Keyan Tomaselli and the Task of Cultural Criticism

Guy Willoughby

The Cinema of Apartheid: Race and Class in South-African Film

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1 Mapping the Terrain

Keyan Tomaselli, formerly of the Journalism School at Rhodes and the Film School at Wits, has been an indefatigable campaigner for the rights and claims of popular cultural study in South Africa. Along with his wife Ruth and others, principally Johan Muller of the Education Policy Unit at Witwatersrand University, he has produced an ambitious trilogy on media and cultural formation, *Myth, Race and Power* (1986), *Narrating the Crisis* (on the press, 1987) and *Currents of Power* (on broadcasting, 1989). Establishing a theory built – like that of the Birmingham Cultural Studies Group in Britain – on those twin neo-Marxian explanations of power and culture, Althusser's critique of ideology and Gramsci's of hegemony (Tomaselli 1987: 1–19), he and his collaborators have fashioned an impressive critique of cultural artefacts and practices in the 1980s – a critique largely fitful and scattered till now in a myriad sociology journals, or in notes to books on more august subjects. This trilogy offers a pertinent analogue to the work of Tomaselli's Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies (CCSU), which (loosely based on the Marxian project of the Birmingham CCCS) has been in operation now since 1986.[1]

Professor Tomaselli has not only produced a mighty labour of cultural criticism himself – his various essays on film, video and the press would fill several volumes – but he has been careful throughout to map the terrain of his enquiry with regard to other disciplines. In a paper on media education in South Africa, for instance, he distinguishes cultural studies from the functionalist model of the Communications schools (generally found on Afrikaans campuses), which neglect the material or socio-economic context of media messages: "Questions of ownership and control, ideology and productive forces are seen as 'not cinema' (or 'not television') and the hidden influences informing the accepted 'reality' are mostly ignored" (Tomaselli 1985: 12–3). At the same time, Tomaselli attacks explicitly and by implication the more venerable literary departments at English-language universities, in terms familiar to Marxian criticism.[2] They are "elitist", pettily exclusive in defining texts for study, and neglectful also of wider processes: "The vital and necessary relation [traditional criticism] once had with larger realities has

been severed, as has its capacity for cultural mobilization" (Tomaselli 1987: 1–2).

Yet the Director of the CCSU does not, apparently, seek merely to see the texts of popular culture as simple reflections of a material base. Throughout, Tomaselli refers to the subtly shifting processes of representation whereby media, producers and audience interact, and on the falsity – and inherent conservatism – of a dogmatic approach. As he and his fellow authors remark in *Currents of Power*: "Texts do not directly reflect the mode of economic production and the attendant political and ideological systems within which they operate. The intertextual relations are far more complicated than the commonly assumed correspondence between 'reality', and 'media reality'" (Tomaselli et al. 1989: 157). Indeed, the author explicitly chides the reductionism of much materialist criticism, with its monolithic, prescriptive bias. We are warned that cultural studies offer "a series of cautions and warning lights against economistic Marxism and the dangers of fascist/authoritarian co-options which result in the suppression of democracy and repression of the people" (Tomaselli 1987: 18).

Well: it is timeous, therefore, that Keyan Tomaselli invites us to compare his own practical criticism – I use the term without allusion – with his theoretical pronouncements, and happily such an extended text is at hand. With the publication last year of *The Cinema of Apartheid: Race and Class in South African Film*,[3] we have a detailed treatise on a complex subject, authored solely by Professor Tomaselli, which enables us to sample the fruits of the writer's extensive labour in the field of cultural studies. A close examination of this book, which takes the author's earlier *The South African Film Industry* (1979) as "a point of departure" (p. 9), reveals the strengths and weaknesses of Tomaselli's project; these are the strengths and weaknesses of popular cultural study as it is practised both locally and in the major metropolitan centres, and their elucidation here should throw light on the discipline's future prospects. I am going to claim in sum, that such cultural criticism needs to be incorporated within literary studies, for it is with literary studies (rejuvenated, as it has been, by various theoretical elixirs in recent years) that the real business of cultural recovery is to take place in the future; and it is as a vital, reconstituting element of literary research, rather than as a sort of adjunct of sociology – its station, *via* Tomaselli *et al.*, at the moment — that the study of popular culture will most usefully regain the academy.

2 The Cinema of Apartheid: Problems and Possibilities

What, then, are the strengths of Keyan Tomaselli's project? To begin with, the reader of *The Cinema of Apartheid* is struck by the author's awesome determination to amass, collate, and stratify data. This is the archival and arithmetical side of the cultural critic's business, the side in which she leans most readily and usefully on the tools or strategies of the social (or "human") sciences; for in popular culture, our concern is with the texts, often ephemeral, marginalised, and usually produced with scant (or hostile!) regard

for the cultural critic. The student of literature is not used to fighting for his texts, and we accordingly have much to learn from the sciences in general about collecting, sorting, and theorising quantities of material – quantities greater, say, in the study of a season's worth of newspaper or TV coverage, than all the novels that even an Anthony Trollope could produce in the course of a busy lifetime.

Thus, in *The Cinema of Apartheid,* Professor Tomaselli offers us a number of careful taxonomic researches. He gives a detailed account of the convoluted and censorship systems by which the state has both fostered, and controlled, the local film industry (pp. 29–52); a breakdown of the labyrinthine movements of capital in the production and distribution of South African cinema (pp. 139–178); and – as a bonsella – an exhaustive chronology of South African feature films since 1910 (pp. 261–70). The writer cites too innumerable interviews with those involved in recent film production and marketing, where other sources are thin (as in the chapter, for instance, on "Films for Blacks", pp. 53–82), it being a vital (and neglected) fact that a vast, stratified labour goes into making movies – more so than any comparable medium before it. Tomaselli rightly knows (it is Stuart Hall's point before him)[4] how a comprehensive grasp of film's impact relies on a technical as well as an ideological knowledge; and the cumulative effect of his book, with its continuous deployment of data, confirms this.

Another undoubted strength of *The Cinema of Apartheid*, germane also to the earlier trilogy, is the writer's consistent movement back and forward between cultural product and economic process. The long-held tendency of literary and aesthetic criticism, whereby the work is separated – however provisionally – from its broader, social context, is notably absent in Tomaselli's discussion of individual feature films, videos or documentaries. Thus, in analysing the weaknesses of contemporary "independent" cinema, he criticises the tendency of anti-apartheid documentaries to neglect the deeper structure of specific injustices. "What is omitted from the latter videos", he asserts, "is an examination of the *relationship* between the urban events documented and the processes operating within the political economy as a whole" (p. 210; Tomaselli's italics).

Tomaselli's perspective here, part sociological and part technical – he takes some filmmakers to task for "a lack of knowledge about the *ideological* effects of cinematic techniques on the part of the technicians" (p. 208) – enables him to make shrewd connections between seemingly unrelated events. Arguing that "the images of oppositional filmmakers have proved susceptible to co-option by the repressive agencies of the state", he explains by way of example the "hodge-podge of incompatible codes and muddled techniques" in the trade union video, *FOSATU: Building Workers Unity.* "The narration, for example, tells of workers on strike, but presents shots of them working", while "people within the film are not always identified and many who are working towards a socialist economy are paradoxically displayed as sinister conspirators hiding behind white skins and dark glasses" (pp. 209–10).

Again, the writer's assured grasp of technique and its ideological effects enables him to explain the commercial success of more mainstream films.

Boetie gaan border toe, for instance, which exhibits "a new generation of technical, textual and propagandistic competence", succeeds through its precise targeting of audience – "It is difficult for even anti-conscription viewers not to identify with the 'troepies', for they send up authority and defy instructions" – and the cunning ideological shift of its *dénouement:* "The baptism of fire [on the Border] turns them into men and galvanizes the forces of civilization against communist abstractions" (p. 219).

This kind of simultaneous technical and contextual awareness is the most striking sign of Tomaselli's debt to the rhetoric and strategies of sociology, political science and anthropology, for long deeply wedded to Marxian economics and philosophy in their grasp of the materialist base in all human activities and institutions. It is of course a rhetoric, and a strategy, that has been adapted with increasing sophistication and sensitivity in literary studies too – now happily beyond the crudities of doctrinaire British Marxism in earlier decades – and incorporates the exacting insights of recent continental neo-Marxisms. At its best, this infusion from the human sciences (for Marxism is, at last, the most awesome Positivist inheritance from the nineteenth century, crucible of the very ideology of science)[5] is revivifying and just, and Tomaselli's work demonstrates its efficacy in cultural study.

Yet it is precisely here that I must describe Tomaselli's weakness, which is the obverse side of his strength; for (as we in literary studies know) detailed catalogue and economic analysis are not enough to explain or explore the significance of a text. (By text, let me quickly interpose, I refer to any human artefact, any construct therefore bearing messages – I speak here the language of Structuralism). It tells us only something about the relative merits of Shakespeare's sonnets, for example, to count and stratify the number and kind of image and syntax the poet employs in his famous cycle; an account of the complex publishing history of that volume, of the battery of censorship or surveillance the poet had to navigate, may foreground, but not foreclose, the suggestions a reader may encounter in these sonnets. Now, it is surely a pity that more of this kind of genealogising does not go on in literary studies, because the politics of creation and reception, as well as the technological infrastructure, help us to re-view a text outside of our own, idiosyncratic imaginations; but few literary critics would regard a scrutiny of the material relations that (directly or indirectly) give rise to a text as, in itself, a worthy hermeneutics. Rather, such activity is a preliminary movement, a prologue to the business of criticism, it gestures towards an authoritative (but not an inclusive) reading. In short, Tomaselli's critiques underplay a synchronic view of particular texts, the positing of significant relations *within* the work at hand.

More: *The Cinema of Apartheid* suffers from a studied neglect of actual films, videos, shorts, serials, documentaries; it tells us *about* "Race and Class in South African Film", but little of their precise operation – and the operation of other significances – in particular films, particular texts. It is as if the author has prepared the ground – the data-bank of production and reception histories, the technological know-how – but the figure has been neglected. What Tomaselli's book lacks then, are analyses of pertinent

examples, not merely categories – "auteur" films, "black" movies, "alternative", "mainstream", *et al.* – which are there largely, it seems, to illustrate economic or political arguments.

Where context and specificities do line up, as in the examples given above, Tomaselli has illuminating observations to make; but these are sadly the exception. Too often, when he comes to discuss specific films, the writer either relies on other commentators in a rather garbled fashion (as in the chapter on "Film Critics", in which it is difficult to sort out Tomaselli's views from those of other critics he surveys); or he falls into a bald economic determinism, at odds with his own ambitious claims for cultural study.

Here is an example: it is awkwardly inserted into a discussion on socially irresponsible film reviewers in a chapter on "The Reviewer Syndrome". By way of riposte, the writer analyses *April '80* (1980), a film about "radical" student politics by Jan Scholtz.

He begins: "To see the characters as individual manifestations [of what?], then, is critically limited". Tomaselli goes on:

> A more fruitful approach is to examine them in terms of the social roles they play within the wider society. The *boeredogter,* for example, shifts her role in response to the need for urbanization which is determinant upon the *Broederbond*'s desire to capture the English-dominated "foreign" capitalist system and transform it to the Afrikaner national character. At the symbolic level, the *boeredogter* represents the trauma of the urban trek. She is alienated Afrikaner capital, that only unifies with national capital [that is, she takes an English-speaking boyfriend] after enormous travail.
>
> (1989: 104)

This may be illuminating, but it is not textual analysis, in the sense of a careful recreation of significances in the work; it is a kind of wholesale collapsing of the narrative, including its characters and their motives, into a (merely asserted) economic thesis. Thus the *boeredogter* of Tomaselli's reading has no actual volition, but adjusts her "role" in response to a sinister "desire" at the level of a Dominant State Apparatus (my terminology, appropriately, is drawn from that arch conspiracy-theorist, Louis Althusser.)[6] In attacking the "superficial approaches" (p. 106) of local reviewers – their "ideologically clouded liberal view of the structural determinants of apartheid itself" (p. 106) – Tomaselli veers to the opposite extreme, by reducing the film to a straightforward political allegory, and a conscious plot on the part of its producers ("Scholtz was able to introduce *apparently* contentious political issues and manipulate them in such a way as to convince liberals of their veracity . . .", p. 107; Tomaselli's italics).

Tomaselli's study is shot through with this kind of special pleading, *in toto* a veritable poetics of simple reflexivity. According to *The Cinema of Apartheid,* films do little more than image the subterranean movement of capital, filmmakers are either absurdly naïve ("South Africa's filmmakers feel that their films lie outside politics, that they are merely entertainment", p. 81), or willing pawns of Dominant Ideology: one producer's assumptions are, for instance, "exactly those guiding the South African political economy"

(p. 80). Audiences are dupes as well, and incapable of individual, dissenting responses to the cinema they watch. "[T]he industry has induced the habit of 'going to the cinema'", claims the author in one of his more breathtaking generalisations. "This habit reduces the need for choice or the practice of examining the product before purchase. Audience participation is conditioned and satisfied through the development of genres and the star system" (pp. 139–40).

As the above remarks reveal, Tomaselli appears to presume the most straightforward relations between medium and ideology. The representation of popular culture in Black cinema "inevitably reinforces the dominant ideology of racial capitalism"; print media, "the propaganda vehicles of capitalism", are there to "perform the socializing task of preparing the new black middle-class to form an alliance with capital . . ." (pp. 66–7); thus films made in the 1980s "began to reflect . . . 'integration'" (p. 16), so that for example *Don't Stop the Music* (1982) "reflects the process of co-option and embourgeoisement [of blacks] . . ." (p. 80), *et cetera.* Changes in local cinema follow shifts in the political economy as night follows day: so cinema for blacks, "employed by the state and capital to support efforts towards a cheap and docile labour force" (p. 54), becomes more multiracial in content, "follow[ing] . . . the need for a stable, urbanised black middle-class to provide labour for commerce and manufacturing" (p. 76).

Of course, Professor Tomaselli could claim (and perhaps he will protest) that I have mistaken the purpose of his book, which is not to mouth about the felicities of certain films, but to reveal the nexus of class and racial interests in the formation of the cinema industry. However, even this worthy sociological aim will only be partially achieved, as long as the particularity of that industry's products, and their possible reception, are not carefully examined. What Tomaselli is denying, or at least downplaying, are the manifold responses the media may invite, and that the social scientist's urge to dogmatise about filmic effect ("[reflecting] the process of co-option") weakens the veracity of his research.

Tomaselli is continuously snide about what he calls "esthetics" in his study, and by this term he seems to have in mind a footling concern with ornament, always at the expense of material realities. Independent filmmakers, for instance, "[*d*]*espite* their counter-ideological tendencies . . . show a continued allegiance to a culturally ingrained stance on esthetics and form" (p. 202; my italics). Tomaselli appears not to allow that artefacts have a complex appeal to the senses, intellect and compacted experience (individual, as well as communal) of its audience; an appeal that must (in the oldest formulation of aesthetics) arouse, or in some way involve, pleasure, *jouissance.*

In a word, the texts which Tomaselli presents are (or were) made to be enjoyed, they in some way refer to certain (shifting, subterranean, possibly confused) categories or codes of pleasure, and if the critic does not account for these pleasures (or, of course, for their absence) he will not, at last, satisfactorily account for dominant ideologies, class habits, the persistence of "false" forms of representation, and all the other concerns of sociology: and it is here that literary studies can help us.

3 Literature, Language and Culture

The strands of significance which literary studies gathers up, when practised at its eclectic best, offers a corrective to the joyless reductionism which too often passes for cultural study in the discourse of social scientists. In literary criticism, the practitioner enacts a dynamic interweave of strategies, approximating to the complex psychological experience of all cultural (that is, human) products and events. There are other factors to be borne in mind beside economics merely; theories of reception, mythic and conventional patterning, rhetorical features, sign systems, the traces or tropes of power and desire – these are all the bustling province of the literary critic. To see films (or books, or newspapers, or any artefact) as merely indexes of social and political forces, as evidence for a simple base/superstructure thesis, is to shrivel the (muddled, vital, insistent) place and point of cultural expression. We need to assert an aesthetics, not deny one, in re-presenting popular media; otherwise, we are simply practising a kind of pseudo-science, a false tactic of sociological induction, whereby we find in cultural products precisely those ideological currents we put there.

Now, the melancholy truth about *The Cinema of Apartheid* is that the sociological thesis it advances – that South Africa, reeking with "repression" on every front, is ripe for a "horrific" apocalypse (pp. 215–6) – is already dubious and dated in the 1990s. Like many of his peers, Tomaselli ultimately inscribes a narrative of fall and redemption in *The Cinema of Apartheid,* a thesis that the wicked South African polity is seen to deserve; and "new" historicists know that an author's fulmigations have less to do with "facts", than a particularly subtle episteme and its appropriation of them.

Read as a demonstration of method, as a critical manifesto as well as practice, *The Cinema of Apartheid* presents precisely that monolithic "economistic Marxism" the author elsewhere derides. Because he uses South African cinema to illustrate an Althusserian argument ("Film and video will always be crucial legitimating agents [for dominant ideology]" ... p. 11), Tomaselli tends to a grim antivoluntarism, a rule of diminishing returns, political and cultural – a position events in South Africa have already proved out of date. The author's gloomy apocalyptic scenario for South Africa, involving the entrenchment of apartheid and "deepening repression", ironically demonstrates his own rider: "speculations on aspects of the future ... could lapse into idealism ..." (p. 215).

There is a further irony in all this. While Tomaselli commits himself to an alternative cinema in South Africa ("films which are not only in opposition to the capitalist mode of production, but are aware of their own technique/style/technology/conventions ...", p. 198), and its liberating possibilities ("A radical film ... devises directions for cultural resistance/action against an oppressive social order ...", p. 198), his own critical practice undercuts radical hopes of both a better society and a better cinema. There seems, while reading, to be no way out of the gloomy determinist trap, in which individuals cannot rise above conditioning forces. Here Tomaselli shows the pessimistic influence of the Frankfurt School of neo-Marxism, but it is surely rather

discouraging for those whose hopes are founded on an "oppositional" culture.

Neglecting the *quidditas* of South African cinema – the actual experiences possible while viewing particular films – Tomaselli rather wants to co-opt his conspiracy-theory of the media to new purposes, and leaves us without much hope of an upsetting, demanding, new cinema. He rests, rather, in a rather ominous Althusserian hope: "Film and video will always be crucial legitimating agents and will hopefully be able to take their place in helping to forge a new, free and peaceful society in the years to come" (p. 11). How "hopeful" his reader should be, at the thought of cinema continuing merely as a "legitimating agent" (albeit in a supposedly "free" society) is somewhat in doubt.

Consider the irony, the concealed authoritarianism, in a remark such as this. Radical filmmakers are "able to influence the responses of their subject-audiences by making them active rather than passive viewers" (p. 137). Of what value, we might ask, is this "active" spectatorship, if it is merely a Pavlovian "response" to the nudge of the filmmaker?

There is an inherent, unattractive prescriptiveness about all this, a cosy assumption on the author's part that he has successfully exposed the mind-forging manacles of the media, and seeks to reappropriate them for a "better" *Weltanschauung* yet to come. As I have indicated, the assumption is patently a false one, his "possible endings or scenarios" (pp. 215–6) unhelpful, and – as a result – the entire exercise, complete with all its surveys, assertions and factual foliage, offers at last a poor image of the diverse riches of South African film.

4 Literature and Social Science

The explanation, at last, for this failure, returns us to the relative merits of literary research and social science: and it is the "science" of that appellation I wish now to confront. In literature, we know that paradigms shift, reading may become writing, that discourse is polymorphous, protean, unsettled and unsettling, in effect; and that texts are not mere bulletins from the front of class struggle, but our ultimate protestations against power. Roland Barthes, that most subtle and disturbing of recent cultural critics, distinguishes "science" from other kinds of writing thus: "The forces of freedom which are in literature depend not on the writer's civil person, nor on his political commitment – for he is, after all, only a man among others – nor do they depend on the doctrinal content of his work, but rather on the labour of displacement he brings to bear upon the language" (Barthes 1983: 462). Acknowledging that the opposition of literature and science is "a historical myth", but one which is "pertinent" from the point of view of language, Barthes declares that "Literature" ["the practice of writing"]

> in this truly encyclopedic aspect, displaces the various kinds of knowledge, does not fix or fetishize any of them: it gives them an indirect place, and this indirection is precious ... Literature works in the interstices of science. It is always behind or ahead of science, like the Bolognese stone which gives off by

> night what it has stored up by day, and by this indirect glow illuminates the new day which dawns. Science is crude, life is subtle, and it is for the correction of this disparity that literature matters to us.
>
> (Barthes 1983: 463)

It is because Keyan Tomaselli is still attached to the positivist certitudes of "science" that his work, *in toto,* strikes us as a crude simulation of his subject; in *The Cinema of Apartheid,* what Barthes calls the "disparity" between life and science, demands exposure and correction.

This brings me to a related, crucial question thrown up by Tomaselli's book – the question of language. In the essay I have been quoting, Barthes describes the upsetting sleight-of-hand that literature performs: "Because it *stages* language instead of simply using it, literature feeds knowledge into the machine of infinite reflexivity. Through writing, knowledge ceaselessly reflects on knowledge, in terms of a discourse which is no longer epistemological, but dramatic" (Barthes 1983: 463–4). When we deal with the manifestations of human culture, with books, works, icons and ideas, we need to uncover, enclose and reappropriate them, to catch both their essence, and their provisionality, in a language that bristles with its own potentialities – rich, porous, at once precise and allusive. For our language, or discourse, should throw off unexpected lights from our own knowledge and (linguistic) experiences, should reflect on itself as it reflects on other discourses.

Yet such a discourse should betoken a consciousness of more than itself; as we read, we recreate (in all its contrariness, its health as well as its sickness) a civilisation (I speak etymologically), a compacted residue of expressions, silences, signs living and dead. Oscar Wilde said that the aesthetic critic, armed and appropriated of many knowledges, speaks the age as he speaks himself;[7] Barthes affirms: "The act of stating, by exposing the subject's place and energy, even his deficiency (which is not his absence), focuses on the very reality of language, acknowledging that language is an immense halo of implications, of effects, of echoes, of turns, returns, and degrees." He adds significantly: "Words are no longer conceived illusively as simple instruments; they are cast as projections, explosions, vibrations, devices, flavors. Writing makes knowledge festive" (Barthes 1983: 464).

Now, without that kind of artful resonance, the critic becomes a mere curator, an inventorist of others' effects. There is little "festive" in the knowledge Keyan Tomaselli details; on the contrary, there is something distinctly forbidding, almost ominous, about the grim determinism he expounds, and it has to do with the kind of language he deploys. It is often bald, formulaic, awkward: rather than "the splendour of a permanent revolution of language" (Barthes again), it is thin, commonplace, stilted; and it is so because of the generalisations it enacts. It is not only the filmmakers, but the clarity and resonance of ideas, which are "ossified" in a sentence like the following: "The cohesion necessary to coagulate filmmakers into a movement in South Africa was lacking and became ossified through petty bickering, ostracism of innovators, political intimidation, business timidity and a complete confusion of values, principles, and directions" (p. 93).

Elsewhere, the pseudo-scientific accents belabour the prose: so that an episode in a film is described as "non-continuous with the internal continuity of the plot" (p. 105), while an auteur critic "plays tremendous attention to technique and analyzes what happens as well as how it is shaped, how it appears and what it means" (pp. 121–2). Clichés abound: people are variously "prim and proper", "soppy", "goody-goody", etc; key terms, like mantras, litter the linguistic landscape, without irony or investigation: "capital/ist/ism", "dominant ideology", "legitimation", "co-option", "class structures" (which invariably "solidity"), etc, etc. Little of this is argument, appeal, the staging of knowledge; it is a call to arms, a marshalling of ideological allies, a hammer on the jerking knee; it is bad polemic, dressed up as good science.

5 Coda

The Cinema of Apartheid, then, is a dry, closed work, the very opposite of the writerly text which invites the reader's imaginative engagement. Unlike the best of recent cultural critics writing in English – Edward Said, Raymond Williams, the early McLuhan[8] – there is no *plaisir du texte,* no dramatic experience of our reading. *The Cinema of Apartheid* is obdurate of the reader's desire for provocation, and impresses us as a textbook, a collation of data, a mess of facts and assertions. At the moment when science realises its history as the most potent of modern cultural myths, Tomaselli writes as if some objective, empirical project will most soundly describe popular culture.[9]

It is not that Keyan Tomaselli's work is misplaced or insubstantial; it is its very substantiality which is at fault. He has written, as with the earlier collaborative studies, an admirable primer to the research of popular culture in South Africa. What is needed now is for literary critics to recover that terrain for themselves, and to inject into it that plurality of interests which it deserves. It is when the popular media are regained as a type of writing that a vital cultural study in South African can begin.

Notes

1. See Tomaselli (1987) for an account of the objectives of the Unit. For the developing theoretical problems of the Birmingham CCCS, see Stuart Hall (1980a) – an essay which is paralleled by the similar account of a critical practice and its history in the first chapter of Tomaselli et al. (1986).
2. See for instance Vaughan (1984).
3. All page references to the book are given in the text.
4. See Hall (1980b).
5. The inadequacies of Marxism, as a critical theory of advanced industrial society, are highlighted in the work of one of his more heterodox, Nietzschian descendants: see Foucault (1976). An interesting assessment of the latter's challenge to Marxian historicism is found in Poster (1984).
6. See the influential statement of the theory in Althusser (1971): its limitations are usefully discussed, by Graham Hayman and Ruth Tomaselli, in the first chapter of Tomaselli et al. (1989), especially pp. 11–12.

7. See Wilde (1970), especially the account of creativity, criticism and consciousness on pp. 207–17. That "worldly" critic, Edward Said, makes a similar claim: "rather than being defined by the silent past, commanded by it to speak in the present, criticism, no less than any text, is the present in the course of its articulation, its struggles for definition" (Said 1984: 51). For a discussion of Wilde's anticipation of contemporary problems in culture and aesthetics, see Willoughby (1989).
8. It is of course, worth noting that each of the writers mentioned here were literary critics first, and cultural commentators second: liberating, idiosyncratic examples of the practice is found in McLuhan (1951), Williams (1974) and Said (1984). Barthes, of course, was the literary critic who in a sense created a cultural discipline: see Barthes (1972).
9. For the "new" historicist challenge to assumptions in social science, see Hutcheon (1988).

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