

Literary Criticism (From Plato to Leavis)
Dr. Merin Simi Raj
Department of Humanities and Social Science
Indian Institute of Technology Madras
FR Leavis

(Refer Slide Time: 00:38)

- Editor of *Scrutiny* (1932-53)
- *New Bearings in English Poetry: A Study of the Contemporary Situation* [1932]
- *Revaluation: Tradition and Development in English Poetry* [1936]
- *The Great Tradition* [1948];
- *D. H. Lawrence: Novelist* [1955];
- *"Anna Karenina," and Other Essays* [1968]
- *The Common Pursuit* [1952]
- *Education and the University: A Sketch for an "English School"* [1943];
- *Literature in Our Time and the University* [1969; based on the Clark Lectures of 1965]
- *The Living Principle: "English" as a Discipline of Thought* [1975].



Welcome for a session on FR Leavis. Today we will look at some of his works and the concepts he had introduced. FR Leavis is a critic known for his firm standards and moralism and he is one of the founding editors of a quarterly journal of criticism called ‘Scrutiny’. And the other editor was Queenie Dorothy Roth who later became his wife. His early critical interest was in poetry and some of his works are *New Bearings in English Poetry: A Study of the Contemporary Situation*, *Revaluation: Tradition and Development in English Poetry*.

His later interests shifted towards novels and some of his works are, *The Great Tradition* of 1948, *D.H. Lawrence: Novelist*, *“Anna Karenina” and Other Essays*. His preoccupation with literary criticism is constantly seen throughout his works and spanning from the 1950s to 1970s, some of the most common ones are, *The Common Pursuit*, *Education and the University*, *Literature in Our Time and the University*, *The Living Principle: “English” as a Discipline of Thought*.

(Refer Slide Time: 01:40)



According to FR Leavis:

- Literary studies must be read as a response to the moment of history
- It should restore coherence to contemporary life
- Literary studies must bear on socio-political issues and the conduct of cultural life



Leavis is seen as a successor to Mathew Arnold because he also views literary studies as a form of criticism of life, he believes, can pierce through dominant ideologies. And according to him, the field of literary studies allows the mechanical age of life to redeem itself. FR Leavis and his concepts or his theories must be seen in the context of the 20th century. And for FR Leavis the 20th century world was purposeless and aimless because World War I had just happened and it had destroyed almost any semblance of the old Victorian consciousness of England. Organized religion has gone into decline and that is seen even during Arnold's days. And therefore religion failed to offer any coherent explanation for the disruptions of the war. There was a constant pursuit of pleasure or hedonism in the 1920s.

And this search is supposed to illustrate the emptiness of modern life; and it is also a period where there was loss of faith in any codes of regulation, especially from religions. Therefore, FR Leavis's vision of literary studies must be read as a response to this moment in history. It was an attempt to counter the forces of popular literature and middlebrow culture. It was also to restore the coherence of contemporary life. Leavis propagated literary studies as a way of understanding the evolution of modern life and all its complexity. The holder of a literary degree in 1920s and 30s became most fit for bearing the high offices. In the late 1930s, English became the only subject worth studying. And English as a subject became a supremely civilizing pursuit and it gave the spiritual essence for social formation, as understood by FR Leavis.

(Refer Slide Time: 03:49)



• What kind of literature needs attention especially at the book society level?

' Novel ' now covers so many non-comparable pieces of fiction

- (a) the novel by a serious artist which succeeds (or does not) as a work of art,
- (b) the novel—e.g. The Sound and the Fury, The Waves— which is merely the work of a practised author doing technical stunts,
- (c) the low-level best-seller,
- (d) the novel which answers to the book-societies' conception of Literature--- Needs the **most critical attention** as it imposes an idea of **what constitutes an important novel**



Another important note to remember is that Leavis was always wrongly categorized in the field of practical criticism which is also a product of the 20th century. However, it emphasized on close reading and on discovering how a work of literature was self-contained and functioned as a self-referential, aesthetic object. And it is always about the words on the page. However, according to Leavis, the aim of the literary scholar is to bring his research to bear on the social political issues and the conduct of cultural life. Although he looks at some of the aspects of new criticism and practical criticism, he is not by himself a practical critical theorist. And just like Mathew Arnold, FR Leavis also believed in touchstones that determine the high seriousness in literary texts.

For Mathew Arnold, having a touchstone to compare the text made it possible to alter the consciousness of the Victorians and also set standards of quality. But for Leavis, the standards are formed in comparison of works of the age. And Leavis also reevaluated the standard practice in the course of English literature where all literature and texts of a century were studied, regardless of the all their tendencies. Instead, he argued for a denser canon of works that argued properly with essential social cultural issues that reflected the society of that time. For him, literary figures who are more interested in form than the content, more interested in the beauty of the language rather than the ideological uses of the text or of the content in the text, were less important.

(Refer Slide Time: 05:47)



• *The mellifluous Tennyson was not to be preferred to the harsh, difficult Hopkins. The clever self-referentiality and aestheticism of Joyce ranked far below the prophetic visions and cultural radicalism of D. H. Lawrence. The recherche medievalism of Spenser and the idiosyncratic religiosity of Milton devalued them beneath Donne and Marvell.*
(Richter, 2007)

• Great English Novelists:
Jane Austen, George Eliot, Henry James, Joseph Conrad



For example, one of the critics of FR Leavis Richter (in a very recent publication in 2007) gave an example of how he graded the authors in all his works. “The mellifluous Tennyson was not to be preferred to the harsh, difficult Hopkins. The clever referentiality and aestheticism of Joyce ranked far below the prophetic visions and cultural radicalism of D.H. Lawrence. The recherche medievalism of Spenser and the idiosyncratic religiosity of Milton, devalued them beneath Donne and Marvell.” We also will see later how D.H. Lawrence was placed in a higher standard or a higher level than James Joyce who is very celebrated in their time. And some of the works I am using for this presentation by FR Leavis is *The Great Tradition* and two other articles from his journal called *Scrutiny* which are ‘Literary Mind’ and ‘Literature and Society’.

In *The Great Tradition* he says that the great English novelists are only Jane Austin, George Eliot, Henry James and Joseph Conrad. In a similar way, in his earlier works, he pronounced that Milton is negligible; and he dismissed the Romantics. And he also held that there is no poet we need to really bother about except for Hopkins and TS Eliot. He also says, in one of his works, that the only way to escape misinterpretation is never to commit oneself to any critical judgment. The only way to escape misrepresentation is never the commit oneself to any critical judgment that makes an impact. That is never to say anything. However, the most profitable discussion takes place only when one is as clear as possible with oneself; and what he sees and what he wants to judge, or any critique in this sense. And one must establish the essential discriminations in the field of interest.

He also says, the field of fiction is so large that there are insidious temptations to complacent confusions of judgments and to critical indolence or lethargy in reading through text. Going to the minor novelists in the Victorian age, he says minor novelists of the Victorian age such as Charles Reed or Henry Kingsley or Wilkie Collins, in the 1920s and 30s, their works are brought to attention and they are publicized, more as broadcasts, suggesting them as living classics from the previous age. But then one must question what names necessarily should be part of literary history and what names or what works are significant as creative achievement.

He goes on to say that the novelists must not only change the possibilities of art for the practitioners and the readers, but they must be significant in terms of human awareness they promote, awareness of the possibilities of life. Most of the focal words of FR Leavis revolves around life and experience; and most of his judgments on criticism of the works also fall on the human experience, human intelligence and creativity, which again fall back on experience. In the work, *The Great Tradition* again, he names Jane Austen as one of the greatest writers of the Victorian age because she reflects the society of that time.

And he also says something about her learning experience that are seen through her works. And before this, we should also see that by naming few brilliant novelists, he does not devalue the existence of tradition, but rather provides an understanding of what tradition is. And this is where we see Jane Austen because she is one of the early women writers who are very much celebrated and from her works, we see the Victorian age and the livelihood of the Victorian age households. And at the same time, her works, string many different threads that are very common to the Victorian age, which again are pulled out by other writers to develop something better or to develop something deeper in the understanding of human experience. These are the words of FR Leavis about Jane Austen.

(Refer Slide Time: 10:47)



Jane Austen is one of the truly great writers, and herself a major fact in the background of other great writers. she read all there was to read, and took all that was useful to her - which wasn't only lessons. In fact, Jane Austen, in her indebtedness to others, provides an exceptionally illuminating study of the nature of originality, and she exemplifies beautifully the relations of "the individual talent" to tradition.



“Jane Austen is one of the truly great writers and herself a major fact in the background of other great writers. She read all there was to read and took all that was useful to her, which was not only lessons. In fact, Jane Austen in her indebtedness to others, provides an exceptionally illuminating study of the nature of originality. And she exemplifies beautifully the relations of the individual talent in the tradition.”

(Refer Slide Time: 11:14)



As a matter of fact, when we examine the formal perfection of Emma, we find that it can be appreciated only in terms of the moral preoccupations that characterize the novelist's peculiar interest in life. Those who suppose it to be an "aesthetic matter," a beauty of "composition" that is combined, miraculously, with "truth to life," can give no adequate reason for the view that Emma is a great novel, and no intelligent account of its perfection of form. It is in the same way true of the other great English novelists.



“If the influences bearing on her had not compromised something fairly to be called tradition she could not have found herself and her true direction; but her relation to tradition is a creative one. She not only makes tradition for those coming after, but her achievement has for us a retroactive

effect. As we look beyond her, we see what went on before and because of her we see the potentialities and significances which are brought out in such a way that, for us, she creates the tradition we see leading down to her. Her work, like the work of all creative writers gives a meaning to the past.” He takes an example of one of Jane Austen's works, *Emma*, and continues to comment on it.

(Refer Slide Time: 12:04)



As a matter of fact, when we examine the formal perfection of Emma, we find that it can be appreciated only in terms of the moral preoccupations that characterize the novelist's peculiar interest in life. Those who suppose it to be an "aesthetic matter," a beauty of "composition" that is combined, miraculously, with "truth to life," can give no adequate reason for the view that Emma is a great novel, and no intelligent account of its perfection of form. It is in the same way true of the other great English novelists.



He says, “As a matter of fact, when we examine the formal perfection of *Emma*, we find that it can be appreciated only in terms of the moral preoccupations that characterize the novelist’s peculiar interest in life. Those who suppose it to be an “aesthetic matter,” a beauty of “composition” that is combined, miraculously, with “truth to life,” can give no adequate reason for the view that *Emma* is a great novel, and no intelligent account of its perfection of form, is in the same way true of the other great English novelists.” He says that when you look at a work as a creative piece and just as an aesthetic object, you will not be able to see the higher purpose of the text or what the work is trying to reflect.

And that is what he says must be changed in the literary critical field where the works are judged for what they are, what their content is, what they are trying to illuminate. But he does not refute the existence of an English tradition. He says, “But there is English tradition and these great classics of English fiction belong to it.” However, he also goes back to say that all the minor writers of the Victorian age will not be part of the English novel as a category that puts them all

together. He says not everything can be categorized as the canon. He says, the English tradition talks about creating characters and creating worlds.

And in this tradition, the appreciation for Thackeray or Virginia Woolf or Trollope will always disappear because their work does not reflect the tradition in the content. Out of the four, the second one is George Eliot, he finds to be a great English novelist. He says George Eliot also learns from Jane Austen and therefore there is a continuity from Jane Austen and therefore she is part of the tradition. He also says George Eliot admired her work and George Eliot as a writer whose intellectual weight and moral earnestness strike some critics as her handicap, whose genius and problems are necessarily very different, is the hardest kind of influence to define.

Even when we see it to have been of the profoundest importance. Here, FR Leavis tried to say that although they all belong to different eras, what George Eliot learned is the way Jane Austen weaves the irony, the way Jane Austin weaves the life and the experience in her writing, which does not throw it on the readers face, but is subtly present. And this subtlety is what George Eliot takes in with her and she adds to the spirit of her works, which is lot of vigor of the country life and altogether a different setting that George Eliot talks of in some of her works. For Leavis, after Joseph Conrad, the only other great novelist that can reach up to their standard is D.H. Lawrence and he says this about his works:

(Refer Slide Time: 15:48)

Lawrence, in the English language, was the great genius of our time. In his novel, he committed himself to the hardest and most sustained creative labour, and he was, as a novelist, the representative of vital and significant development. He might, if his genius had let him, have gone on writing novels with the kind of "character creation" and psychology that the conventional cultivated reader immediately appreciates - novels that demanded no unfamiliar effort of approach. However, his genius manifests after the great success of Sons and Lovers, as he gave up that mode of writing and devoted himself to exhausting toil of working out the new things and the developments, that as the highly conscious and intelligent servant of life he saw to be necessary.



Lawrence in the English language was the great genius of his contemporary times. I mean the age or the climatic phase following Conrad's. "In his novel, he committed himself to the hardest

and the most sustained creative labor, and he was, as a novelist, the representative of vital and significant development. He might, if his genius had let him, have gone on writing novels with the kind of “character creation” and psychology that the conventional cultivated reader immediately appreciates- novels that demanded no unfamiliar effort of approach. However, his genius manifests after the great success of *Sons and Lovers*, as he gave up that mode of writing and devoted himself to exhausting toil of working out the new things and the developments that as the highly conscious and intelligent servant of life, he saw to be necessary.”

He goes on to say that Lawrence was a most a daring and radical innovator in form and method and technique; and his innovations and experiments are dictated by the most serious and urgent kind of interests in life. This spirit by virtue of which he can truly say that what he writes must be written from the depth of his religious experience that makes him so much more significant in relation to the past and the future. Lawrence believed that one must speak for life and growth amid all the mass destruction and disintegration. It is the spirit of originality that gives his novels a disconcerting quality and also gives them significance as a work of genius.

Here Leavis places the writing of D.H. Lawrence within the context of Leavis’ own times, which is also the rise of modernist times and there is no center. in the times of 1920s and 30s, where religion had declined and he needed that faith and the belief in something to prop up. And this was also the time where there was no center, there was no faith, there was no structure. And this seemed like he was going back to the past, to hold on to tradition as the only thread that would connect the past and the future, show a direction for the authors and for the readers, and the general public who will be influenced by the reading of these texts.

(Refer Slide Time: 18:31)



- term 'dramatic poem' indicates- structural approach to the novel; prose should be read like verse
- Concept of complete reader
- critical judgement has the form: 'This is so, isn't it?'
- judgement is too easily 'the applying of accepted standards', thought is too easily the 'moving of recognised abstractions according to rule'
- Education must be an anti-acquisitive, anti-competitive moral bent.
- a 'sense of complexities'
- He criticizes the dead language of established phrases such as 'bourgeois'.
- Future prospects of creativity underlies the future prospects of higher education.



We also see that Leavis constantly proposes that literary studies and English literature must be part of every man's education just so that they understand the beauty of human experience and life. Going back to Leavis' other works. Most of his career is characterized by lot of boldness in his opinions and the originality in all of his opinions. And in one of his readings on how to teach reading in 1932, Leavis had pointed out that the criticism of the novel was in its infancy, filled with shallow notions of characters who had real life extending beyond the text and who also created a world among themselves within the text. In a series of articles in the journal *Scrutiny*, he used the term 'dramatic poem' to indicate a formal and structural approach to the novel.

He is one of the pioneers of narratology but was never content to remain within the bounds of narratology. Characteristically, he also insisted that prose should be read like verse, with the required attention to close details while listening, while insisting that the isolated passage could not do justice to the whole. And this again is one of the aspects we see going back to the practical criticism where the sentences or the words on the page are weaved together in coherence, this is where he develops that from.

Going back to the idea of tradition, he says even in his work, *The Great Tradition* he never implies that the other books that he is not appreciating is not worth reading. He says they might touch upon the ideas of tradition, they might touch upon the aspects of tradition, but they cannot be part of the Canon. And if every work is being included in the Canon, the values and the morals that are introduced by the canonical works will be diluted.

Wellek in his review of Leavis's work *Revaluation*, suggested that he wanted a norm to which an author could bring up a work, and due to the reply Leavis gives, he is seen to be the opponent of philosophy and theory in favor of untheorized practice; because he also falls back on value system alone and the reflection of society. Leavis expresses in a reply a concept of complete reader, realizing the complex experience of literature as opposed to the abstract philosophical formulation. Leavis argues not by the application of an external norm and hence are not immutable. Leavis refuses to formulate criteria. He says the next work might be different. Inevitably, the individual critic forms a structure based on more constant preference.

The structure is open to further modification by a new work which could require a different response on other grounds of judgment and hence certain state any kind of norms that would provide or that would be a tool for the critic to judge the works. This is exactly why, even though he talks a lot about the tradition, he never absolutely defines what that tradition means. And he only tries to explain the tradition through the works of Jane Austen, George Eliot, or Conrad or for that matter, Lawrence. According to Leavis, critical judgment has the form, "This is so isn't it?" And the newness here modifies the sense of value, creates another sense of value by which it is to be judged. Leavis's criticism rejects the critical wisdom of any age that provides absolutes for the future. Judgment is not a matter of abstraction.

What one needs is a real, an appropriate responsiveness to the thing offered, and a free and delicate receptivity to fresh experience. Declared values become empty husks, things formerly validated by experience, once fixed, become natural and automatic and therefore ceases to have life. And here Leavis emphasizes that the life he means is the development that happens, is the decline or the improvement that tool or a theory could have. Although he never uses the word theory, he never proposes it as a theory. Another journal that existed in the times of Leavis is called *The Criterion* and that journal had a political stance or narrative lens through which it critiqued the other works. However, *Criterion* as opposed to *Scrutiny*. He also said while *Criterion* judges the works with a specified political criteria *Scrutiny* journal will only scrutinizes the work.

It will judge them as the reader or the critic reads the text and therefore it is to an extent an individual experience of the reading of the text itself. His issue with *The Criterion* journal is that judgment is too easily the applying of accepted standards, thought is too easily the moving of recognized abstractions according to rule. Leavis does not propose that the judgments of literary

criticism do not hold any extra-literary choices or decisions and he does not propose that any aesthetic concern of the literary work is only a thing of beauty. However, the relationship to the life that the text holds is all the more important to him and this is where he connects with the critique of Marxism and where he refutes the Marx's critics.

He says, any judgment or literary value must involve extra-literary choices, in which again, he also includes religion and spiritualism and morality, which *The Criterion* he believes always leaves out. In his work restatement for critics, he declares himself non-politically indifferent. He says no hope is to be based on bloody revolution. However, he also says some form of economic communism is inevitable and is sometimes very desirable. Here he draws lines on where the communism as an understanding must end. He also says civilization needs to be saved by an intelligent working towards this end, where 'this end' denotes the education, denotes a nonviolent way of going forward to the future; not an instigation of revolution which is violent and which is destructive.

He also says, the question that always remains is communism of what kind. In this regard, Leavis wishes to foster, through education and anti-acquisitive, anti-competitive, moral depth, where he says it should not be this or that, this political ideology over another. He believes in non-hegemonic working of criticisms. He also insists on senses of complexities in all the texts and he wants to cherish the senses, cherish the sense of complexities, knowing well that to Marxists this is to play the bourgeoisie game. He, while criticizing Marx's criticism, and Marxism itself, he criticizes the language that are established; and he calls them dead language because there are certain phrases that are repetitively used such as bourgeoisie and class struggle.

Leavis goes back to the commentary that Marxism is the alcohol of the intellectual, warming and exalting, obliterating difficulties and incapacitating for elementary discrimination, so much so for the opium of the masses. He says Marxists are furthermore too bourgeois in being like the bourgeois themselves, too much the productive material environment being the creator of the processes in the same way of capitalists on the possibilities of the progress; the Marxists' future is vacuous. And they have too little thought about the nature of culture that exists through the time.

And the critics of Leavis also argued that he leaned towards Marxism in some partial sense, in some aspects however he sharply criticizes, in a very typical Leavis attempt, any competing establishment of orthodoxies and concepts of hegemonies and discourses, because he believes

that those kinds of competing establishments will not allow for a balanced view of what a text says. He keeps questioning if there is a human nature or if there is such a thing as human nature. And he also questions what other systems or discourses determine an individual who reads the text or even writes a text.

He also goes back on the question of “Is the author dead?” In another work of Leavis called *Literature and Society*, he defends himself from the accusations that his criticisms are isolated, individual and purely literary in value that are proposed by romanticism. However, he also believes that specific creative gifts of any individual will not create a masterpiece. And that comes with the learnings from the tradition, that comes from its relation to the culture and it is a reflection of life and the experiences. He asserts that there are a set of determinants other than the material and economic which are enormous, but the shaping of tradition for the critic and the writer can be literary as well as material.

Here is where he brings in Marxism again, where he talks about the shaping of one's writing, shaping or one's work and the shaping of the material or the content he uses. Here, material considerations, in another sense, is the socioeconomic structures that exist. And the propagation of a certain desire for another or a different kind of socioeconomic structure that exists in the times where the text is being published. There are varying shaping systems; he then asserts that there is nevertheless a measure of spiritual autonomy, human intelligence, choice and will.

These matter with an inherent human nature, without the individual talent there is no creation, only predestined automatism which is not Leavis's his own time but this is that of the critics. Only in individual does a society live and only in individual a culture passes through and therefore every individual creation, every individual work matters even as part of tradition. Because otherwise the tradition will not be taken forward and there would be the abrupt end or decline to that certain tradition or that certain practice. In dealing with the products of human creativity, this fear of critic is to perceive the subtleties and complexities rather than to enforce the domination of ideas and criterion.

He this is where he goes back to say saying that any set ideas will only curb the understanding of the text in its full-fledged form and it will not allow the creativity of the readers to flow and that would hinder the process of learning about life and learning in general. Leavis also criticizes Marxism that by saying that there is not certain autonomy of the human intellectual and aesthetical moral activity expresses not only the cause origin and economic circumstances and

therefore using clause, clause structure and clause operation as only lends on looking into literature will not only hinder the process of understanding the cultural differences and but also the differences in the experiences of different authors and the characters in the book.

However, he also says some of the books that were Victorian that spoke about the Victorian era in the 1920s were not being received well for the fact that bourgeoisie was being criticized during that time and it was in the decline and not for any other reason. However, he says that literature and criticism were always related to society and he said he always wanted to preserve a certain autonomy of the human spirit. And this is exactly where we see again, DH Lawrence and George Eliot being appreciated by Leavis where he says the vigor of their work, the spirit of life and their works is what makes, is one of the things that makes them great novelists. That are the, their novels and works reflect the spirit of living. He also says systems are not absolute and systems modify and therefore a significant new work can change the whole structure and one's previous perceptions of the cultural structure and also the work.

And this is where he again criticizes Marxism for saying that they provide clause structure as an operation, as the only lens which through which the texts are read or dealt with. But the times change like just like how the Victorian era changed the ideas of Victorian era change, so will the ideas of the 20th century. Although in this time James Joyce's work came on one of the most celebrated work. He believes that James Joyce's work is very unstructured and is there is no center in that text and it does not celebrate any form or it does not celebrate any moral value and therefore it should not be well celebrated as that of DH Lawrence's. And for, for Leavis criticism is a collaborative creative process.

(Refer Slide Time: 34:19)



Creative university/ relevance of Leavis:

• Leavis's 'The living Principle'

Reality is a collaborative creation; language is an instance of collaborative creation; creative use of language develops thoughts on life; nothing is important but life

• Leavis's 'The Living Individual'

Life and creativity are 'there' only in individual, living beings; all individuals seek creative fulfilment; Creativity involves important responsibilities to self, others and 'life'; creativity can be disordered

• Leavis's 'The Living Purpose'

Creativity under epistemological/sociological and ontological threats; university should aim to be a concentrated centre of creative collaboration; study of creative literature in institutions of higher education should involve close analysis of contemporary use of language



And it is the it is the creative writer for him who exemplifies freedom while literature is the most significant mode of language. And therefore by, by considering criticism as a collaborative creative process, it allows the readers full possession of the text. And this we, this is how he goes back to the question of is author dead? But here he does not post that on the author, but on the critic who makes available a framework to understand the text as he as he as a reader understood. And it must be understood in the cultural context, but never, but a critic should never suggest that this is the only way it can be read.

Yes, of course Leavis's criticism is not devoid of theory because he deals with most of the critical preoccupations that were later theorized. And he also showed how the relative freedom is indeed a possibility while the readers freedom of, while the readers freedom to understand how a text can be understood and while also challenging that no dogma can remain permanent. And this is throughout this, these are things that are understood throughout the 30 years of articles he had published in the journal scrutiny. He always negotiated between the society tradition and individual talent. And he negotiated between, between the text and the literature and also what has been already given in the past and what is the prospective of the new future.

Leavis's understandings went into a decline after his death and after some of his followers started a field of studies called Leavis studies, pose these questions on what is the purpose of reading Leavis in these change and still changing circumstances. And how can the work of Leavis serve today as an intellectual tool for understanding and possibly changing higher education? These

questions fall on two basic factors. One is that Leavis's socioeducational thought closely embedded in critic of specific literary text. So the understanding is that if you take away the readers familiarity with these texts, Leavis's arguments will seem to fall or will seem to not hold and also Leavis's negative verdict on mass culture.

And in another work he had oppose the idea of democratic mass university. However, the question of what is the purpose of reading Leavis in the changing times and how as an intellectual, he serves for the understanding of higher education comes from some his works where he very much emphasizes on the idea of creativity, which he places on the idea of learning and higher education and university. And the answers for those questions depend on three different premises. One of the premises is that Leavis is a rich source of ideas and his experiences and his understanding of experiences that dealt with the society and higher education. So it means that while he dismissed the mass culture, the depth and the seriousness with which Leavis's posts his questions about culture and society and education and his conception of language, are always a considerable force in understanding the text.