

# Ideology affects the way literature is read

## english literature essay

[Literature](#), [British Literature](#)



Literature in Marxism is perceived as something which is profoundly influenced by the civilization and society in which the writer is populating in. Therefore literature is seen as a merchandise from civilization which means that the writer is affected by the environment and the external elements environing him. In the same manner one reader differs from the other because he or she is besides affected by the societal milieu. Furthermore, Marxists, and subsequently on Structuralists, believe that because literature is experienced harmonizing to its attitude and rules of society, literature is 'ideologically impregnated by its societal placement'.

[ 1 ]

Lois Althusser has played an of import function in the shaping of political orientation in literature with of import essays such as his 1970 essay entitled Reading `` Capital '' and another more of import essay in the field of political orientation entitled Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses ( 1970 ). Others like Roland Barthes besides helped specifying the function of political orientation when reading literature particularly with the outstanding essay entitled The Death of the Author, published in 1967.

Early Marxists believed in the thought that literature is non simply merely a creative activity but it is a production. The difference between the two is that by 'creating ' one is explicating something out of nil whilst on the other manus, by 'production ' , the creative person is bring forth something out of other stuffs which is where the societal and political context comes in. In Marxism there is an on-going dualism between the impression of the base and the impression of the superstructure. This dualism is understood in

multiple ways by different critics such as Althusser. The superstructure, harmonizing to Marxism, is made up of those institutes which surround us as one of base and therefore of pure contemplation. On the contrary the base which is that which determines society is one of economic dealings.

Harmonizing to Marxists it is the superstructure which in itself includes art and therefore literature which enforces the ways of production. In contrast to this, another sort of dualism is a contrast between imminency and the thought of committed literature. The thought that art is written for art 's interest suggests that what is literary is in world internal for the text and therefore it reinforces the thought that what is of import is what happens inside the text and non what can be instantly seen on first glimpse.

Therefore the literary is found behind the written words, what is left unwritten by the writer and this must be found out by the reader himself.

The theory so moves on from one of superstructures to that of an political orientation. Subsequently on Marxism developed into Structuralism, in which the construction is favoured over the topic itself which has been developed by theoreticians such as Louis Althusser and Pierre Macherey to reason against the experiential philosophical ways of theoreticians like Georg Lukas and Jean-Paul Sartre.

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With Structuralism, the issues of the function of the authors comes into inquiry and the aesthetic creative activity is so seen as one which promises a better hereafter and therefore literature and art become something which underline the endowments of the creative person instead than something

which divides people and turns them against one another. It becomes a promise for a better hereafter.

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Structuralists move off from the Hegelian problematic and on the other manus they move towards grouping literature with other diverse activities which are productive. They refuse to split the existent off from representation in literature. Literature is now seen as on the one manus, a produced object and on the other manus as a consequence of the societal production and the definition of the existent becomes dependent on the environment in which it was produced and this is where the impression of political orientation comes in.

Ideology has become a cardinal construct in Marxists ' theoreticians ' plants and unfavorable judgment about art and literature. Marxists see ideology more than merely the survey of thoughts but they see it as an mentality of life. The Bourgeois political orientation is regarded by Marxists as constructing and infusing establishments in society and in civilizations which besides include literature and different signifiers of art. Ideology, peculiarly to Structuralists, becomes an imperative issue, particularly to the manner in how one can speak about political orientation in a non-ideological manner. At first Marxists see the word political orientation in a negative visible radiation due to the fact that they associate the word with 'false consciousness ' .

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Marxists see political orientation as a method employed by the dominant categories to forestall subsidiaries from gaining the true nature of things and alter them to their ain benefits. Therefore as a agency of concealing the truth and maintaining the governing power over the inferior categories from obtaining their rightful civil autonomies. But so in the 1960 's, Althusser changed the construct of political orientation being a sort of false consciousness with his essay Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses ( 1970 ) . In this essay Althusser argues that society must foremost be divided into different `` ideological province setups '' instead than be viewed as a whole. He argues that instead than false consciousness, the political orientations vary harmonizing to each province setup. Althusser sees literature as being one of these province setups since literature does non show merely one sort of political orientation but it varies harmonizing to the text. He states that interpellation takes topographic point instead than societal consciousness and this means that thehuman beings is made up of the established constructions in society such as the mass media and literature in which the representations seen in it consist of the looks of mundane worlds. Therefore, political orientation, harmonizing to Althusser, is made up of both the existent and the fanciful since it is existent because it shows how people truly live their mundane life in conformity with society and its spheres but fanciful because it does non offer a full apprehension of the ways of how people are constituted in these societal worlds.

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At the same clip when people read a realist text they can associate to it and when characters are portrayed as being free, the text will interpellate the readers to believe that they are free as good. Thus, realist novels work in the same manner as political orientation does ; by turn toing the readers and as a consequence doing them believe the ideological vision that they are portraying.

Althusser discusses the interpellation of the topic in relation to political orientation. Harmonizing to Althusser, both the author and the reader are topics and therefore they both become ideological topics because both of them live 'spontaneously ' .

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The linguisticcommunicationso has its ain function in the interpellation as to show the human being as unified, independent, subjectiveness.

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Althusser uses the illustration of the authoritative pragmatism since it is a extremely popular genre in different countries of humanistic disciplines, in peculiar, in literature. Althusser uses this genre because in itself it is a topic which shows non merely the political orientation of the true representation of world in add-on the apprehension of the state of affairs of topic.

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In the nineteenth century, the impression of the writer fostering off from the text he has written was going even more dominant, particularly in realistic fiction. In the authoritative realist novels the truth is shown, but non told since the reader has the undertaking of happening it out for him or her ego. This can be seen in diverse novels in the genre such as those written by Defoe and Hardy. In these novels the reader is interpellated as the topic since he has the undertaking of make up one's minding and happening out the truth, which in itself, is an ideological pattern. Thus significances change consequently to a individual 's political orientation. Belsey argues that classical pragmatism follows the same cyclical form in most novels. This includes a sort of upset which is encapsulated in a narrative of for illustration love or slaying. But at the terminal the narrative ever reaches an stoping which the reader in some manner or the other expects and hence order is restored. This can be found in novels such as Jane Eyre, where order is restored as Jane and Mr Rochester 's look of love makes its full circle. This, harmonizing to Belsey, is non found in history since it is narrated in an impersonal mode and there is no defined talker, whilst in narrative the talker is defined as a topic and the reader relates to this voice. The narrative in fact unfolds through this interpellation between the reader and the writer and through this communicating ; the topics portion the significances of the work through political orientation. Belsey besides argues that in classical pragmatism, the reader is in a manner delighting his ain self-importance by placing and positioning himself in the function of the supporter. Belsey states that this interpellation between the reader and the writer is non merely done in the 3rd all-knowing narration but besides in the first storyteller since the

reader besides gets the opportunity to associate to the supporter in inquiry. But the 3rd narrative allows the reader to explicate the stoping of the narrative before it is written. Therefore the reader as a topic himself is in a place of subjectiveness and therefore in an ideological place. But at the same clip, to decline this place, is in itself an ideological pick.

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Althusser negotiations about how a individual can non hold a complete indifferent read since it is really hard to avoid doing givens and ideas which may prejudice the reading in many ways. For that ground the reading is different from one individual to another and it is ne'er impersonal because it is affected by the societal milieus. Althusser besides argues that behind the text that one can see in a book or in any literary signifier which he calls 'explicit discourse ' there is ever the underlying, unobserved, 'silent discourse ' , which the writer is non cognizant of and so it is the undertaking of the reader to happen it out.

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This 'silent discourse ' is hence the elements which affected the writer unconsciously in clip of composing the text. Hence Althusser proposes that when reading, one must abandon what the writer had intended for him or her to read and understand and alternatively acknowledge the implicit in 'silence ' which it conceals in itself. This system is called the 'symptomatic reading ' , in which by governing out the construction of the statement, one uncovers the ideological constructions of the text. Althusser argues that the



writer 's sentiment is non the lone one which can be given to the text because each reader has a different background with different signifiers of political orientations and each one of these may impact the manner the novel is read. For illustration people may come from different civilizations with different traditions from those of the writer and as a effect the readings of the fresh alteration. Consequently, Althusser is against the thought of empiricistphilosophy, which is to understand the novel or text by direct scrutiny. Empiricists besides believe that intending comes from experience instead than congenital traditions and thoughts which affect the manner the novel is read. Althusser argues that the political orientation within every human being affects his manner of comprehending a novel or a work of art. Catherine Belsey, agrees with Althusser and provinces that political orientation is something indispensable which can non be discarded with a individual idea since it is steadfastly positioned inside every individual individual. She besides argues that political orientation is what makes 'concrete persons as topics '

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and therefore it affects us continuously.

Althusser argues that significance is created by the reader instead than discovered and this is done through the apprehension of the unconscious of the writer at the clip of composing the novel and by the pattern which takes topographic point when reading the text

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which 'sets to work, in a specific construction '

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. Althusser references four types of pattern which are the economic, political, ideological and theoretical. The ideological pattern takes up a novel or a text and gives it a whole new significance and this is done through the societal agencies which give it a new point of view and position. In Althusser, the ideological pattern refers to the diverse and composite ways in which a piece of art and literature 's significance is modified harmonizing to the day-to-day actions of a peculiar individual. Therefore when one states that something is 'ideological ' , it involves in the inactive imitation of the misguided beliefs about the nature of societal world. Sometimes person takes a place which may look as incoherent and conflicting, but one must understand that it might hold non been seen in this manner when the place was taken because political orientation is rich in contradictions but which at the same clip, they underpin it and give it intending.

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In the same manner Roland Barthes argues that Bourgeoisie composing can non be guiltless since one can non compose without zero prejudice in head. Barthes argues that all the written texts are in some manner or another ideologically charged. He states that in authorship, the writer is in some manner or another, ideologically tinged since when one is composing, he or she already has an political orientation which is soundless and which naturalises the attitudes of the dominant category. Barthes agrees with

Althusser by stating that the soundless political orientation is a soundless mode of passing to the reader. He developed the thought that literature is non-guiltless since it contains political orientation and hegemony because in the writer there is ever an ideological angle which affects what he writes or what he should not compose. Barthes besides argues that the political orientation is linked with political relations and faith and the author makes usage of literature as a agency of bringing forth another thought. Literature after the Second World War had to be committed and one could not compose literature in a vacuity any longer. This is seen in George Orwell's *Animal Farm* (1945) which is not merely a fable but a manner of conveying to the populace an consciousness of the category war between the in-between categories and the dominant categories. In reacting to a text by reading it, the reader is naturalizing something which may not be natural and the power of the opinion category is exerted in a manner such as it naturalises itself. Literature is hence a series of codifications which have to be understood since literature is portion of a codification and the reader encodes literature in order to do it a societal event. This theory goes manus in manus and has been developed from Saussure's theory of the signified and the form which Barthes besides takes on to explicate how literature is made up.

Roland Barthes's most influential essay in the field of literature is entitled *Death of the Author* (1968) whom he explained as the figure shaped by critical discourse in order to restrict the readings in the manner of reading a literary text.

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This essay is perceived as revolutionist in the spirit of revolution of the clip and it becomes a cardinal text which marks the alteration from Structuralism to Post-Structuralism. Barthes negotiations about and disagrees with the thought of the writer as a God since he creates the work out of nil, merely like God. He says that one can non let the writer to presume the function of God in literature but besides in art in general. Barthes is hence taking the function of the writer who imposes thoughts and beliefs on the reader and hence a bound to how the text is read. He believes in destabilizing the impression of the writer as the beginning of the text since the text exists independently off the writer and hence Barthes allows infinite for the reader. He argues that one time the writer is removed from the text the reader becomes the critic and hence the decease of the writer resuscitates the reader and his thoughts. By making this Barthes is interrupting down the hegemony of the middle class author and hence the changeless political orientation which is traveling on must be realised. In the same manner as Althusser, he argues that political orientation is ever present and one must non acquire off from it but allow it assist him or her create his ain readings. By canceling the writer the reader or the translator now, merely like the writer, has all the traditional properties of inaugural removed and is transformed in the impersonal pattern of reading. What he or she is reading can non no longer be called 'work ' but it becomes a 'text ' since the word 'work ' may bespeak the engagement of another individual in making it whilst the word 'text ' does non give a sense of individualism.

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Althusser agrees with the thought of the deconstruction of the writer by believing that the significance of a text is to be produced through a diagnostic analysis. The writer becomes a map of political orientation by interpellating the persons as topics.

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Therefore one has to wholly dehumanize the text and turn it into something which involves no human attempt in making it, therefore 'unseen problematics'.

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Therefore theoreticians like Althusser and Barthes show how ideology affects the manner of how a text is read by the reader. Both theoreticians agree that political orientation cannot be eliminated when reading a text since it is necessarily found in each person and for that ground it affects the manner literature is read otherwise by diverse individuals with different political orientations.