

**CULTURAL STUDIES IN THE 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY**

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This paper is related to cultural studies and especially focuses on the status of cultural studies in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, cultural studies has been playing a significant role in the history of ideas for last five decade. Most over it this paper see the status of popular culture and defines as popular culture is associated with a set of practices, belief and subjects that are consumed by the majority of society's population. Cultural studies is a multidisciplinary field, starts from the research centre 'Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies' in 1964 at the university of Birmingham in U.S.A. Richard Hoggart and Stuart Hall who gives the first glimpse of popular culture through cultural studies approach. Popular culture plays an eminent role in the field of culture studies from 1964 to 2020. But this paper aims to be analysis the data from 2000 to 2020 only to find out what popular culture has the future. In this way, this paper will be analyzed the pop icon and gives various aspects of popular culture. There are many writers who give their contribution for cultural studies in the 21<sup>st</sup> century and their works will be included in this study.

**Keywords:** multidisciplinary, cultural studies, Popular culture



Cultural Studies is one of the most distinguished disciplinary and interdisciplinary or multidisciplinary field in post-modern era because it consist the several disciplinary includes literature, politics, geography, sociology, linguistic etc and many theories namely structuralism post-colonialism, Marxism, culture materialism post- structuralism etc. In the layman's words, cultural studies is made of two word culture and studies. Firstly culture means the particular way of life. And are various aspects including the food you take, God you worship, clothes you wear song you sing language you speaking etc. Human as the member of society and others achievements, like customs, traditions, festivals and various issues of like including art, music, architecture philosophy literature, religion science can be seen as the aspects of culture. Culture is an umbrella term. In the words of Cristina De Rossi:

"Culture encompasses religion, food, what we wear, how we wear it, our language, marriage, music, what we believe is right or wrong, how we sit at the table, how we greet visitors, how we behave with loved ones, and a million other things.",<sup>1</sup>

And the second 'studies' which means the 'Study of'. The combination of cultural studies meaning is 'the study of culture'. But it is wrong because cultural studies is an institutional field origins, locate so it is different from the study of culture. Cultural Studies first centre purpose to produced details conceptualized analysis of the ways that power and social relation are created, structured and maintained through culture. In Cultural Studies, there are many disciplinary to examine and relative to culture ad power, gender, race, feminism, class etc to explore the commission between these of forms of power. It is Bennet who divides the definition of Cultural Studies into four points which are:

- I. "Cultural Studies is an interdisciplinary field in which perspectives from different disciplines can be selectively

drawn on to examine the relations of culture and power."

- II. "Cultural Studies is concerned with all those practices, institutions and systems of classification through which there are inculcated in a population particular values, beliefs, competencies, routines of life and habitual forms of conduct."
- III. "The form of power that cultural studies explores are diverse and include gender, race, class, colonialism etc. Cultural Studies seeks to explore the connections between these forms of power and to develop ways of thinking about culture and power that can be utilized by agents in the pursuit of changing."
- IV. "The prime institutional sites for cultural studies are those of higher education and as such, cultural studies is like other academic disciplines. Nevertheless, it tries to forge connections outside of the academy with social and political movements, workers in cultural institutions, and cultural management."<sup>2</sup>

Culture Studies start from 1964 with the establish of centre for contemporary cultural studies by Richard Hoggart and Stuart Hall who first used cultural studies approach to popular culture. Popular culture refers to the taste of ordinary people rather than educated elite and contrast to folk culture working-class culture or high culture. Popular culture is associated with a set of practices, belief and subjects that are consumed by the majority of society's population. The abbreviated form of popular is pop which is narrow and refers to something specific including music, literature, radio fashion, television, cyber-culture, dance, film etc. Mass media is realigned in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Before 2000, mass media is used for television, newspaper, books, cinema etc. But today, it is used for the internet, mobile, magazine etc. The distinguish meaning

<sup>1</sup>Cristina De Rossi, an anthropologist at Barnet and Southgate College in London, told Live Science.

<sup>2</sup> Bennett, T. (1998) Culture: A Reformer's Science. St Leonards, NSW: Allen & Unwin.



between the term 'popular' and the phrase 'popular culture' is given by Stuart Hall in his essay 'Notes on Deconstructing 'The Popular''. He first defines popular:

"Take the most common-sense meaning: the things which are said to be popular because masses of the people listen to them, buy them, read them, consume them and seem to enjoy them to the full"<sup>3</sup>

Secondly he defines the phrase 'popular culture' as the cultural activity of people. The term popular culture was coined by Johann Gottfried Harder to refer to the entirety of ideas, belief, entertainment, slang, fashion and politics which permeates the everyday life of ordinary people in a society

Change is the law of life like Nature and culture has a characteristic as changeable. The modern world means the world's people, is connected to new ways of life that have never been before. Popular culture is a modern phenomenon that has a new way of spreading the internet to share their thoughts, ideas and experiences through the use of the internet, particularly has been influenced culture and songs, films, video is viral through the internet. People have a lot of symbols of popular culture including writers, singers, actors and dancers who have reached extreme heights of fame and have come to the present era. Nowadays social media is a platform in which, anyone can be a celebrity. On the social media basis, YouTube, Tik Tok, Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, Yahoo etc seem to be the new symbols adding of popular culture. In March 2014, several You Tubers were invited in the Whitehouse by President Barak Obama to know their message for young people. Thus, YouTube is the symbol of popular culture in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

There are several categories of Pop/ popular culture including sports, news, politics, fashion and entertainment. *Gone Home (2010) and PUBG (2017)*

<sup>3</sup>Hall.S "Notes on Deconstructing 'The Popular'", *"People's History and Socialist Theory"*. Raphael Samuel(ed.), London: Routledge, 1981

are examples of popular culture in the video game. In music, *American Got Talent, Indian Got Talent, American Idol and Indian Idol* are various examples of pop culture. *What not to Wear and Project Runway* belong to pop culture in fashion. On TV, *Reality show Big boss, The Kapil Sharma Show, The Bachelor, The Biggest Lasserare* examples of popular culture. In food culture, fast food, hamburger Rice A Rani are examples of popular culture and *the Kitchen and Rachael Ray* are TV shows for cooking. WhatsApp Twitter, Facebook, Snapchat etc are the best examples of popular culture in social media. There are a lot of main figures in pop culture such as Bob Dylan, Chetan Bhagat, Shakira, Bill Gates, Mark Zuckerberg, Stephen Hawking, Justin Bieber are the famous icon of popular culture in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

In Cultural Studies, Such writer often who gives the contribution to popular culture such as Matthew Arnold, Stuart Hall, Raymond Williams, Richard Hoggart, E.P. Thomson etc in 20<sup>th</sup> century and Lawrence, Graneberg Siman Frith, Angela Mc Robbie, Maggahm Morris etc in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. In 21<sup>st</sup> century Today, Angela Macrobbe is a professor of communication at Goldsmith college and combines the study of popular culture. It is Lawrence Grossberg who is the student of Stuart Hall and Richard Hoggart. He is known for popular culture and Culture Studies especially focus on popular music. In his work, *Media Making: Mass Media in popular culture (2005)* he gives an unique approach to present the knowledge about the relationship between media culture and society and relate to popular culture. Simon Firth is famous for analyzing popular music culture. He uses an approach as called popular music studies. In 2004, he publish a four volumes *"Popular Music: Critical Concepts in Media Cultural Studies and a collection of essays about Popular Music: Talking Popular Music Seriously: Selected Essays in (2007)* To concludes it cannot be wrong to say that popular culture contrast to the high culture and takes an eminent place in cultural studies. In 21<sup>st</sup> century, popular culture has a new form in our society. Thus mass media merged into popular culture. In his book *Against Race (2000)*, Paul Gilroy calls this book the renunciation of race. He champions consumption and gives us a new political language. Patricia J. William is an American proponent of critical race theory. William wrote *Blind Goddess* in which, she writes about the impact of race on each



stage. Thus, there are many another theorists such as Richard Delgado, Kimberlie William Crenshaw, Camara Phyllis James etc who contributes to critical race theory in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. In Cultural Studies, Such writer often who gives the contribution to popular culture such as Matthew Arnold, Stuart Hall, Raymond Williams, Richard Hoggart, E.P. Thomson etc in 20<sup>th</sup> century and Lawrence, Graneberg Siman Frith, Angela Mc Robbie, Maggahm Morris etc in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. In 21<sup>st</sup> century Today, Angela MacRobbie is a professor of communication at Goldsmith College and combines the study of popular culture. It is Lawrence Grossberge who is the student of Stuart Hall and Richard Hoggart. He is known for popular culture and Culture Studies especially focus on popular music. In his work, *Media Making: Mass Media in popular culture* (2005) he gives an unique approach to present the knowledge about the relationship between media culture and society and relate to popular culture. Simon Firth is famous for analyzing popular music culture. He uses an approach as called popular music studies. In 2004, he publish a four volumes *“Popular Music: Critical Concepts in Media Cultural Studies and a collection of essays about Popular Music: Talking Popular Music Seriously: Selected Essays in (2007)”*

Raymond Williams was a Welsh Marxist theorist, novelist, critic, public intellectual, author academic, socialist and a leading figure of the New Left and established a new method of critical analysis as *Culture Materialism* which is based on the concept of culture in which cultural practice has been identified as part of an active, dynamic, historical process. His work draws towards two consecutive streams in cultural form: the contingent and the subjunctive. The first of these is the history of the figure which has been driven by human action while later we discover moments that want to ask what options are possible and how. From here, Williams developed the several enduring theoretical concepts: he identified a ‘structure of feeling; which he called the field of interaction between the official consciousness of an era and the whole process of actually living its consequences’; he insisted on seeing culture as ‘normal’ every day and (Possibly) democratic, being constantly made and re-made; and he creates three forces or tensions in the development of cultural form: the residual, the dominant and the emergent, all of these provides a

way to analysed and critique cultural change, along with its relevance and impact. In *Culture and Society*, Raymond Williams says that how the nation of culture developed in the west, especially Great Britain from 18<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> century. *The Long Revolutions’* of this title is a revolution of culture, which Raymond William sees open with the democratic revolution and the industrial revolution. In *The Country and the City*, Raymond Williams analyses images of the country and the city in English Literature since the 16<sup>th</sup> century, and how do these images become central symbols for the concept of social and economic change associated with capitalist development in England.

Richard Hoggart was a British academic which emphasising on the British popular culture, in sociology, English literature, and culture studies. Richard Hoggart was the founder of the Birmingham centre for contemporary cultural studies, institutional origins to become a global field of cultural studies. Richard Hoggart had envisaged that the centre would have places where he would be given literature reviews on various forms of mass culture: comic books, girl’s magazines and Hollywood Cinema. Hoggart had a working class family in Leeds and had started his educational cares as an adult education teacher and specialist in the work of W.H. Auden. In *The Uses of Literacy*, Richard Hoggart investigates the impact of mass media on the United Kingdom. This book has been mentioned as a major influence in the history of English and media studies and in the establishment of cultural Studies. This book was an attempt to understand the changes in Britain’s culture due to ‘Massification’.

Stuart Hall a British Marxist sociologist, political activist and cultural theorist, along with Richard Hoggart and Raymond Williams, was one of the founding figure of the school of thought, how called British cultural studies or The Birmingham School of cultural studies. Stuart Hall was a founder of the influential New Left Review and Hoggart gives him invitation to joining the centre for contemporary cultural studies at Birmingham University in 1964. The Encoding/ Decoding model of communication



was first evolved by cultural studies scholar Stuart Hall and titled 'Encoding and Decoding in the Television Discourse'; Hall's essay provides a theoretical view of the production, dissemination, and interpretation of media message. Hall proposed that audience members can play an active role in the decoding of messages distortions as they depend on their social contexts, and maybe able to change their message through collective action. In simple words, Encoding/Decoding is the translation of a message, which can be easily understood. When you decode a message, you interpret the message in ways that make sense to you. Decoding includes both verbal and non-verbal forms of communication: Decoding behaviour without the use of words means looking at body language and feeling related to it when someone is sad, angry, or stressed, there are other body language signs. Sometimes when a person is trying to convey a message to someone, then the meaning of the message can be changed from different person to another person. Decoding has to be prepared by understanding who knows what on the basis of the information given at the time of receiving the message.

E.P Thomson was a British historian, Socialist, Writer, Peace campaigner and he is perhaps best known today for the historical work of the Britain revolutionary movements of the late 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century. *The making of the English working class* is a work of English social history which was placed 30<sup>th</sup> in the modern library 100 best nonfiction books of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Thomson uses the term "working class" instead of "classes", in the books; emphasis has been laid throughout the book to emphasis on the development of a working class consciousness.

Dick Hebdige is an expatriate British media theorist, sociologist who was associated with all sub-culture and its resistance against the mainstream of society. His current research interest include desert, media topographies, and per formative criticism. Hebdige has written extensively on Modern art, media and cultural studies, design, on mod style, reggae, postmodernism and style, surrealism, improvisation, and Takashi Murakami. In *Subculture: The Meaning*

*of Style*, Dick, which focuses on Britain's post-war youth subculture styles, is a symbolic form of resistance. Drawing from Marxist theorist, French structuralism, literary critics, American sociologists, presents a model for analyzing youth subcultures.

Hebdige argues that each subculture is passing through the same trajectory. But they outline the distinct style deference of specific subcultures such as Teddy boys, Mods, Rocker, Skinheads and Punks. Hebdige emphasises the historical, class, cast, and socioeconomic conditions that surround the formation of each subculture. According to Hebdige, styles are created by combining clothes, music, dance, makeup and drugs. Hebdige emphasis on the historical, socio-economic, class, caste and mass media contexts of each subculture. For example, Hebdige argues that a common issue is the rejection of British national symbolism by both white punk and black. Despite being unrelated, Hebdige proves this point by outlining the similarities of his form.

Poul Willis is a British society scientist and known for his scientific works of sociology. Poul Willis's work is widely read in the field of sociology, anthropology and education, with emphasis on consumer culture socialization, music and popular culture. *Learning to Labour*, Willis's tells about ethnographies study of working class boys at a secondary school in England. In this, Willis tries to explain the role of youth culture and socialization as medium by which school working class jobs. Learning to Labour as a social scientist, researcher in an important educational and educational study have recognised school education and as a historical study of culture and he is one of the most cited sociological text in education studies. Most of the thinkers such as Angela McRobbie, Poul Gilrory, Lawrence Grossberg etc belong to Cultural studies in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, cultural studies is playing a role in the field of education. Today, it becomes a subject like other Sociology, linguistic, literature etc. Angela McRobbie combines popular culture, contemporary media ad feminism to gaze and is well known as a British culture theorist and feminism- Lawrence Grossberg is famous for cultural studies and popular



culture especially in philosophy of commune. It is Poul Gilrory who is the centre for the study of race and racism.

## CONCLUSION

Thus, cultural studies is playing an important role in the history of ideas of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. There are many theorists of cultural studies who spearheaded the multidisciplinary such as race theory, popular culture, feminism, Marxism, gender theory, mass media etc. In Cultural Studies from 1964 to 2020, such writer often who gives the contribution to cultural studies such as, Stuart Hall, Raymond Williams, Richard Hoggart, E.P. Thomson etc in 20<sup>th</sup> century and Lawrence, Graneberg Siman Frith, Angela Mc Robbie, Maggahm Morris etc in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. It cannot be wrong to say that popular culture contrast to the high culture and takes an eminent place in cultural studies. In 21<sup>st</sup> century, popular culture has a new form in our society. Thus mass media merged into popular culture. Most over it, this paper has been remaining success to show the real status or condition of cultural studies in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

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