Creating the cultures of the future: cultural strategy, policy and institutions in Gramsci

# Part One: Gramsci and cultural policy studies: some methodological reflections

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## Introduction

Gramsci's writings have rarely been discussed and used systematically by scholars in cultural policy studies, despite the fact that in cultural studies, from which the field emerged, Gramsci has been a major source of theoretical concepts.[1] Cultural policy studies were in fact theorised as an anti-Gramscian project between the late 1980s and the early 1990s, when a group of cultural-studies scholars based in Australia[2] advocated a major political and theoretical reorientation of the discipline away from hegemony theory and radical politicisation, and towards reformist-technocratic engagement with the policy concerns of contemporary government and business.[3] Their criticism of the 'Gramscian tradition' as inadequate for the study of cultural policy and institutions has remained largely unexamined in any detail for almost twenty years and seems to have had a significant role in the subsequent neglect of Gramsci's key concepts in this area of study.[4]

This essay is an attempt to challenge such criticism and provide an analysis of Gramsci's writings with the aim of proposing a more systematic contribution of his work to the theoretical development of cultural policy studies. The reason for doing so is that Gramsci's writings undermine the very concept of cultural policy as commonly understood, thus providing us with a working model for subjecting it to a fundamental critical rethinking. They are resistant to commonly held ways of thinking about questions of cultural policy, and through this resistance they force us to think deeply and outside the boundaries of our normally accepted ideas and assumptions. Gramsci's prison writings, in particular, are extremely radical, original and even unpredictable. If we are to benefit from Gramsci's ideas, then we have to open up as much as possible to Gramsci's challenging inventiveness, his creative use of language and concepts,[5] his peculiar methods,[6] his pushing of the reasoning to the extreme of paradox,[7] and his constant opening up of difficult questions. I therefore analyse some of the interpretations of his thought that have already circulated within cultural policy studies before moving on to interrogating the more unsettling, less familiar territories that are directly relevant to cultural policy questions.

At a time in which cultural policy studies are running the risk of developing in an ever more inert, passive, and pragmatic direction, it is vital to shake the virtual monopoly of the reformist-technocratic paradigm by injecting radical interventions into the debate. In the climate of cynical relativism and reduced horizons that has been brought about by by the neoliberal context for intellectual work, it is essential to reintroduce questions of human emancipation into the debate. Clearly, Gramsci is only one of the many potential radical voices that can contribute to challenging the current reformist-technocratic agenda in this area of study,[8] but perhaps it is precisely because of Gramsci's particular destabilising potential that his contribution has been strenuously fought, in this way perhaps unwittingly reconnecting to Cold War intellectual hostility towards Gramsci's positive conception of the relationship between culture and politics.[9] Given the misrepresentations of Gramsci and his intellectual legacy on questions of cultural policy, their reintroduction into the debate is a complex and vast task, and its different aspects need to be dealt with separately. This essay therefore consists of three parts.In Part One, I question the use of the notion of 'Gramscian tradition' made by its critics and challenge the claim that it was inadequate for the study of cultural policy and institutions. In parts Two and Three, I consider Gramsci's specific writings on questions of cultural strategy, policy and institutions, which have so far been overlooked by scholars, arguing that they provide further analytical insights to those offered by his more general concepts. More specifically, in Part Two, I consider Gramsci's pre-prison writings and political practice in relation to questions of cultural strategy and institutions. I argue that the analysis of these early texts, which were written in the years in which Gramsci was active in party organisation and leadership, is fundamental not only for understanding the nature of Gramsci's early and continued involvement with questions of cultural strategy and institutions, but also as a key for deciphering and interpreting cultural policy themes that he later developed in the prison notebooks, and which originated in earlier debates. Finally, in Part Three, I carry out a detailed analysis of Gramsci's prison notes on questions of cultural strategy, policy and institutions, which enrich the theoretical underpinnings for critical frameworks of analysis as well as for radical practices of cultural strategy, cultural policy-making and cultural organisation. I then answer the question of whether these insights amount to a theory of cultural policy.

My discussion here is not meant to offer an alternative to other existing or potential contributions of Gramsci's writings to the broader analysis of the links of cultural and economic policy, or to other potential extensions of Gramsci's analyses. On the contrary, it is meant to be in addition to them. Given the specific focus of my essay, although I will provide brief explanations of Gramsci's concepts in footnotes or, where necessary, by incorporating them in my discussion, it is beyond the scope of this essay to offer a preliminary introduction to his thought,[10] or to the many controversies that have surrounded the interpretation of his writings.[11] Finally, I do not aim to provide examples of applications of my conclusions. These can however offer the basis for further specific empirical work.

## 1. The criticism of the 'Gramscian tradition'

Tony Bennett, perhaps the leading figure of the Australian school of cultural policy studies,[12] and the most vocal of the critics of the 'Gramscian tradition', argued that the reasons why this intellectual tradition was theoretically inadequate for the study of cultural policy and institutions were:[13]

1) its definition of culture as 'whole ways of life' (from Raymond Williams's keywords), which for Bennett served to legitimise the study of popular culture 'as the forcing ground for forms of symbolic opposition to culture in its more restricted dominant and aesthetic form',[14] a definition that for Bennett missed the key transformation of culture, from the late eighteenth century, into 'a historically specific set of institutionally embedded relations of government',[15] and generated 'forms of class essentialism';[16]

2) its commitment to Gramsci's concept of hegemony,[17] because of the central role given to 'class as the coordinating centre of social and political life', which 'can neither be sustained theoretically nor, anymore, be of much service politically';[18]

3) its theory of agency for being based on such categories as class, race and gender (which for Bennett appeared to exist only as 'targets' but not as 'social agents' of political programmes),[19] and on the model role of the 'organic intellectual',[20] adopted by Stuart Hall,[21] for being a role ultimately unable to connect with policy-makers and moved instead by the objective of producing oppositional subjects organised as a collective force through cultural means, rather than by engaging with institutional contexts.[22]

To sum up, the key issues were: the definition of culture as 'whole ways of life'; the concept of 'hegemony'; and the concept of the 'organic intellectual'. The joint adoption of such concepts apparently determined for Bennett whether individual scholars belonged to the 'Gramscian tradition' and thus whether their work should be considered incompatible with the study of cultural policy. Nonetheless, out of these three concepts, only two were associated with Gramsci ('hegemony' and 'organic intellectual') and only one was unique to Gramsci ('organic intellectual').[23]

Bennett also articulated specific criticism of Gramsci's thought by setting up an unfavourable comparison with Foucault.[24] He represented Gramsci's conception of power 'as arising from a highly unified and centralised origin' in 'the ruling class',[25] and criticised the concept of hegemony because of its being exclusively concerned with culture and ideology and because its objectives were 'to be accomplished by exposing (...) [the popular] classes, regularly and routinely, to bourgeois ideologies and values'.[26] Bennett capitalised on one of Foucault's maxims to caricature the holders of such a concept of hegemony: '"The problem", as Foucault put it, "is not changing people's consciousness – or what's in their heads – but the political, economic, institutional régimes of the production of truth"'.[27] By this he possibly meant that the point was to speak not to the people, but to the government – which, for Bennett, was apparently sufficient to explain why Foucault could be reconciled with cultural policy studies understood as reformist-technocratic engagement with government and business, while Gramsci could not. Elsewhere, in a more general critique of cultural studies, Bennett

also criticised the historical-materialist orientation, arguing that it should be scaled down to a Foucauldian form of materialism, in which history was seen not as the expression of 'a more fundamental cause' such as the mode of production, but as the generator of 'forms of social life and conduct'.[28]

However, it is possible to argue that Bennett's criticism of Gramsci and the 'Gramscian tradition' was based on a series of conceptual and logical problems:

1) an inadequate understanding of Gramsci's concept of hegemony as limited to culture and ideology and ultimately consisting of ideological indoctrination.

2) an unexamined and unexplained assumption that Gramsci was not interested in changing 'the political, economic, institutional regimes of the production of truth';

3) a critique of the historical-materialist orientation that was in strange conflict with the idealist understanding of the concept of hegemony (see point 1).

4) an unexamined and unexplained assumption that symbolic opposition to dominant or aesthetic cultural forms was inherently incompatible with an interest in governmental questions;

5) a conflation of the unwillingness of the 'Gramscian tradition' to engage with the 'institutional conditions' of culture with a *theoretical inability* to do so;

6) an arbitrary reduction of the categories of class, gender and race to the passivity of targets of governmental programmes – a revisionist position that seemed to deny the historical existence of class conflict, feminism, and anti-racist movements as actual powerful social agents of historical change.

The conceptual and logical problems in Bennett's criticism do not seem to require further discussion in the limited scope of this article, but I will return to them at the end of Part Three, in the light of my detailed analysis of Gramsci's specific writings on cultural policy and institutions. In the rest of this article, instead, I only wish preliminarily and critically to analyse Bennett's notion of 'Gramscian tradition' by focusing particularly on the two main concepts involved in such notion: culture and hegemony, which arguably are the most variable ones within the 'Gramscian tradition' because they are not unique to Gramsci. My argument is that there are fundamental differences, even between Gramsci and Williams, in the understanding of the two concepts. This discrepancy between two such key figures in the 'Gramscian tradition' throws a problematic light on the assumption that it is possible to criticise such tradition as a single, coherent phenomenon.

### *Gramsci's concept of culture*

David Forgacs and Geoffrey Nowell-Smith have argued that Gramsci, in his prison notebooks, never defined the concept of culture theoretically and always relied implicitly on the definition 'derived from the traditional socialist thinking which provided his early cultural-political formation'.[29] It could be counter-argued, however, that Gramsci constantly worked on the theoretical elaboration of the concept. On the one hand, the concept was central to his political thinking from his early days as a socialist activist to his last writings in prison, and therefore it underwent constant elaboration and development through critical engagement with different schools of thought and, especially, as part of the development of his political thought.[30] On the

other hand, as Anne Showstack Sassoon has demonstrated, Gramsci tended to rely on existing accepted concepts to give them new meanings, through a complex process of elaboration, to offer new understandings of phenomena or to explain new developments that were taking place in the real world.[31]

Moreover, Gramsci did not seem to consider the culture of different social strata as necessarily part of a single general phenomenon that could be preliminarily defined. For example, by reading his notes on folklore, it is possible to infer that the 'conception of the world' of the hegemonic groups and that of the subaltern groups were, for him, two discrete, separate and distinct entities, which worked according to a morality that was 'in contradiction' or 'simply different'.[32] In order to account for the way in which culture worked in such different realms of social life, Gramsci needed to refer to different intellectual traditions and methods. All this shows that his concept of hegemony was not necessarily associated to any particular notion of culture.

It is significant that none of the existing glossaries of Gramsci's concepts has ventured a definition of 'culture'.[33] Kate Crehan has argued that Gramsci's concept of culture *cannot* in fact be defined; to explain it, it is necessary to 'map out' the full terrain that it occupied in Gramsci's writings,[34] a task that has taken as many as three chapters of her book. Birgit Wagner has tried to categorise the content of Gramsci's prison notebooks 16 and 26, which are titled '*Argomenti di cultura'* ('Cultural themes'). The list of themes that Wagner has identified includes what today would come under the following intellectual categories: the history of mentalities, epistemological issues, philosophy and history of philosophy, economics and history of economics, theory of the state, questions of nomenclature, and a literary project.[35] A list of the sub-topics of these broad categories occupies three pages of her essay.

It is also possible to argue that different definitions of culture as starting points to Gramsci's elaborations were often implied in the diverse methods and traditions of analysis that he adopted for the discussion of aspects of culture in a range of different social realms. For example, in his preparatory notes for a history of intellectuals he indicated in 'cultural history' (*storia della cultura* according to the German tradition of *Kulturgeschichte* and as developed by German scholars in the last two decades of the 19th century) and in the 'history of political science' (*storia della scienza politica*, or 'intellectual history'), the two methods that he would utilise.[36] In the tradition of *Kulturgeschichte*, 'culture' meant the bringing together of the histories of philosophy, literature, language, science, the arts, to discuss them in relation to the *Zeitgeist*.[37] However, because at the time in which Gramsci was writing, cultural history did not include popular culture,[38] when he moved on to incorporating popular culture into the discussion, he adopted, as a starting point, a specific understanding of culture that was commonly accepted by the 'science of folklore' of his time, and which he immediately challenged.[39] In his writings on 'Science and scientific ideologies', instead, Gramsci noted that science was 'una categoria storica' whose object was culture understood as a 'conception of the world' in the sense of 'the relationship between humanity and reality as mediated by technology',[40] a concept with a similar meaning to that of 'civilisation'. But when he discussed Dante, Ibsen, or Pirandello Gramsci referred to a literary notion of culture.[41]

Arguably, the use of such different traditions, methods, and sources of understandings of the notion of culture was necessary to arrive at a theorisation of the complex relationships between the cultural, the political and the economic in different social realms. It was while commenting on De Sanctis's essay '*La cultura politica*',[42] that Gramsci eventually defined culture as 'a coherent, integral and nationwide "conception of life and man", a "lay religion", a philosophy that has become "culture", that is, one that has generated an ethic, a life-style and an individual and civil pattern of behaviour'.[43] But as I emphasise in Part Three, this happened in 1934, i.e. quite towards the end of his productive life, as a summary of his development of the concept, not as an introductory definition. As Peter Ives has perceptively noted more generally in relation to Gramsci's eschewal of preliminary definitions, 'it is almost as if he is practising Wittgenstein's dictum, "the meaning of a word is its use in the language", rather than some stated definition prior to its use'.[44]

From this discussion it is possible to conclude that the concept of culture in Gramsci is far more complex than can be captured by its definition as 'whole ways of life'.

***Williams's concept of hegemony***

Gramsci entered cultural studies not only directly, through his own writings, but also mainly through Williams's elucidation of the concept of hegemony in his article 'Base and superstructure in Marxist theory' (1973) and in his book *Marxism and Literature* (1977),[45] and by the influence of Williams as one of the founding fathers of cultural studies. Williams was in fact particularly interested in the concept of hegemony because it provided an account of the relationship between the economic base and the superstructures that avoided economic determinism (or the tendency to see culture as an epiphenomenon of the economic),[46] it retained a strong sense of human agency and of the role of culture in history, and did not reduce consciousness to the ideology propagated by the dominant class.[47] Yet, it is possible to argue that Williams went beyond Gramsci in his understanding of the concept, arriving at an original interpretation. This had important consequences for the emergence of a 'Gramscian tradition' because Williams's original interpretation of hegemony, which was often taken to be a mere elucidation of Gramsci's, was very influential within cultural studies.

Williams had already argued, in his 1973 article 'Base and superstructure in Marxist cultural theory', that Gramsci's principle of hegemony opened up the possibility of introducing the ideas of 'alternative' and 'opposition' to the 'dominant culture' – a possibility that, in his view, was not available in other more deterministic versions of Marxism.[48] Williams thus established a distinction between 'residual' and 'emergent' forms of 'alternative' and 'oppositional' culture in relation to the 'dominant' culture.[49] Nonetheless, because of his syncretism,[50] a final attribution of these categories to him, rather than to Gramsci, for readers who were not already familiar with Gramsci's writings was probably not straightforward. These categories appeared again in the chapter on hegemony in Williams's *Marxism and Literature*,[51] where hegemony was related to the category of 'the dominant', while the concepts of 'counter-hegemony' and 'alternative hegemony' were introduced as 'real and persistent elements of practice'

to account for 'resistance or opposition' and the category of 'the alternative'.[52] Through this, Williams was revising the notion of hegemony. A whole chapter of *Marxism and Literature* was in fact devoted to the full development of the categories of 'the dominant', 'the residual' and 'the emergent'.[53] The residual, explained Williams, 'may have an alternative or even oppositional relation to the dominant culture' but at the same time the dominant culture incorporated some of the residual through the work of a 'selective tradition'.[54] 'The emergent', instead, was a kind of 'new' that consisted of new values, meanings and practices brought about by the emergence of a new class and which was not incorporated in the dominant culture but, on the contrary, remained alterative and oppositional to it.[55] Although these categories could be seen as developments or extrapolations of Gramsci's ideas of the traditional intellectual as residual from an earlier hegemony and of the organic intellectuals as emerging out of the subordinate classes, in Gramsci these concepts were not generalised and schematised.

Most importantly, by introducing the concept of counter-hegemony Williams arguably returned to the traditional meaning of hegemony as 'domination', which Gramsci had transcended. In Gramsci, hegemony referred precisely to the opposite of domination.[56] This clearly amounted to a fundamental difference between Williams's and Gramsci's understanding of the concept. Nonetheless, Williams's concept of hegemony, with an associated emphasis on the antonymic couples 'dominant' vs. 'oppositional' and 'hegemonic' vs. 'counter-hegemonic', is the way in which the concept of hegemony has often tended to be understood and utilised within cultural studies. The explanation of the concept that can be found in cultural studies books seems to indicate this understanding:

> The theory of hegemony was of central importance to the development of British cultural studies (not least in the work of the Birmingham Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies). It facilitated analysis of the ways in which subordinate groups actively respond to and resist political and economic domination.[57]

> Gramsci sees ideology as a site of particularly vigorous contestation, and the popular culture as a source of considerable resistance to hegemonic formation.[58]

> However, (...) hegemony can never be total. There are always emergent forms of consciousness and representation which may be mobilized in opposition to the hegemonic order. This means that a lot of work, called *ideological labour*, goes into the struggle between hegemonic and counter-hegemonic forms. And what's at stake in the long term in this struggle can be political and economic power itself.[59]

In the last example, the idealist separation of culture from the social is significant: cultural struggle seems to be considered sufficient to counter domination. This problem of interpretation of the concept of hegemony, which introduces yet another understanding of the concept within what Bennett has called the 'Gramscian tradition', was identified by Hall as a more general problem of the assimilation of Marxist theorists cleansed of their Marxist meaning and implications.

> I notice there is now a very rapid assimilation of the Althusserian moment into literary studies but without its Marxist connotations. And I notice the same

> thing about Gramsci's work. Suddenly, I see Gramsci quoted everywhere. Even more troubling, I see Gramscian concepts directly substituted for some of the very things we went to Gramsci to avoid. People talk about 'hegemony' for instance as the equivalent of ideological domination. I have tried to fight against that interpretation of 'hegemony' for twenty years.[60]

In Gramsci's concept of hegemony, there was no emphasis on cultural struggle, in isolation from economic and political aspects, as sufficient for social change. Gramsci seemed to think that the subordinate classes did not have the possibility of actively engaging 'modern culture', the official culture of the hegemonic groups, on its terrain through effectively oppositional cultural forms. The subaltern groups 'cannot possess conceptions which are elaborated, systematic and politically organized and centralized in their albeit contradictory development (...) if indeed one should not speak of a confused agglomerate of fragments of all the conceptions of the world and of life that have succeeded one another in history'.[61] Therefore, the subaltern social groups needed to leave behind their subaltern conception of the world and 'bring about the birth of a new culture among the broad popular masses, so that this separation between modern culture and popular culture (...) [or] folklore will disappear'.[62] This possibly means that in Gramsci, without such deep transformation, alternative or oppositional cultural meanings and practices occurring on the cultural plane, even if realistic, would be of little consequence. Arguably, for him the existing hegemony could not be replaced through cultural struggle alone.

It is therefore clear that Williams's concept of hegemony is significantly different from Gramsci's, and that the concept of hegemony often adopted in what has been referred to as the 'Gramscian tradition' can have little in common with both Gramsci's and Williams's.

## 2. 'The turn to Gramsci' and the Gramscian study of cultural policy

The confusion over Bennett's notion of a 'Gramscian tradition' within cultural studies becomes even greater if we consider the fact that a number of its critics had once been amongst the most committed proponents of a 'turn to Gramsci' in the study of popular culture. This introduces yet another strand of 'Gramscian tradition' that overlaps with the idealist understanding of the concept of hegemony that we have already encountered. In 1986, Bennett himself was the main advocate of such turn to Gramsci. He proposed it in the introduction to an anthology of essays that he edited and wrote with a group of scholars who, from 1982 to 1987, ran an influential distance-learning course titled *Popular Culture* at the Open University.[63] To be able to understand Bennett's later criticism of the Gramscian tradition and of Gramsci, it is therefore necessary to examine his use of Gramsci's concepts.

Apparently it was not directly Gramsci's writings that informed Bennett's 'turn', but a version of Gramsci's concept of hegemony 'theoretically enriched' (to borrow David Forgacs's expression) with Laclau's and Mouffe's assimilation of Althusser's concept of interpellation and with Laclau's concept of articulation.[64] Bennett's adoption of a Gramscian framework was an attempt at using Gramsci for addressing the

divergence, within cultural studies, between what Stuart Hall had defined as its 'two paradigms': culturalism and structuralism.[65] Bennett explained that both positions were problematic in themselves. While structuralism considered popular culture 'as an "ideological machine" which dictated the thoughts of the people', culturalism 'was often uncritically romantic in its celebration of popular culture as expressing the authentic interests and values of subordinate social groups and classes', which 'resulted in an essentialist view of culture (...) as the embodiment of specific class or gender essences'.[66] For Bennett, Gramsci's concept of hegemony, 'especially when viewed in the light of recent developments in discourse theory',[67] had the power of undermining the two equally problematic sides of the opposition.[68] The reason for this, Bennett argued, was that in Gramsci 'popular culture is viewed neither as the site of the people's cultural deformation nor as that of their cultural self-affirmation (...); rather, it is viewed as a force-field of relations shaped, precisely, by these contradictory pressures and tendencies'.[69] Hegemony was thus explained as a struggle 'for moral, cultural, intellectual and, thereby, political leadership over the whole of society',[70] where the political seemed a mechanical implication of the cultural, while the structural dimension was not even contemplated. Through this interpretation, hegemony tended to become a struggle exclusively on the cultural terrain and for culture's sake.

> A bourgeois hegemony is secured not via the obliteration of working class culture, but via its *articulation* to bourgeois culture and ideology so that, in being associated with and expressed in the forms of the latter, its political affiliations are altered in the process.[71]

This clearly amounted to an idealist notion of hegemony as limited to the cultural terrain, and implied an essentialist conception of culture as automatically determining political affiliation. Added to this, the concept of articulation derived from discourse theory further neutralised any historical-materialist context of social stratification for such cultural struggle. For Bennett, the concept of articulation enabled a more satisfactory understanding of bourgeois culture as 'a mobile combination of cultural and ideological elements derived from different class locations which are, but only provisionally and for the duration of a specific historical conjuncture, affiliated to bourgeois values, interests and objectives'.[72] Thus, after all, class affiliation appeared as a minor detail. Perhaps instead of an 'enrichment' of the concept of hegemony, we should more correctly speak of its emptying, or spoiling – arguably, to make it compatible with a non-Marxist view of society.

In the collection of essays on the 'turn to Gramsci' edited by Bennett in 1996, which was supposed to illustrate the turn to such emptied concept of hegemony, Stuart Hall's essay 'Popular culture and the State' made only partial use of Laclau's articulation theory as an adjunct to Gramsci's concept of hegemony, retaining a strong rooting in questions of class, and a critical approach. With this piece, Hall moved towards the study of the ways in which the institutions of the state contributed to the hegemonic process. Through this interest, cultural studies reconnected with Richard Hoggart's and Raymond Williams's earlier interests in questions of cultural policy and institutions.[73] Yet the significance of Hall's piece of work, which should perhaps be considered the foundational act of a Gramscian theoretical interest in cultural policy

within cultural studies, has been indirectly obscured by the Australian school's censure of the 'Gramscian tradition' as unsuitable for the study of cultural policy and institutions. It is therefore useful to outline Hall's essay briefly.

Hall attempted a history of cultural policy in Britain since the seventeenth century, analysing the law, the press, and broadcasting, 'to show how cultural institutions and practices institutionalise (settle, fix, secure, stabilise) a particular pattern of relations between cultures and classes in society'.[74] By applying Gramsci's notion of the educational role of the state, and probably also through inspiration from E. P. Thompson's work, Hall examined the ways in which the relations between popular culture and the state in the context of 'the shifting boundary line between state and civil society' reflected both the changing character of the state and of class relations. Gramsci's notion of the educational state had already been used in Nicholas Pearson's study *The State and the Visual Arts* (1982), for a political understanding of the relationship between the state and the institutions of the visual arts in Britain over two centuries, particularly concentrating on the role of museums and exhibitions. While in Pearson, however, Gramsci's passages were just mentioned as a source of inspiration, Hall developed, together with the empirical analysis, a theoretical discussion. The notion of a permeability between the political society (i.e. the state traditionally understood as government) and civil society was a clear indication that his frame of reference was Gramsci's concept of integral state.[75]

Two years later, Bennett followed Hall's path in viewing cultural institutions as an area of interest for cultural studies and in using Gramsci's notion of the educational role of the state for their empirical study. The focus of his analysis, however, as in Pearson, was the public museum. Moreover, unlike Hall, from the very beginning Bennett only used individual concepts from Gramsci's thought, and these were not framed by the broader theory of the integral state. In fact, Bennett had to look elsewhere for a link between the state and cultural meanings in civil society. For example, in his article 'The exhibitionary complex' (1988), he analysed the relations of the universal exhibition to the development of the 'bourgeois democratic polity'[76] by combining Gramsci's notion of the educational role of the state with a Foucauldian analysis of the meaning of the architecture of the museum as material and symbolic 'embodiments' of a 'power to tell' comparable to the 'power to punish' of the prison.[77] In Bennett's method of utilisation of different theoretical sources, the individual concepts were juxtaposed as in a patchwork. Contrary to Hall's eclecticism and Williams's syncretism,[78] Bennett's coordination, or perhaps parataxis, did not integrate the different conceptual sources, but made each to work independently to explain a particular characteristic of the cultural institution.

In his later article 'The political rationality of the museum' (1989), Bennett's method of combining different theoretical sources moved from parataxis to what could be called a 'layering' method. He in fact layered the Gramscian perspective, as a less effective alternative, under a Foucauldian interpretation of the 'political rationality' embodied in the birth of the museum as a 'technology' comparable to the prison, the hospital and the asylum, and aimed at 'regulating the conduct of individuals and populations'.[79] Here the limitations of Bennett's conception of the state for a study of

cultural policy are clearly evident, as the state seems to be conceptualised as an obscure but highly centralised entity with a clear political rationality (i.e., with objectives) but without any motivation outside such abstract rationality in and for itself.

On Hall's earlier example, Bennett also directed his attention to the institutions of popular culture. For this task, however, he did not use the notion of the educational role of the state, but Gramsci's insights on folklore, which he applied to a study of the British post-war 'flurry of new museum initiatives – folk museums, open-air museums, living history farms – orientated towards the collection, preservation and display of artefacts relating to the daily lives, customs, rituals, and traditions of non-élite social strata'.[80] In his study, by taking Gramsci's criticism of the science of folklore of his time as inspiration, Bennett complained that the spread of the museums of popular culture had 'resulted in a "peopling of the past" in which the cultures and values of non-élite strata are subordinated to bourgeois culture and values'.[81] The solution that he proposed for this problem consisted in devising different 'structures of control over museums and a radical reorganization of their relations to different groups in the community'.[82] For Bennett, it was in fact possible, through a kind of curatorship receptive of new scientific work, to generate better curatorial practices and therefore more complex representations of the 'everyday lives of ordinary people'.[83] In Bennett's focus on a correct representation of people, we can see a reformist-technocratic approach to cultural policy, perhaps in its developing stage. But how did such an approach relate to a 'Gramscian' concept of folklore? The question I want to ask here is not about Gramci's views of reformist politics, but about the kind of normative understanding of cultural policy that Bennett looked for in Gramsci. Nonetheless, in order to evaluate this, we need briefly to return to Gramsci's notes on folklore.

In Gramsci, folklore was 'a conception of the world and life implicit to a large extent in determinate (in time and space) strata of society'.[84] It was 'a reflection of the conditions of cultural life' of such strata,[85] and consisted of 'a confused agglomerate of all the conceptions of the world and of life that have succeeded one another in history'.[86] Folklore was, however, not an archaic cultural form isolated from the modern world. On the contrary, it was subject to historical development and to the constant contribution of philosophy and modern science, to the point that it was possible to speak of 'modern folklore', in which 'certain opinions and scientific notions, removed from their context and more or less distorted, constantly fall within the popular domain and are "inserted" into the mosaic of tradition'.[87] It was therefore in constant development, and included some interesting elements that could be seriously studied as starting points for developing a political strategy, but for the most part the elements of popular culture were a powerful force that reproduced the condition of subordination.[88] For Gramsci, therefore, a 'science of folklore' should produce seriously critical knowledge that should feed into the practice of teachers, who should use it to *overcome* folklore and *uproot* it from the mind of the youth of the subordinate social groups.[89] In these notes, which he wrote in 1935, Gramsci was indicating a cultural strategy through which the peasants, as a subordinate but not fundamental social group, could be freed from folklore understood as a conception of the world that locked them to their own subordination and made them unable to connect with the developing hegemony of the urban working masses.[90]

Therefore, arguably, for Gramsci it was especially folklore *itself* that needed to be combated, whereas in Bennett it was only its study as a picturesque element: through better curatorship it would be possible to achieve a better representation of popular culture and offer it to the people as part of an educational programme. This was precisely the approach that Gramsci criticised in the scholars of folklore of his time: for them, folklore 'is an end in itself or is only useful in offering to a people the elements for a deeper knowledge of itself'.[91]

Indeed, Bennett may have been misled by a mistake in the English translation of Gramsci's note. In fact, where Gramsci wrote: 'Only in this way will teaching be more efficient and really bring about the birth of a new culture among the broad popular masses',[92] the English translation says: 'Only in this way will *the teaching of folklore* be more efficient (...)'.[93] Yet it seems unlikely that for Gramsci a more efficient teaching of folklore would be an objective. How could folklore be taught *to* the popular social strata if it had to be *uprooted* from the minds of their youth? And how could anybody teach the subordinate social groups something that was *already* their conception of the world? It is in fact possible to argue that in the logic of Gramsci's notes on folklore, a museum of the culture of the subordinate classes would be seen as an institution established for the benefit of some *other* social strata – perhaps sectors of the middle classes who would in any case represent folklore according to their own conception of the world – no matter how good and 'receptive of new scientific work' the curatorial practices might be. The point I want to make here is that a discussion framed by Gramsci's ideas on folklore should probably first of all raise the issue of whether a museum of folklore would make any politically progressive or emancipatory sense at all for the subordinate classes, before discussing which curatorial practices would be best suited to representing their culture. Thus whereas in Gramsci the centrality of culture derived from its ability to lock or unlock subordinate social groups to an existing social structure, in Bennett's understanding it was just a terrain of cultural struggle for the sake of representation, i.e. of culture itself.

It is perhaps significant that it has been in a wrongly translated note that Bennett found in Gramsci the inspiration for his policy recommendations in relation to the museums of popular culture. At some point, in fact, Bennett and other members of the Australian school who had initially thought that Gramsci would offer a supporting theory for their reformist-technocratic project were presumably disillusioned, and their earlier 'turn to Gramsci' became, in 1992, an invitation to the whole discipline of cultural studies to U-turn away from the 'Gramscian tradition'. Bennett was to claim, at the time of this anti-Gramscian appeal, that the only kind of practical engagement enabled by Gramsci's concept of hegemony consisted, for example, in 'restructuring the representational practices of the museum to facilitate the emergence of the oppositional subject of a counter-hegemony' –[94] an approach that he considered inadequate 'to engage practically and productively' with museum policy-makers.[95] This can be seen to amount to unconscious self-criticism, at least in the sense that it confirmed Bennett's idealist misunderstanding of Gramsci's concept of hegemony.

Nonetheless, as we have seen, the 'Gramscian tradition' the Australian school moved away from was a very heterogeneous intellectual formation, which included both

much less and much more than Gramsci's original ideas as well as, most importantly, the misinterpretation of some of his key concepts. This circumstance, together with the virtual obliteration of the actual pioneering role of Gramsci's concepts and framework for the study of cultural policy and institutions, makes the Australian school's assessment of the 'Gramscian tradition' problematic. It is therefore necessary to attempt a more adequate redefinition of the notion of the 'Gramscian tradition' within cultural studies, and then examine theoretically its ability to open the way to an understanding of cultural policy and institutions.

### 3. Redefining the 'Gramscian tradition'

Even in the light of the centrality of the concept of 'hegemony' within the 'Gramscian tradition', Bennett's definition of the tradition as ultimately the adoption of the concept of 'hegemony' in conjunction a particular notion of culturedoes not seem an adequate strategy to identify a Gramscian tradition. As we have seen, there are different versions of the concept of hegemony, and these are not characterised by a specific associated concepts of culture, but by a specific theoretical model which works within certain theoretical boundaries. What characterised Gramsci's concept of hegemony was that it was based on a unitary model (as opposed to what we could refer to as Williams's 'double' model and Laclau's and Mouffe's 'articulation' model),[96] which we could tentatively define as working within the theoretical boundaries of:

1) Gramsci's concept of 'philosophy of praxis', or his particular reinterpretation of Marx's historical materialism;[97]

2) his concept of 'historical bloc', which conveyed the relationship of social groups with the unity of social-economic content and ethical-political form, of nature and spirit, of structure ad superstructure,[98] therefore replacing the traditional Marxist notion of a 'determination' of the superstructures by the economic base;

3) his political theory, in which hegemony was understood in the context of the theory of the 'integral state';[99]

4) his commitment to the theory and practice of the revolutionary process of the socialist transformation of society.[100]

These criteria should not be understood as defining elements of Gramsci's concept of hegemony. Nonetheless, if we need a method to be able to distinguish what can be considered part of a 'Gramscian tradition' in the use of the concept of hegemony within cultural studies, the boundaries set by this group of criteria, even if loosely understood, could help identify whether extrapolations, developments, enrichments and applications of the concept of hegemony could still be considered as based on Gramsci's own conception of hegemony – thus as being part of a 'Gramsci tradition' proper within cultural studies. This is in fact a different process from establishing whether a piece of scholarly comment on Gramsci is accurate. While it is necessary for scholars to work scientifically on Gramsci's texts, without creative applications such texts might remain useless to us. After all, Gramsci himself distinguished between these two aspects of a theoretical concept: one thing was the method of scholarly analysis,[101] quite another was

the ‘fecundity’ of application.[102] An intellectual tradition of the use of the concept of hegemony defined by the above boundaries, for example, could include Hall’s interpretation because, despite his eclectic method of incorporation of many other theoretical influences, he did not neglect the theoretical perimeters within which Gramsci understood the concept. Therefore, although Hall’s interpretation perhaps did not fully respond to ‘the need to consider Gramsci’s thought as an integral project’,[103] as advocated by Peter Thomas for scholarship, it could be seen to be developed according to an attempt to be creative while trying to be faithful to the theoretical and practical commitments of Gramsci’s thought.

Within the Marxist camp, we could also distinguish a ‘Williams tradition’ of interpretation of hegemony characterised by a different meaning of the word to Gramsci’s (i.e. as ‘domination’) and a theoretical development according to a ‘double’ rather than unitary model of the concept, with hegemony paired with ‘counter-hegemony’ and related to the categories of the dominant, the residual, and the emergent. Williams’s remains a materialist concept but, as we have seen, developed within a cultural (rather than political) theory.

We could also isolate a ‘non-Marxist tradition’ of interpretation of hegemony characterised by the replacement of the materialist element with a concentration on the cultural sphere only, in isolation from the economic and political elements of hegemony. This category would bring together all the non-materialist interpretations of the concept -- be they based on Gramsci’s unitary model, or on Williams’s ‘double’ model, or on Laclau’s and Mouffe’s post-Marxist ‘articulation’ model, for example.

Within the latter category we could finally distinguish Bennett’s use of individual concepts from Gramsci’s writings in the context of an idealist understanding of the concept of hegemony.

## Conclusion

On the basis of the analysis carried out, it is now possible to examine theoretically the potential for a redefined Gramscian tradition proper to open the way to an understanding of cultural policy and institutions. I will do this by comparing it with the idealist, non-Marxist tradition.

An idealist versions of the concept of hegemony assumes that civil society is independent from the state traditionally understood as government, and therefore the concept of hegemony is understood in the context of cultural theory, and the analysis is limited to cultural politics. An idealist concept of hegemony thus favours a concentration of interest on the production and reception of cultural texts, which are ultimately *external* to the subjects (who may or may not produce or receive them or make them public), and their contexts, languages, readers, and effects.[104] Within this concept, cultural politics taking place in the institutions of civil society has, as its central focus, the ideological work of private organisations – both ‘hegemonic’ organisations understood as ideologically dominant, like the press, the commercial media, advertising, religious organisations, and ‘oppositional’ organisations like social

movements.[105] Here, the interest is limited to *the political dimension of culture*, which is captured by cultural theory.

In an idealist understanding of hegemony, the study of cultural policy of governments (i.e. in political society) would need to be introduced *in addition* to the analysis of cultural politics in civil society. The two aspects of the analysis would therefore tend to be separated (one referring to civil society and the other to political society), and ways of connecting them would need to be devised.[106]

In Gramsci, instead, civil society was not separated from the state, and the concept of hegemony was understood in the context of political (rather than cultural) theory, that is, in relation to Gramsci's theory of the integral state. Whereas the idealist concept of hegemony refers only to the cultural aspects of hegemony, and therefore exhausts the hegemonic process within the mechanisms of 'cultural politics' in civil society, Gramsci's concept of hegemony also referred to the complex *interrelation* of the political and the cultural, that is, cultural processes that should be seen as 'political activities'.[107]

Cultural processes related to political activities are *internal* to the subject – they constitute the human being politically, both individually and organised in social movements, and produce a political will;[108] and therefore cultural policy, through the institutions of political society, focuses on the organisational work of public institutions like, for example, the public education system, government-funded cultural institutions, the juridical system, and official Churches recognised by the state. The interest is therefore not just in the political dimension of culture in civil society (culture as contributing to the moral and intellectual formation of individuals, who become aware of their role in society), but also and especially in *the cultural dimensions of politics* in political society, or, as Richard Johnson has argued, in 'the cultural dimensions of struggles and strategies as a whole'.[109] The cultural dimension of politics is in fact linked, in Gramsci, with the organisational dimension of modern capitalism and its main political consequence: the integral state. Therefore, within the framework of analysis of Gramsci's principle of hegemony, the range of relevant organisations and institutions that need to be included in the study of cultural phenomena becomes very wide (as becomes very wide the category of the intellectual): public education system and private schools, public and commercial media, public and private arts and cultural organisations, state bureaucracies and capitalist management, the juridical system and political parties.[110] Moreover, as private and public organisations do not work as neatly separated entities but are interlinked through the activities of the integral state, it is also in their reciprocal links that they need to be analysed.

This significantly widens the study of cultural policy beyond its dimension as 'governmental' activity. In Gramsci, culture is understood not as a separate element of social life which is produced as a resource by the organisations of civil society and which can become the *object and instrument* of government through the (ultimately coercive) deployment of legal, administrative and economic instruments.[111] The cultural element is a *constitutive part* of the integral state.

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## Abbreviations

SPN Gramsci, A., *Selections from the Prison Notebooks*, edited and translated by Quentin Hoare and Geoffrey Nowell Smith, New York, International Publishers, 1971.

SCW Gramsci, A., *Selections from Cultural Writings*, translated by William Boelhower and edited by David Forgacs and Geoffrey Nowell-Smith, London, Lawrence & Wishart, 1985.

FS Gramsci, A., *Further Selections from the Prison Notebooks*, translated and edited by Derek Boothman, Minneapolis, Minnesota University Press, 1995.

Q Gramsci, A., *Quaderni del carcere*, edizione critica dell'Istituto Gramsci a cura di Valentino Gerratana, 2nd ed. (1st ed. published in 1975), 4 vols, Torino, Einaudi, 2001 [1929-1935].

PN 1 Gramsci, A., *Prison Notebooks*, edited by J. Buttigieg and translated by Joseph A. Buttigieg and A. Callari, Vol. I, New York, Columbia University Press, 1992.

PN 2 Gramsci, A., *Prison Notebooks*, edited and translated by Joseph A. Buttigieg, Vol. II, New York, Columbia University Press, 1996.

PN 3 Gramsci, A., *Prison Notebooks*, edited and translated by Joseph A. Buttigieg, Vol. III, New York, Columbia University Press, 2007.

## Notes

[1] Throughout this article, when discussing Gramsci's writings, I provide references to the page numbers of the available English translations. When more than one translation is available, I reference the older most widespread anthology. References to the Italian critical edition of the prison notebooks (Q) are added in parenthesis; they also allow a rapid location of the notes (although not of the page numbers) in the first three volumes so far published of the English critical edition of the prison notebooks (PN). Where no published translations are available, translations are my own. A list of abbreviations of editions and anthologies of Gramsci's writings cited in this article is provided with the list of references. Concordance tables of the anthologies of English translations with the Italian critical edition of the prison notebooks are available at http://www.internationalgramscisociety.org/resources/concordance_table/index.html. For the dates of Gramsci's prison notes, I refer to G. Francioni, *L'officina gramsciana. Ipotesi sulla struttura dei "Quaderni del carcere"*, Napoli, Bibliopolis, 1984.

[2] In 1987, they established an Institute for Cultural Policy Studies at Griffith University. The institute was directed, for the first three years, by Tony Bennett. For an account of this intellectual enterprise by one of its protagonists. See C. Mercer, 'Cultural policy: research and the governmental imperative', *Media Information Australia*, 73, August, 1994. The Centre later became the Australian Key Centre for Cultural and Media Policy, which Bennett directed from 1995 to 1998, when he returned to Britain (T. Bennett, 'Introduction', in *Critical Trajectories. Culture, Society, Intellectuals*, Malden and Oxford, Blackwell, 2007).

[3] See, for example, T. Bennett, 'Putting policy into cultural studies', in L. Grossberg, C. Nelson and P. Treichler (eds) *Cultural Studies*, London and New York, Routledge, 1992, originally published in Chambers, D. and Cohen, H. (eds), *Proceedings of the 1990 Australian Cultural Studies Conference*, Kingswood, NSW, Australia, Faculties of Humanities, University of Western Sydney, 1991.

[4] This criticism should also be seen in the context of a broader rejection of a then perceived dominance of Gramsci's influence within cultural studies. See, for example, D. Harris, *From Class Struggle to the Politics of Pleasure. The Effects of Gramscianism on Cultural Studies*, London and New York, Routledge, 1992).

[5] For a detailed analysis of the role of this process in Gramsci's thinking, see A.S. Sassoon, 'Gramsci's subversion of the language of politics', *Rethinking Marxism*, 3 (1), 1990, reprnted in Martin, J. (ed.) *Antonio Gramsci: Critical Assessments*, 4 vols, London, Routledge, 2002, pp. 411-421.

[6] J.A. Buttigieg, 'Gramsci's Method', *boundary 2*, 17 (2), summer, 1990, and Buttigieg's introduction to PN1, pp. 42-64.

[7] The role of paradoxical reasoning in Gramsci's thought has been captured in A.S. Sassoon, *Gramsci and Contemporary Politics: Beyond Pessimism of the Intellect*, London, Routledge, 2000, Chapter 2 'The challenge to traditional intellectuals'.

[8] I am thinking, for example, of the potential contribution of dialectical critical realism proposed in G. MacLennan and P. Thomas, 'Cultural studies. Towards a realist intervention', in J. Cruickshank (ed.) *Critical realism. The difference it makes*, New York, Routledge, 2003.

[9] I will discuss this aspect of Gramsci's reception in the introduction to Part Three.

[10] Classic texts on Gramsci's political theory include C. Buci-Glucksmann, *Gramsci and the State*, London, Lawrence and Wishart, 1980 [1975] and A.S. Sassoon, *Gramsci's Politics*, 2nd ed., Minneapolis, Unwin Hyman and University of Minnesota Press, 1987 [1980]. On cultural aspects, see W.L. Adamson, *Hegemony and Revolution. A Study of Antonio Gramsci's Political and Cultural Theory*, Berkeley and London, University of California Press, 1980, and K. Crehan, *Gramsci, Culture and Anthropology*, Berkeley and London, University of California Press and Pluto Press, 2002.

[11] Overviews of interpretations of Gramsci's writings are: A. Davidson, 'The varying seasons of Gramscian studies', *Political Studies*, 20 (4), 1972; C. Mouffe and A.S. Sassoon, 'Gramsci in France and Italy: a review of the literature', *Economy and Society*, 6 (1), 1977; C. Mouffe (ed.) *Gramsci and Marxist Theory*, London, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1979; J.V. Femia, 'The Gramsci phenomenon: some reflections', *Political Studies*, 26 (3), 1979, reprinted in Martin, J. (ed.) Antonio Gramsci: Critical Assessments, 4 vols, London, Routledge, 2002, pp. 126-131; A.S. Sassoon (ed.) *Approaches to Gramsci*, London, Writers and Readers, 1982; J.A. Buttigieg, 'Philology and politics: returning to the text of Antonio Gramsci's Prison Notebooks', *boundary 2*, 21 (2), Summer, 1994; and G. Liguori, *Gramsci conteso. Storia di un dibattito 1922-1996*, Roma, Editori Riuniti, 1996. For a recent outline of post-1989 scholarship, see G. Vacca, 'Gramsci studies since 1989', *Journal of Modern Italian Studies*, 16 (2), 2011. Specifically on the interpretations of Gramsci in the English-speaking world, see G. Eley, 'Reading Gramsci in English. Observations on the reception of Gramsci in the English speaking world 1957-82', *European History Quarterly*, 14, 1984; and D. Forgacs, 'Gramsci and Marxism in Britain', *New Left Review*, 176, July/August, 1989, all reprinted in J. Martin (ed.) *Antonio Gramsci: Critical Assessments*, 4 vols, London, Routledge, 2002. Recent important philological work in the analysis of Gramsci's prison notebooks has attempted to free Gramsci's central concepts from a host of old interpretations and controversies, and to focus, instead (following Gramsci's own indications), on the systematic reconstruction of the theoretical evolution of his concepts without trying to distil a single meaning. See, for example, Francioni, *L'officina gramsciana. Ipotesi sulla struttura dei "Quaderni del carcere"*; F. Frosini and G. Liguori (eds), *Le parole di Gramsci: per un lessico dei Quaderni del carcere*, Roma, Carocci, 2004. This work has not been translated into English, but it is discussed extensively in P.D. Thomas, *The Gramscian Moment: Philosophy, Hegemony and Marxism*, Leiden, Brill, 2009. However, it seems that a pioneer of the evolutionary approach has been Christine Buci-Glucksmann, who has also integrated what she has called the 'constant restructuring' (p. 8) in Gramsci's though with that of his political practice. See Buci-Glucksmann, *Gramsci and the State*.

[12] Throughout this three-part essay, I use the expression 'Australian school' as a shorthand because this is how this intellectual formation has come to be described in the literature, although its members eventually moved back to Britain (see J. McGuigan, 'Postscript 2000', in J. Lewis and T. Miller (eds) *Critical Cultural Policy Studies*, Malden, Ma., and Oxford, Blackwell, 2003).

[13] Bennett has defined the study of cultural policy as 'concerned with the instruments (legal, administrative, economic) through which governments provide, regulate, and manage cultural resources and the uses to which they are put. The objectives that are pursued by these means can be divided into three broad, but overlapping, categories – the symbolic, the social, and the economic' (T. Bennett, 'Cultural policy', in N.J. Smelser and P.B. Baltes (eds) *International Encyclopedia of the Social & Behavioral Sciences*, Elsevier, 2004, p. 3092).

[14] Bennett, ‘Putting policy into cultural studies’, p. 26.

[15] Ibid., p. 26.

[16] Bennett, ‘Introduction’, p. 6.

[17] Hegemony is considered a central concept in Gramsci’s conception of politics (A.S. Sassoon, *Gramsci's Politics*, n. 4, p. 232). It is in fact perhaps the most studied amongst all of Gramsci’s concepts and the one that has generated most interpretative controversies. Classic texts include G.A. Williams, ‘The concept of "egemonia" in the thought of Antonio Gramsci: some notes on interpretation’, *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 21, 1960, and J.V. Femia, ‘Hegemony and consciousness in the thought of Antonio Gramsci’, *Political Studies*, 23, 1975. A useful text is D. Boothman, ‘The Sources for Gramsci's Concept of Hegemony’, *Rethinking Marxism*, 20 (2), April, 2008. An important text, also for the analysis of the concept of hegemony in relation to those of state and civil society, is G. Francioni, ‘Egemonia, società civile, stato. Note per una lettura della teoria politica di Gramsci’, in G. Francioni (ed.) *L'Officina gramsciana. Ipotesi sulla struttra dei "Quaderni del carcere"*, Napoli, Bibliopolis, 1984, an extended critique of Perry Anderson’s highly influential article: P. Anderson, ‘The antinomies of Antonio Gramsci’, *New Left Review*, I (100), November-December, 1976. As a starting point for my discussion, we can refer to the following synthetic definition: ‘It has to do with the way one social group influences other groups, making certain compromises with them in order to gain their consent for its leadership in society as a whole. Thus particular, sectional interests are transformed and some concept of the general interest is promoted’ (‘Hegemony’, in A.S. Sassoon, ‘A Gramsci dictionary’, in A.S. Sassoon (ed.) *Approaches to Gramsci*, London, Writers and Readers, 1982, pp. 13-4). Gramsci often restricted the discussion to specific aspects of hegemony by adding qualifiers, as for example in the expressions ‘political hegemony’ FS 306 (Q 10, 6-IIiv, 1245), ‘intellectual hegemony’, ‘ethical-political hegemony’, ‘economic hegemony’ PN2 183 (Q 4, 38, 461); PN3 30 (Q 6, 38, 713); SPN 161 (Q 13,18, 1591); ‘intellectual and moral hegemony’ SCW 255 (Q 23, 57, 2253), ‘cultural hegemony’ SCW 184 (Q 29, 3, 2346) ‘cultural-political hegemony’ Q 9, 132, 1192; Q 13, 26, 1618. This can be taken to mean that the generic word ‘hegemony’ included all such aspects.

[18] Bennett, ‘Putting policy into cultural studies’, p. 29. Criticism of Gramsci’s principle of hegemony within cultural studies continued in the following decade. See, for example, N. Thoburn, ‘Patterns of production: cultural studies after hegemony’, *Theory, Culture & Society*, 24, 2007 and, in the same journal issue, S. Lash, ‘Power after hegemony: cultural studies in mutation?’, *Theory, Culture & Society*, 24 (3), May, 2007. For a powerful response see, again in the same journal issue, R. Johnson, ‘Post-hegemony?: I don't think so’, *Theory, Culture & Society*, 24 (3), May, 2007.

[19] Bennett, ‘Putting policy into cultural studies’, p. 31-2.

[20] For Gramsci, ‘every social group, coming into existence on the original terrain of an essential function in the world of economic production, creates together with itself, organically, one or more strata of intellectuals which give it homogeneity and an awareness of its own function not only in the economic but also in the social and political fields. The capitalist entrepreneur creates alongside himself the industrial technician, the specialist in political economy, the organisers of a new culture, of a new legal system, etc.’. SPN 5 (Q 12, 1, 1513). These were ‘organic intellectuals’ (Q 12, 1, 1522). ‘However, every “essential” social group (...) has found (...) categories of intellectuals already in existence and which seemed indeed to represent an historical continuity uninterrupted even by the most complicated and radical changes in political and social forms’; examples included the ecclesiastics. SPN 6-7 (Q 12, 1, 1514). These were ‘traditional intellectuals’.

[21] T. Bennett, ‘Towards a pragmatics for cultural studies’, in J. McGuigan (ed.) *Cultural Methodologies*, London, Sage, 1997. Stuart Hall discussed his understanding of the role of the organic intellectual in S. Hall, ‘Cultural studies and its theoretical legacies’, in L. Grossberg and C. Nelson (eds) *Cultural Studies*, New York and London, Routledge, 1992.

[22] Bennett, ‘Putting policy into cultural studies’, p. 25. The role of the organic intellectual has often been simplified and misunderstood to mean (as in Bennett here) an organiser of consent or of the political opposition.

[23] See Boothman, ‘The Sources for Gramsci's Concept of Hegemony’.

[24] T. Bennett, *Outside Literature*, London, Routledge, 1990, and T. Bennett, *Culture: A Reformer's Science*, Sydney, London and New York, Allen & Unwin and Sage, 1998, pp. 60-84

[25] Bennett, *Culture*, p. 68.

[26] Ibid., p. 68.

[27] Quoted in ibid., p. 71.

[28] Bennett, 'Towards a pragmatics for cultural studies', p. 53.

[29] D. Forgacs and G. Nowell-Smith, 'General introduction', in *Antonio Gramsci. Selections from Cultural Writings, translated by William Boelhower and edited by David Forgacs and Geoffrey Nowell-Smith*, London, Lawrence & Wishart, 1985, p. 14.

[30] Walter Adamson has traced the development of the concept of culture in Gramsci in Adamson, *Hegemony and Revolution*.

[31] Sassoon, 'Gramsci's subversion of the language of politics'. This positive evaluation of Gramsci's use of language is antithetical to Perry Anderson's argument that it watered down the distinctiveness of Gramsci's concepts (Anderson, 'The antinomies of Antonio Gramsci'). Peter Ives has linked Gramsci's reliance on existing meanings of words to his criticism of the artificial creation of new words as 'neolalism', a pathological use of language (P. Ives, *Language and Hegemony in Gramsci,* London, Pluto Press, 2004, p. 65). I discuss Gramsci's view of 'neolalism' in relation to cultural policy questions in Part Three.

[32] SCW 190 (Q 27, 1, 2313).

[33] See, for example, A.S. Sassoon, 'A Gramsci dictionary', in A.S. Sassoon (ed.) *Approaches to Gramsci*, London, Writers and Readers, 1982, pp. 12-17, and the glossary in AGR, pp. 420-431.

[34] K. Crehan, *Gramsci, Culture and Anthropology*, Berkeley and London, University of California Press and Pluto Press, 2002, p. 67.

[35] Wagner, '"Argomenti di cultura", p. 91.

[36] Q 12, 1, 1515.

[37] Burke, *What is Cultural History?*

[38] Ibid.

[39] PN1 186-7 (Q 1, 89, 89-90); SCW 188-91 (Q 27, 1, 2311-14).

[40] FS 292 (Q 11, 37, 1457).

[41] See SCW 150-163 (Q 4, 78-87, 516-530); SCW 359-62 (Q 21, 6, 2120-3); SCW 203-6 (Q 14, 72, 1737-40); SCW 138-46 (Q 9, 134, 1195-7); (Q 14, 15, 1670-4); Q 14, 21, 1678-9. In the case of literature, as with the arts in general, Gramsci recognised a degree of autonomy of the aesthetic element. For him, the arts were always part of a specific culture, and therefore cultural history could contribute to art history and criticism. This meant that arts historians and critics could legitimately investigate the ideologies circulating in a work of art, but they should not judge a work as beautiful on the basis of its moral and political content. J.A. Buttigieg, 'Gramsci', in M. Kelly (ed.) *Encyclopedia of Aesthetics*, Vol. 2, New York & Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1998.

[42] F. De Sanctis, 'La coltura politica', *L'Italia*, 13 June 1877, reprinted in *Scritti politici di Francesco De Sanctis raccolti da Giuseppe Ferrarelli*, 3rd ed., Napoli, Morano, 1900, pp. 70-74. The concept of '*cultura politica*' ('political culture') was used by De Sanctis in a way presumably similar to the contemporary usage by German cultural historians like Gustav Klemm. Klemm had borrowed the concept from Voltaire's notion of culture as expressed in customs, beliefs and forms of government (see R. Tucker, 'Culture, political culture, and communist society', *Political Science Quarterly*, 88, June, 1973).]

[43] SCW 92 (Q 23, 1, 2185-6).

[44] P. Ives, *Language and Hegemony in Gramsci*, p. 65.

[45] R. Williams, 'Base and superstructure in Marxist cultural theory', *New Left Review*, I (82), 1973; R. Williams, *Marxism and Literature*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1977.

[46] Williams, 'Base and superstructure'.

[47] Williams, *Marxism and Literature*.

[48] p. 10.

[49] Williams, 'Base and superstructure'.

[50] By 'syncretism' I mean the 'attempted union or reconciliation of diverse or opposite tenets or practices' (*Oxford English Dictionary*, Second Edition on CD-ROM (v. 4.0.0.3), Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2009). In Williams's case, this seemed manifest in his attempt to reconcile the thought of different Marxist theorists to create a new synthesis. By contrast, I understand 'eclecticism' as referring to the borrowing of concepts from a number of different theorists and combining them, but retaining them as distinct. Alastair Davidson has used the adjective 'eclectic' to describe Stuart Hall's borrowing of Gramsci's concepts (see A. Davidson, 'The uses and abuses of Gramsci', *Thesis Eleven*, 95 (1), 2008).

[51] Williams, *Marxism and Literature*, pp. 108-114.

[52] Ibid., p. 113.

[53] Ibid., pp. 121-27.

[54] Ibid., pp. 122-23.

[55] Ibid..

[56] See note 17.

[57] 'Hegemony' in A. Edgar and P. Sedgwick (eds), *Key Concepts in Cultural Theory*, London and New York, Routledge, 1999, p. 165.

[58] G. Turner, *British Cultural Studies. An Introduction*, 3rd ed., London, Routledge, 2002, p. 168.

[59] J. Hartley, 'Hegemony', in T. O'Sullivan*, et al.*, *Key Concepts in Communication and Cultural Studies*, 2nd, London and New York, Routledge, 1994, p. 135.

[60] 'On postmodernism and articulation. An interview with Stuart Hall. Edited by Lawrence Grossberg', *Journal of Communication Inquiry*, 10 (2), 1986, reprinted in Morley, D. and Chen, K.-H. (eds), *Stuart Hall. Critical Dialogues in Cultural Studies*, London and New York, Routledge, 1996, pp. 131-150, p. 149.

[61] SCW 189 (Q 27, 1, 2312).

[62] SCW 191 (Q 27, 1, 2314). The English translation of this passage in SCW is incorrect, as it translates 'of' instead of 'or' for the original Italian 'o'.

[63] T. Bennett, 'Introduction: popular culture and "the turn to Gramsci"', in T. Bennett, C. Mercer and J. Woollacott (eds) *Popular Culture and Social Relations*, Milton Keynes, Open University Press, 1986, xi-xix.

[64] Forgacs, 'Gramsci and Marxism in Britain'. For a detailed critique of Laclau and Mouffe's reading of Gramsci in E. Laclau and C. Mouffe, *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy: Towards a Radical Democratic Politics*, London, Verso, 1985, see J. Rosenthal, 'Who Practices Hegemony?: Class Division and the Subject of Politics', *Cultural Critique*, 9, Spring, 1988, Ives, *Language and Hegemony in Gramsci*, pp. 144-160, and P. Ives, 'Language, Agency and Hegemony: A Gramscian Response to Post-Marxism', *Critical Review of International Social and Political Philosophy*, 8 (4), 2005. Rosenthal casts serious doubts on Laclau's and Mouffe's understanding of the notion of class as identity, while Ives questions their alleged linguistic enrichment of Gramsci, which neglects Gramsci's writings on language.

[65] Bennett, 'Introduction: popular culture', p. xiii. See also S. Hall, 'Cultural studies: two paradigms', *Media, Culture & Society*, 2 (1), 1980.

[66] Bennett, 'Introduction: popular culture', p. xii.

[67] Ibid., p. xiii. Bennett referred here to E. Laclau, *Politics and Ideology in Marxist Theory: Capitalism, Fascism, Populism*, London, New Left Books, 1977, and C. Mouffe, 'Hegemony and ideology in Gramsci', *Research in Political Economy*, 2, 1979.

[68] Bennett, 'Introduction: popular culture', p. xiii.

[69] Ibid., p. xiii.

[70] Ibid., p. xiv.

[71] Ibid., p. xiv-xv.

[72] Ibid., p. xv.

[73] Paul Jones has demonstrated that questions of education and communications policy were already present within cultural studies from the outset, in the work of Richard Hoggart and Raymond Williams. P. Jones, 'The myth of 'Raymond Hoggart': On 'Founding fathers' and cultural policy', *Cultural Studies*, 8 (3), 1994. However, Bennett responded by representing Williams's cultural policy preoccupations as anticipating precisely the reformist-technocratic approach and as an implicit critique of Stuart Hall. Bennett, 'Towards a pragmatics for cultural studies'. See also J. McGuigan, '"A slow reach again for control". Raymond Williams and the vicissitudes of cultural policy', *European Journal of Cultural Policy*, 2 (1), 1995, Reprinted in Wallace, J., Jones, R., and Nield, S. (eds) *Raymond Williams Now. Knowledge, Limits and the Future*, London and New York, Macmillan and St. Martin's Press, 1997, and, more recently, J. McGuigan, 'Richard Hoggart: public intellectual', *International Journal of Cultural Policy*, 12 (2), 2006.

[74] S. Hall, 'Popular culture and the state', in T. Bennett, C. Mercer and J. Woollacott (eds) *Popular Culture and Social Relations*, Milton Keynes and Philadelphia, Open University Press, 1986, p. 47. Gramsci's concepts of state and civil society have raised major interpretative controversies, but are also enjoying a significant revival, particularly in the context of recent debates on globalisation. Without running through the older literature, which would require too much space, a classic is Buci-Glucksmann, *Gramsci and the State* (from an Althusserian perspective), while other contributions include Francioni, 'Egemonia, società civile, stato'; J.A. Buttigieg, 'Gramsci on civil society', *boundary 2*, 22 (3), Fall, 1995; A.D. Morton, 'Waiting for Gramsci: State Formation, Passive Revolution and the International', *Millennium: Journal of International Studies*, 35 (3), September, 2007.

[75] See note 98.

[76] T. Bennett, 'The exhibitionary complex', *New Formations*, 4, 1988, reprinted in T. Bennett, *The Birth of the Museum: History, Theory, Politics*, London and New York, Routledge, 1995, p.63.

[77] Ibid., p. 87.

[78] See note 50.

[79] T. Bennett, 'The political rationality of the museum', *Continuum*, 3 (1), 1989, reprinted in T. Bennett, The Birth of the Museum: History, Theory, Politics, London and New York, Routledge, 1995, pp. 89-90.

[80] T. Bennett, 'Museums and "the people"', in R. Lumley (ed.) *The Museum Time-Machine: Putting Cultures on Display*, London, Routledge, 1988, reprinted in T. Bennett, The Birth of the Museum: History, Theory, Politics, London and New York, Routledge, 1995, p. 109.

[81] Ibid., p. 117.

[82] Ibid., p. 120.

[83] Ibid., p. 120.

[84] SCW 189 (Q 27, 1, 2311).

[85] SCW 190 (Q 27, 1, 2312).

[86] SCW 191 (Q 27, 1, 2313).

[87] SCW 189 (Q 27, 1, 2312).

[88] See Sassoon, *Gramsci's Politics*, 'Introduction to the Second Edition', p. ix.

[89] SCW 191. In the original Italian (Q 27, 1, 2314), Gramsci used the verbs '*superare*' ('overcome') and '*estirpare*' ('uproot'), which leave no doubt about the radical character of the process.

[90] For the political context of this strategy, see note 56 in Part Three.

[91] SCW 191 (Q 27, 1, 2313).

[92] Q 27, 1, 2314, my translation.

[93] SCW 191, my emphasis.

[94] Bennett, 'Putting policy into cultural studies', p. 31.

[95] Ibid., p. 30.

[96] For a basic definition of Gramsci's concept of hegemony, see footnote 17.

[97] Gramsci's concept of 'philosophy of praxis', often considered only a code name for 'Marxism', is seen instead by Wolfgang Fritz Haug as Gramsci's particular reinterpretation of Marx's historical materialism. See W.F. Haug, 'Rethinking Gramsci's Philosophy of Praxis from One Century to the Next', *boundary 2*, 26 (2), Summer, 1999 and W.F. Haug, 'Gramsci's "Philosophy of Praxis"', *Socialism & Democracy*, 14 (1), Spring/Summer, 2000. See also G. Francioni and F. Forosini, 'Nota introduttiva al Quaderno 11 (1932)', in A. Gramsci (Date) *Quaderni del Carcere, Edizione anastatica dei manoscritti*, Subsidiary G. Francioni and F. Forosini, Reviewed Item, a cura di G. Francioni, Cagliari, Fondazione Istituto Gramsci, Istituto dell'Enciclopedia Italiana, e Unione Sarda, 2009.

[98] SPN 366 (Q 8, 182, 1051-2); FS 360 (Q 10-I, 13, 1237); Q 10-II, 40, 1300; SPN 137 (Q 13, 10, 1569). The concept of 'catharsis' was also imaginatively used by Gramsci to refer to the terrain of this complex relationship as the 'starting-point for all philosophy of praxis' and the freeing of human beings from the passivity of social reproduction. SPN 366-7 (Q 10, 6, 1244). In SPN, the translation of Gramsci's 'blocco storico' is 'historic bloc', while PN3 uses 'historical bloc'. The latter, which means 'pertaining to history' seems correct, while the first, which usually means 'celebrated or noted in history' (OED), seems less accurate.

[99] For Gramsci, hegemony was a central concept of political science, which in turn was the science of the state. See Sassoon, *Gramsci's Politics*, note 4, p. 232. Gramsci defined the concept of 'integral state' synthetically as 'State = political society + civil society, in other words hegemony armoured by coercion' (SPN 263; Q 6, 88, 763-4), where 'political society' was the state as traditionally understood (i.e., as governmental function). I discuss the concept of the integral state in greater detail in Part Three.

[100] Gramsci could not use the concept of revolution in a normative sense in his prison writings. The concept of 'catharsis' was arguably one of the nearest approximations (see note 98). Gramsci's use of the concept of revolution has therefore been the object of different political interpretations and appropriations, as well as of scholarly controversies. For the purpose of this discussion it is possible to refer to Anne Showstack Sassoon's basic definition: 'Rather than viewing revolution as a dramatic break after which the new society begins to develop from scratch, Gramsci maintains that revolution must be understood as a process which begins within the old society and continues after moments of dramatic change. An old society will be destroyed in all its aspects only insofar as a new one is built and consolidated. (...) In addition to this notion of construction-destruction, revolution as a process is related to Gramsci's view that a socialist revolution must be made by the mass of the population, not by a small élite'. A.S. Sassoon, 'A Gramsci dictionary', in A.S. Sassoon (ed.) *Approaches to Gramsci*, London, Writers and Readers, 1982, pp. 13-14.

[101] PN2, 137-39 (Q 4, 1, 419-21); SPN 382-6 (Q 16, 2, 1840-1844).

[102] SPN 201 (Q 9, 63, 1134).

[103] Thomas, *The Gramscian Moment*, p. 45. Thomas has criticised Hall for trying to 'complete' Gramsci's incomplete texts. Alastair Davidson has moved a similar critique of Hall's eclecticism in Davidson, 'The uses and abuses of Gramsci'. A completely different assessment can be found, for example, in G. Baratta, *Le rose e i quaderni. Saggio sul pensiero di Antonio Gramsci*, Roma, Gamberetti, 2000 and A.S. Sassoon, 'Raymond Williams, Stuart Hall, Gramsci e noi', in G. Schirru (ed.) *Gramsci, le culture e il mondo*, Roma, Viella, 2009.

[104] This list draws on the analysis in R. Johnson, What is cultural studies anyway?. Social text, 16 (Winter), 1986-87, pp. 38–80. Original publication: CCCS stencilled paper, no. 74, 1983.

[105] This list draws on the analysis in ibid.

[106] A mechanism of connection seems necessary in any idealist schemes of analysis (be it based on the concept of hegemony or not) because they assume a separation between civil society and the state. This would includes Bennett's neo-Foucauldian 'governmentality' framework, as Bennett claims that a separation is necessary and guaranteed within liberal and neoliberal conceptions of government (Bennett, 'Cultural policy', p. 3096). The concept of governmentality, therefore, refers to a traditional notion of the state, that is, government, (or, in Gramsci, the coercive element of the state), which in fact in Bennett has the function of *policing* and 'reforming others in the context of varied programmes of social management' (Bennett, 'Introduction', p. 10).

[107] Q 9, 132, 1193; SCW 122 (Q 23, 7, 2193). On the different aspects of the concept of hegemony in Gramsci, see note 17.

[108] Johnson, 'What Is Cultural Studies Anyway?', p. 69.

[109] Ibid., p. 54

[110] Ibid.

[111] Bennett, 'Introduction', p. 9.