

**English Language and Literature**  
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**Module - 4**  
**Literary Genres**  
**Lecture - 28**  
**Marxist Literary Criticism**

Welcome back to NPTEL the national program on technology enhance learning as you are aware these lectures are being brought to you by the Indian institutes of technology, and the Indian institute of science we are in module 4 of these series of lectures, and you are aware that the 4th module is devoted entirely to literary criticism. We have several schools of criticisms here which we are going to talk about to discuss and we have already been through 2 of these and today.

The topic is marxist literary criticism in the last a 2 lectures we saw you know we looked at some of the important postulations given by classical literary criticism and by liberal humanism. And we are now today moving into a very important, if not the most important a school of literary criticism which has had a rich tradition and a long history before we go to marxist literary criticism proper, it is very important for us to know what marxism as and as approach as an ideology well as a critical tool as an analytical tool, intense right some of you we are sure are aware of name postulate the main theatrical you say you could say the main propositions of marxist literary of marxist marxism as a whole, but let us at the beginning of today's lecture first look at what the main points in marxism are right you are aware that the 2 most important figures in marxism are karl marx and his collaborator friedrich engels and you also aware that the most perhaps the most famous treaties by then written by them is entitled the communist manifesto. Now what exactly is marxism or as in approach and as said as tool as an analytical tool studying society politics philosophy literature right what are the most important things that we as students of language or literature ought to know right. So, let us come to the first slide here.

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The slide is titled "Historical Materialism" in a bold, black font. Below the title, there are two bullet points: "• How are societies organised and structured?" and "• How do societies develop and change?". At the bottom of the slide, there are two rounded rectangular buttons: a blue one on the left labeled "structure" and an orange one on the right labeled "change". In the bottom left corner, there is a small circular logo with the text "NPTEL" below it.

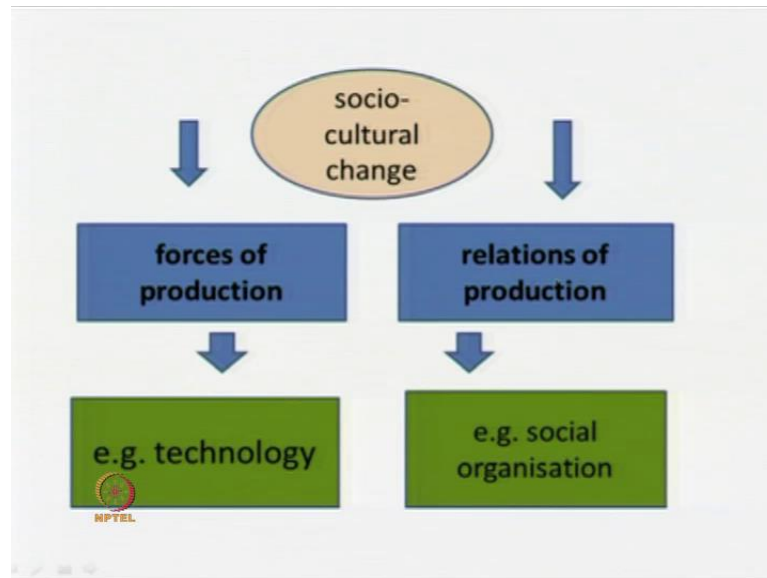
Generally their approach is known as historical materialism now we need to look at first these 2 terms historical and materialism or history, and matter before we ask the important questions within historical materialism. We need know what materialism is materialism does not mean materialistic or somebody who you know somebody for whom material things or say luxury goods or consumer goods are you know are very dear or are you know somebody who lives a life that is knows as a materialistic quote on unquote materialistic life here, it is different materialism is usually understood versus another term in philosophy namely idealism.

Now, I obviously I cannot go you know into detail about these, but suffices for us here to know that idealism is an approach is an is a school of thought is an ideology. So, to speak that looks you know or that considers the idea or the spirit as the most, you know as a source of whether it is life or the source of meaning or the source of our destinies the one of the most important properties of idealism was the German philosopher g w f hegel right hegel believed in what is what he called the absolute spirit he believed in a in a in a platonic sort of way when we know that plato believed in forms that are eternal and the world being only mere reflection of those eternal forms right likewise hegel believed in the idea that everything emanated from an eternal idea with a capital I idea, and that we are a mere reflection of that eternal idea or god or absolute spirit right on the other hand materialism completely rejects the idea or you know the idea or you know forms. other god or absolute spirit as the source of our life our meaning and our movement in history

materialism holds that matter is supreme that own meaning own life all social arrangements are destiny. So, to speak now here by destiny I do not mean the way we understand destiny in you know pre audience sort of or religious sort of ways that destiny how our lives are going to work themselves out the source of our all this is matter more about that awhile. So, suffices it for us to understand here at this stage simply these 2 terms historical materialism that the source of all meaning the source of our life the source of all our arrangements social economical political is matter and it has a historical you know it has a history behind it right the kind of lives that we are leading here today is a result of history looked at from a material sense. So, you understand what materialism is that is not being materialistic in the sense of liking you know have fancy cars etcetera right.

So, let us look at this slide here what would historical materialism seek to study historical materialism seeks to study things like the organization and structure of societies. So, it would ask questions like how our societies organize and structured and 2<sup>nd</sup> how do these societies develop and change. So, in the first case is really the structure and the organization of society, and the second is society emotion what leads to social change why do societies change we know that societies do not remain the same social arrangements rules regulation norms etcetera the kind of lives that we lead are you know these are never the same these change. So, marxism through his history you know historical materialist approach seeks to give us answers right. So, here we see in this slide that the structure of societies and the causes of change of societies the movement of societies the nature of their movement; these are you know basically speaking these are the things that are sort to be understood by marxism as a whole as we know we have not yet moved into marxist literary criticism.

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Next again the two very important terms in marxism. So, we know that we are we study socio cultural change a structure organization, and change we ask the question how why do societies change and what are the causes of social change right.

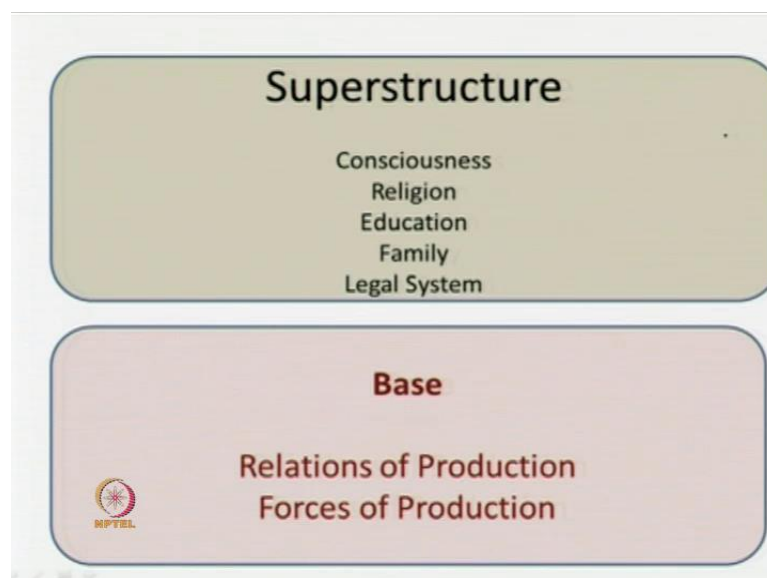
So, marx helped that among other things the forces of production these productive forces which contribute toward our material the production our materialize right, and the relations of production that is the relations between you know or among people in the in the production process right among people are sorry are determined by or are related to... So, to speak to the forces of production these together we understand as what we what they called what marx called the mode of production that every historical epoch is going to be characterized by a certain mode a certain mode of production certain mode of production or you could say a certain way of production right. Now, let me give you a few examples what are these modes of production modes of production are as we know these are you know this really is a it is interesting that marxism is both the micro and the macro theory.

So, if you look at history history is explained marxism as you know marked by different ways of production production of what production of essential our material lives. Now examples here would be for instance ancient flavory in ancient flavory you had a certain way of production in feudalism you had a certain way of production, where land was a most important factor and the relations of productions essential, where you know maybe

characterized by 2 sort of binary you know binary a opposite term a social straight our life for instance the landlord and on the other hand the (( )) who works on the land and on the landlords firm firms sorry, now these are relations of production which are sort of corresponding to the to the mode of production that is there in the time the social change is explained as you know a crisis.

So, to speak happening in history during certain times when the forces of production are you know the forces of production are not sort of in sync with the relation of production, when the forces of production are they develop such a what the forces production forces of production you know are different factors that go into the production process technology could be 1 science and technology for instance, and these the social organization is such that they the social relations of production act as marx says act as change or fetters on the forces of production the forces of production eventually sort of are free or free themselves from the social relations of production and society moves into you know if you want to understand this is the understand the source of why society changes is, because of forces or production and relations of production are sort of at edge right and the forces of production you know sort of are free from the social relations of production and society moves onto another epoch.

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Then the next important terms are the base and the superstructure marx argued that every in every society and every mode of production every epoch there is what we called we

can have a 2 tier almost in architectural sort of metaphors use here a 2 tier structure of you know and sort of an infrastructural base and the superstructure the base, if you look at this slide here the base comprises again the forces of production and the relations of production the base is an economic base to put, it very simply here of course, the base is an economic base.

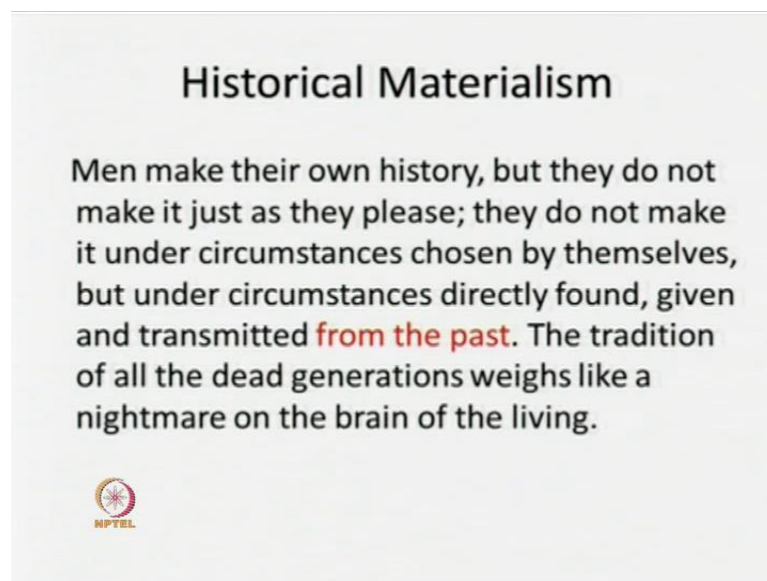
Now, marx says that according to right this is very important according to the nature of the economic base, there would arise corresponding super structural elements, now in the superstructure he says these are essentially to put you know to use 1 term only for it is these are cultural elements for instance corresponding to... Now remember we were using word like corresponding to we are marx never meant that these are deterministic that the base is completely going to determine he kept it more you know he give it more space really and he understood the enormous complexity of the super structural elements.

So, he says that these are determined by or these correspond to right the economic base and here we find the legal system for instance, then social very important social initiation like the family the religion education and eventually our consciousness. Now when we study marxist literary criticism what are we going to do where are we going to place the literary text, it is obvious to us that literary text would be in the superstructure am I correct here the products art for instance the products of our consciousness right like art really also be related to the economic base that is forces of production, and the relations of production or what may we call the mode of production this is very important for us to understand before we go to study what marxist literary criticism is again to quickly recapitulate marxism studies or marxism the aim of marxism is to study the organization as structure of society second to study how societies and why societies change how they develop from 1 epoch to another we called it historical materialism because we understand the past in terms of or in relation to very important relation to history or to the you know the present to history that is the present is always determined by history.

And you know we do away with the idealist hegelian way of looking at idea is the most important source of everything and here the idea is replaced by matter. So, our material economic arrangements right give rise which is base give rise to the superstructural elements in our culture among among which we find art also or being a very important part. So, marx lay great great importance on social consciousness right for instance as we will find later on he said that our consciousness does not determine you know our

consciousness or does not determine you know the kind of societies we have, but this is the kind of societies we have that eventually or that will always determine. The kind of consciousness that we have here when we say consciousness we do not mean simply you know aware you know as being conscious or as being aware these things right we mean by consciousness here we mean really are everything our mental consciousness our emotional consciousness our intellectual consciousness our moral consciousness right. So, all are norms or. So, called virtues or. So, called you know evil aspects or you know everything that is part of our consciousness or ideas of good and base ideas of for instance a base social and the base economic or the base political arrangement ideas of the base literary text for instance these are all to be understood in the term consciousness theory it is not just being like I am conscious or I am aware of my surroundings you know it is of cognitive sort of way.

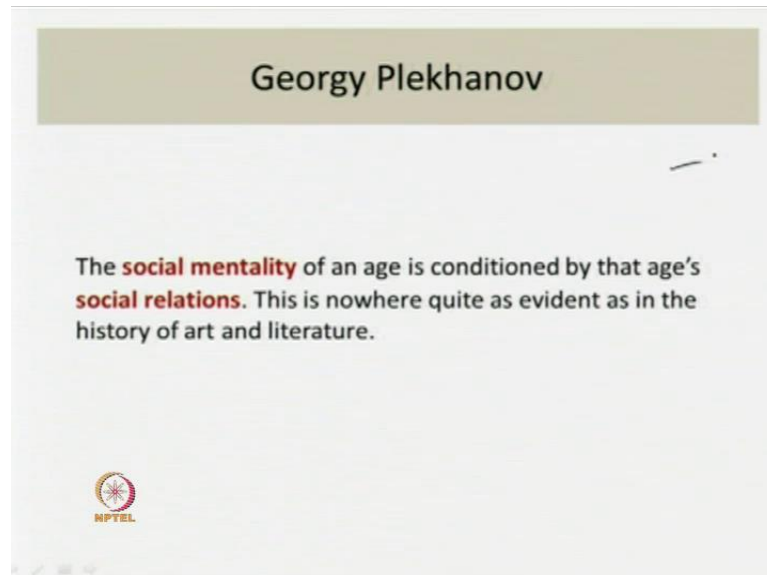
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Let us read from this slide which will make this 1<sup>st</sup> point clear to us when we talk about historical materialism we have to remember these words from marxism that men make their own history, but they do not make it just as they please they do not make it under circumstances chosen by themselves, but under circumstances directly found given and transmitted from the past the tradition of all dead generations weighs like a nightmare on the brain of the living now the opposite; these desire these words are beautifully put this says that we there's no doubt we make our history or we make our own destinies, but the

past plays a most important part in sort of the carving out of our destinies or of our history.

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Now we are going to move into marxist literary criticism proper and what I have d 1 in this lecture is; obviously, there are several ways you know in which you can or we could talk about a marxist literary criticism sometimes we can just refer to 1 book for instance terry eagleton's very important book on on the marxist literary criticism what I have d 1 here; however, is I have try you know try to bring to you some of the important formulations commence in pronouncements on marxist literary criticism from a couple of sources.

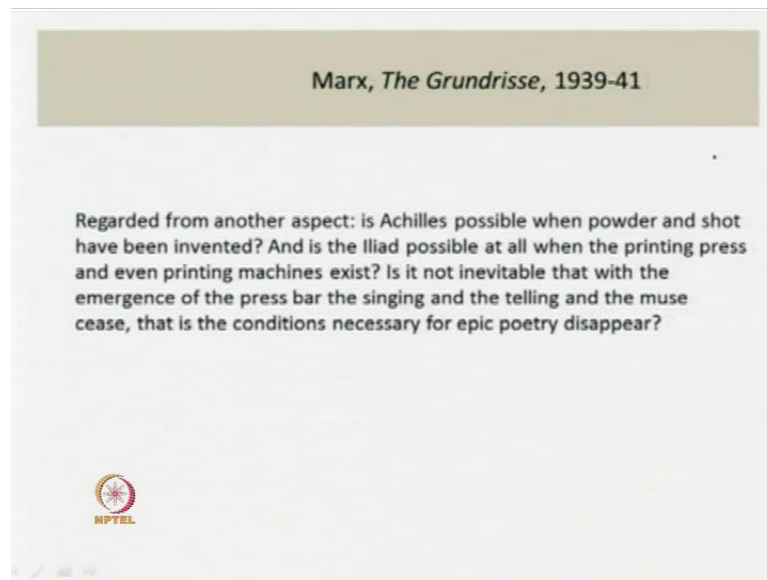
So, in a bit to in which our understanding of Marxism, and in that with that few in line we have first a quotation from plekhanov right who says that the social mentality of an age is Condition by that age's social relations, this is nowhere quite as evident as in the history of art and literature we talked about social relations of production just awhile ago when we referred to the 2 very important terms the forces of production and and the social relations of production in Marxism. Now this is how we moved into literary criticism for marxism and one of the better ways to put it through plekhanov for instance what does he say he says here that the social mentality of any age is conditi ld or determined by the social relations of that age this is a point also when we saw when we talked about the you know the base and the superstructure the base now here plekhanov



lays more importance on the social relations of production he says that the social relations of production. Now again what is the social relations of production simply put for instance in a capitalist system the worker right the worker, and you know the owner of the means of production the capitalist that is a relation a social relation of production the relation between or among workers that also is a relation of production, which is determined by the way the production process is arranged is very important and the economic mode of production, that is all and the forces the nature of the forces of production even the degree of development of the forces of production. Now the social relations condition the kind of mentality now this mentality is also related to the word consciousness that we found awhile ago. So, plekhanov says that you know how are we to gage how are we to understand the nature even the complexities of the social mentality of any age he says you will you only need to look at the art a particular the literature of a certain period is more or less going to tell you or the social mentality of that particular epoch was lied right that; obviously, it is not. So, simple as that you know that the all the literary texts of a certain age is going to be reflective of its social relation it is of course, far more complex and it should be, so but if we have the theorize on the nature of the literary text in relation to the mentality social collective mentality of a particular period then we can safely say that the literature of a period shows us the social mentality in all again qualifying.

It in all its complexities in all its different huge right in all its you know all its probably problematic of that arises from the social relations of the particular epoch, and go back where does the social relations come from where do the social relations of a particular age come from they eventually come from the mode of production of the economic arrangement do you understand. Now if I am from this slide really what we have d 1 is we have been d 1 to relate the literary text to marxist propositions or to marxist statements do you follow I hope this is this is an important point here important juncture in our lecture today right. So, we talked about historical materialism base on superstructure forces of production relations of production and we come to the we have come to the literary text as being you know as being a complex indicator. So, speak of the social mentality that arises from the social relations and the economic relations of an age. So, this really is one of the you know the part of the theorizing of the literary text in relation to the Marxism.

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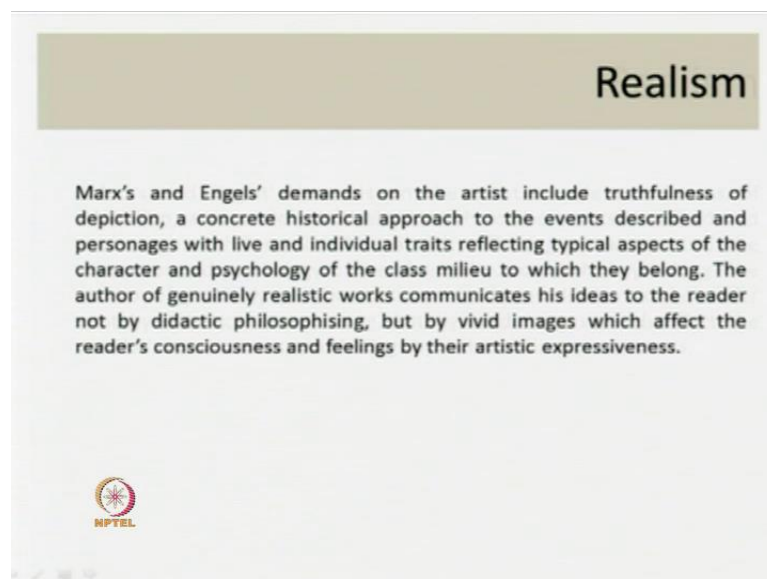
Now, we will go straight to a quotation from Karl Marx himself from the *Grundrisse*. Now many say that Marx and also Engels did not really you know talk. So, much about the literary text about literature whatever you find are more or less a sort of sporadic there are collections on Marx and Engels on literature and art for instance, but it is said that there their main focus was not; obviously, the literary text, but you know there are some brilliant insights we get a particular from Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels when we look at some whenever or wherever they do talk about literature art and its relation you know the relation to show you know to social relations and forces of production the modes of production we find some brilliant insights that are given which are then taken up by other scholars who practice criticism or theory from a Marxist perspective. One such quotation and one just something that is oft quoted is from the *Grundrisse*. Now let us read from here Marx asked this question is Achilles possible when powder and shot have been invented and is the Iliad possible at all when the printing press and even printing machines exist. So, here 1<sup>st</sup> we find that Marx is through you know asking these questions actually he is making a statement.

That in a time when there was a printing machine and the printing press epics like the Iliad or by Homer or would not have been possible in a way what did he say he is seeing a time the literary text, and epic to the material realities of its time by contrasting it the material realities of the time of Homer to the material realities of England for instance during the time of the printing press of the time of Cassin he is proposing this

that an epic like the Iliad would not have been written in a time of the printing press you know the time of the printing press is also the time of the beginning of you know the rise of the middle class, the which is again important for the rise of the novel. So, the epic now takes a new form which is the novel in a time which is you know in a time which is very different not just you know just as you know not not from the point of view of the ideas that were you know extant during the time, but also from the point of view of the material conditions lets read this again is achilles possible when powder and gunshot have been invented and is the Iliad possible at all when the printing press, and even printing machines exist is it.


Now, he asked is it not inevitable that with the emergence of the press bar the signing and the telling the muse cease, that is the conditions necessary look at this the conditions necessary for epic poetry disappear in this base on really he is being given us a statement that the way of the epic the nature of the epic is bound to disappear with the changes that are or with the disappearance of a certain material way of life do you understand it is a singing the telling and the muse the cease to exist the though these factors of the epic the cease to exist you know with the emergence of the press. So, now, again this is yet another example of how material how materialism is then in this sense understood as a source of what even or of even the genera right, how material changes in materialize can also change or in material conditions can also change. So, change is very genera of literary text.

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**Realism**

Marx's and Engels' demands on the artist include truthfulness of depiction, a concrete historical approach to the events described and personages with live and individual traits reflecting typical aspects of the character and psychology of the class milieu to which they belong. The author of genuinely realistic works communicates his ideas to the reader not by didactic philosophising, but by vivid images which affect the reader's consciousness and feelings by their artistic expressiveness.

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Then it is often argued that you know with marxism a way of writing which is a realist mode is simply in vogue right now marx's and engels' demands on the artist most of what I am reading here are from terry eagleton marx's and engels' demands on the artist include truthfulness of depiction right almost the very similitude truthfulness of depiction a concrete historical approach to events described, and personages with live and individual traits reflecting typical aspects of the character and psychology of class milieu to which they belong there.

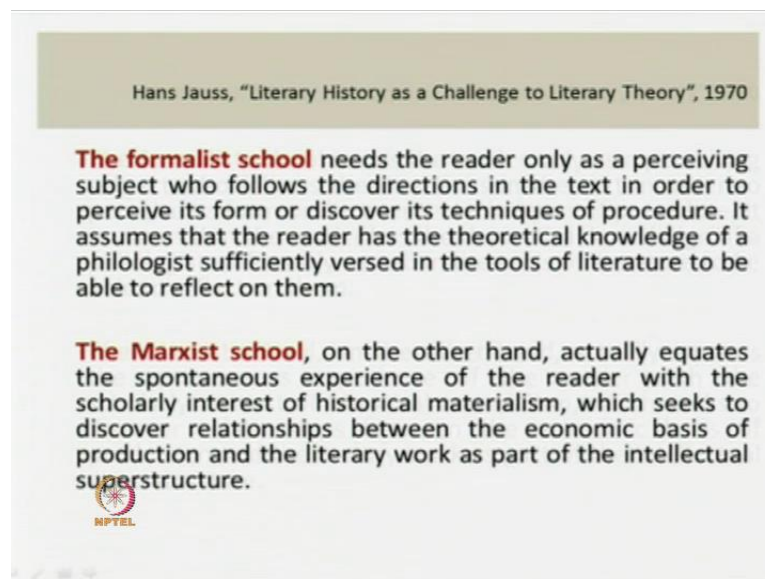
So, there is a certain not a mere reflectionism not a simplistic reflectionism, but you know from marx's point of view we would expect right you would expect that the characters, that are depicted in a novel for instance right which is again which is again constrained by time and space you know where we know from which social milieu these characters come from or the time during which the time of the setting of a novel for instance marx, and engels required a marxism requires that the artist be faithful in his depiction is his whole depiction of the characters he says the characters were even the individual right the individual traits of individual characters have to correspond to a certain type that was you know that was characteristic of a certain time.

Now let us quickly read the 2<sup>nd</sup> marx's and engels' demands on the artist include truthfulness of depiction a concrete historical approach to the events described and personages with live and individual traits reflecting typical aspects of the character and psychology of the class milieu to which they belong the author of genuinely realistic works communicates his ideas to the reader not be didactic philosophizing right, but by vivid images which affect the reader's consciousness and feelings by their artistic expressiveness this word is very important here didactic there are many you know many scholars who are hoarsely put it, who are who are anti marxist or who do not who are argue against the marxist literary criticism importantly by saying that marxist literary marxist literary criticism is didactic right. So, in the sense it is as it says too ideological right that it is almost again propagandist.

But as eagleton says marx marxist literary criticism expects right a that the artist when he or she is you know sketching his characters delineating events for instance a b truth to the actualities of those times and instant instead of philosophizing in a didactic or even in a doctrinaire fashion right would with vivid realist realist or realistic images right express their ideas or you know have their literary piece come out as an artistic

expression which is far above the you know the the didactic or moralizing philosophy that I would expect this is very important what the what this also. Suggest that marxist literary criticism was not looking for propagandist kind of literature, it only asks that there be a connection there be not simply a connection, but there be a faithful you know depiction of the time and the types of characters that that were or are there in a particular in a particular a stretch of time or space.


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Hans Jauss, "Literary History as a Challenge to Literary Theory", 1970

**The formalist school** needs the reader only as a perceiving subject who follows the directions in the text in order to perceive its form or discover its techniques of procedure. It assumes that the reader has the theoretical knowledge of a philologist sufficiently versed in the tools of literature to be able to reflect on them.

**The Marxist school**, on the other hand, actually equates the spontaneous experience of the reader with the scholarly interest of historical materialism, which seeks to discover relationships between the economic basis of production and the literary work as part of the intellectual superstructure.

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Now, let me quote from Hans Jauss his essay literary history as a challenge to literary theory, because here he makes an important distinction, he talks about marxism by making an important distinction between another school of thought that you many of us are here are aware of that is a formalism particular of the Russian school now he says that the formalist school needs the reader only as a perceiving subject. Right who follows the directions in the text in order perceive its form or discover its techniques or of procedure as you know form was enormously important in Russian formalism that is why the word formalism right formed, and he says that it is a mean enough for the reader to a kind of discover you know the techniques or the formal aspects take joy and pleasure in sort of unraveling the you know identifying the formalist nature of you know a formalist elements in a text it assumes that reader has the theoretical knowledge of a philologist sufficiently versed in the tools of literature to be able to reflect on them.

So, you want expect the reader should be in formalism should be well acquainted with you know the various tools analyze or tools of analyze of analyzing literary text and should be able to discover. So, to speak the beauty of the formal elements on the other hand he says the marxist school on the other hand actually equates the spontaneous experience this is important where here the reader is assumed to be you know as he is sufficiently well versed or well trained in understanding the literary text, but on the other hand he says on the marxist school actually equates look at this word the spontaneous experience of the reader with the scholarly interest of historical materialism now word spontaneous we are not sapping as simply the spontaneously experiencing a literary text along with 1 the spontaneous response will literary text 1 also expects the reader to bring in his or her the scholarly interest of historical materialism which again lets read which seeks to discover relationships between now this is the most important discover here you discover the form or the technique and take sort of you know take pleasure of the you know discovering.

You know the nuances of techniques and procedure, on the other hand marxist you know approach what we do is we see we discover not the formal elements, but let us look at this here seeks to discover the relationships relationships between the economic basis of production and the literary work as part of the intellectual superstructure this I need you to really look at very carefully, because it is very I what nuances words here to you know it is the, because is really I think he strikes a right code by saying that it is there it is not that the marxist literary criticism engages itself only with kind of an corvial work or almost you could say archict even an architecture sort of work where you are trying to dig out history and trying to make you know a correlation between the text and you know the or the text position in history in space and time.

So, is no there is great a joy, this great spontaneity of the reader and when the reader is equipped right with understanding the historical realities of the text then the pleasure the... So, called readerly pleasure of you know or the pleasure reading a text comes when you discover as he says the relationship here between the economic basis of a particular age of you know and in this production process, and the literary work as remember part of the part of what part of the conscious culture consciousness of a time or what he calls here the intellectual part of the intellectual production of the superstructure this is very important for us to understand again who are the 3 scholars,

we saw here a plekhanov a of course, marx himself and he asks the question right would the iliad have been possible or why you know on the other hand why is an epic not the most important.

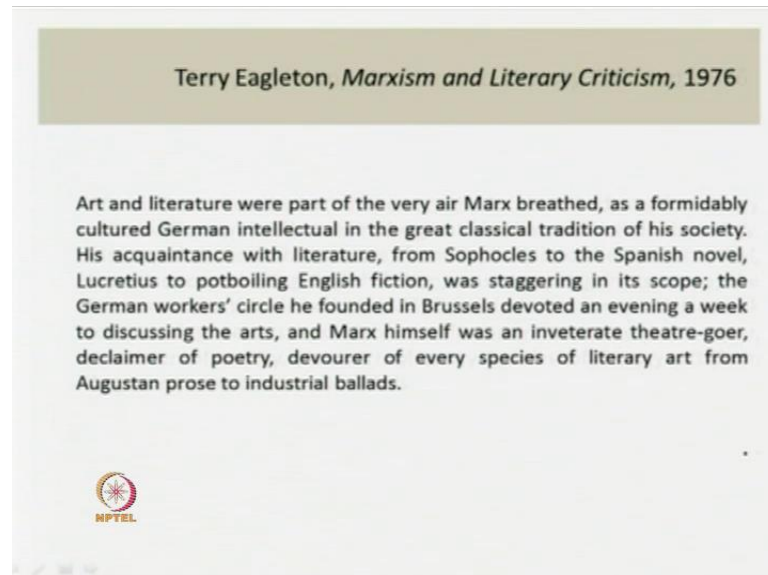
Genera during say for during say the say 8eenth century England right it is because the material conditions have changed 2<sup>nd</sup> we looked at georgy plekhanov who said that the social mentality of an age is related to a social relations, and we also know that the social relations are related to the forces of production the economic arrangements and he claim that nowhere is this relation most well you know sort of demonstrated than in the art and literature of a time.

Then we found the through terry eagleton when he talks you know when he talks about the literary text here when he talks about when he talks about realism and he talks about the the importance of even the expectation in marxist literary criticism that there has there should be you know a faithful depiction of characters you know of setting right according to the historical time in which the text is set then we came to hans jauss who talks about who compares marxist literary criticism and the formalist schools and says that where as in the formalist a school we try to unravel you know which are to get pleasure you know in the reading process by unraveling the formal structures of a text by unraveling you know the procedures that have been used in contrast to that in marxist literary criticism.

We have you know the spontaneous reading of a text tried to an understanding of the historical realities of that text and understanding a text a writer as you know part of the superstructural elements of any age as he says here to discover the relationship between the economic base of production and the literary work as part as part of the intellectual superstructure these are immensely important formulations I would really say these are the core formulations that those of you who beginning marxist literary criticism, we know this lecture is the a really a basic level a lecture in a basic level course that has been designed for students particular in engineering colleges who have a first exposure to language and literature it is important for us to understand this systematically right to find out what marxism says a about society about social change in the organization and b where the literary text lies as far as more entire marxist framework is concern what according to them is the function of the literary text. And secondly, you know how is a

reader to approach a literary text how is a reader to understand a perceive a literary text and we saw this in contrast to the formalist school then coming back to terry eagleton.

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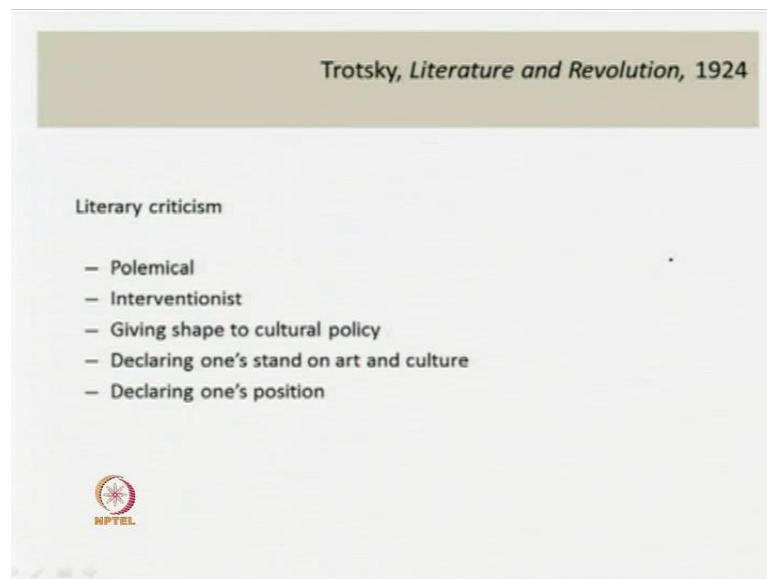
And again quoting from marxism and literary criticism eagleton says art and literature were part of the very air marx breathed as a formidably cultured german intellectual in the great classical tradition of his society right marx. In fact, some of you may not know marx also had written poetry right and he had he had great he great admiration for you know for the greatest job the writers.

Like shakespeare for instance, and if you read dust capital and some of his other works you be surprise to find excuse me the literary allusions that you find in his text we find here evidence of an absolutely fine mind who was not simply looking only you know you know only to make certain theoretical formulations on economics on culture on, you know culture in the sense of materialize that we lead, but we find here a person who was also you know also. So, well verse in literature and some of his writings really read like we saw in the for the example from grundrisse really you know read. So, you know read. So, beautifully when we looked at them from anesthetic point of view now eagleton therefore, says that art and literature he describes the milieu in which marx was writing art and literature were part of the very air marx breathed as a formidably cultured german intellectual in the great classical tradition of his society his acquaintance with literature from sophocles to the Spanish novel lucretius to parboiling English fiction was



staggering in its scope the German workers circle he founded in brussels devoted an evening a week to discussing the arts and marx himself was an inveterate theatergoer declaimer of poetry devourer of every species of literary art from augustan pores to industrial ballads, this is eagleton giving us the background of how marx whose also sit among other things in literature right then we come to a meaning in trotsky here.

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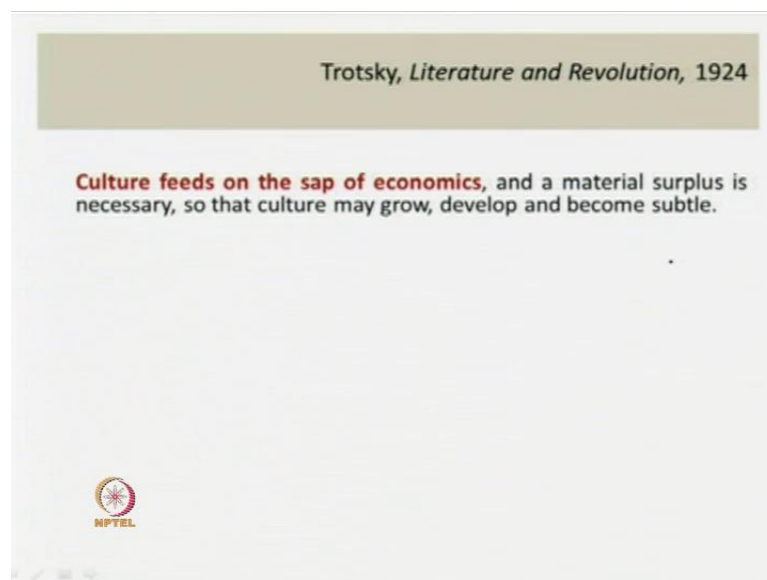


Because here we find you know how should I put a variant of marxist literary criticism that was you know that many feel was deeply a deeply polemical almost. So, to speak you know propagandist right. So, what I want to do here is you know bring to you what bring to you what trotsky trotsky kind of argued for in his seminal book literature and revolution published in 19 20 4. So, this kind of trotsky's variant of marxist literary criticism turns in for quite some flag from you know people who are who do not really follow the marxist school of sort. Now let us look at this slide here trotsky in literature and revolution says that you know when 1 practices literary criticism 1 needs to 1 needs to lay focus on not in other formal aspects not on you know the didactic aspects of the philosophy in the philosophy in there not on.

So, called spiritual aspects of a text he says that our job is to be polemical right to be problematic to be interventionist. So, that when we perform literary criticism on a text right we are not simply looking at certainly not just the description of what the text is saying we are not looking at this formal aspect we need be in interventionist literary

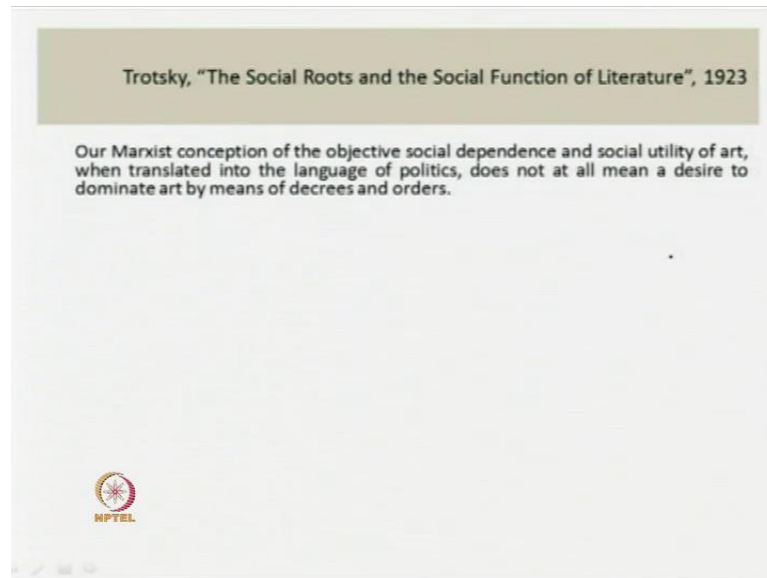
critic needs to intervene in the text in order to show the inequalities that are there in the society in order to foreground the exploitation that is there in society hence he calls polemical or interventionist. So, he says that it lets look at this slide again literary criticism should be polemical should be interventi ventionist or the literary critic should be eventually help in giving shape to culture policy the social policy and 1 should declare, this is very important with trotsky and 1 should declare what 1's tants on art and sorry culture is 1 should also declares once of declare 1's intellectual position right. So, trotsky here was very clear on the job, so to speak of the function of a writer or saw of the critic.

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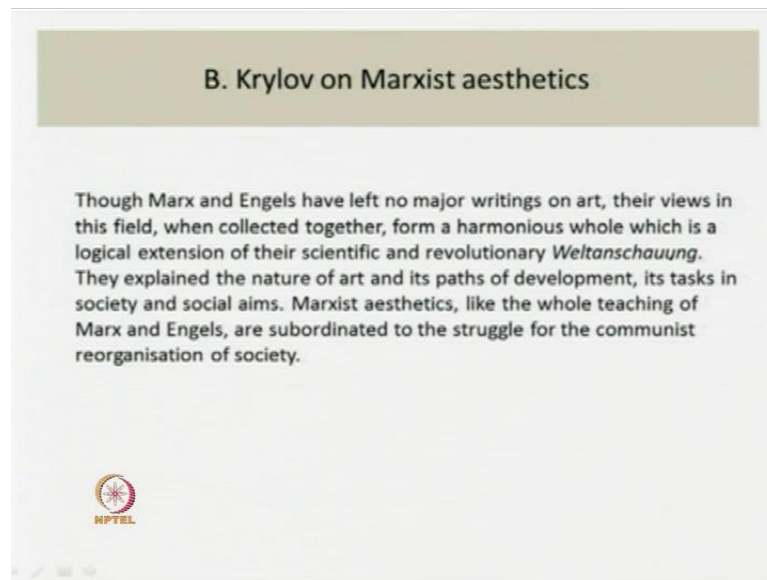
Trotsky says that culture feeds on the sap of economics and the material surplus is necessary.

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So, that culture may grow develop and become subtle he says in the social roots, and the social function of literature that our marxist conception of the objective social dependence, and social utility of art when translated into the language of politics does not at all mean a desire to dominate art by means of decrees and orders here is trotsky seeking to defend his view of what marx a marxist criticism ought to be like he says we just, because we want to study the objective social dependence and the social utility of art does not make does mean that it is propagandist right. So, we will stop here indeed there's. So, much else to talk about I could only bring just a few critics here. We should have also look at lucatch and his theory of the novel and we could have also looked at some of you know another way in which some of the text maybe grew.

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Looked at you know from actual text would have been decoded from marxist perspective what I have wanted to do is first to bring to you some of the you know the very core very elementary things, that we should know about Marxism, because we cannot go straight to marxist literary criticism without knowing what marx had to say about society about the organization structural society. And the and why you know social you know social change happens in the 1<sup>st</sup> place. And we therefore, saw well what let me let me now you know pose some questions right.

So, that we can we do this recap by opposing some questions for instance, if I ask you a question like this. How did marx look at social structure and social change how we're going to answer that question one of the ways in which to answer obvious this question; obviously, is to say that marxism is an approach which is historical which is materialist then we go on to say the importance, talk about the importance of history in marxism in general in marxist general theory in particular, and we say that this source the source of meaning the source you know understanding a literary text the source of our social lives our cultural arrangements the source of kind of the nature of our social relations that we have and eventually the source of the literary text is not you know is not something that is our, you know that is that is sort of outside of the material world that we live in if the sources not the idea, we have to go beyond the idea, and say that our social consciousness our literary consciousness comes from matter that is the most important

thing matter in the sense of the way our material lives are arranged right the way ways in which the economic base works right.

The rules and regulations which determined the production the distribution and consumption of material goods that leads to as we understood a superstructure right that base leads to a superstructure and the superstructure is conditioned though of course, in a very complex ways by the economic base, and what was what is entailed in the superstructure in the superstructure, we have found our entails social institutions like the family like religion like education and consciousness art literature a second.

If you know we if we ask how is sort of how is the literary text the social mentality of an age and 3<sup>rd</sup> the social relations of an age how are these related then we take recourse to plekhanov's work words for instance and we say that a marxist literary text looks at the social mentality a marxist literary criticism looks at the social mentality of an age as being based demonstrated or indicative. So, to speak by art and literature art and literature are the best vehicles. So, to speak of the social mentality of an age now that social mentality is again related to the social relations of productions that are there at the certain given point of time, and finally the social relations of productions are determined by what the way the economic arrangement is in society do you follow.

Then next we may ask a question like what is you know you can ask what is you know the mode of writing that is most conducive. So, to speak to marxist literary criticism or at his expected from a writer and we say that the realist mode is the mode of writing that is most conducive to an artist according to marxist literary criticism, and the realist mode our demands this from an artist that he or she does not sort of go away from the type the type of characters that are you can say possible in a certain age or in a certain given a socio cultural milieu right we cannot move away from that if we have to be faithful to our depiction you know or in our depiction of characters and setting this setting should also reflect.

So, to speak in however, problematic can complex away should be reflective of the actual material conditions that exist in that time. So, this is demanded from in this case it is really perhaps the realist novel the realist novel that you know it is a best example of what marxist literary criticism expects a writer to do right. So, we that was what and we also remember marx's saying in grundrisse that the epic is not sort of

possible of course, I can self consciously write you know take and say that well I am in the twenty first century and I am going to write an epic we are not talking about that the epic is in a different sense not possible in a time where for instance there is a printing press and where material conditions are very different from say ancient Greek Greece for instance and then in there we saw he says that Iliad is not possible you know the characters like achilles are not possible in a time when the material conditions are very different is very important for us.

You know there are many critics of what of what is called vulgar school of marxist criticism in the sense that in the sense that I always expects I always expects a propagandist kind of writing while we are always you know for instance of worker is you know of the worker shown to be to be in a very simplistic way the finest of characters whereas, the for instance of the capitalist is shown to be you know the way the characters are not flesh start there are no complexities that is the vulgar kind of marxist criticism that many have perhaps slightly.

So, attacked we also looked at trotsky and literature and revolution a I of you know the the classic pieces in marxist literary criticism and I that has been attacked also a lot by scholars were against marxist literary criticism by pointing to the fact that he always asks for interventionist you know an interventionist is made by the literary critic and by the artist and for polemics for you know eventually shaping cultural policy right, but trotsky himself says that well just, because we want to find out the you know and sort of a scientific systematic objective we want to carry at an objective inquiry through the literary text into the socio cultural relations of production into the economic base does not mean that we are doing it in a doctrinarian sort of way, right.

So, there is perhaps sort a balance between you know the pleasure of reading a text for its own sake and profile course bringing in social change by showing the way the text willingly or unwillingly reveals the social inequalities and realities of exploitation of a certain age. So, these are some of the questions that are important that may come up well there is indeed. So, much else to talk about as far as marxist literary sorry criticism is concerned, but stay with this it is enough for us at this juncture to simply look at this these important points these say foundational points that we have raised in our lecture and in the next lecture we shall move on with another school of criticism thank you for now see you next time.