

Cultural Studies
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Module No.# 03

Sites

Lecture No. # 03

Time

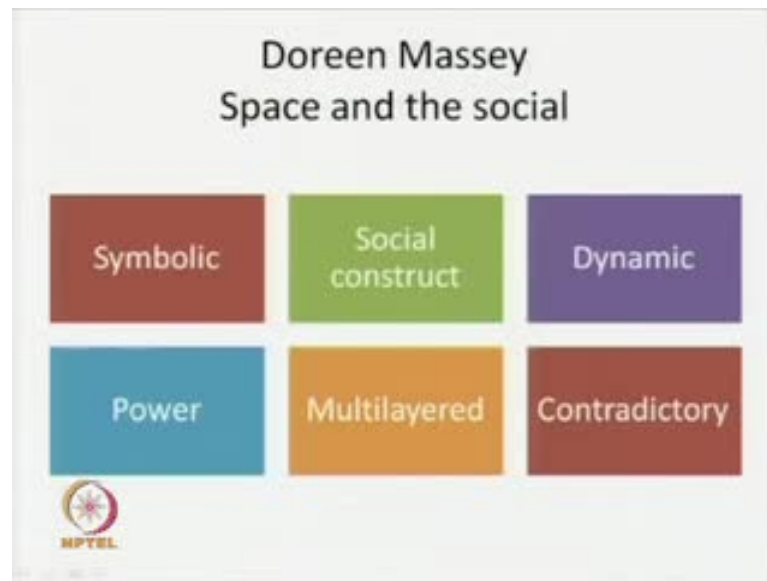
Hello, welcome once again to NPTEL, National Programme on Technology Enhanced Learning, which is a joint venture, by the Indian Institutes of Technology and the Indian Institute of Science. These lectures are for the students in engineering colleges in our country.

And, I am sure, those of you who are students of the Humanities and Social sciences would also find these lectures useful. In the engineering institutes, the Humanities and Social sciences disciplines offer elective courses. Some of them are also core courses.

And, our course, Cultural Studies is a course that I teach in, teach at IIT, Guwahati. I am Liza and we are in module 3 of Cultural Studies. We have already done 2 lectures, already discussed 2 lectures. These were to do with the body and space.

This third module is, as you know, devoted to sites, s i t e s, sites of Cultural Studies. This, I have done in a bid to, to show you, how theories and key concepts that we learned in the last 2 modules may be applied or located in various aspects of our lives.

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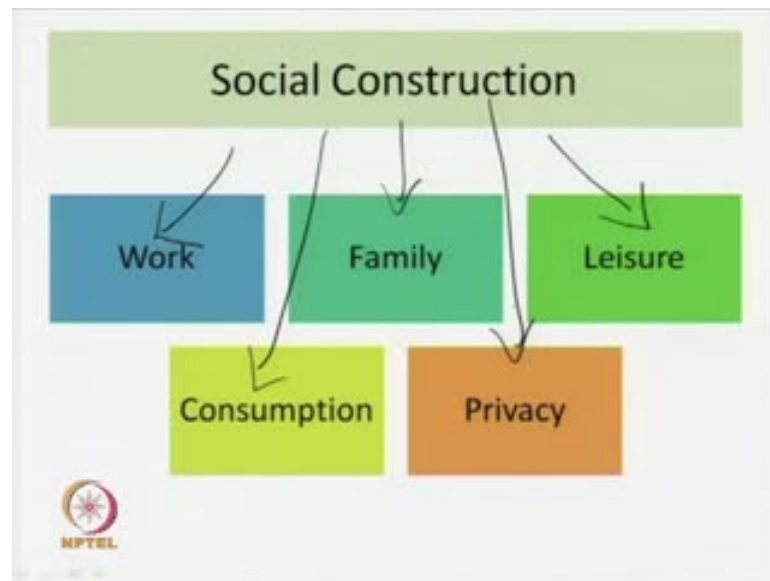


So, today's lecture is entitled Time, time as seen in Cultural Studies. As always, we do a recap of what we discussed in the last lecture. The last lecture, you would recall, was devoted to space, the way space is seen in cultural theory, in cultural studies.

And, we looked through a book by Pramod Nayar. We came upon Doreen Massey's Theorization of Space as social and we found that space is not simply geographical space or space as we understood it in, probably in, in primary school; space is deeply social.

And, if you look at these slides, space is symbolic; space is a social construct; space is dynamic; space has to do with power; space is multilayered as an entity, as, even as a concept and there are also contradictory issues relating to space.

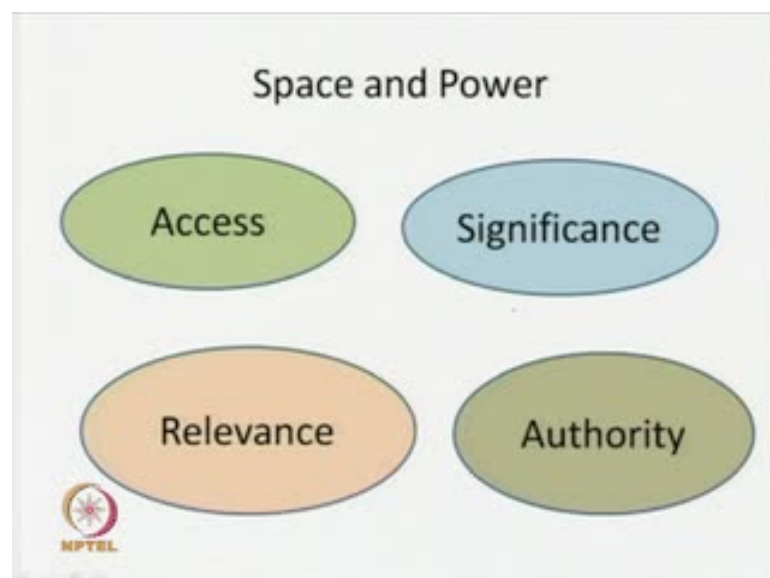
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We, you will also recall that, as a social construction, space has to do with some of the most important areas of our lives and these were, as we saw in the last, last lecture, these are work, family, leisure, consumption and also privacy, ok.

In this way, space is a social construct, because it has, has very important implications for our, various aspects of our social and cultural lives.

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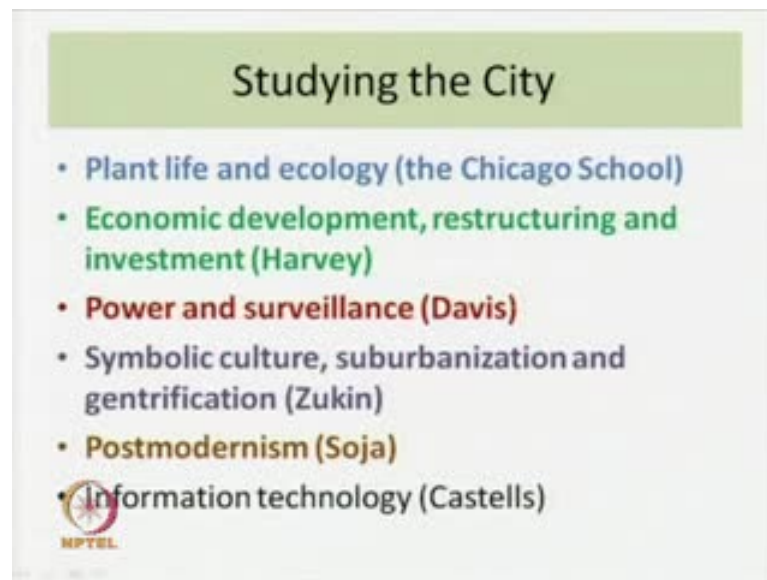
And, the next point was to do with space and power; and space and power, you will recall Michel Foucault, who had said that, history of space is at once a history of power.

So, how is power implicated in space? Power is implicated in space, according to the slide, because it has to do, space has to do with aspects of power, like access, like significance, like relevance and like authority, ok.

Who has access to space? What are the rules regarding trespassing, for instance, what is the significance, with respect to power of different spaces, different kinds of spaces and how, how are certain spaces more relevant than the others and hence imbued with more power and who has authority over certain spaces?

So, we saw in, in the last, you know, last lecture, that things like space for instance, which initially may not have been thought by many, to have to do with our living, with our ways of life, is also, another, an important site where, you know, power, politics, the social are all implicated. So, space is no longer, **you know**, all sort of neutral, neutral topographical area.

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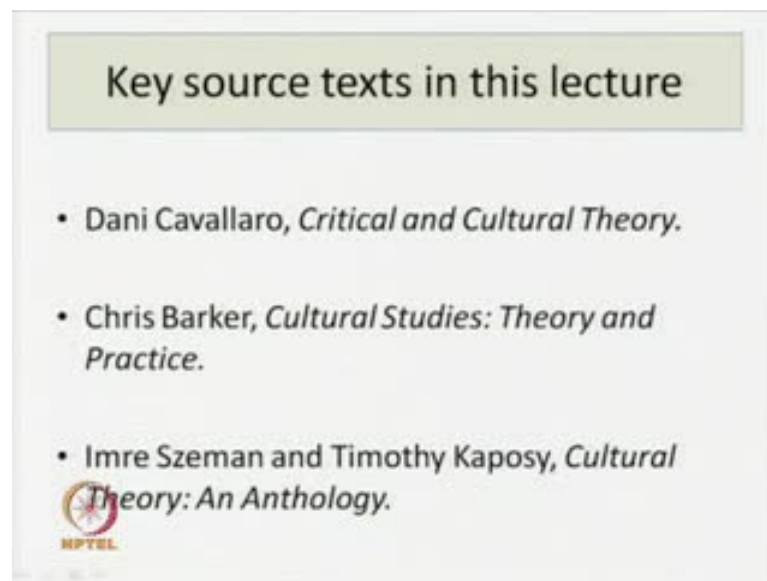
Then we also saw, very briefly, that as far as urban studies is concerned, as far as studying space in the city is concerned, there are different ways, different, even movements, philosophical movements, even different theoretical movements and many people have been working on the various aspects of space.

And, these are, for instance, the Chicago School working on Plant life and Ecology, Post- modernism and space, ok.

Then, Power and surveillance, David Harvey's for instance, the, you know, the city as a site of economic development, restructuring and investment, the city as text, may be another way of doing cultural studies, on the city.

Well, so, today's lecture is time. Time is obviously with, you know, students of engineering and the sciences, in Physics, time is something you have studied from the point of view of Physics, from the point view of, of a, of the physical sciences as it were. So, well, let us see, what cultural studies has to say about time and how time is looked at in, in cultural theory.

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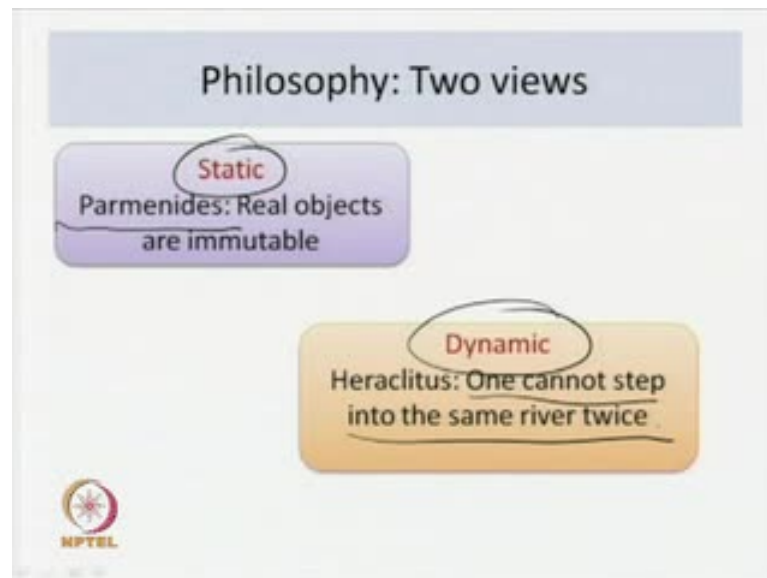


Let us look at the key texts, the source texts for this lecture, from where I will be taking several points and from where I will be also, from time to time quoting, certain very important statements by these critics and scholars. They are, these are books are *Critical and Cultural Theory* by Dani Cavallaro, *Cultural Studies, Theory and Practice*, the book you are familiar with by now, *Cultural Theory - An Anthology* by Szeman and Kaposy.

So, basically there are many of course,, there are many books, there several articles to do with time and the way it is looked at and the way it is theorized in cultural studies.

But for, you know, the fact that we do not have enough time and just within the, you know, the limits of, of one lecture we have to talk about time in cultural studies. So, I would be looking at these texts.

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Well, let us begin with Philosophy. And let us begin, you know, several, you know, years, hundreds of years ago, in Philosophy, time has or time was looked at, not as a simple given, right. Philosophers, the Greek philosophers, beginning with the Greek philosophers, a time has been problematized ever since, ok.

Now, in philosophy, let us look at this slide. There are 2 views with regard to time. One view looks at time as static, in the sense that real objects, look at Parmenides, the philosopher Parmenides, ok.

Parmenides and others held that real objects, real objects are immutable, right. Real objects have nothing to do with change, right. Real objects are always there.

Almost like the platonic forms, for instance, the forms that are universal, forms that are eternal.

So, in that sense, one school of thought looked at time as static and real objects, objects that are there forever, objects that are eternal objects, that matter, have nothing to do with change and hence they were called immutable.

The other aspect, other view is the called the dynamic view of of time, which accepts the fact with philosophers like Heraclitus, accepts the change, accepts mutability, accepts time as a flow for instance, where time is not static but, dynamic.

And this is something that, you have, I am, I am sure most of us have, you know, come across this statement, that one cannot step into the same river twice, comparing the flow of time, the flow of water.

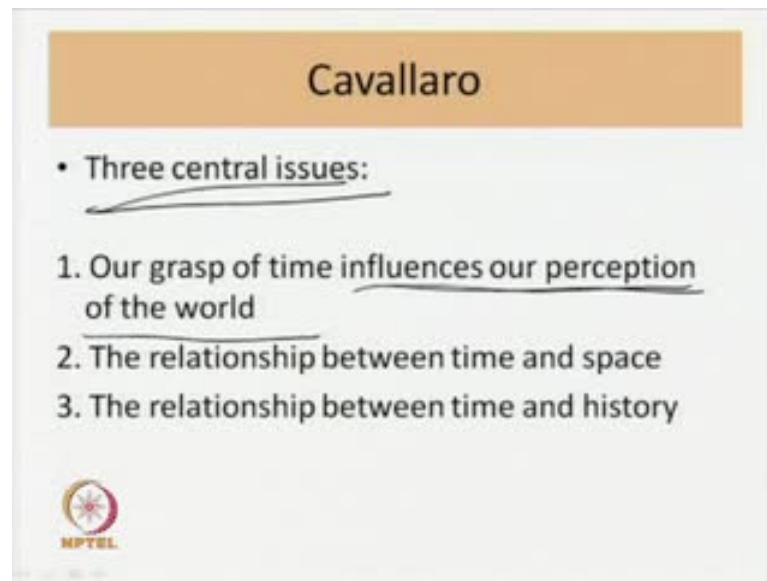
So, if you step into a river for instance, then the, you know, you step, step into with, you know, just a couple of minutes later, you are not really stepping into the same river, because of water is different, the water has flown.

So, the flow of water, like the flow of, sorry, flow of time, like the flow of, of rivers, for instance, is the dynamic notion of time.

So, what are the 2 views of time in philosophy, that we have seen, the 2 major schools of thought are those of immutability, of, where real objects have no change and the other one, is of being, time being dynamic where the time flows, for instance, the metaphor of a river for instance, ok

So, these are the 2 views of philosophy, when cultural studies problematizes, I want to, you know, state this in the beginning, when, when cultural studies problematizes time, it is not that it is doing, this has been done for the first time, since very, since very long ago, philosophers had already problematized time.

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The slide features a title 'Cavallaro' in a dark font on an orange rectangular background. Below the title, there is a bullet point '• Three central issues:' followed by a list of three numbered items. The first item is '1. Our grasp of time influences our perception of the world', the second is '2. The relationship between time and space', and the third is '3. The relationship between time and history'. At the bottom left of the slide, there is a circular logo with a red and white design and the text 'NPTEL' below it.

Now, looking at how Dani Cavallaro in his book Critical and Cultural theory, on his, you know, in his essay entitled time, he says, that there are 3, we may, we may say that there are 3 central issues when we study time, in cultural and critical theory. One may be this, that our grasp of time influences our perception of the world, meaning the way you look at time, for instance, if you consider time as static, ok, then your perception of the world would be dependent on it. If you consider time like Heraclites did, as something dynamic as, you know, as a flow, right, in that sense too, your perception of the world would differ.

This is more, more than, realistically speaking, a cultural studies question. This is more a question in philosophy.

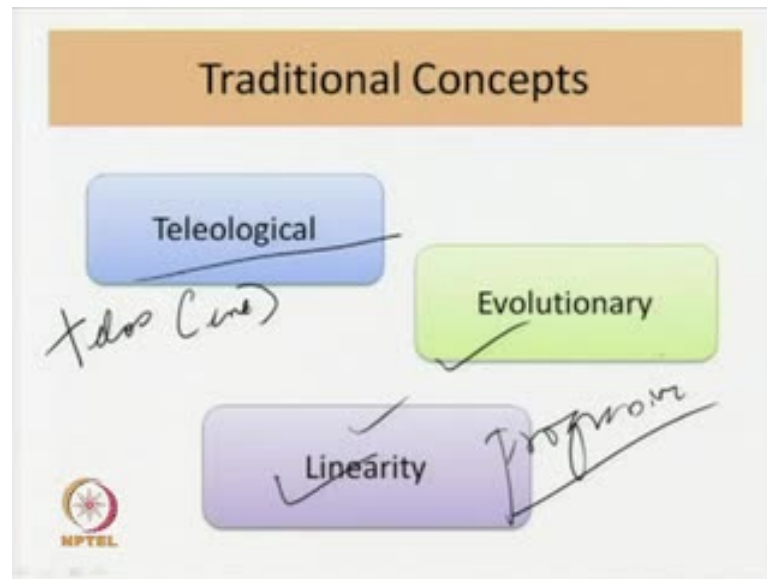
Then, the relationship between time and space is not something simply to do with physics, but, it is also a matter for exploration in cultural studies, and importantly, I would say, the relationship between time and history, right.

So, as Cavallaro says there, we can place these on the 3 broad, you know, or vertical, central issues, that is, our grasp of time, our understanding of time also determines the way we perceive the world, our perceptions of the world, the way we will understanding the world, the way we understand life, the way we understand the universe and second

the relationship between time and space and sort the relationship between time, time past time present for instance, and history, ok.

So, we would be looking at these in, in this lecture, we will be looking at time broadly through this and also from a couple of other aspects.

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Well, what was the traditional concept of time? If you ask many, many, many people, they would say that, well, they would go by the traditional concepts on views of time and they would say the time is, you know, teleological; teleological from the word teleos or having an end, right.

This view, this traditional, traditionalist view of time holds that, things are moving to, sometimes, you know, some would say a pre-distinct end, ok.

So, things unfold, time unfolds, things unfold, events unfold, even history unfolds to a certain designated end or a designated, you know, designate, there is something that to which we are all, you know, sort of life unpacks, so to speak, towards that certain end. That view is known as the teleological view, that is, with the purpose towards a certain end.

The, obviously the opposite would be a non-teleological view, where there is no given end to which we, which our lives unfold.

Also traditional concept, because also it is linear, right, is the evolutionary view of time. The, you know, particularly, if you look at the evolution of species, right. It need not be teleological, it need not be working itself towards, towards, towards the certain goal, predestined goal, preordained goal.

Nevertheless, it is seen as a history of progress, for instance, if you look at Darwinian evolutionary theorizing, you will see that, species move from, have evolved from very small, you know, organisms from the amoeba, for instance, to homosapiens.

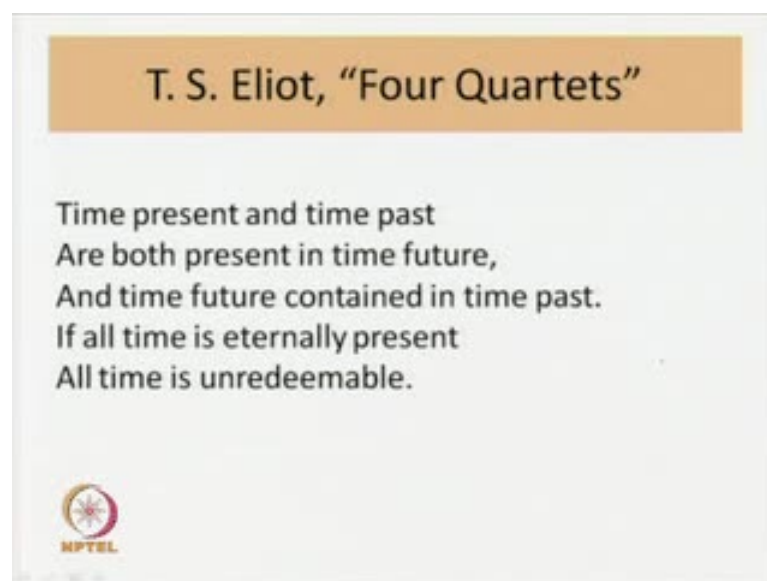
So, there is a certain linearity to it, which we have mentioned here, the linear progressive, so to speak, to do with progress, ok.

Sometimes, it may be punctuated, right, as we, we have the concept of punctuated equilibrium, from instance in the evolutionary theory.

However, the overall frame work is, we may say, a traditionalist frame work. So, the, in, in traditional concepts of time, time is teleological, time is evolutionary, time is progressive in that sense, and time is linear, ok.

So, what cultural studies does is, problematizes these and to show that, you know, one may, one may talk about something else, than this way of looking at time.

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Now, I am, being from literature, being really trained in literature, I cannot help, but, bring to your notice these 4, these 5 lines from T. S. Eliot, the poet T. S. Eliot's "Four Quartets".

This, I would, with this I would like to begin the problematization of time and let us read it, these lines are really beautiful.

Time present and time past are both present in time future and time future contained in time past.

If all time is eternally present, all time is unredeemable. Let us look at the second, time present and time past are both present in time future.


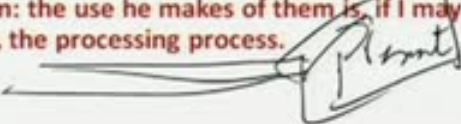
Ok, this is, this is what we call understanding time, not in a linear way of past, present and future. Our understanding of the world, understanding of ourselves, is not only in the present, right.

So, both time past and time future are also present in the present and time past and time present are also present in time future. This is a poetic way of showing that understanding of time is a little more complex than the traditional concepts.

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E. H. Carr, *What is History?*

No document can tell us more than what the author of the document thought - what he thought had happened, what he thought ought to happen or would happen, or perhaps only what he wanted others to think he thought, or even only what he himself thought he thought. None of this means anything until the historian has got to work on it and deciphered it. **The facts, whether found in documents or not, have still to be processed by the historian before he can make any use of them: the use he makes of them is, if I may put it that way, the processing process.**

A quotation from the famous historian E. H. Carr and some of you would, if, would be familiar with the text, with his very famous text, what is history, right.

So, I will just touch upon, I will come back to history again, but, just to show you, how it has, even the, the last point made by, you know, the, the 3 central issues, the last mentioned by Cavallaro, that is looking at time and history, this is what Carr has to say, say, as far as history is concerned and our understanding of time, no document, let us read from here, no document can tell us more than what the author of the document thought.

What he thought had happened, what he thought ought to happen or would happen, or perhaps, only what he wanted others to think he thought or even only what he himself thought he thought. None of these means anything, until the historian has got to work on it and deciphered it, ok.

So, like time, like the problematization of time, history too is seen, not as a given, history is seen as deeply informed by the historian, by **deeply informed by, you know, by, by the,** the person of, you know, the historian or even sometimes, may be the personality in, in the sense of, sense of the perceptions of the historian. So, like time, even history is not something that is innocent, pristine and given.

Now, the facts, whether found in documents or not, have still to be processed by the historian, before he can make any use of them, ok.

So, even if he has gleaned something from the past, the historian is at the present, ok.

And the, this presence both presence and, and this, if I may use the word presentness of the historian is, you know, the agent, that is the agency through which the past is brought to us.

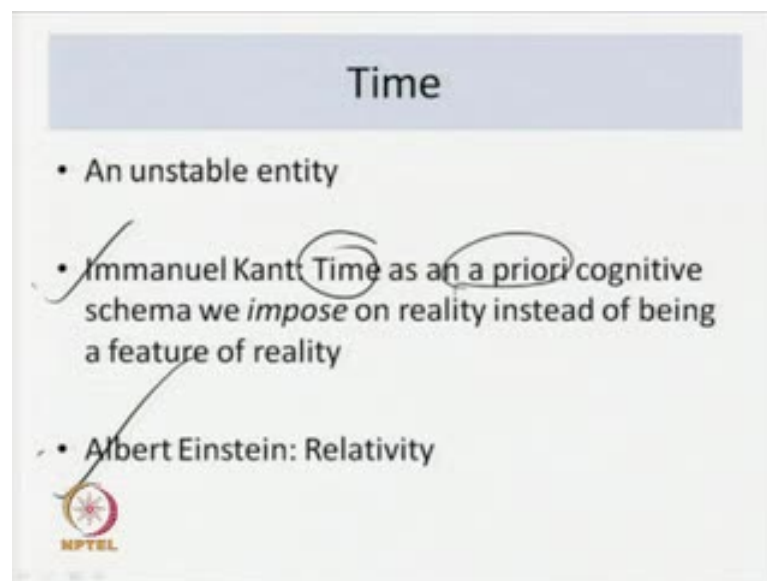
So, the past is already colored by the present. How by the present? By the fact that, the historian is in the present.

So, the facts, whether found in documents or not, have still to be processed by the historian, before he can make any use of them.

The use he makes of them is, if I may put it that way, be the processing process and this processing process, cultural studies would, you know, theories would link this with E. H. Carr 's statement, this processing process is something that happens in the present, ok.

So, this is how the present has a hold over the past. We can never know the past, in all its so called pristineness, right.

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Therefore, by now we have found, if you look at this slide, that time has by now for us become an unstable entity. This is something which we cannot grasp in a very simplistic way, something which is not stable, the, stable in the sense, it is an unstable entity, in the sense, in the sense that, it does not offer us any certainties, right.

Even time, which is taken for granted by us, particularly by the traditional concepts of teleology and linearity, for linearity for instance, ok.

So, these are no longer tenable in our understanding of, of time. For instance the German philosopher Immanuel Kant had proposed this in the eighteenth century.

He said the time as in a priori cognitive is an, is an a priori cognitive schema which we human beings impose on reality, instead of being a feature of reality, ok.

Now, it will be very difficult, I am sure, for many of you to, to accept this, but, Kant made an important distinction between reality and our cognitive apparatuses, ok.

He was certainly not the first to point this out, but, but, importantly, he showed us that, there are certain categories through which we view the world, the certain cognitive which, **which has**, which has to do with cognitive schemas, which has to do with certain ways of perceiving, our brains are of a certain kind.

So, we perceive reality with certain schemas or ways of looking, right, which are hardwired in us, in the sense that, they are a priori, a priori means they are hardwired into our cognitive system and he includes time as an a priori cognitive schema, ok.

Time therefore, as an, as an a priori cognitive schema, is an a priori cognitive schema which we impose on reality, ok.

Look, look at what Kant is saying, Kant is saying that, time is not a feature of reality, that we can grasp and we can see and we can understand, oh, this is the flow of time.

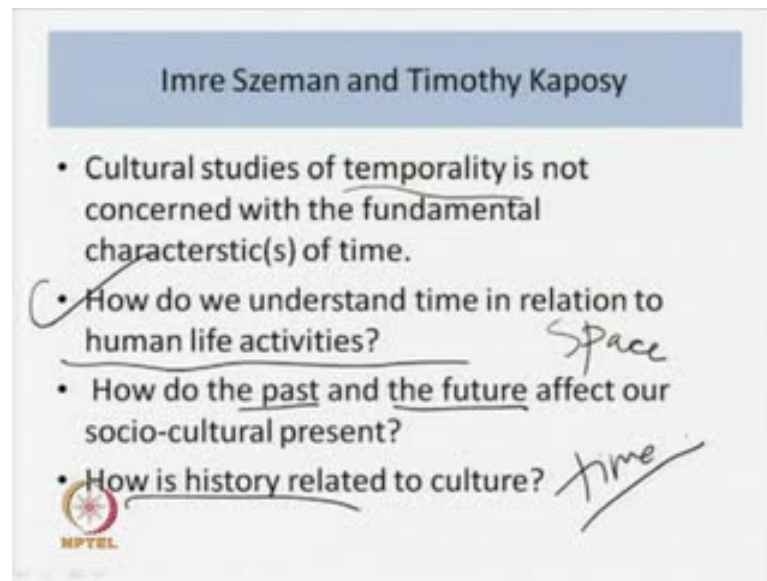
Time, he says, is that, is something in us, right, of course, we know this is also problematic. We cannot accept it, this, as it is mentioned, but, but, that time is already problematized by the eighteenth century, is, you know, is proven by statements like those given by Immanuel Kant, ok.

And of course, as students of science, you would, you would also understand very readily, the concept of relativity of time, as given by Albert Einstein.

So, we find, that they are both in philosophy and in the sciences, time has, you know, by the nineteenth, twentieth century, time has never been really what he calls, what we can call a stable concept; time is always an unstable entity, ok.

How do we grapple with time? In, so, this, this lecture is, **is is**, you know, an attempt from my side to bring to you, these various contours of the problematization of science in, in philosophy, in cultural and critical theory.

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The slide features a blue header with the text "Imre Szeman and Timothy Kaposy". Below the header is a list of four bullet points. The first bullet point is "Cultural studies of temporality is not concerned with the fundamental characteristic(s) of time." The second bullet point is "How do we understand time in relation to human life activities?" with the word "Space" written in cursive to its right. The third bullet point is "How do the past and the future affect our socio-cultural present?" with the word "time" written in cursive below it. The fourth bullet point is "How is history related to culture?" with the word "time" written in cursive below it. There is also a small logo in the bottom left corner of the slide area.

- Cultural studies of temporality is not concerned with the fundamental characteristic(s) of time.
- How do we understand time in relation to human life activities? *Space*
- How do the past and the future affect our socio-cultural present? *time*
- How is history related to culture? *time*

Now, I had mentioned this book, this Anthology by Szemann and Timothy Kaposy and they have, you know, they have spoken about time in their anthology, in the Introduction to the section on time, with specific, in specific relation to cultural studies. Now, let us, let us look at how they have articulated it in their book.

Now, according to Szemann and Kaposy, Cultural studies of temporality, that is of time, of temporality is not concerned with the fundamental characteristics of time. So, this may be a difference, a valuable, a very important difference, ok, between looking at time in, in science and looking at time in, **in in** the humanities. Whereas perhaps, the central issue in, in science could be, what is a fundamental, what are the fundamental characteristics of time, as an entity.

So, Szemann and Kaposy, since we cultural studies people have written in cultural studies, the evidence is that we are not concerned, as concerned with temporality and the, as a fundamental study of temporality as a fundamental, you know, exploration into the qualities or characteristics of time, ok.

So, if not, if that is not the case, then what, what are we going to study in cultural studies with relation to time?

They say here, the second point, the, the important question in cultural studies to do with time is this.

How do we understand time in relation to human life activities? This you will understand is similar to the question of space, right.

In the last lecture, we talked about, you know, the importance of space, in studying space in cultural studies, as how is space social, right.

How is space not simply topographical? How is space social? The similar questions are asked in cultural studies of time. For instance, how do we understand time, not as, you know, not with regard to its fundamental features which may be, you know, the aim of, the aim of the sciences, but, how do we understand time in relation to our human socio-cultural activities? That is where the issue of time comes in.

Next, the point they make is, how do the past, how do the past and the future affect our socio-cultural present, ok.

The next important thing therefore, is, how, even though we live in the present, right, even though we live in the present, how is the present affected by something that is no longer there, that is the past and something that is coming, that is the future, ok.

So, it means that, recall T. S. Eliot, the poet's lines, time present and time past are both contained in time future or time, you know, both the past and the future are always with us in the present.

So, that, seemingly, you know, seemingly correct statement or, you know, an innocent statement like I live in the present is a highly problematic one.

When I say I live in the present, I do my social activities, my cultural activities, my living in the present. It is not as simple as it looks like.

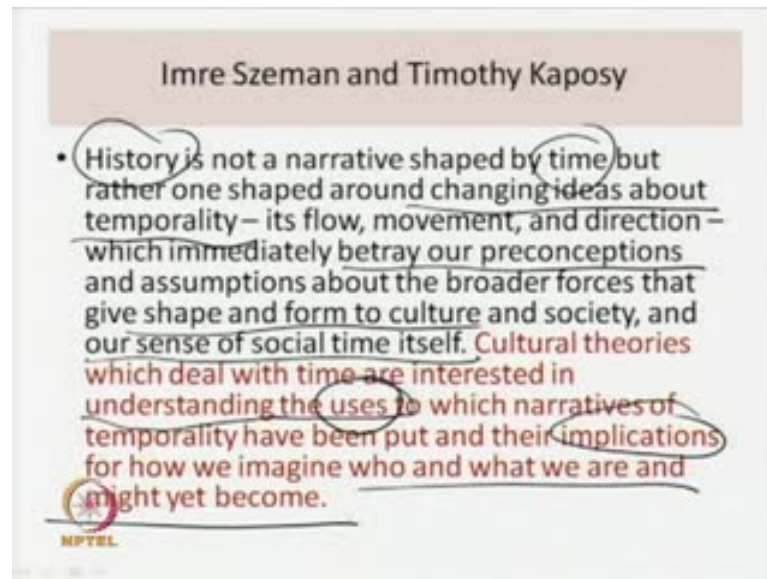
Because all our actions are affected, if not determined, by the past and by, you know, by the future. So, this is the second point in relation to time, that cultural studies is concerned with our lives.

Then finally, how is history related to culture and how is, that is, how is history related to time in culture, ok.

So, we can say with these very, you know, seminal points. I am not saying that, these are the only 3, you know, ways in which or Cavallaro or that Cavallaro's 3 central issues are the only issues. These are not, not the only issues definitely.

But, for the purposes of this lesson, it, it suffices for us to look at these questions.

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Now, to do with history and time, and the third point raised by Cavallaro. Now, I am quoting from Szemann and Kaposy and this is how they have looked or they have theorized, regard, on, on time and history.

Now, let us read this carefully. History is not a narrative shaped by time. Let us mark this, history is not a narrative shaped by time, but, rather one shaped around, this is important, changing ideas about temporality, ok.

So, we cannot say in a very simplistic way that, you know, history is of course,, a story, a narrative, right, a telling of tales, which is shaped by time. We cannot say that. It is not enough to say that, ok.

History is about changing conceptions of time. Now, history is shaped around changing ideas or changing conceptions of temporality of time, right. Its flow, let us read this, its flow, movement and direction, which immediately betray, or that is they reveal, they

betray our preconceptions and assumptions about the broader forces that give shape and form to culture and society and our sense of social time itself, ok.

So, history is conditioned then, history is conditioned, not simply by our understanding of the past, history is conditioned by our, our changing, ever changing ideas about what, what time means, what time means in the social, in fact, right.

And it betrays or it reveals our own understanding, our own preconceptions, right. Sometimes, perhaps our own biases, our own preconceptions and assumptions about, about what, about the forces that create our socio-cultural lives and give that, that is how they put it, that gives shape and form to culture and society and to our sense of social time.

Cultural theory is, now coming down particularly to cultural theories, cultural theories which deal with time are interested in what, are interested in, this let us mark this, interested in understanding the uses to which narratives of time or temporality have been put.

Coming down to the basics of cultural studies, that is our, we, we, as they have shown us, we know by now that, history is to do, not simply narrating something that is shaped by time, but, by our changing ideas about what time means or what social time means, right.

In cultural theory, what is, you could say that, this, this may, this is something to do with even historiography or the philosophy of history.

So, how is the philosophy of history then different from cultural studies? We have to really pare it down and see how these are different, right.

The philosophy of history may also consider itself with these questions, temporality, past and present, history, narration, etcetera. What we do in cultural studies is, how these changing ideas of temporality, how are conceptions of what he calls, what they call the broader forces that shape our lives, ok, how these have been, as it says here, put to use?

Who has put this to use? For, for what purposes, which is always the central question, which is always the central motive of cultural studies, ok.

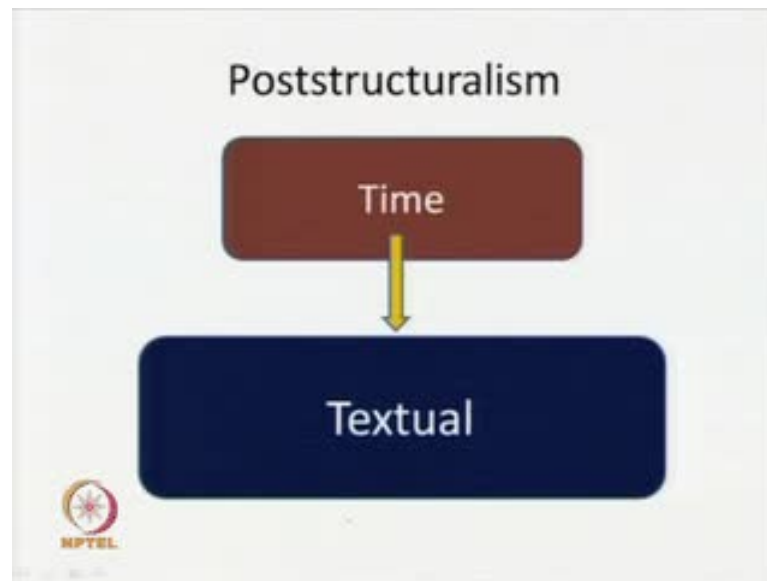
So, let us read this part again. Cultural theories which deal with time are interested in understanding the uses to which narratives of temporality have been put and their implications, both their uses and their implications, for how we imagine, who and what we are and might yet become. I think this is a huge question, ok.

So, if time, history, the narration of history is something that can be used by certain agencies, these have huge implications for us because, they will also determine, that is, that is, they will also affect the way we perceive ourselves, the way, for instance, here the way we imagine who we are, right.

Even questions of our, you know, of our, ultimately who we are, why we are here, for instance, why you are on this planet, for instance, what our identity is, what is, what we call the ultimate goal is, if there is one, ok, these are white or, or who we, we are, how do we define ourselves and what we may become, that is, to what goals should we aspire or, you know, all these are not simply issues of, say identity and subjectivity, understand these. Identity and subjective are also colored by the way people have, people have, you know, put to use the changing conceptions of time, ok.

That is why time is such an important concept. Time is an important site, location, of, of, in philosophy, in the philosophy of history, for instance and in, in cultural study. So, we would do well to keep this, the political aspect of time and its uses or understandings of time.

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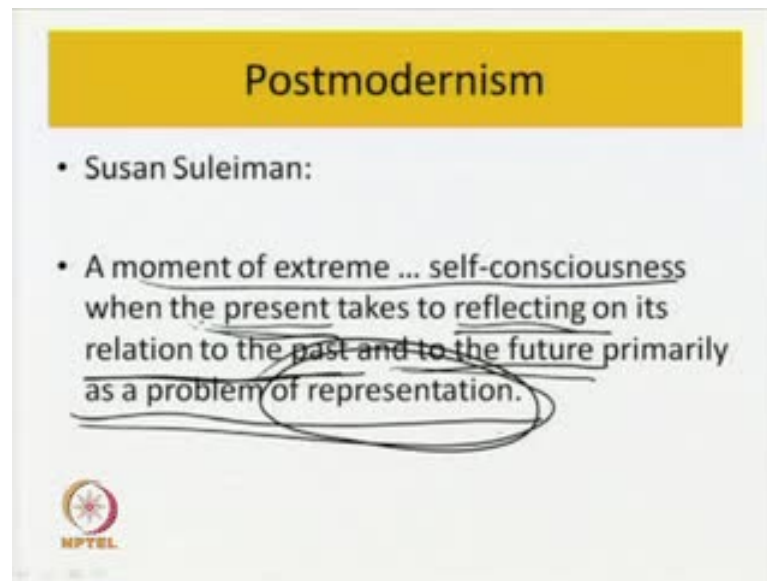
Another way in which cultural studies has seen time, is also, time as textual. Time, not as a part of simply, a part of reality, but, time, also as something that comes to us through language, time which has its own discourses, right.

And in that sense, time is textual, but, because, through language, we talk about time, we make demarcations, right.

So, in that sense, time is not, you know, so to speak, a real entity. We remember Immanuel Kant had problematized this whole concept of time being real, being a real entity, by saying the time is there as a cognitive schema, a priori cognitive schema in our, our mind, so to speak.


Poststructuralism does the same thing, but, by insisting not on, on it as a cognitive schema, but, by insisting that, time is a matter of language, is a matter of discourse and ultimately, time is also textual. So, you see, how these various, you know, schools of thought have rendered time a problem.

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Postmodernism

- Susan Suleiman:
- A moment of extreme ... self-consciousness when the present takes to reflecting on its relation to the past and to the future primarily as a problem of representation.

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Now, quickly quoting from Susan Suleiman, in, you know, a theorizing of time in postmodernism.

She says that, in a postmodernism, as you know, as a movement or as a school of thought, is one that is conditioned or determined or, or has as its characteristic, what she calls extreme self-consciousness, as if you are, it is kind of an implosion, so to speak, an implosion on to itself, ok.

As if, you know, culture thinking knowledge being very self-conscious about itself, self-reflexive, looking inward into itself, ok.

So, she calls postmodernism a moment, right, a moment in the sense that, a time in, in the history of human thinking, on the history of ideas, calls it a moment of extreme self-consciousness.

Let us look at this slide here. A moment of extreme self-consciousness, about what? When the present, look at this, when the present takes to reflecting on its relation to the past, right.

So, here is a scholar talking about postmodernism in terms of time.

So, what is this moment or time of postmodernism? It is a time in the history of ideas and the history of, of knowledge, ok.

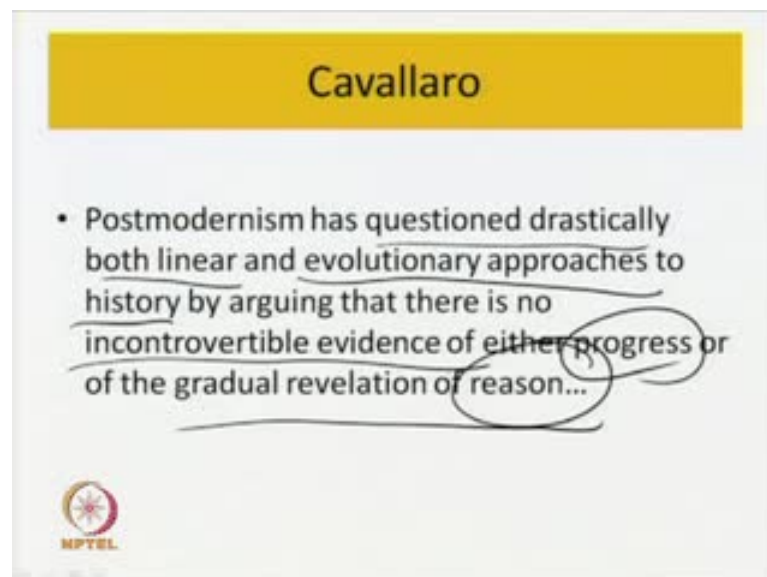
Where there is an extreme self-consciousness about, about time, when we, in our present, reflect on our relationship to the past and on our relationship, as she says here, to the future, primarily as a problem of representation, ok.

You remember, we, we devoted 2 lectures, 2 lessons to, to representation and she brings in postmodernism and cultural studies very beautifully here, ok.

So, postmodernism is defined as a problem of, you know, looking at the problem of representation, right and looking at time and its relation to the present and of us in time, to the present and to the, to the, sorry, to the past and to the future, as a problem of representation.

Therefore, it is seen, time is seen as a problem of representation, in the same way, much in the same way as, the body is seen as a problem of representation, as space is seen as a problem of representation, ok.

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So, also, Cavallaro also has to comment, has made this comment on postmodernism in his text.

Now, let us see how Cavallaro has articulated this. He says postmodernism has questioned drastically, let us look at this, questioned drastically both linear and evolutionary approaches to history, which is, I said was a traditionalist approach to history, ok.

Postmodernism is the school of thought which questions linearity. It questions the evolutionary progressive sort of, you know, human, as human progress as hurtling, so to speak, to, to a desired end, designated end, ok.

This is something that has been, this linear narrative of time is something that has been, as he says, Cavallaro says, drastically conditioned or, sorry, drastically questioned by postmodernism.

Now, let us look at this again. How, by arguing that, there is no incontrovertible evidence of either progress or of the gradual revelation of reason, this is important. In enlightenment thinking, in enlightenment thinking, we, we know that the 2 most important characteristics or say the 2 most important tropes or 2 most important frameworks, were those of, were those of progress and those of reason. Reason was paramount in enlightenment thinking. The march of history, so to speak, was seen as the grand narrative of the march, you know, from a lesser, you know, way of being to a more, through a series of progresses, so to speak, that human life, human history, human civilization makes, so that, we see the march of history as, you know, a linear progress..

So, postmodernism by problematizing and as we saw in Suleiman's case, for instance, Susan Suleiman's case, that, the whole idea of history, past, present, future has been rendered into a problem of representation. Here also, as Cavallaro says, the whole idea of reason, of gradual revelation of reason from époque to époque, reason is going to, you know, going to get better and better or there is going to be progress, ok.

History has also shown us that, human civilization has not been so, right, that there were, you know, there were periods of a great reason, followed by times of great unreason, of many happenings in history, which have nothing to do with the unfolding, gradual unfolding of a progressive reason, so to speak, ok.

So, you see, these are central questions and I will say these are, these are highly problematic areas, you know.

So, the way, as again mentioned by, by, in one of the slides a while ago, also, if you are a person who has more or less a teleological understanding of human life, of human history, of time, ok, then your perception about, not just time, your perception about yourself, your perception about others would be colored, so to speak, or rather would be determined by that sort of an understanding, ok.

So, every action that you perform or everything thing, you know, that happens in, in, you know, has happened in the past or is happening in, in present or will or will for that matter, will happen in the future, you will see these as having a reason, having a purpose behind it, if you are, so to speak, a teleologist.

If you are not a teleologist, if you are, you know, basically belong to the framework of postmodernism, then you are going to a - see all these things to do with time, progress, reason, everything as simply a matter of representation, of representing ourselves or representing the universe as a matter, also, of discourse, of talking about these things, of talking about time, past, present, history, narrative, etcetera.

Ok and, and also secondly, you are not going to be a linearist, so to speak, and you are not going to see our lives as informed as history, informed as a gradually, you know, gradual process, where reason gets better and better with, where progress is linear and gets better and better, ok.

So, the, I feel among all these topics, you know, to do with cultural studies, the question of time, as dealt with in cultural studies, there is no doubt that, the ultimate question is, who has put it to use, you know, to what use, the, our understandings of time.

But I also feel that, this is an area which is closest to philosophy, right, that is why, some of the cases you find, that I have also referred to, our philosophers have talked about time.

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The slide features a blue header with the name 'Linda Hutcheon'. Below it, a bullet point asks: 'How can the present know the past it tells?'. The word 'know' is circled in black. The text continues: 'We constantly narrate the past, but what are the conditions of the knowledge implied by that totalizing act of narration? ... Do we know the past only through the present? Or is it a matter of only being able to understand the present through the past?'. A handwritten line underlines the entire paragraph. In the bottom left corner, there is a logo for NPTEL.

Again, another scholar Linda Hutcheon, who talks about the politics of postmodernism. Now, let us read what Hutcheon has to say, ok.

Now, this is a question, an important question she asks, how can the present know the past that it tells?

So, if you are writing in the present about the past, now in the first place, how can you know everything about the past, it seems to be a very simple question, but, the point is, how does, she says, how does the present, you know, know the past that it tells?

If you talk about the past, you are talking about it from the present, ok.

Then she says, we constantly narrate the past, but, what are the conditions, this is an important word, what are the conditions of the knowledge implied by this, what she calls totalizing act of narration, ok.

We constantly narrate the past history, constantly, so to, so to speak, says that it recreates the past, that you can know the past, even if we are in the present.

This act, this act of narrating the past from the present, she calls it a totalizing act of narration with all the shades of, you know, meaning that totalizing can have including, I would say, its terrenes aspect, ok.

So, this act of narration from the present about the past is a difficult one. It is a problematic one, why? Because, simply because, it is an act of narration, where we think that, the historian or the person who is writing about the past will give us the final verdict about the past, which she calls a totalizing act of narration, ok.

So, this totalizing act of narrating the past is, in fact an illusion, where this whole attempt to show that one knows the past is at once, you know, problematized by the fact. This is a first, in fact this is a first question.

How can the present know, how can the present know the past it tells. Then, further, she says, do we know the past only through the present? This is a question we should ourselves, questions that historian should ask themselves.

Do we know the past only through the present or is it a matter of only being able to understand the present through the past. Then look at her, how beautifully said. Again echoes of T. S. Eliot's poetry or the, you know, the, the poem that we saw, the extract from the poem, ok.

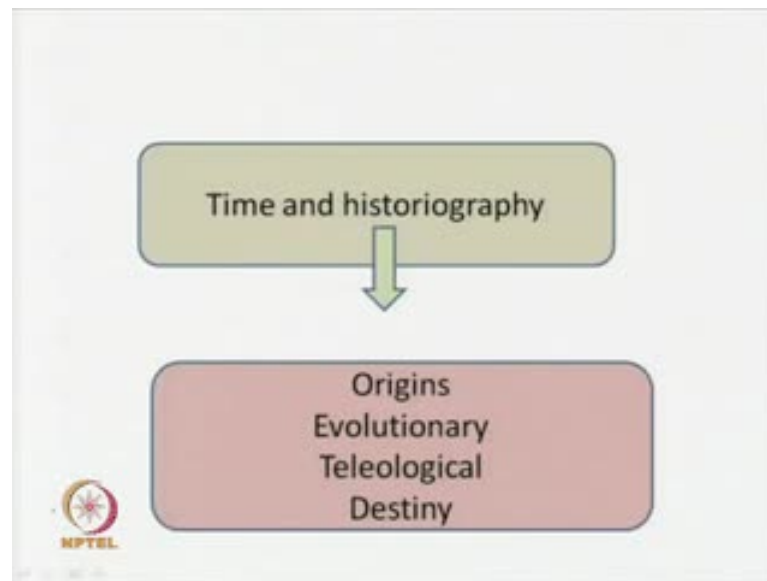
What should we say, is it that we know the past only through the present, right. Is it not also a fact that, we know the present only through our past.

So, I hope you can understand how beautifully Hutcheon has put it here, that the present is again not, not something, you know, it is an illusion to saying that, you know, all the power of narration standing in the, some, some sort of a vantage point of the present.

The present is not a vantage point; the present is not a privilege point; the present, from which the historian narrates the past, the person narrates a past, it is not a privilege moment. Why, because the present is also known or understood in terms of the past, ok.

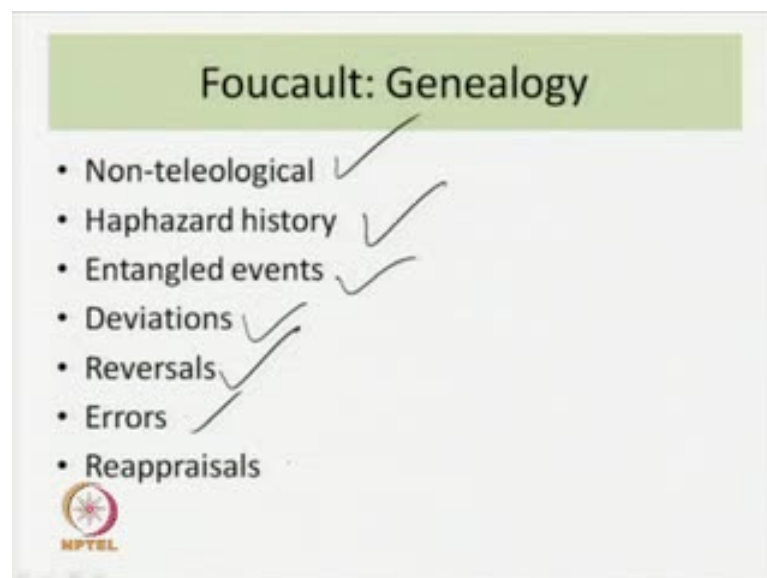
So, this conflating, we say the conflating of the present, the past, the future, into an, a sort of ambiguity, ambivalence, where you cannot, you know, kind of cannot pare it down into, this is past, this is present, this is future, all this is, has been, you know, the contribution from the school of thought of this movement, known as postmodernism.

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Therefore, time and historiography, historiography is the, that is the writing of history, time and historiography, simply put, historiography, if graphos is writing, then historiography is a writing of history, so, or also history writing about itself, if you, if you will. Time and historiography have, have usually been looked through the lenses of the framework of origins, ok, through an originary framework, evolution through teleology and through destiny. So, this is something that has been, has been almost discarded today, right.

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Then, we will end with Michel Foucault again. Foucault as, you know, has been constantly with us in our lessons in cultural studies.

Foucault offered another way of looking at history. He says that, instead of the teleological approach, he offered what is called the genealogical approach, so, where the, where the, you know, the, you know, the very unproblematic, linear way of progress is now replaced by, what he says is the genealogical approach.

And what are, quickly, what are the, we do not have time to look at it in detail, but, quickly, the characteristics of the genealogical method are very different, are almost opposite to those of the teleological approach.

Now, he says that, this way of looking at history is certainly non-teleological, it is haphazard history, history that does not have a long, you know, an, an, a non-punctuated way of looking at, you know, progress, events are entangled; they need not have any direct, easy causality about them, as we understand history or we have been taught history in our schools; then there are deviations, there are reversals, errors and reappraisals.

So, it may seem to be a very chaotic way of looking at history. Nevertheless, Foucault would say that, this is the real thing, ok.

All our constructions of, of, you know, of, of, in an ordered way of looking at history is an illusion; the reality is that it is always chaotic and we, it is only us, only we who, who imposed a sort of clean, say, clean narrative on history.

So, these are non-teleological, haphazard and entangled, with no pure causality, so to speak, ok.

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Foucault

- The purpose of history, guided by genealogy, is not to discover the roots of our identity, but to commit itself to its dissipation. It does not seek to define our unique threshold of emergence, the homeland to which metaphysicians promise a return; it seeks to make visible all of those discontinuities that cross us.

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So, therefore, very quickly, Foucault says the purpose of history guided by genealogy is not to discover the roots of our identity, even the roots, question of roots is very problematic, but, to commit itself to its dissipation. It does not seek to define our unique threshold of emergence, the homeland, to which metaphysicians promise a return; it seeks to make visible the, all of those discontinuities that cross us, ok.

So, history is all about time, is about discontinuities and not very easily related, related causes and their results right.

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Hayden White

History

Randomness

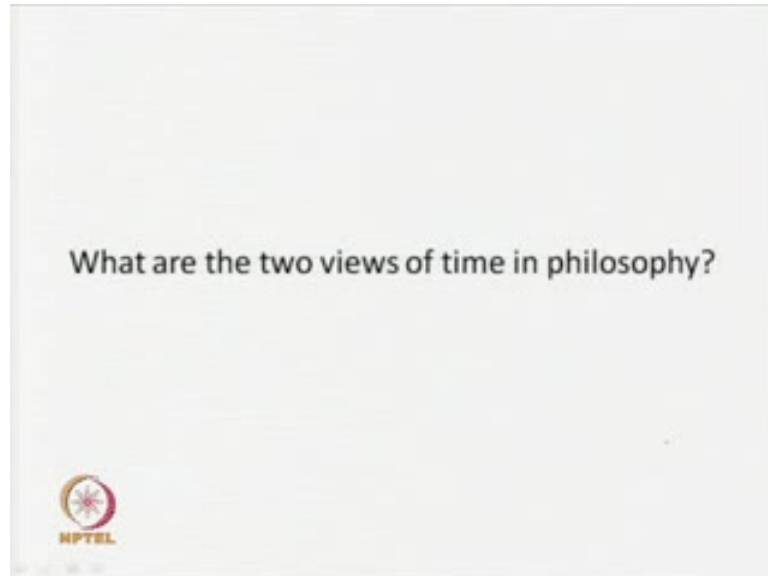
Non-idealized

Discontinuous

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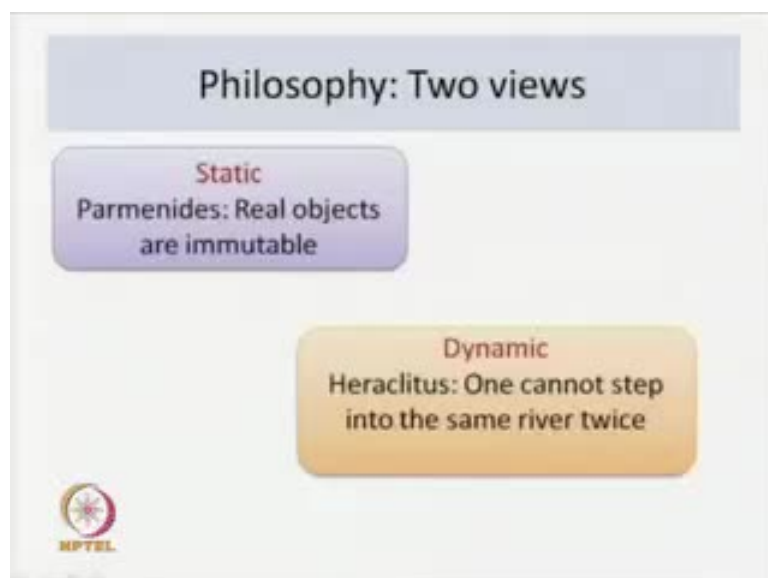
So, Hayden White is another, you know, if you want to do further studies, he is another scholar, who has looked at history similarly, in terms of randomness, as something that is non-idealized and discontinuous, right.

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Let us look quickly at some of, you know, the questions that we may formulate here, right. For instance, if I, if you get a question like, what are the 2 views of time in philosophy, not just in cultural studies? The 2 views of time you saw are, may be broadly defined as the static view and the dynamic view.

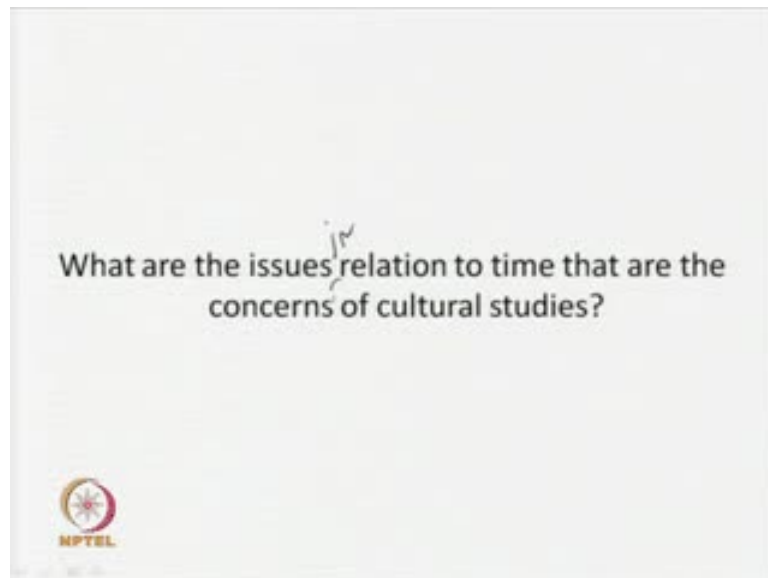
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The static view holds with philosophers like Parmenides, that real objects are immutable, you know, time in, **in, in, in** a certain realm, things do not change.

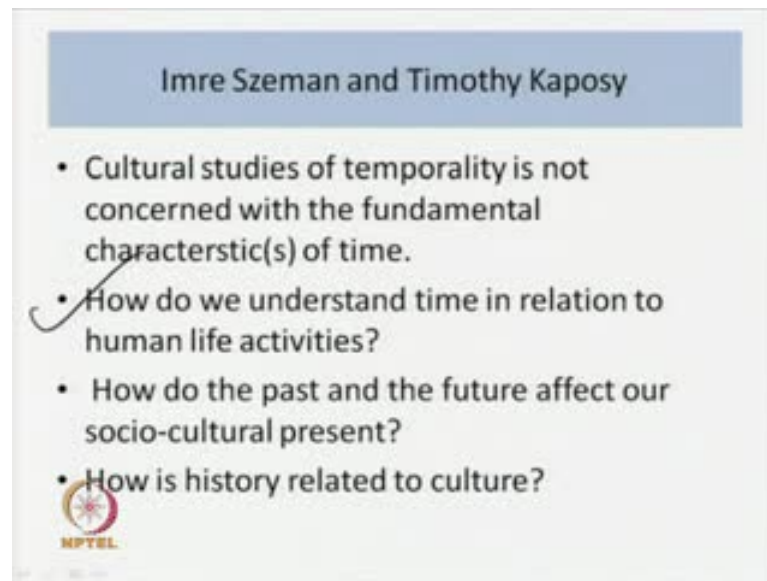
What you call real objects, do not change, right. On the other hand, with Heraclitus, we also can look at, philosophy has looked at time as something dynamic, in which the famous statement we have seen, the, that one cannot step into the same river twice, that time is always flowing and time is always dynamic.

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Next, what are the issues in, should be in here, in relation to time that are the concerns of cultural studies? So, we talk generally about philosophy. So, what exactly is the point at which cultural studies is going to come in?

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Imre Szeman and Timothy Kaposy

- Cultural studies of temporality is not concerned with the fundamental characteristic(s) of time.
- How do we understand time in relation to human life activities?
- How do the past and the future affect our socio-cultural present?
- How is history related to culture?

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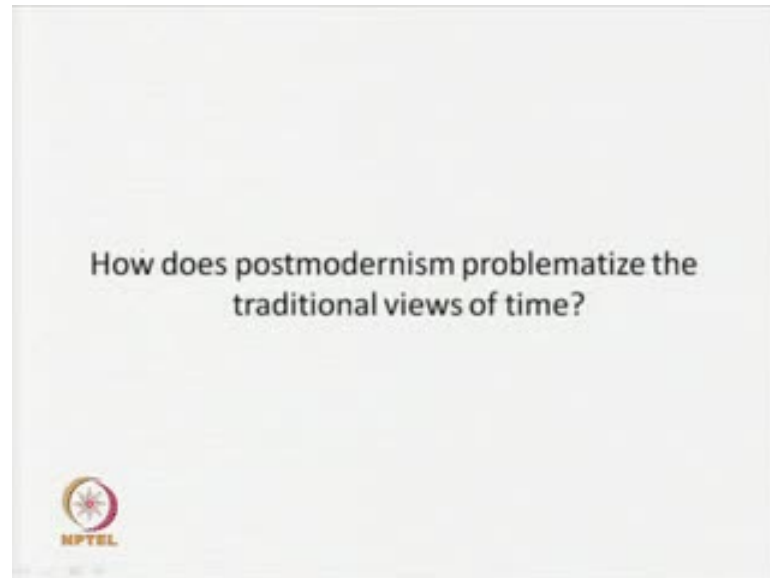
Now, the most important here is, this point, how do we understand time in relation to human activities and not questions like, you know, cultural studies does not deal with questions like, what are the fundamental features of time, which is something that the physicists may study.

How is time social, how is, you know, time, what, what is the role of time in our, our understanding of time, of the, of the past, of the present and of the future? What implications does, does our understanding of such things of time past, present and future of history have?

How does it bear upon us in our human activity? That is the most important question, followed by this important corollary, which is, and how have these various understandings been put to political use by people, by different agencies? Ok.

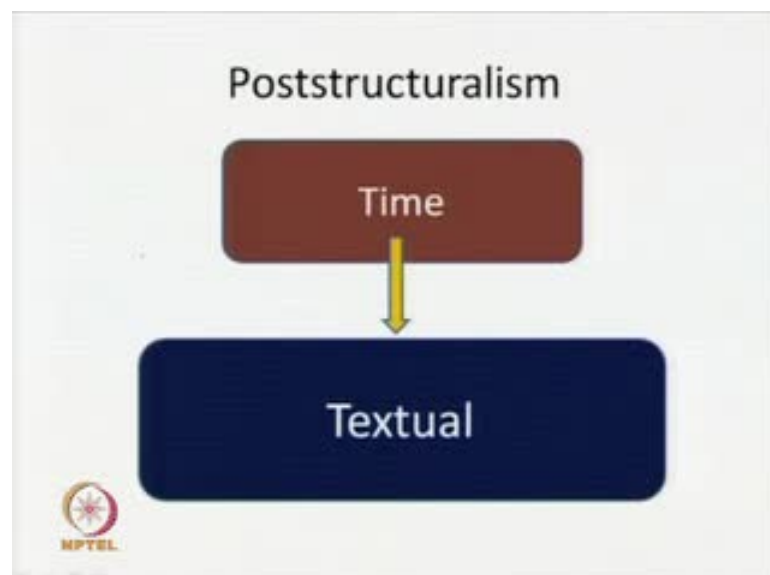
So, how are we asked to sort of subscribe to a certain view of time, because that certain view of time is going to determine our future actions? So, these, these are the particular questions to raise, in regard to time, by cultural studies?

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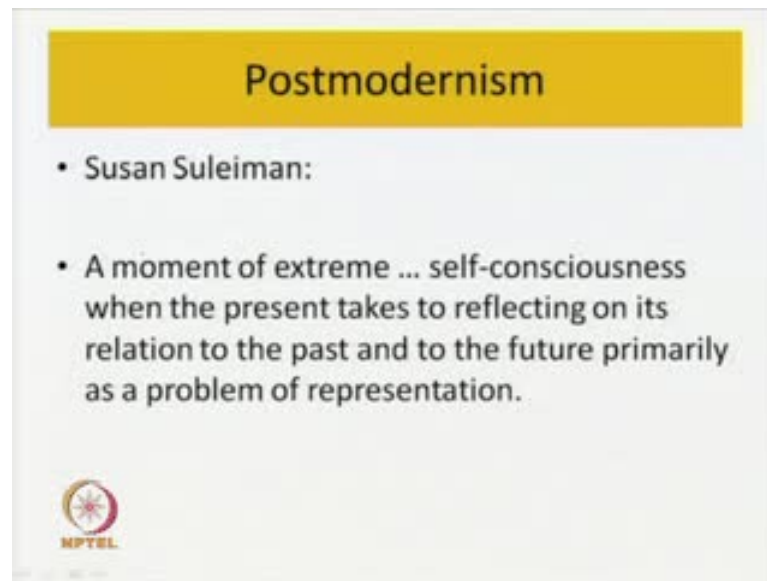
Then, how does postmodernism problematize the traditional views of time? Postmodernism is, as we saw, makes very radical, raises some radical questions to do with time, especially, you know, dismissing the, dismissing the traditionalist views of time as teleological, time as a linear, as progressive, ok.

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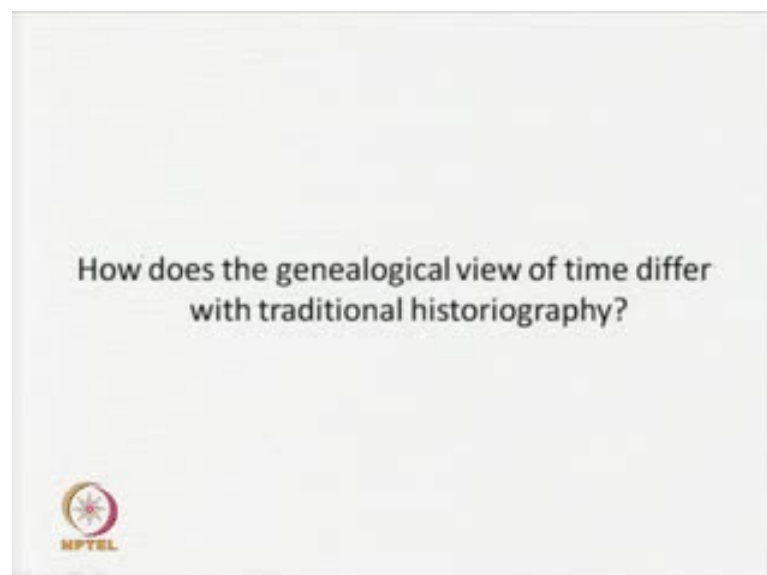
It also looks at time as textual, time as a matter of discourse and not as time, as in reality, by the time it comes through our cultural lives, time becomes a matter of discourse and time becomes textual, ok.

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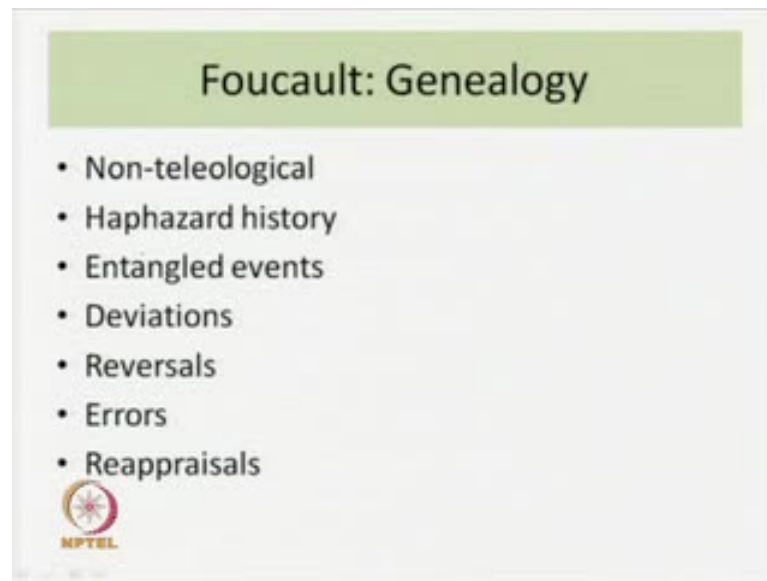
And also, we saw in postmodernism, there is a, following Susan Suleiman, there is a, there is a heightened self-consciousness regarding the, the, the past and the present and the future and the relationship between them and what it has to do with, you know, how it is a problem of representation of these things.

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Then finally, how does the genealogical view of time, with regard to traditional, differ with regard to traditional historiography, that is, or rather, the teleological school, as given to us by Michel Foucault?

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And Finally, we end with this today. Michel Foucault gave us the genealogical view in distinction to the teleological view and where, you know, it, where we find that things are almost the opposite of the teleological view, where things are not ordinary, origins, matter of origins, roots do not matter, ok.

It is an avowal and understanding of history, of time as random, as filled with errors, as it says here with deviations. The writing of history should also be characterized by this realization of our fact that history is non-teleological. There are haphazard events, where causality of events is highly problematic and, you know, highly over determined, so to speak, highly over determined, and there are events that are entangled, events, that you, they are so entangled, where time, again time present and time future and time past are so entangled, that you cannot really break it up and unpack them to, you know, to make it a very convenient beautiful, sweet story of progress, ok.

So, we will end here and I am going to link this in, in a time, in my next lecture, there are a couple of slides which I left out. I will carry them over to the next lecture, because the next lecture is to do with the idea of development in cultural studies, ok.

Where time will also, will begin with an understanding of time, history and development, as looked at from the cultural studies point of view, where cultural is paramount, you know, it is a reference point as far as development is concerned.

So, I hope, you know, I have at least been able to make you begin to think about, you know, how difficult it is to talk about time and to make you understand that it is perhaps, you know, it is perhaps time for us, it is time for us to do away with old, traditional concepts of time as being linear and unfolding a reason, unfolds in a better way, époque after époque.

And to, at least to understand, to appreciate the fact that time may be, as far as it has implications for our social, social lives, as how we live out our lives, our cultural lives of, you know, this is fraught with so many questions, that is, we should begin to at least think carefully about what idea of time we consume, what idea of time we adopt, why, because as was mentioned here in this lesson, it has, it also determines the way we look at ourselves and our perceptions about the others and the universe.

Thank you so much.