, or institutes at German universities are just for cultural studies. As an alternative, there are academic organizations and research projects, mostly in the field of media studies, that use cultural studies in an interdisciplinary way.

In spite of the fact that cultural studies are widely recognized within the academic community, there is still insufficient differentiation between this field and the fields of study that deal with the humanities and social sciences. As a result of this ambiguity, cultural studies have been subjected to criticism, and continuing conversations over its accomplishments continue. There are still a number of theoretical and methodological questions that have not been answered, despite the fact that a good number of the disagreements appear to have been settled. The investigation of the dynamic relationship between Kulturosoziologie and cultural studies is what gives rise to a number of different cultural critique traditions within the discipline of German sociology. The premise that underpins these distinctions that were derived from this relationship is that cultural studies, as noted by Inglis in the context of British cultural studies, is potentially the least alien among the several disciplines within sociology that are considered to be unfamiliar or different (cf. Inglis

2007: 99). This is the assumption that underpins these distinctions that were derived from this relationship.

Because of the way in which cultural studies tackled cultural issues, there has been a recent resurgence of interest in the sociology of culture, which began in the late 1980s. This ongoing challenge in cultural criticism is a direct result of this method. Even during the time when the criticism of the Frankfurt School and Kultursoziologie in the style of Weber, Simmel, or Mannheim were deemed too specialized to be included in the academic lectures of a number of institutions, they provided sociology students with a novel viewpoint on culture. The unique setting in question has resulted in the emergence of several problems, which has prompted investigations on the possibility of disciplinary mergers. In spite of the fact that cultural studies and cultural sociology (also known as Kulturwissenschaft) continue to compete with one another, these problems have prompted conversations about the implications they have for the future. It is not an easy task to bring peace to contentious situations that arise in academic settings. There are two separate approaches to investigating the fundamental question of why cultural studies is met with strong resistance from other academic fields. One of these approaches is called a comparative analysis. It is possible to argue that cultural studies is still in its infancy and is in the process of developing, and that it does not yet possess a clear and distinct identity, which is especially true when viewed through the lens of German culture. On the other hand, it has been argued that Germany already has a number of academic fields that deal explicitly with issues that apply to communication and culture. As a result, bringing together the various points of view that are inherent to these fields constitutes a significant task. When studying and conceptualizing the challenges or successes that exist within a particular culture, however, it is essential to take into account the myriad of cultural perspectives that exist inside that society. However, when these ideas are used as ideological "criteria for admission," they stifle the progression of scientific knowledge. In light of the deficiencies I've outlined above, I'd like to make the proposal that the framework of the academic field of cultural studies should incorporate a sociological approach to the study of culture. All of the people taking part in the game will be able to benefit from this in some way.

It is necessary to conduct an investigation into the many methods by which German sociology and Kulturwissenschaft(en) acknowledge the field of cultural studies in order to acquire a better understanding of the ongoing difficulties.

It is well recognized that the term "culture" has historically carried significant weight, particularly within the context of Germany and the German language. Within the context of German universities, the discipline of arts, commonly referred to as Geisteswissenschaft, is widely regarded as the primary authority on matters pertaining to culture.

Consequently, the term "culture" holds academic significance as it encompasses several sorts of "Weltanschauung." Cultural studies distinguishes itself from both cultural science and cultural sociology in the following manner:

The field of Geisteswissenschaft, from which Kulturwissenschaft emerges, has acknowledged the latter as a legitimate successor, asserting that cultural studies primarily focus on the realm of everyday life and social behaviors, rather than being predominantly concerned with the concept of "Sinn" or meaning. Can this be regarded as the primary catalyst for animosity, or is it merely a means to obfuscate the underlying rationales behind individuals' disapproval of cultural studies' approach to culture?

The introductory level textbook authored by Hartmut Bohme and colleagues (2000) contains a limited discussion of cultural studies, spanning only three pages. The primary objective of the guidebook is to provide students with an introductory understanding of the discipline of cultural studies, while also identifying any areas of deficiency in their existing knowledge.

Upon further examination of these pages, it becomes apparent that they employ cultural studies clichés and juxtapose them with culture, in a manner reminiscent of the Geisteswissenschaften's frequent utilization of this term. In my perspective, this does not contribute to the comprehension of cultural studies.

The subsequent sections of the textbook delve into the significance of cultural studies, taking into account the extensive educational traditions in the United States and the United Kingdom. However, it is worth noting that the aforementioned sections fail to incorporate widely accepted theories or ideas.

The usage of terms such as "contextualization" suggests that only disparate elements are brought together. The convergence of ethnography and cultural anthropology is commonly referred to as the concept of "othering." The technique of "mapping" is frequently employed to create cognitive representations of cultural phenomena, while the usage of minority speech serves as a means to distinguish and delineate the collective expression of individual cultures (referred to as Kollektivsingular; UG).

According to the authors, it is argued that there are evident problems associated with this phenomenon, since the term "culture" is progressively losing its analytical and synthetic significance in the context of ideological criticism, particularly within the area of influence of ethnic and minority groups. The conventional canon is being supplanted by a novel canon that is rapidly constructed through the aggregation of various data. According to Hofme et al. (2000), on page...

This statement, in my perspective, illustrates the perspective of Kulturwissenschaft(en) on cultural studies and highlights the incomplete addressing of the inherent complexities associated with the term "culture."

Conclusion

Academics who approach their work with a receptive mindset bear direct responsibility for the existence of these distinctions, which can be addressed or eliminated at the discretion of individual academics. However, these differences persist.

According to Dirk Baecker (1996), cultural studies, in relation to Kulturwissenschaften, runs the risk of being relegated to the realm of academic insignificance due to these amalgamations. In addition, it is worth considering the potential benefits of integrating the perspectives of cultural studies and sociology of culture. Specifically, we should examine how this integration could assist German-speaking academic communities in addressing their reluctance towards embracing popular culture. This is particularly relevant considering that cultural studies is widely regarded as a significant influence on popular culture.

In my viewpoint, it is more advantageous to perceive cultural studies as a continuous exhibition of the valuable insights and proactive approach offered by this sociologically oriented perspective,

rather than striving to uncover a cross-fertilization that would not effectively address the disparities between the two traditions. Cultural studies should not be regarded as a viable alternative field of study that allows for detachment from the complexities of everyday life and its political implications. According to Nick Couldry, it is imperative to actively engage with the various views that constitute the social fabric, rather than oversimplifying or disregarding them. The subject at hand, nonetheless, overlaps with the "politics" of cultural studies, which aims to include diverse perspectives in its portrayal of social reality (Couldry 2000: 126-130).

The objective is not to enforce superfluous limitations. Nevertheless, it is somewhat astonishing that the cyclical arguments in this discussion fail to adequately address the difficulty of transdisciplinarity, especially considering the extensive acceptance of cultural studies in German-speaking academia throughout history.

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