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In spite of some resistance, the humanities—no longer in possession of the “social mission” that once characterised humanistic study (Summit 2012, 668)—are gradually changing into what Badmington (2006) calls the “posthumanities,” a more socially relevant, interdisciplinary continuum of knowledge. In so doing, there seems to have been a rapprochement with other, more socially-oriented disciplines. It is precisely from this merger that new inter- or even anti-disciplines have risen, such as cultural, media and gender studies.

Cultural studies is an area of interdisciplinary research which understands that cultural phenomena and their interpretation are mediated by such identity variables as class, gender, race, ethnicity and sexuality, to name but a few. Consequently, identity has been—and remains—central to cultural studies (Barker 1999, 2). Crucially, the centrality of this concept can also be observed within both gender and media studies. Gender studies is an equally interdisciplinary area that focuses on gender as a “structural phenomenon” that “is also produced, negotiated and sustained at the level of everyday interaction” (Jackson and Scott 2002, 1). Identity issues, therefore, are just as relevant within gender studies as they are within cultural and media studies—see Barker (1999) and Gauntlett (2008).

*Mapping Identity and Identification Processes. Approaches from Cultural Studies* offers a selection of papers presented at the 14<sup>th</sup> International IBACS Culture and Power Conference (University of Castilla-La Mancha, 2010), illustrating the centrality of identity and identification issues in current cultural research and critical theory.

After an emotive preface by Lawrence Grossberg, the volume proper begins with an introduction by the editors. This clearly presents identity as a discursive formation, thus paying homage to Foucauldian theory, which has proved so influential in the field. Indeed, cultural, gender and media studies are all widely seen as strongholds of poststructuralist approaches. These have perhaps most visibly helped challenge influential binary oppositions including the very categories of *self* and *other*, and *male* and *female*.

The book is neatly structured into five parts. Part I (“Identity and Identification in Cultural Studies: Theoretical Debates”) features four chapters offering theoretical discussions on the nature of identity or else the very identity of cultural studies as an inter/anti-discipline. This is the case of the first chapter, Lawrence Grossberg’s “Cultural Studies in the Contemporary,” which defines the aim of cultural studies as “(radical) contextualization of culture” which is “not necessarily committed to a specific theoretical paradigm” (36). Indeed, cultural studies has never imposed a single or coherent theoretical model (Bathwick 1992, 330-331). Grossberg also refers to the field’s performative nature, claiming that cultural studies “is, above all, a way of doing intellectual work that both responds to and is responsible to the context in which it works” (43). Within cultural studies and other related disciplines, knowledge is a tool with which society could and should be changed (Walton 2008, 297). Lastly, Grossberg also confirms the key role played by poststructuralist thought in the development of cultural studies and, by extension, the posthumanities continuum.

Chapter two, Aljosa Puzar’s “Cultural Studies and/on Borders: Complexity and Transgression,” also inquires into the defining features of cultural studies and even goes on to hint at the academic and social effects of the emergence of cultural studies in such diverse contexts as Croatia and South Korea. Further emphasis on this latter aspect would have made this chapter even stronger.

In turn, Chapter three (Idalina Conde’s “Crossed Concepts: Identity, Habitus and Reflexivity”) provides a theoretical approach to identity that blurs the borders between cultural studies and sociology by drawing on the theoretical legacies of Pierre Bourdieu (*habitus*) and Anthony Giddens (*reflexivity*).

Next comes David Walton’s “Universities for Sale? Academic Excellence, the Free-Market Economy, and the Future of Cultural Studies: Performative Politics, Discontent, Resistance and (De)Identification.” Relying on the central concepts of (de-)identification, discontent and resistance, Walton intelligently draws inspiration from the defining features of cultural studies to criticise the market forces responsible for both the launch of the Bologna Process and the latest trends in Higher Education.

Part II, “Bridging the Gap between Identification Processes and Identity Construction in the Media,” comprises three chapters which discuss identity-related issues in different media products. Candida Yates’s “Media and the Inner World: Mapping the Psycho-Cultural” is a thought-provoking contribution that functions as a plea for the use of psycho-analytical theory to account for the new media trends (celebrity culture, pull-yourself-together TV, the widespread use of social media).

Chapter six, Adrienne Shaw’s “A Critical Approach to Marginalized Audiences and Representation,” demonstrates how to link representation theory with reception research, inquiring into identity/identification processes and their role in media consumption (mostly videogames, in this particular case).

Merja de Mattos-Parreira’s chapter, “Hegemonies of Expatriate Identities in Portuguese English-Language Press,” explores the way readers manifest their identities

in Portuguese newspapers in English. Despite the enormous potential of this piece, the connection between the different topics covered in this chapter is not always apparent, partly because the examples in the appendix are not integrated in the discussion.

Part III (“Gendering Selves in Cultural Products”) features three papers, each looking into the representation of a more specific identity variable—gender—in both film and popular music. This section opens with Chantal Cornut-Gentille D’Arcy’s “A Critical Reflection on the Socially-Constructed Nature of Gender Identity in *The Full Monty* and *Calendar Girls*.” This is an essay which, drawing on Derridean and Foucauldian theory, convincingly argues that the similarities between both films conceal remarkable gender-based differences concerning nakedness and the body.

Equally thought-provoking is Sara Martín-Alegre’s “Heterosexual Masculinity in Despair: Dan White in Rob Epstein’s *The Times of Harvey Milk* and Gus Van Sant’s *Milk*.” In her insightful analysis of both films, the author calls for a more thorough treatment of the complexities surrounding discrimination against non-heterosexual people, arguing that a more egalitarian society can only be achieved by not simply sanctifying gay “martyrs” (179) like Harvey Milk but also and crucially by exploring in depth the disempowerment felt by those many males subjected to patriarchal masculinity discourses.

The third essay in Part III is Esther Zaplana’s “Tori Amos’s ‘Pandora’s Aquarium’: Voice, Music, and Female Identity within the Space of *l’écriture féminine*.” Zaplana dissects Amos’s characteristically “hypervolic” vocals (197), *fluidly narrative* lyrics (200) and even her accompanying *liquid, airy* imagery. Drawing on Hélène Cixous’s (1991) and Luce Irigaray’s (2004) feminist theories, Zaplana argues that Amos’s appeal resides in her unique soundscape, which can be seen as a celebration of femininity no longer understood as the binary opposite of (superior) masculinity.

Part IV (“Film, Music and the Glocalization of Identities”) once again looks into a variety of cultural products, although this time the focus shifts from gender to the impact globalisation can have on local identities. This section opens with Mahdis Azarmandi’s “Transnational German-Turkish Cinema from a Cosmopolitan Perspective: Towards the Representation of Cosmopolitan Hybrid Identities.” Azarmandi examines the everyday life of the German-Turkish community as portrayed in Fatih Akin’s films, demonstrating that such works “do not focus on conflict between Germans and immigrants, but explore conflicts of Turkish-German identity” (214) which may inspire audiences to embrace “an alternative articulation of community no longer fixed on binary notions of ‘foreign’ and ‘local’” (216-217).

Readers may expect a similar approach to, and treatment of, the same medium (film) in the next chapter, Elena Oliete-Aldea’s “Identifying Otherness in Transnational Film: *Slumdog Millionaire*.” However, her discussion focuses mostly on the blending of Hollywood and Bollywood visual and narrative styles found in this film.

Part IV is brought to a close by Felicity Hand’s “Forging Identity through Popular Culture: *Seggae* in Mauritius.” By focusing on Creole *seggae* performer Kaya (1960-1999),

Hand effectively highlights the social consequences of ethnic division in Mauritius, signalling Kaya as a strong “icon of affinity” (Ward 2001, 14) for the subaltern Creole community. Hand persuasively argues that Creole identity in Mauritius is mostly “articulated . . . through seggae,” adding that it has now expanded beyond Mauritius to become an “Indoceanic manifestation of popular culture” (241).

Finally, Part V (“Nationhood and Cultural history at the Crossroads”) comprises five chapters focusing on features of national and cultural identity discourses, both present and past. The first two chapters delve into complementary aspects of Britishness. Thus, in “Autobiography as Cultural Politics in Multi-Ethnic Britain,” Chris Weedon explores manifestations of identity in autobiographical works by ethnic and cultural hybrids such as (Guyanese-Welsh) Charlotte Williams, (Nigerian-Scottish) Jackie Kay, and Muslim British-South Asian authors Rageh Omaar and Ed Husain. Weedon presents the works she reviews as intricate tapestries illustrating both how mainstream society regards hybridity and the coping strategies that hybrids learn to resort to in their lifelong identity formation processes.

For its part, John Storey’s “The ‘Roots’ and ‘Routes’ of British Identity” offers a critique of the traditional discourse of Britishness and, in particular, its association with WASP-ness, encouraging British people to no longer rejoice in their imperial past (its “roots”) and look forward instead to a more ethnically integrative future (its possible “routes”).

Next comes Anindya Rauchaudhuri’s “What Remains? Memory, Identity and Loss in the Work of Frances Torres and Alicia Framis.” The author takes as his cue the work of these two Catalan artists and mostly focuses on the sore issue of Spanish identity and the impact of the Spanish Civil War. This chapter intelligently questions the usefulness of the implementation of the Spanish Law of Historical Memory, which privileges some versions of the conflict when historical memory is diverse, fragmented and contradictory.

Part V continues with Himmet Umunc’s “The European Constructs of Turkish Identity in the Early and Modern Times.” Focusing on the images of, and references to, Turkey and the Turks that appear in Shakespeare’s play, Umunc provides valuable textual evidence that the West’s construction of Turkey and the Muslim East as its “constitutive outside” (Hall 1996, 15) can be traced as far back as the times of Marco Polo and the Crusades.

This collection’s final chapter, Brilliant Mhlanga’s “Towards a New Sociology of Ethnicity in Africa: Zimbabwe’s Nationalism and the Paradox of Ethnicity,” brings the collection to a fitting close. Mhlanga inquires into the postcolonial implications of Zimbabwe’s nation-building process, which has been based on a systematic attempt to eradicate ethnicity but has resulted in the de facto prevalence of a specific ethnic affiliation over the rest.

Overall, this volume is a very welcome contribution to the extant literature in cultural studies. In focusing on identity and identification, it succeeds in locating the

position of cultural studies on the increasingly complex map of academic knowledge, and certainly goes a good deal further than the vague definition of the discipline as a study of “contemporary culture . . . continuously shifting its interests and methods both because it is in constant and engaged interaction with its larger historical context and because it cannot be complacent about its authority” put forward in a well-established cultural studies reader like During (1999, 1;17). Additionally, and although never renouncing its defining poststructural legacy, the book further explores the concept of identity from different theoretical stands borrowed from neighbouring and even more distant disciplinary fields like sociology or psychology, respectively. In doing this, the volume remains true to one of the foundational principles of cultural studies, namely its interdisciplinary nature. Finally, the volume showcases an interesting selection of identity-based case studies spanning an impressive array of cultural materials and media (the social media, reality television, videogames, newspapers, film and documentary, music, literature, photography, and even the plastic arts are all represented) taken from an equally varied range of countries and cultural traditions. This is commendable in its own right since it may serve to move cultural studies away from its hegemonic Anglophone centre.

With very few exceptions, then, the editors have done an excellent job out of selecting and structuring an exciting range of papers, although less attention has been paid to purely formal aspects. Thus, spellings are not always systematic, and some chapters feature typos, punctuation and even minor lexico-grammatical mistakes. None of this, however, diminishes the considerable value of the volume.

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