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## 学際性の追求：文化的研究批判

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# The Pursuit of Interdisciplinarity: A Critique of Cultural Studies

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I

Given its vast capacity to incorporate discourses, cultural studies can be supposed as a practice of interdisciplinarity. It encompasses a wide range of critical initiatives both in Britain and in America, and its critical principle is based on cultural materialism propounded by the English Marxist Raymond Williams, who has sought to describe a form of critical activity. It is true that Williams adheres basically to the Marxist principle that social existence affects and determines consciousness: class-consciousness, among others. At the same time, however, he avoids the trap of attempting to understand all cultural activities as mere ramifications of the economic base. Specifically, he attaches particular importance to cultural materials, such as texts and advertisements. With an emphasis on culture as a whole social phenomenon, he has therefore analyzed a wide variety of cultural forms, from television to fiction, from high culture to subculture. In America, cultural studies has been influenced by British leftist critics (e.g. Richard Hoggart and Terry Eagleton) as well as continental Marxists (e.g. Antonio Gramsci and Louis Althusser). American cultural studies has been concerned with such issues as race, class, and gender, thereby sharing academic interests with what is called multiculturalism.

In this way, British, European, and American practitioners of cultural studies have investigated a wide range of topics, employing an equally wide variety of critical methodologies. It is this very multidirectional investigation, however, that makes cultural studies open to criticism. After defining "Cultural Studies as 'an interdisciplinary, transdisciplinary and sometimes counter disciplinary field'" (101), Bill Readings points out: "The problem of Cultural Studies is that it attempts to deliver on the redemptive claims of cultural criticism, while expanding those claims to cover everything. This is why Cultural Studies activities find their most fertile disciplinary homes in expanded departments" (103). It is by no means surprising that cultural studies has extended its territory at the interdepartmental level, given that it is "interdisciplinary" or "transdisciplinary" or "counter disciplinary." Since its system of thought is established on a broad basis called "culture," cultural critics have attempted "to cover everything," by incorporating into its vast universe of discourse a wide variety of disciplines: history, sociology, and anthropology, among others. More often than not cultural studies has hence been recognized as a branch of cultural poetics called New Historicism in America and cultural materialism in Great Britain, which "declares that history is one of many discourses or ways of seeing and thinking about the world" (Bressler 238). By considering history as one of many other discourses, cultural materialists/New Historicists attempt to demonstrate the interrelatedness of all human activities, let alone critical activities. Since all critics are influenced by cultures in which they live, they are under cultural influences even if they are analysts of "culture."

Readings argues against such culturalization because "Cultural Studies [has] committed to the generalized notion of signifying practice, to the argument that everything is culture" (102). That is to say, "if culture is everything, then it has no center, no referent outside itself—facing up to this dereferentialization seems to me to be the task incumbent upon Cultural Studies" (118). The paradox of "dereferentialization" is that cultural studies allows for centralizing itself by decentralizing culture—one which "has no center" exactly because there is a culture outside the cul-

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ture. Readings becomes critical of the “culture-is-everything” principle, especially when it is applied to understanding the issue of racism. Influenced by Gramscian Marxism, cultural studies tends to see race as a cultural representation. As regards racism against, for instance, African-Americans, cultural studies practitioners take them as those who occupy marginalized positions in relation to a hegemonic center. Dissatisfied with cultural studies that ignores “the link between the struggle against racism and the struggle against poverty,” Readings claims: “I am merely arguing against understanding racism as a primarily cultural issue” (105). It is plain that Readings’s concern lies in the substitution of cultural issues for racial ones, because such substitution is representative of culturalization or, in his term, “dereferentialization.”<sup>1</sup>

An accelerated culturalization of discourses leads inevitably to the “dereferentialization” of cultural studies. By being independent relatively of the economic base, the culture as superstructure has thus cultivated a vast space for itself by crossing the discursive boundaries. “What I want to argue,” says Readings, “is that the emergence of Cultural Studies must be understood as a symptom, that its fundamental stress on participation initially arises from a sense that culture is no longer immanent but is something ‘over there’” (102-03). The multidirectional participation of cultural studies is based on its fundamental recognition that something exists “over there” to be understood as the cultural. In this sense, the question of knowledge has close relevance to that of capitalism, and the present study builds its insights around cultural studies concerned with economics so that it can specifically explore interdisciplinarity between human and social sciences.<sup>2</sup>

II

“Culture is no longer the terrain on which a general critique of capitalism can be carried out” (103), Readings declares. By “a general critique of capitalism,” he seems to mean Marx’s critique of capitalism. In *Capital*, as we know, Marx asserted that capitalism is destined to collapse itself by overproducing commodities: in other words, it was his belief that commodities would lose their exchange values through overproduction. For Marx, a critique of political economy is based on the industrial capitalism he observed in Great Britain. In *Capital*, therefore, he argues about a capitalistic mode of production of industrial goods. In 1973, however, Daniel Bell published *The Coming of Postindustrial Society* to declare the advent of a postindustrial capitalist society wherein commodities include not merely industrial goods but also informational goods, such as communications and advertisements. In a postindustrial society, as described by Jean-François Lyotard, informational goods include knowledge as the exchangeable. Consciously or not, cultural critics have mass-produced knowledge under the name of Culture. Supposing that Marx’s critique of capitalism is applicable to arguing over multidirectional activities of cultural studies, the mass-produced knowledge of culture is bound to lose its exchange value once it is overproduced. Indeed, Readings suspects, academicized culture is no longer exchangeable.<sup>3</sup> Yet what he means here is not that knowledge of culture is no longer valuable, but that cultural studies is no longer situated in the sphere of exchanges; that is, culture is transvaluing itself in an attempt to dereferentialize itself. If, by any chance, culture should be completely dereferentialized, then cultural studies would make questionable the exchangeability of knowledge. In such a case, cultural studies would reemerge as the academic empire named Culture.

Perhaps herein lies the reason why Readings thinks that there is a great divide between a critique of capitalist systems and that of cultural studies. As quoted above, he asserts: “Culture is no longer the terrain on which a general critique of capitalism can be carried out.” Given that cultural studies grounds itself on cultural materialism in order to deconstruct the rigid hierarchy between the economic base and the cultural superstructure, it is small or no wonder that cultural materialists have reacted against economic explanations of human and social practices as hege-

monic control to "economize" human and social sciences, for they have aimed to "culturalize" human and social sciences, such as history, sociology, and anthropology, as subspaces for cultural studies. This is precisely why cultural materialists have espoused Gramsci's "hegemony" as a guiding principle with which to attack economics as disciplinary hegemonism. "Cultural Studies attacks the cultural hegemony" (102), Readings says, and such an aggressive attitude is adopted when practitioners deal with economics. In Pierre Bourdieu's case, for example, it is through conceptualization of symbolic/linguistic economy that he makes a counter argument against economics.

As a sociocultural thinker, Bourdieu has concerned himself with cultural studies by proposing a system of cultural capital, which he maintains is homologous to the system of monetary capital. Such a homology permits a sociological reading of culture as a relatively independent economy, in which language takes the place of the money form as the unit of value. As Readings points out, Bourdieu's conceptualization of the economy is based on his cultural materialistic notion of superstructure: "Bourdieu wants to get out of the problem of relations of determination between base and superstructure by stressing the analogy between, and the potential convertibility of monetary and cultural capital" (108). It must be hastened to add that Bourdieu has maintained that his concept of the cultural capital is by no means "the analogy," but the homology of monetary capital: he argues that analogies are constructed "when one tries to push the superimposition of the various series beyond a certain degree of refinement" (*Outline* 155). Since analogies hierarchize "the various series," he insists on homologies among them. For Bourdieu, therefore, the difference between analogy and homology is of great significance, especially when he homologizes economic and cultural capital.

In *The Field of Cultural Production*, Bourdieu lays particular weight on the form of homology: "the logic of the homologies between the two spaces means that the struggles going on within the inner field are always overdetermined" (44). Here he means that each field is relatively autonomous but structurally homologous to the others. What is deducible from this proposition is that each field's mode of production is structurally homologous to the others. "Through the logic of homologies," says Bourdieu, "the practices and works of the agents in a specialized, relatively autonomous field of production are necessarily overdetermined; the functions they fulfill in the internal struggles are inevitably accompanied by external functions" (94). In his idea, therefore, economic practices of production are necessarily homologous to cultural practices of production. To put it another way, he maintains that economic capital is structurally homologous to cultural capital, which he defines as a form of knowledge.

The concept of cultural capital is based on the homology between economic and symbolic/linguistic exchanges. Bourdieu asserts that symbolic/linguistic expression, just like money, has an exchange value determined by the cultural capitalists of society, who better understand and manipulate the language than the working-classes. In a capitalist society, he argues, cultural capitalists control the way in which they distribute capital, and therefore they can afford to make a capital investment in their children as the next generation. In "The Forms of Capital," he articulates that the notion of cultural capital is "a theoretical hypothesis which made it possible to explain the unequal scholastic achievement of children originating from the different social classes by relating academic success" (243). In short, the form of cultural capital overlaps generations. Even in cultural terms, the class system is hence maintained; and this formation is a structural homology between economic and cultural capital.<sup>3</sup>

It should be noted, however, that there is no fine distinction between structural homology and, for instance, structural identity. In order to demonstrate this point, we must examine the seemingly homologous relationship between the essentials to form economic and cultural capital, namely money and language. In *Language and Symbolic Power*, Bourdieu deals with this problematic homology, which is fundamental to the operation of his cultural economic system:

Linguistic exchange—a relation of communication between a sender and a receiver, based on enciphering and

deciphering, and therefore on the implementation of a code or a generative competence—is also an economic exchange which is established within a particular symbolic relation of power between a producer, endowed with a certain linguistic capital, and a consumer (or a market), and which is capable of procuring a certain material or symbolic profit. (66)

In brief, Bourdieu is of the opinion that language is homologous to money and therefore that “linguistic exchange is... also an economic exchange.” In modern economics, money is defined primarily as a medium of exchange. As Bourdieu emphasizes, an economic exchange as a communication between those who use money (e.g. the dollar) can be homologous to a linguistic exchange as a communication between those who use a language (e.g. English). In addition, money is also a store of value. In this respect, too, Bourdieu constitutes a homology between money and language: if one is capable of accumulating money, then she is also “capable of procuring a certain material or symbolic profit.” The main reason is that “it is rare in everyday life for language to function as a pure instrument of communication. The pursuit of maximum informative efficiency is only exceptionally the exclusive goal of linguistic production and the distinctly instrumental use of language which it implies generally clashes with the often unconscious pursuit of symbolic profit” (66-7). Bourdieu's view sees that since it is storable as knowledge, “symbolic profit” can be steadily increased, and therefore it becomes “linguistic capital” as a linguistic variant of cultural capital.

Lastly, money serves as a unit of account: it is used to measure the relative value or price of a wide variety of goods and services. In connection with this function, Bourdieu articulates his idea of the money-language homology as follows:

Utterances receive their value (and their sense) only in their relation to a market, characterized by a particular law of price formation. The value of the utterance depends on the relation of power that is concretely established between the speakers' linguistic competences, understood both as their capacity for production and as their capacity for appropriation and appreciation. (67)

In this passage Bourdieu draws a parallel between values and powers of money and language, in terms of “law of price formation.” The value of money is inseparable from the purchasing power of money. “The value of a unit of money—a dollar, for example—is measured in terms of what it will buy. Its value, therefore, is inversely related to the level of prices. An increase in the level of prices and a decline in the purchasing power of a unit of money are the same thing” (Gwartney and Stroup 298). The monetary value is in an inverse relation to prices, which means that money expresses its purchasing competence through the formation of prices. In this respect, Bourdieu's notion that “the value of utterances is dependent upon the relation of power/between the speakers' linguistic competences” is worth considering: he supposes that the value of utterance is expressed as a speaking ability of the speaker situated in a linguistic market characteristic of “a particular law of price formation.” In this manner, Bourdieu makes a socio-economic and sociolinguistic attempt to demonstrate functional homologies between money and language, but the next section calls his homologization into question.

### III

As we have seen, Bourdieu lays great emphasis on structural homologies between money and language. In actual fact, however, he seems to mean structural affinities by structural homologies. In *The Field of Cultural Production*, for example, the terms “structural homology” and “structural affinity” are used almost interchangeably. After pointing out that cultural producers who occupy economically and symbolically dominant positions tend to enter into a mental alliance with those who are economically and symbolically dominated, he continues as follows: “Such alliances, based on homologies of position combined with profound differences in condition, are not exempt from mis-

understandings and even bad faith. The structural affinity between the literary avant-garde and the political vanguard is the basis of rapprochements, between intellectual anarchism and the Symbolist movement" (44). In this fashion, Bourdieu's writing is characterized by his interchangeable use of homology and affinity. It can reasonably be said, then, that he draws no distinction between structural correspondence and structural likeness. If he insists on the validity of homology, he must conceptually differentiate structural homology from structural affinity as well as structural identity.

Thus Bourdieu's notion of homology becomes highly problematic when he is exclusively concerned with sameness or likeness or correspondence, not difference. All practitioners of interdisciplinarity must therefore be cautious about homologization, which is achievable only if they are also capable of differentiation. In order to make an interdisciplinary study, in other words, they need to be continuously situated in an in-between space, where they are conscious of both similarities and differences between two individual entities (e.g. money and language) so as to make continuously critical exchanges between discourses.

As Bourdieu asserts, the notion of homology serves as a methodology to negate any order of things. Some critics like Martha Woodmansee and Mark Osteen argue, however, "it nonetheless risks erecting its own universal equivalent" (21). While acknowledging the usefulness of homologies to make cross-boundary exchanges, they voice skepticism toward overpowering homologization, by which "the homology between language and money may soon become identity" (19). Another exemplary argument about the validity of homology is seen in Fredric Jameson's *Postmodernism or, The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism*. As a poststructural Marxist, he problematizes identity as well as ideology, each of which is the form of totalistic generalization. This is particularly why he suspects that the homological method may become just an "excuse for the vaguest kind of general formulations and the most unenlightening assertions of 'identity' between entities of utterly distinct magnitude and properties" (187). Here again, the ideal distinction between homology and identity is open to question.

Similarly, Amy Koritz and Douglas Koritz treat the question of homology in "Symbolic Economics" subtitled "Adventures in the Metaphorical Marketplace." The essay focuses on the conflict between Gary Becker's (neoclassical) economic studies and Bourdieu's (sociological) cultural studies. Becker, a Nobel Laureate in Economics, has stressed that all social processes are described as exchanges of owned properties; and Koritz and Koritz argue as follows: "Given this totalizing impulse within economic theory, the prevalence and persuasiveness of the metaphorical treatment of culture as an economy by cultural theorists should be approached with some caution" (409). Here Becker's work is taken as a clear manifestation of economic reductionism characterized by an exchange paradigm — "an axiomatic, totalizing exchange paradigm" (411).

Koritz and Koritz assume that Becker regards culture as identical with the marketplace. This is exactly why they polarize Becker and Bourdieu: "Analyzing the relations between fields as homologies rather than identities is supposed to guard against the threat of economic reductionism posed by Bourdieu's choice of vocabulary" (410). Bourdieu's interdisciplinary analysis of cultural studies and economics "is supposed to" be homological. In fact, however, he enunciates "a general theory of social practice that attempts to employ economic language while rejecting economic reductionism, but which, we argue, finally offers little resistance to the hegemony of economic explanations of cultural practices" (409). Hence Bourdieu and Becker come into question: Bourdieu's "economic language" is problematic even when he employs it to react against "economic reductionism," and Becker's "axiomatic, totalizing exchange paradigm" is also so because it represents "the hegemony of economic explanations of cultural practices."

First of all, Koritz and Koritz note: "Bourdieu himself argues that his economic language should not be understood as located in the economic field" (415). At the same time, they suggest, however, that "Bourdieu and Becker seem to share more than Bourdieu at least is willing to acknowledge, since both assume human subjects to be

motivated in the first stance by a desire to maximize—though in Becker the object of maximization is utility, while in Bourdieu it is distinction” (412). That is to say, Bourdieu’s distinction between cultural and economic fields is being eroded not only by his terminology, but also by his ideology—ideology which manifests itself in the totalistic supposition that humans are always urged by “a desire to maximize.” It can then be said in this context that Bourdieu’s cultural economics has always been open to criticism. In his essay entitled “A Reply to Some Objections,” therefore, he makes the counter argument that he employs the concept of homology so as to break away from “economic reductionism” or “economistic reduction” (111). The reply conveys his belief that he, as a (socio)cultural critic, is able to maintain the homology between the economic field and the cultural fields which incorporate “scientific field, artistic field, literary field, philosophical field, etc.”

Paradoxically enough, Bourdieu’s cultural reductionism is here revealed. Bourdieu’s reduction of scientific, artistic, literary, and philosophical fields into “the cultural fields of production” is an indication that his distinction between homology and identity is virtually unworkable. It is therefore unquestionable that the problem is his overpowering homological method. It is at this point that Koritz and Koritz make the following counter argument against his counter argument: “Admittedly, a homology is not to be equated with an identity; but Bourdieu nonetheless effectively privileges the terms in which the homology is couched. His consistent use of economic language... makes it difficult to maintain the distinction between homology and identity” (416). Herein lies the very reason why it is particularly important for interdisciplinarians to be aware of differences between two domains, such as cultural studies and economics. To be fair, as we shall see, however, we must direct our attention not only to cultural reductionism but also to economic reductionism.

#### IV

Another question posed by Koritz and Koritz is Becker’s economic reductionism. It is often pointed out that his economic theory emphasizes exchanges as all social interactions, and Koritz and Koritz argue against his seemingly reductionistic view that “[t]he only legitimate way for one individual to gain utility from the endowments and production of others is through mutually advantageous exchange” and “therefore, individuals always act as if they were exchanging” (411). Becker puts particular emphasis on individuals as well as exchanges, since it is his fundamental principle that exchanges can be made only when individuals have a sense of difference from one another. More importantly, Becker adheres to his economic theory of exchanges and individuals, and therefore he neither constructs any homology between culture and the marketplace nor criticizes any cultural study. In this respect, it is perhaps more proper to say that his economic approach is an application of his theory to culture rather than a reduction of culture into the marketplace; and such a stance can be seen as typical of economists, just as remarked by Paul Krugman: “economics studies human beings in their simplest (if least edifying) activities (xii)”<sup>3</sup>

Here Krugman provides us with an important key to practicing an interdiscursive study of literature and economics. That “economics studies humans in their simplest activities” is not necessarily suggestive of economic reductionism, because the sphere of economic theory is not necessarily restricted to the marketplace. What is highly significant in this very context is to perform varied experiments on economic theory in order to reach “surprising conclusions.” As Krugman puts it:

[E]conomics lends itself both to the development of theory and to the testing of that theory to a greater extent than other social sciences. If economics were a subject of purely intellectual interest like astronomy it would be regarded as a quietly progressive field, one in which there has been a steady accumulation of knowledge over the past two centuries. (xiii)

What is crucial in conducting an interdisciplinary study from an economic perspective is not to demonstrate the validity of economic theory, but to reach different conclusions from what economists expect, through “the development of theory” and “the testing of that theory.” A sense of difference will thus be expressed through incorporation and investigation of economic theory. In order to attain this goal, for example, literary texts can function as an interdiscursive space in which varied economic theories are employed to make theoretical analyses, through which the validities of those theories are examined to make critical responses. Since literary studies is capable of incorporating into their vast universe of discourse a wide diversity of theories such as feminism, environmentalism, and Marxism, it is of vital importance to recognize the literary text as an entity capable of making critical responses to varied theories. The point is that theoretical and textual analyses are positively codependent upon one another in literature:

Theory can help us not only better understand literature but also use literature better to understand the world outside of literature. Nonetheless, literary theory, however fascinating in its own right, does not function independently of literature itself. It is designed not to replace literature as a field of study but to provide tools for the appreciation and understanding of the richness and evocative power of literature. (Booker 5)

In connection with theory, the literary text is not only passive but also evocative: it incorporates theories and generates responses. In this sense, the introduction of theoretical economic models into literary texts makes it possible for us to make critical exchanges between literature and economics – economics as “the world outside of literature.” A critique of cultural studies in relation to economics is hence relevant to “the appreciation and understanding of the richness and evocative power of literature.” And yet, interdisciplinary studies should contribute to knowledge’s openness without overemphasizing such umbrella concepts as culture and literature; each of the studies must be made as a practice of specific interdisciplinarity so as not to construct any academic empire. The interdisciplinary is an ever-moving target, toward which the practitioner steps, not stops.

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> The following is also the criticism of cultural studies in terms of substitution: “cultural studies frequently reproduces stereotypes of identity and ethnicity; as a result, the literary specificity of indigenous cultures gets lost” (Apter 201).

<sup>2</sup> According to Bell, “whereas industrial society was a goods-producing society, postindustrial society is organized around knowledge for the purpose of social control and the directing of innovation and change” (20). Similarly, Lyotard deals with knowledge’s exchange value: “Knowledge is and will be produced in order to be sold, it is and it will be consumed in order to be valorized in a new production: in both cases, the goal is exchange. Knowledge ceases to be an end in itself; it loses its ‘use-value’” (4-5).

<sup>3</sup> In *Distinction* Bourdieu explains cultural capital in the following abstract manner: “capital is a social relation, i.e., an energy which only exists and only produces its effects in the field in which it is produced and reproduced, each of the properties attached to class is given its value and efficacy by the specific laws of each field” (113).

<sup>4</sup> It must be noted that major economists tend to avoid defining economics as a discipline. For Alfred Marshall, for example, economics “is not a body of concrete truth, but an engine for the discovery of concrete truth” (159). Similarly, John. M. Keynes notes that “[i]t is a method rather than a doctrine, an apparatus of the mind, a technique of thinking which helps its possessor to draw conclusions” (196). Lastly, Joan Robinson claims that it “is presented to the analytical economist as a box of tools” (1).



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## 要約

本稿は、これまで人文科学において広範に実践されてきた「文化的研究(Cultural Studies)」の在り方について検証している。自然科学における実証と異なり、人文科学における論証は、なるほど厳密な客観性を要求されない場合が往々にしてある。したがって、ある社会における文化と別の社会における文化に、あるいは一つの社会における複数の文化の相違に個別性と連続性を見出しつつ、それらの問題を文化の問題として論じることには、それなりの学問的価値はあるだろう。しかし、Bill Readings が指摘するように、個々の集団間の差異性と連続性の問題を「文化」という観点から総括してしまうことには議論の余地がある。なぜなら、それは否定的な意味における還元主義的な論法となる危険性があるからである。一方、社会科学においても還元主義的な論法は存在する。たとえば、新古典派経済学は、社会における人間の活動を利益の追及または最大化という観点のみから説明する傾向がある。かくして本稿は、人文科学（例えば文学）と社会科学（例えば経済学）の学際性を図る際には、それら学際的研究の個々が「特殊 (specific)」であるべきであり、学際性を総括的な概念としてではなく、永続的に追及されるべき概念として捉えることを提唱している。