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音

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读 解 流 行

滕继萌 [新西兰] 劳伦斯•西蒙斯○编著

文化研究读解系列

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总 序

文化研究在西方学术界从 20 世纪 60 年代诞生之日起就经常被正统学者批评 为华而不实的"学术时髦"。这种批评不仅没有阻止学术界对文化研究与日俱增的 兴趣,反而使之成为在西方高校备受关注的显学。究其原因,文化研究的确填补了 传统人文学术研究领域的空白,发挥着不可替代的知识创新功能。

文化研究旨在检验文化实践与权力的关系,其研究对象遍及日常生活中社会与政治背景下无限多样的大众文化形式,不仅关注文化如何建构我们,而且关注我们如何建构文化。文化研究试图解释构成人类生活环境的各类文本与意识形态、阶级、种族、性别等的复杂关系,其研究方法具有典型的跨学科性,涉及社会学、政治学、历史学、哲学、传播学、文学批评、女性主义批评、艺术批评、翻译研究,等等。上述意义上的文化研究的确超越了一切传统的人文与社会科学研究范式,提供了观察人类文化和现实生活的独特视角。

西方文化研究的理论与范式正式进入中国大陆学术界大概可以追溯到本世纪初。在短短十多年的时间里,西方文化研究的概念和理论被大量输入国内学术话语体系,不少域外文化研究的著作被翻译出版,文化研究机构不断涌现,相关课程开始进入高校课程设置,越来越多的硕士和博士论文瞄准文化研究选题。文化研究显然已成为中国学术界的显学。

国内学术界文化研究的进一步展开,必须更加系统、深入地把握西方文化研究的理论与方法,同时,高校文化研究相关课程的教学必须建立在对文化研究核心经典文本的阅读之上。为此双重目的,我们组织了一支中西方学者合作团队,联袂推出"文化研究读解系列"。本套丛书包括《读解文化研究》、《读解电视》、《读解流行音乐》、《读解新媒体》和《读解电影》等。每分册的选文由相关领域造诣深厚的西方学者负责精心挑选,均为文化研究领域公认的经典文本;每分册的导读和注释等则由中国学者完成,旨在帮助中国读者准确理解原文。

如此分专题系统呈现和读解西方文化研究领域的经典文本,在中国学术界尚属首次。我相信,无论是文化研究领域的研究者还是授课教师,都能从这套权威性的读本中获取丰富的研究灵感和教学资源。

当然,这套丛书还存在这样和那样的不足,特别是现有的选题远未完整呈现半个多世纪以来西方文化研究的丰硕成果。这一遗憾只有留待来日弥补了。

北京外国语大学英语学院院长 **孙有中**

流行音乐:数字时代的历史文化存在

流行音乐作为一种历史文化的存在,一种社会的声学现象,古今中外皆存。流 行音乐又称通俗音乐,是英文"popular music"的中译,在当代英语中经常缩写为 "pop music"。流行音乐是一个歧义丛生、殊难界定的概念。要明确这个概念的含 义,必须首先厘清定语限定词"流行"的含义,然后辨明限定词与被修饰词"音乐" 之间的关系。根据《牛津高阶英汉双解词典》的释义,作为形容词使用的 "popular",有"通俗的、大众的、流行的"等义项。文化研究的奠基人之一、英国学 者雷蒙・ 威廉斯也曾指出:"'popular'是从普通百姓而不是欲博取他人好感或追 逐权力者的角度所做的认定",因此"受到许多人喜爱的"、"受欢迎的、流行的"这 一义项应该是"popular"的现代含义。当然,从文化研究的角度来讲,"popular"虽 然意指受大众喜爱的,但是其内涵依然指代那些广受进步力量拥戴的文化产品,如 伯明翰文化研究中心的第二代掌门人霍尔就坚称,"深受大众喜爱的、流行的"是指 由"与权力集团相对立的"、"构成'大众阶层'的阶级所喜爱的。由此我们可以认 定,所谓"深受大众喜爱的、流行的"主要是指与统治阶级或权力集团相对立的从属 群体或阶层的文化选项。进而,所谓"流行音乐"即普通大众所拥有的音乐,是为普 通大众生产、由普通大众消费、反映大众利益的文化制品。在资本主义(后)工业社 会的宏大背景下,流行音乐主要指由文化生产商和普通大众共同生产、借助先进的 传播技术、由大众消费因而在很大程度上体现大众的美学诉求与政治意向的文化 产品。现代流行音乐起源于第二次世界大战后的美国。在美国文化背景下,流行 音乐大多指广播、电视或各种娱乐场所所播放的流行音乐曲目,包括波普(pop songs)、乡村歌曲 (country-and-western)、爵士歌曲(jazz songs)、民歌(folk songs)、 摇滚歌曲(rock music)、电影插曲(themes from movies)等,而在现代流行音乐中尤 以摇滚乐以及由此派生出来的嘻哈(hip-hop)等新生流派为主流。实际上,欧美流 行音乐已经跨越了语言、种族以及国家的界线,成为全球流行文化的代名词。如 今,流行音乐研究已经是文化研究不可或缺的有机部分。

20 世纪中期起源于英国并逐渐弥漫到其他文化区域的文化研究,从一开始就十分重视流行音乐的研究。从文化研究的角度讲,流行音乐研究的范畴应包含对音乐传统、音乐风格、流派及其生产和输出的背景等方方面面的研究;同时,我们也必须研究流行音乐的经济属性,因为在当今资本主义的生产环境下,流行音乐文化无论从形式和内容上讲都是由音乐工业大机器生产创造的。具体地说,音乐生产并非简单地依照经济运作规律和资本生产模式,由大型音像公司生产制做。事实

上,它与更广阔的文化模式和惯例拥有千丝万缕的联系,是资本主义社会整体经济生活的一部分,并在特定的社会情境下以多种不同的方式被解释和理解,并被赋予不同的含义。从音乐传统、风格、流派等角度讲,一方面,流行音乐研究的对象涵盖了所有的流派和风格,甚至包括古典音乐与爵士乐,原因在于,自20世纪60年代以来,不同风格的音乐形式相互"穿越"交融,所谓"高雅"与"通俗"之说早已没了市场,其传统界限早已名存实亡;另一方面,强势的西方流行音乐也日益受到第三世界流行音乐的同化,即亚非等本土音乐对入侵第三世界的欧美流行音乐的抵抗和挪用(appropriation)。从某种意义上讲,这种抵抗和挪用早已成为20世纪末、21世纪初全球化背景下流行乐坛的里程碑事件,并已成为不可逆转的一大文化趋势。

那么,我们为什么要研究流行音乐呢?原因很简单,研究音乐本身可以帮助 我们更好地了解音乐所表现的权力关系、性别、群体身份等概念,通过阶级、性别、 国家、种族等划分所反映出的现代文明的冲突。正是出于上述原因,各国文化研究 学者一直致力于研究流行音乐这一声学现象所构建的意义深渊。"文化研究读解 系列"的《读解流行音乐》分册便是这一研究成果的集中体现。本分册收集了20 篇反映欧美学者自90年代以来对世界流行音乐研究的最新成果,他们以跨学科、 **跨文化等多重视角和研究范式、对流行音乐的不同流派、传播手段、音乐版权、群体** 身份和性别等话题进行了细致人微的解构。自觉与不自觉中,大部分作者运用了 法国文化研究学者布鲁诺·拉托尔(Bruno Latour)的行为者网络理论(Actor-Network Theory),该理论强调对流行音乐中各主要元素的分析,其中包括人(歌手、 乐迷与唱片公司管理者),概念(不同的音乐类型)和物品(不同的乐器、传播手段) 等,并通过对这些元素所建构的意识形态网络的解读,使读者能够更好地理解当今 世界流行音乐的发展趋势。以几位学者对"歌手"这一元素的分析为例。我们看 到,新一代摇滚音乐人分别指代公司体制内部的歌手与反体制的外部音乐家,两者 虽说有"里子"和"面子"的区别,但是似乎都具备不同的解构功能。根据基思·尼 格斯的解读,体制内歌手多以新技术对劳动者的物化为反叛目标,以数字化合成等 制作技术为手段,在"迷笛"数码音像和 MP3 网络压缩技术的支持下,从内部对资 本主义的音乐生产方式开展隐性对抗;而另一类歌手指那些游离于主流体制外的 个体歌手或小型音乐制作公司。他们坚持流行音乐的反文化、反体制的审美走向, 很多黑人唱片公司更是试图以此策略保持其非主流音乐消费的独立地位。依照尼 格斯的再现,这些小公司更具"街头"气息,而与之签约的街头说唱艺人才是美国 "文化战争"中的真正"斗士",是他们真正把握了时代的精神(zeitgeist),并拒绝流 行文化生产与产品的消费由大型制作公司垄断。

此外,拉托尔理论的一个重要指向是探讨世界流行音乐研究的发展趋势。如果说以往的学者只是注重音乐文本、表现和话语分析的话,《读解流行音乐》分册的 大多数作者则以前瞻式的治学态度详尽地阐释了流行音乐在数字时代的传播模式 及其与音乐制品版权之间的关系。在他们看来,公共领域中对现行数字传播技术、版权等问题的批评态度应是以社会财富重新分配为出发点的严肃承诺,而并非简单的道德谴责,更不应该呈现为"民粹主义式的无政府状态"。在此,作者强烈呼吁应将版权问题研究列为现代文化批评之首要任务,因为版权问题是人类进入数字时代消费针对文化产业批判性分析的基础。

总之,从研究方法上看,大部分作者对于文中所涉及的音乐文本分析都遵循了一个共同的原则,即人类学研究所具有的强烈的历史感。具体地说,各位作者不仅对若干欧美流行乐文本进行了深度解读,而且有音乐研究基本理论和方法的介绍,特别是针对具体音乐文本的个案分析,让理论回到文本之中,同时让文本得到理论的关照。当然,这种关照的指向是反思型的,其手段是灵活多样的,对文本的描述大多采取了简约和批判的原则。总之,各位作者以"局内人"的知识水准以及"局外人"的批评立场与历史视角,真正履行了解读流行音乐所承载的历史使命。当然,此书并非完美。由于种种原因,本书从选材上讲仍然多多少少地受到"欧洲文化中心主义"的影响,需要指出的是,尽管中国流行音乐从改革开放至今已经走过30多年的历史,且已经部分地融入了世界音乐(world music)之大潮,但是我们仍然未能看到世界文化研究学者对这一与经济共生的文化现象的详尽解读,此缺失不可谓本书唯一令人感到遗憾之处。

本书共收集了 20 篇音乐批评的专业论文,涉及了世界流行音乐研究的方方面面,其体系完整、内容充实、对于本科高年级和研究生一、二年级学生尤为适用,既可以作为本科生的选修课教材、也可以用作研究生专业课教材,特别是对即将进人硕士论文写作阶段的学生尤为重要。为了帮助学生提高学习效率,每篇论文都配有详尽的中文导读、完整的英文注释以及课后思考题,全书的最后还附有流行音乐研究关键词词汇表。从课时分配上来看,本书的章节安排与国内大学课程课时安排大体一致,任课教员可以任选 10 个单元中的 15 篇课文为主要讲解内容,每周完成 1 篇课文;余下的 5 篇课文内容可抑或作为课外阅读材料,也可作为期末考试的阅读题库,使其成为课程效果评估的一个重要指标。

编写过程中对原文材料的精细阅读使我深受启发。从某种意义上讲,阅读与写作的本能之一就是置身于一个历史事件。对于校园作者来说,惟有写作才能构成"我们的"历史。阅读与写作是教学和学术的延伸,也是参与历史的唯一方式。同时,我也希望这本书、这些流行的事件会对那些抱残守缺的正统学者产生一些激活的作用。尽管我们不能准确地勾勒流行文化事件与历史的全貌,尽管它有不可避免的缺陷,我还是希望它能够对求学若渴的学子们有所帮助,事实上,它也应该对学生的学习产生积极的效果。作为本书的编者和第一个读者,我从中受益匪浅。

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Unit

Popular Noises



导 读

在全球后现代主义的语境下,边缘文化被赋予了极大的发展空间。黑人文化作为边缘文化中一个极具生动性和创造性的分支,同样具有广泛的发展余地。黑人文化自然成为文化研究领域的一个重要学术议题。那么,我们应该如何理解黑人文化尤其是黑人大众文化呢?英国著名文化研究学者斯图亚特·霍尔在他的《黑人大众文化中"黑人"含义透析》一文中,明确阐述了黑人大众文化研究的整体背景、黑人大众文化的特点以及研究黑人大众文化应该采取的正确方法和文化策略,并预示了后现代主义大环境下黑人大众文化研究的全新发展趋势。

《黑人大众文化中"黑人"含义透析》一文是霍尔在 1992 年举办的"黑人大众文化"纽约研讨会上发表的论文,十分具有影响力。首先,霍尔结合美国历史学家维斯特的观点,透彻地剖析了黑人大众文化的时代背景,指出在当今的后现代主义大环境下,以前欧洲高雅文化的主导地位已经逐渐开始冰释,美国主流大众文化开始取得了全球文化生产和文化交流的霸主地位。而美国黑人文化一直是美国文化生产活动的重要组成部分,虽不被认可,但也为美国主流通俗文化本身贡献了一己之力,因此也是美国文化具有"差异性"的组成元素。由于后现代主义对"差异性"的高度重视,西方文化叙述主导地位的逐渐瓦解,加之黑人民权运动和解放黑人离散人群思想的兴起等因素,黑人大众文化作为边缘文化一直具有强大生命力。

关于黑人大众文化的特点霍尔首先指明,大众文化具有深厚的群众基础,能够表达普通大众日常生活的乐趣、记忆和传统等。大众文化具有地域性、通俗性、不正规性和奇异性等特点。同样,黑人大众文化可以表现黑人大众及其族群的文化传统。黑人大众文化在表达方式、音乐词汇的大量应用、口语化等方面的特点使其具有独特性,甚至能够反写(counternarrative)主流文化。由于黑人大众文化的两个决定因素——历史继承与离散人群的生活状态,黑人大众文化虽具独特性但却不具有纯粹性,因而与欧洲或者西方主流文化不是完全对立的,它在表现非洲传统、黑人经历及其独特的审美观念时也会挪用、吸收甚至以自己的方式表达欧洲的意识形态、文化、机制等。也就是说,黑人大众文化具有其特定的矛盾性、不纯粹性,它的"差异性"是蕴含其中的。也正是因为这一点,黑人大众文化总是被认为与高雅文化相对立,而主流文化传统也对其深怀疑虑。它的发展也引发了激烈的反冲:抵抗差异、重整恢复西方文明规范、攻击多元文化主义等力量同时兴起。这使文化领域不再单一纯粹,而是存在不同力量的较量。面对如此纷争不断,霍尔摒弃了文

化统一论的研究方法以及二元对立的思维模式。他认为,黑人大众文化研究应该 采用对话交流而不是对立相克的形式。也就是说,他主张同一与差异应是互动观 念,强调对话与沟通。霍尔的主张大有中国"和而不同"的儒家风范。

斯徒亚特·霍尔是英国文化研究的代表性人物,曾担任《新左派评论》主编。1966 年加人伯明翰大学当代文化研究中心后确定了结构主义、大众传媒研究的发展路线。20 世纪80 年代后,霍尔关注的重点逐渐转移到文化研究领域,明确结合了阿尔都塞和葛兰西的意识形态与霸权理论。90 年代初期冷战结束,"历史终结论"甚嚣尘上,导致了西方资本主义原则的普世化。但是,霍尔所代表的文化研究传统强调本土性和历史性,不断抗拒将文化研究廉价移植到其他文化环境中。在社会实践方面,霍尔对英国保守政府的意识形态与公共政策进行了不遗余力的批判,同时积极参与有关欧洲左派未来发展的大辩论,凸显了霍尔"学术即政治、政治即学术"的多重游离位置。作为一名离散海外的知识分子,霍尔不断将个人经历与社会结构及历史构造相互连接,忠实地实践着"个人即是政治"的理想。

What Is This "Black" in Black Popular Culture?1

Stuart Hall²

I begin with a question: what sort of moment is this in which to pose the question of black popular culture? These moments are always conjunctural. They have their historical specificity; and although they always exhibit similarities and continuities with the other moments in which we pose a question like this, they are never the same moment. And the combination of what is similar and what is different defines not only the specificity of the moment, but the specificity of the question, and therefore the strategies of cultural politics with which we attempt to intervene in popular culture³, and the form and style of cultural theory and criticizing that has to go along with such an intermatch. In his important essay, "The New Cultural Politics of Difference," Cornel West⁴ offers a genealogy of what this moment is, a genealogy of the present that I find brilliantly concise and insightful. His genealogy follows, to some extent, positions I tried to outline in an article that has become somewhat notorious, but it also usefully maps the moment into an American context and in relation to the cognitive and intellectual philosophical traditions with which it engages.

According to Cornel, the moment, this moment, has three general coordinates. The first is the displacement of European models of high culture, of Europe as the universal subject of culture, and of culture itself in its old Arnoldian⁵ reading as the last

refuge. The second coordinate is the emergence of the United States as a world power and, consequently, as the center of global cultural production and circulation, This emergence is both a displacement and a hegemonic shift in the definition of culture – a movement from high culture to American mainstream popular culture and its mass-cultural, image-mediated, technological forms. The third coordinate is the decolonization of the third world, culturally marked by the emergence of the decolonized sensibilities. And I read the decolonization of the third world in Frantz Fanon's sense: I include in it the impact of civil rights and black struggles on the decolonization of the minds of the peoples of the black diaspora.

Let me add some qualifications to that general picture, qualifications that, in my view, make this present moment a very distinctive one in which to ask the question about black popular culture. First, I remind you of the ambiguities of that shift from Europe to America, since it includes America's ambivalent relationship to European high culture and the ambiguity of America's relationship to its own internal ethnic hierarchies. Western Europe did not have, until recently, any ethnicity at all. Or didn't recognize it had any. America has always had a series of ethnicities, and consequently, the construction of ethnic hierarchies has always defined its cultural politics. And, of course, silenced and unacknowledged, the fact of American popular culture itself, which has always contained within it, whether silenced or not, black American popular vernacular traditions. It may be hard to remember that, when viewed from outside of the United States, American mainstream popular culture has always involved certain traditions that could only be attributed to black cultural vernacular traditions.

The second qualification concerns the nature of the period of cultural globalization in progress now. I hate the term "the global postmodern," so empty and sliding a signifier that it can be taken to mean virtually anything you like. And, certainly, blacks are as ambiguously placed in relation to postmodernism as they were in relation to high modernism: even when denuded of its wide-European, disenchanted Marxist, French intellectual provenance and scaled down to a more modest descriptive status, postmodernism⁸ remains extremely unevenly developed as a phenomenon in which the old center / peripheries of high modernity consistently reappear. The only places where one can genuinely experience the postmodern ethnic cuisine are Manhattan and London, not Calcutta. And yet it is impossible to refuse "the global postmodern" entirely, insofar as it registers certain stylistic shifts in what I want to call the cultural dominant. Even if postmodernism is not a new cultural epoch, but only modernism⁹ in the streets, that, in itself, represents an important shifting of the terrain of culture toward the popular –

toward popular practices, toward everyday practices, toward local narratives, toward the décentering of old hierarchies and the grand narratives. ¹⁰ This decentering or displacement opens up new spaces of contestation and affects a momentous shift in the high culture of popular culture relations, thus presenting us with a strategic and important opportunity for intervention in the popular cultural field.

Third, we must bear in mind postmodernism's deep and ambivalent fascination with difference - sexual difference, cultural difference, racial difference, and above all, ethnic difference. Quite in opposition to the blindness and hostility that European high culture evidenced on the whole toward ethnic difference - its inability even to speak ethnicity¹¹ when it was so manifestly registering its effects - there's nothing that global postmodernism loves better than a certain kind of difference; a touch of ethnicity, a taste of the exotic, as we say in England, "a bit of the other" (which in the United Kingdom has a sexual as well as an ethnic connotation). Michele Wallace¹² was quite right, in her seminal essay "Modernism, Postmodernism and the Problem of the Visual in Afro-American Culture," to ask whether this reappearance of a proliferation of difference, of a certain kind of ascent, the global postmodern, isn't a repeat of that "now you see it, now you don't" game that modernism once played with primitivism, 13 to ask whether it is not once again achieved at the expense of the vast silencing about the West's fascination with the bodies of black men and women of other ethnicities. And we must ask about that continuing silence within postmodernism's shifting terrain, about whether the forms of licensing of the gaze that this proliferation of difference invites and allows, at the same time as it disavows, is not really, along with Benetton¹⁴ and the mixed male models of the face, a kind of difference that doesn't make a difference of any kind.

Within culture, marginality, though it remains peripheral to the broader mainstream, has, never been such a productive space as it is now. And that is not simply the opening within the dominant of spaces that those outside it can occupy. It is also the result of the cultural politics of difference, of the struggles around difference, of the production of new identities, of the appearance of new subjects on the political and cultural stage. This is true not only in regard to race, but also for other marginalized ethnicities, as well as around feminism¹⁵ and around sexual politics in the gay and lesbian movement, as a result of a new kind of cultural politics. Of course, I don't want to suggest that we can counterpose some easy sense of victories won to the eternal story of our own marginalization — I'm tired of those two continuous grand counternarratives. To remain within them is to become trapped in that endless either / or, either total victory or total incorporation, which almost never happens in cultural

politics, but with which cultural critics always put themselves to bed.

What we are talking about is the struggle over cultural hegemony, ¹⁶ which is these days waged as much in popular culture as anywhere else. That high / popular distinction is precisely what the global postmodern is displacing. Cultural hegemony is never about pure victory or pure domination (that's not what the term means); it is never a zero-sum cultural game; ¹⁷ it is always about shifting the balance of power in the relations of culture; it is always about changing the dispositions and the configurations of cultural power, not getting out of it. There is a kind of "nothing ever changes, the system always wins" attitude, which I read as the cynical protective shell that, I'm sorry to say, American cultural critics frequently wear, a shell that sometimes prevents them from developing cultural strategies that can make a difference. It is as if, in order to protect themselves against the occasional defeat, they have to pretend they can see right through everything – and it's just the same as it always was.

Now, cultural strategies that can make a difference, that's what I'm interested in – those that can make a difference and can shift the dispositions of power. I acknowledge that the spaces "won" for difference are few and far between, that they are very carefully policed and regulated. I believe they are limited. I know, to my cost, that they are grossly underfunded, that there is always a price of incorporation to be paid when the cutting edge of difference and transgression is blunted into spectacularization. I know that what replaces invisibility is a kind of carefully regulated, segregated visibility. But it does not help simply to name-call it "the same." That name-calling merely reflects the particular model of cultural politics to which we remain attached, precisely, the zero-sum game-our model replacing their model, our identities in place of their identities – what Antonio Gramsci called culture as a once and for all "war of maneuver," when, in fact, the only game in town worth playing is the game of cultural "wars of position." 20

Lest you think, to paraphrase Gramsci, my optimism of the will has now completely outstripped my pessimism of the intellect, let me add a fourth element that comments on the moment. For, if the global postmodern represents an ambiguous opening to difference and to the margins and makes a certain kind of decentering of the Western narrative a likely possibility, it is matched, from the very heartland of cultural politics, by the backlash: the aggressive resistance to difference; the attempt to restore the canon of Western civilization; the assault, direct and indirect, on multiculturalism; ²¹ the return to grand narratives of history, language, and literature (the three great supporting pillars of national identity and national culture); the defense of ethnic absolutism, of a cultural racism that has marked the Thatcher²² and the Reagan²³ eras; and the new

xenophobias²⁴ that are about to overwhelm fortress Europe. The last thing to do is read me as saying the cultural dialectic is finished. Part of the problem is that we have forgotten what sort of space the space of popular culture is. And black popular culture is not exempt from that dialectic, which is historical, not a matter of bad faith. It is therefore necessary to deconstruct the popular once and for all. There is no going back to an innocent view of what it consists of.

Popular culture carries that affirmative ring because of the prominence of the word "popular." And, in one sense, popular culture always has its base in the experiences, the pleasures, the memories, the traditions of the people. It has connections with local hopes and local aspirations, local tragedies and local scenarios that are the everyday practices and the everyday experiences of ordinary folks. Hence, it links with what Mikhail Bakhtin²⁵ calls "the vulgar" - the popular, the informal, the underside, the grotesque. That is why it has always been counterposed to elite or high culture, and is thus a site of alternative traditions. And that is why the dominant tradition has always been deeply suspicious of it, quite rightly. They suspect that they are about to be overtaken by what Bakhtin calls "the carnivalesque." This fundamental mapping of culture between the high and the low has been charted into four symbolic domains by Peter Stallybrass²⁶ and Allon White in their important book The Politics and Poetics of Transgression. They talk about the mapping of high and low in psychic forms, in the human body, in space, and in the social order. And they discuss the high / low distinction as a fundamental basis to the mechanisms of ordering and of sense-making in European and other cultures despite the fact that the contents of what is high and what is low change from one historical moment to another.

The important point is the ordering of different aesthetic morals, social aesthetics, the orderings of culture that open up culture to the play of power, not an inventory of what is high versus what is low at any particular moment. That is why Gramsci, who has a side of common sense on which, above all, cultural hegemony is made, lost, and struggled over, gave the question of what he called "the national popular" such strategic importance. The role of the "popular" in popular culture is to fix the authenticity of popular forms, rooting them in the experiences of popular communities from which they draw their strength, allowing us to see them as expressive of a particular subordinate social life that resists its being constantly made over as low and outside.

However, as popular culture has historically become the dominant form of global culture, so it is at the same time the scene, par excellence, of commodification, ²⁷ of the industries where culture enters directly into the circuits of a dominant technology – the circuits of power and capital. It is the space of homogenization²⁸ where stereotyping and