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Marxistisk litteraturforskning

En forskningstradisjon som forstår det litterære verket som uttrykk for en økonomisk og sosial situasjon og som bærer av ideologi. Marxistisk litteraturforskning fungerer ofte som en ideologi-kritisk og historisk orientert litteratur-sosiologi. Forskningen peker på økonomiske betingelser, og på hvem som eier produksjonsmidlene (f.eks. mediene) og dermed kan bruke dem til ideologisk propaganda (Proulx 1994).

Marx oppfattet litteratur som en del av overbygningen og en konsekvens av en sosio-økonomisk og historisk forankret struktur og basis, men overbygning og basis står i et dialektisk forhold til hverandre (Dirx 2000 s. 49). Litteratur blir enten oppfattet som en avspeiling av en objektiv virkelighet, eller som ideologiske manipuleringer (Nøjgaard 1993 s. 73).

“Først og fremst er den marxistiske litteraturteorien opptatt av forholdet mellom litteratur og samfunn. Man kan si at det er to overordnede spørsmål: Det ene handler om litteraturen i samfunnet. Det andre om samfunnet i litteraturen. Spørsmålet om litteraturen i samfunnet dreier seg om litteraturens funksjon, hvilken virkning diktningen har i samfunnet og i historien. [...] Den andre problemstillingen, samfunnet i litteraturen, dreier seg om hvordan samfunnet viser seg i diktningen og på hvilken måte det dikterne produserer er bestemt av samfunns-messige forhold” (professor Arild Linneberg i <http://www.nrk.no/nyheter/kultur/lesekunst/teorier/2081984.html>; lesedato 11.08.15).

“The following questions are offered to summarize Marxist approaches to literature.

1. Does the work reinforce (intentionally or not) capitalist, imperialist, or classist values? If so, then the work may be said to have a capitalist, imperialist, or classist agenda, and it is the critic’s job to expose and condemn this aspect of the work.

2. How might the work be seen as a critique of capitalism, imperialism, or classism? That is, in what ways does the text reveal, and invite us to condemn, oppressive socioeconomic forces (including repressive ideologies)? If a work

criticizes or invites us to criticize oppressive socioeconomic forces, then it may be said to have a Marxist agenda.

3. Does the work in some ways support a Marxist agenda but in other ways (perhaps unintentionally) support a capitalist, imperialist, or classist agenda? In other words, is the work ideologically conflicted?

4. How does the literary work reflect (intentionally or not) the socioeconomic conditions of the time in which it was written and/or the time in which it is set, and what do those conditions reveal about the history of class struggle?

5. How might the work be seen as a critique of organized religion? That is, how does religion function in the text to keep a character or characters from realizing and resisting socioeconomic oppression?" (Tyson 2006)

I en marxistisk analyse som er "gjenspeilingsteoretisk", kan f.eks. den politisk-sosiale posisjonen A bli gjenspeilt i den estetiske posisjonen B. I en analyse som studerer "homologiforhold", kan en dikters estetiske posisjon C i forhold til den estetiske posisjonen D tilsvare dikterens politisk-sosiale posisjon E i forhold til den politisk-sosiale posisjonen F (Joch og Wolf 2005 s. 106).

"Hele estetikken fra Aristoteles og fram til Kant på slutten av 1700-tallet er en virkningsestetikk. Så i forhold til spørsmålet om kunstens virkning står marxismen i en lang tradisjon. Marxismen har imidlertid lagt vekt på litteraturens rolle når det gjelder å avsløre de historiske og sosiale sannhetene om maktforholdene i samfunnet: forholdet mellom de mektige og avmektige, rike og fattige, undertrykkere og undertrykte." (Arild Linneberg i <http://www.nrk.no/nyheter/kultur/lesekunst/teorier/2082002.html>; lesedato 14.08.15)

"Each critical method has its own strengths and limitations, its optics and blindspots. Marxian ideology critiques have traditionally been strong on class and historical contextualization and weak on formal analysis" (Kellner 1991).

Briten Raymond Williams har blant annet skrevet *Marxism and Literature* (1977). "An unidentified "we", he claims, will eventually turn away from the proposition that "all literature is 'aesthetic', in the crude sense that its dominant intention (and then our only response) is the beauty of language or form...". The aesthetic effect, he contends, has malign intentions upon us – to make us forget that we live in a divided and dividing society through "the dulling, the lulling, the chiming, the overbearing" of its techniques and subject-matter." (Williams i <http://1970sproject.co.uk/events/papers/tony-dunn.pdf>; lesedato 04.06.15)

Raymond Williams' "argument for 'connections' and 'relationships' between varied social practices has given rise to the most important of his concepts 'Cultural materialism'. The concept, it is argued, can be seen as an extension of historical

materialism to the realm of culture which has been so resistant to such as interpretation. 'Culture', he argues, is itself a material activity and not an effect of superstructure which is caused by the economic base. 'Cultural materialism' has been chiefly responsible for the emergence of 'culture studies' as a distinct discipline in British Universities and also New Historicism in the US." (<http://www.the-criterion.com/V4/n5/Christopher.pdf>; lesedato 10.08.15)

“Along with psychoanalytical, feminist, and cultural criticism, Marxist literary criticism exemplifies what the French philosopher Paul Ricoeur terms a “hermeneutics of suspicion.” These are approaches that concern themselves not with what the text says but what it hides. As Terry Eagleton, a leading Marxist critic, writes, the task of Marxist literary criticism “is to show the text as it cannot know itself, to manifest those conditions of its making (inscribed in its very letter) about which it is necessarily silent.” By its very nature, *ideology* is silent. Like the water in the aquarium breathed by the fish, ideology is virtually invisible. Its invisibility gives it greater power. Ideology – defined in general as the shared beliefs and values held in an unquestioning manner by a culture – exerts a powerful influence upon a culture. Those who are marginalized in the culture are most aware of the ways in which an ideology supports the dominant class in the society. [...] Marxist literary criticism often shares with feminist criticism a desire to challenge the power structures in contemporary society. For feminists, the issue is a marginalized gender; for Marxists, the issue is not gender but economic power, leading to political power. Marxist literary criticism can also be viewed as a type of *cultural criticism*, in that it seeks to analyze a discourse (of power) that makes up one of the discourses that determine a text's historical meaning.” (<http://www1.assumption.edu/users/ady/hhgateway/gateway/Marxistlitcrit.html>; lesedato 02.10.13)

“[L]iterature reflects those social institutions out of which it emerges and is itself a social institution with a particular ideological function. Literature reflects class struggle and materialism: think how often the quest for wealth traditionally defines characters. So Marxists generally view literature “not as works created in accordance with timeless artistic criteria, but as ‘products’ of the economic and ideological determinants specific to that era” (Abrams 149). Literature reflects an author's own class or analysis of class relations, however piercing or shallow that analysis may be. The Marxist critic simply is a careful reader or viewer who keeps in mind issues of power and money, and any of the following kinds of questions:

- What role does class play in the work; what is the author's analysis of class relations?
- How do characters overcome oppression?
- In what ways does the work serve as propaganda for the status quo; or does it try to undermine it?

- What does the work say about oppression; or are social conflicts ignored or blamed elsewhere?

- Does the work propose some form of utopian vision as a solution to the problems encountered in the work?" (<http://www.wsu.edu/~delahoyd/marxist.crit.html>; lesedato 10.10.13)

“Marxist Criticism deals with focusing on the ideological content of a work of literature and its explicit and implicit assumptions and values about matters like culture, race, class, and power. It is based on Marxism, or the theories of Karl Marx. Marxists believe that a work of literature is not a result of divine inspiration or pure artistic endeavor, but that it arises out of the economic and ideological circumstances surrounding its creation. Marxist Critics view the literature as a reflection of the author’s own class or as an analysis of class relations. [...] Since literature is consumed, for the most part, by the middle classes, it tends to support capitalist ideology, at least in countries where that ideology is dominant. Marxist critics interpret literature in terms of ideology. [...] Take the Marxist approach to Shakespeare's *The Tempest* for example. The standard Marxist party line would be to interpret Prospero as the representative of European imperialism. Prospero has come to the island from Italy. He has used his magic (perhaps a symbol of technology) to enslave Caliban, a native of the island. Caliban resents being the servant of Prospero and attempts to rebel against his authority. Since Prospero is presented in a favorable light, the Marxist critic might condemn Shakespeare as being a supporter of European capitalist ideology. A more subtle Marxist critic might see that the play has far more complexity, and that Caliban has been invested with a vitality that makes it possible for audiences to sympathize with him. Certainly, the Marxist view of the play brings out ideas that might be overlooked by other kinds of critics and, thus, contributes to the understanding of the play.” (<http://marxist-criticism.wikispaces.com/Definition>; lesedato 20.09.13)

Mange litterære verk blir analysert som uttrykk for en dominerende og undertrykkende ideologi, og dermed som manipuleringsverktøy. Disse verkene bidrar til å fremmedgjøre leserne fra sin egen hverdag (Proulx 1994). Men litteratur kan også oppfattes som en form for *arbeid*, en praksis der mennesket framviser sin frihet og skaperkraft. Gjennom sitt kunstneriske arbeid viser forfatteren arbeidets skapende kraft (Sayre 2011 s. 42). Dette arbeidet er “humaniserende” (Sidney Finkelstein gjengitt etter Sayre 2011 s. 42). “The materialist theory of history denies that art can *in itself* change the course of history; but it insists that art can be an active element in such change.” (Eagleton 1976 s. 558)

Sentralt innen marxismen er tanken om den økonomiske basisen som styrende for overbygningen av ideer, kunst, litteratur osv. Ofte har litteraturen på en “mekanisk” måte blitt oppfattet som en virkning av klasseinteresser (Heinich 2001 s. 68). Men etter andre marxisters oppfatning determinerer den økonomisk-materielle basis

overbygningen kun som en sum av muligheter, ikke i detaljer innen denne summen. Det er stort rom for tilfeldigheter og nyskaping.

Marxister hevder at “particular forms of humanity are determined by particular social relations and systems of human institutions.” (Hawkes 1977 s. 15)

Et av problemene som Marx tematiserer i *Grunnriss av kritikken av den politiske økonomien* (1857-58) er “the relation between base and superstructure. Marx is clear that these two aspects of society do not form a *symmetrical* relationship, dancing a harmonious minuet hand-in-hand throughout history. Each element of a society's superstructure – art, law, politics, religion – has its own tempo of development, its own internal evolution, which is not reducible to a mere expression of the class struggle or the state of the economy.” (Eagleton 1976 s. 560)

Mange marxistiske litteraturforskere “stresses the complicated interrelationships between the socio-economic base and the institutions and values (including literature) which comprise the superstructure. But precisely because those relationships are so complex, a wide variety of critical thought has been brought to bear upon them. [...] Other problems central to Marxist critical discussions include questions such as: What is the relationship between literature and ideology? How does literature develop out of the life of a society? Are there formal laws of literature which serve to distance it from the forms of the material world? Is the primary function of criticism to describe, to explain, to interpret, or to evaluate? To what extent is language separable from society, and is ideology separable from language? To what extent has Marxism, itself a body of theory, been influenced by other modern intellectual currents such as psychoanalysis, existentialism, structuralism, and semiotics? Far from being the monolithic dogma its detractors suggest, Marxism is a living body of thought, seeking to answer questions such as these, which are often ignored in other approaches to literature.” (Eagleton 1976 s. 552)

“It would be a mistake to imply that Marxist criticism moves mechanically from ‘text’ to ‘ideology’ to ‘social relations’ to ‘productive forces’. It is concerned, rather, with the *unity* of these ‘levels’ of society. Literature may be part of the superstructure, but it is not merely the passive reflection of the economic base. Engels makes this clear, in a letter to Joseph Bloch in 1890: “According to the materialist conception of history, the determining element in history is *ultimately* the production and reproduction in real life. More than this neither Marx nor I have ever asserted. If therefore somebody twists this into the statement that the economic element is the *only* determining one, he transforms it into a meaningless, abstract and absurd phrase. The economic situation is the basis, but the various elements of the superstructure – political forms of the class struggle and its consequences, constitutions established by the victorious class after a successful battle, etc. – forms of law – and then even the reflexes of all these actual struggles in the brains

of the combatants: political, legal, and philosophical theories, religious ideas and their further development into systems of dogma – also exercise their influence upon the course of the historical struggles and in many cases preponderate in determining their *form*.” ” (Eagleton 1976 s. 557)

“Friedrich Engels remarks in *Ludwig Feuerbach and the End of Classical German Philosophy* (1888) that art is far richer and more ‘opaque’ than political and economic theory because it is less purely ideological. It is important here to grasp the precise meaning for Marxism of ‘ideology’. Ideology is not in the first place a set of doctrines; it signifies the way men live out their roles in class-society, the values, ideas and images which tie them to their social functions and so prevent them from a true knowledge of society as a whole. [...] Engels’ remark suggests that art has a more complex relationship to ideology than law and political theory, which rather more transparently embody the interests of a ruling class. The question, then, is what relationship art has to ideology. This is not an easy question to answer. Two extreme, opposite positions are possible here. One is that literature is nothing but ideology in a certain artistic form – that works of literature are just expressions of the ideologies of their time. They are prisoners of ‘false consciousness’, unable to reach beyond it to arrive at the truth. It is a position characteristic of much ‘vulgar Marxist’ criticism, which tends to see literary works merely as reflections of dominant ideologies. As such, it is unable to explain, for one thing, why so much literature actually *challenges* the ideological assumptions of its time. The opposite case seizes on the fact that so much literature challenges the ideology it confronts, and makes this part of the definition of literary art itself. Authentic art, as Ernst Fischer argues in his significantly entitled *Art Against Ideology* (1969), always transcends the ideological limits of its time, yielding us insight into the realities which ideology hides from view.” (Eagleton 1976 s. 562)

“A more subtle (although still incomplete) account of the relationship between literature and ideology is provided by the French Marxist theorist Louis Althusser. Althusser argues that art cannot be reduced to ideology: it has, rather, a particular *relationship* to it. Ideology signifies the imaginary ways in which men experience the real world, which is, of course, the kind of experience literature gives us too – what it feels like to live in particular conditions, rather than a conceptual analysis of those conditions. However, art does more than just passively reflect that experience. It is held within ideology, but also manages to distance itself from it, to the point where it permits us to ‘feel’ and ‘perceive’ the ideology from which it springs. In doing this, art does not enable us to *know* the truth which ideology conceals, since for Althusser ‘knowledge’ in the strict sense means *scientific* knowledge – the kind of knowledge of, say, capitalism which Marx’s *Capital* rather than Dickens’s *Hard Times* allows us. The difference between science and art is not that they deal with different objects, but that they deal with the same objects in different ways. Science gives us conceptual knowledge of a situation; art gives us the experience of that situation, which is equivalent to ideology. But by doing this, it allows us to ‘see’ the nature of that ideology, and thus begins to move us towards

that full understanding of ideology which is scientific knowledge.” (Eagleton 1976 s. 562-563)

Den ungarske filosofen og marxistiske litteraturforskeren György Lukács hevder at det sosiale i litteraturen viser seg i litteraturens formelementer: “the truly social element of literature is the form.” “In his early essay *The Evolution of Modern Drama* (1909), the Hungarian Marxist critic Georg Lukács writes that ‘the truly social element in literature is the form’. This is not the kind of comment which has come to be expected of Marxist criticism. For one thing, Marxist criticism has traditionally opposed all kinds of literary formalism, attacking that inbred attention to sheerly technical properties which robs literature of historical significance and reduces it to an aesthetic game. [...] Marx himself believed that literature should reveal a unity of form and content, and burnt some of his own early lyric poems on the grounds that their rhapsodic feelings were dangerously unrestrained; but he was also suspicious of excessively formalistic writing. In an early newspaper article on Silesian weavers' songs, he claimed that mere stylistic exercises led to 'perverted content', which in turn impresses the stamp of ‘vulgarity’ on literary form. He shows, in other words, a *dialectical* grasp of the relations in question: form is the product of content, but reacts back upon it in a double-edged relationship. Marx’s early comment about oppressively formalistic law in the *Rheinische Zeitung* – ‘form is of no value unless it is the form of its content’ – could equally be applied to his aesthetic views.” (Eagleton 1976 s. 564)

“Marxist criticism sees form and content as dialectically related, and yet wants to assert in the end the primacy of content in determining form. The point is put, tortuously but correctly, by Ralph Fox in his *The Novel and the People* (1937), when he declares that ‘Form is produced by content, is identical and one with it, and, though the primacy is on the side of content, form reacts on content and never remains passive.’ This dialectical conception of the form-content relationship sets itself against two opposed positions. On the one hand, it attacks that formalist school (epitomized by the Russian Formalists of the 1920s) for whom content is merely a function of form – for whom the content of a poem is selected merely to reinforce the technical devices the poem deploys. But it also criticizes the ‘vulgar Marxist’ notion that artistic form is merely an artifice, externally imposed on the turbulent content of history itself.” (Eagleton 1976 s. 565-566)

“English Marxist critics of the 1930s fall often enough into the ‘vulgar Marxist’ mistake of raiding literary works for their ideological content and relating this directly to the class-struggle or the economy. It is against this danger that Lukács’s comment is meant to warn: the true bearers of ideology in art are the very forms, rather than abstractable content, of the work itself. We find the impress of history in the literary work precisely *as literary*, not as some superior form of social documentation.” (Eagleton 1976 s. 566)

Den tyske sosiologen og litteraturforskeren Leo Löwenthal mente at det ikke er en enkel ekvivalens mellom et formelt trekk ved et verk og en ideologi, men et komplekst forhold. Han ville vise hvordan de *samme* formene har ideologisk mening som skifter avhengig av sosio-historisk kontekst (Sayre 2011 s. 204-205). Löwenthal hevdet at skipbrudd-scenene i Shakespeares *The Tempest* representerer samtidens engelske samfunn som et symbolsk mikrokosmos, samtidig som det er de borgerlige verdiene som blir stående som de mest solide i skuespillet (gjengitt etter Sayre 2011 s. 147).

Forfattere klarer vanligvis ikke å løsrive seg fra sin borgerlige klasses tilhørighet og ideologi (Michel Zérafra i *Roman og samfunn*, 1971; her sitert fra Cogny 1975 s. 105).

Franskmannen Lucien Goldmann prøvde å overvinne svakheten ved basis-overbygning-modellen. Han utviklet en modell der likheten mellom basis og overbygning ikke gjelder innhold, men likhet i struktur (struktur-homologi).

Goldmann hevdet at romansjangerens historie viser i fiktive historier de ulike etappene i den kapitalistiske økonomien (Sayre 2011 s. 159). Han mente også at en realistisk roman må vise motsetningen mellom mennesket i et humant perspektiv og mennesket i et tingliggjørende, kapitalistisk perspektiv, fordi denne konflikten gjennomtrenger det moderne samfunn (Sayre 2011 s. 164). Han oppfattet realismen i litteraturen i det 20. århundre som “abstrakt” og relativt virkelighetsfjern, men tolket dette som et uttrykk for individets minkende betydning i en statlig monopolkapitalisme (Sayre 2011 s. 166).

“Goldmann is concerned to examine the structure of a literary text for the degree to which it embodies the structure of thought (or ‘world vision’) of the social class or group to which the writer belongs. The more closely the text approximates to a complete, coherent articulation of the social class’s ‘world vision’, the greater is its validity as a work of art. For Goldmann, literary works are not in the first place to be seen as the creation of individuals, but of what he calls the ‘trans-individual mental structures’ of a social group – by which he means the structure of ideas, values and aspirations that a group shares. Great writers are those exceptional individuals who manage to transpose into art the world vision of the class or group to which they belong, and to do this in a peculiarly unified and translucent (although not necessarily conscious) way. Goldmann terms his critical method ‘genetic structuralism’, and it is important to understand both terms of that phrase. *Structuralism*, because he is less interested in the contents of a particular world vision than in the structure of categories it displays. Two apparently quite different writers may thus be shown to belong to the same collective mental structure. *Genetic*, because Goldmann is concerned with how such mental structures are historically produced – concerned, that is to say, with the relations between a world vision and the historical conditions which give rise to it.” (Eagleton 1976 s. 571)

“Goldmann's work on Racine in *The Hidden God* is perhaps the most exemplary model of his critical method. He discerns in Racine's drama a certain recurrent structure of categories – God, World, Man – which alter in their ‘content’ and interrelations from play to play, but which disclose a particular world vision. It is the world vision of men who are lost in a valueless world, accept this world as the only one there is (since God is absent), and yet continue to protest against it – to justify themselves in the name of some absolute value which is always hidden from view. The basis of this world vision Goldmann finds in the French religious movement known as Jansenism; and he explains Jansenism, in turn, as the product of a certain displaced social group in seventeenth-century France – the so-called *noblesse de robe*, the court officials who were economically dependent on the monarchy and yet becoming increasingly powerless in the face of that monarchy's growing absolutism. The contradictory situation of this group, needing the Crown but politically opposed to it, is expressed in Jansenism's refusal both of the world and of any desire to change it historically. All of this has a ‘world-historical’ significance: the *noblesse de robe*, themselves recruited from the bourgeois class, represent the failure of the bourgeoisie to break royal absolutism and establish the conditions for capitalist development. What Goldmann is seeking, then, is a set of structural relations between literary text, world vision and history itself. He wants to show how the historical situation of a social group or class is transposed, by the mediation of its world vision, into the structure of a literary work. To do this it is not enough to begin with the text and work outwards to history, or vice versa; what is required is a dialectical method of criticism which moves constantly between text, world vision and history, adjusting each to the others.” (Eagleton 1976 s. 571-572)

“Interesting as it is, Goldmann's critical enterprise seems to me marred by certain major flaws. His concept of social consciousness [...] is Hegelian rather than Marxist: he sees it as the direct expression of a social class, just as the literary work then becomes the direct expression of this consciousness. His whole model, in other words, is too trimly symmetrical, unable to accommodate the dialectical conflicts and complexities, the unevenness and discontinuity, which characterize literature's relation to society. It declines, in his later work *Pour une Sociologie du Roman* (1964), into an essentially mechanistic version of the base-superstructure relationship.” (Eagleton 1976 s. 572)

“It is in the significant *silences* of a text, in its gaps and absences, that the presence of ideology can be most positively felt. It is these silences which the critic must make ‘speak’. The text is, as it were, ideologically forbidden to say certain things; in trying to tell the truth in his own way, for example, the author finds himself forced to reveal the limits of the ideology within which he writes. He is forced to reveal its gaps and silences, what it is unable to articulate. Because a text contains these gaps and silences, it is always *incomplete*. Far from constituting a rounded, coherent whole, it displays a conflict and contradiction of meanings; and the

significance of the work lies in the difference rather than unity between these meanings.” (Eagleton 1976 s. 572-573)

“[I]t is in the nature of the work to be incomplete, tied as it is to an ideology which silences it at certain points. (It is, if you like, complete in its incompleteness.) The critic's task is not to fill the work in; it is to seek out the principle of its conflict of meanings, and to show how this conflict is produced by the work's relation to ideology. To take a fairly obvious example: in *Dombey and Son* Dickens uses a number of mutually conflicting languages – realist, melodramatic, pastoral, allegorical – in his portrayal of events; and this conflict comes to a head in the famous railway chapter, where the novel is ambiguously torn between contradictory responses to the railway (fear, protest, approval, exhilaration etc.), reflecting this in a clash of styles and symbols. The ideological basis of this ambiguity is that the novel is divided between a conventional bourgeois admiration of industrial progress and a petty-bourgeois anxiety about its inevitably disruptive effects. It sympathizes with those washed-up minor characters whom the new world has superannuated at the same time as it celebrates the progressive thrust of industrial capitalism which has made them obsolete. In discovering the principle of the work's conflict of meanings, then, we are simultaneously analysing its complex relationship to Victorian ideology.” (Eagleton 1976 s. 573)

I boka *Den hellige familie* (1845) analyserer og kritiserer Karl Marx den populære franske romanforfatteren Eugène Sues *Paris' mysterier* (føljetong påbegynt i 1842) (Sayre 2011 s. 54). Marx' yndlingsforfatter var franske Honoré de Balzac. Av alle forfattere som Marx omtaler, er det Balzac som nevnes oftest. Også andre marxister har verdsatt den franske romanforfatteren. “Balzac's vision of a society in which class, money and personal ambition are the major players has been endorsed by critics of both left-wing and right-wing political tendencies. Marxist Friedrich Engels wrote: “I have learned more [from Balzac] than from all the professional historians, economists and statisticians put together.” [...] Balzac has always been a favorite of Marxist critics, starting with Marx and Engels themselves.” (<http://neoshinka.wordpress.com/2008/12/02/balzac-asimov-starfuckers-inc/>; lesedato 14.10.13)

“Bruker man den marxistiske teorien i forhold til litterær produksjon, kan man stille spørsmålene: Hva er produksjonsforholdene for litterær kunst? Hva er produktivkraftene for litterær kunst? Med de to begrepene kan marxismen fange inn hva det er som bestemmer tilblivelsen av litteratur. Marx' produksjonsteori er på mange måter også en kommunikasjonsteori. Kjedens produksjon, produkt og konsumpsjon har en parallell i kommunikasjonsteoriens avsender, budskap og mottaker. Innen kunstfeltet er det en kunstner som er betingelsen for avsendelsen av budskapet. Så har du produktet, kunstverket, og til slutt har du publikum, mottakerne av kunstverket. I en slik marxistisk teori blir kunstverket oppfattet som en vare. Mens publikum er konsumenter som tilegner seg varen. Når produksjons- og konsumpsjonsprosessen analyseres historisk og samfunnsmessig, åpner det for en

forståelse av kunstens funksjon i en bestemt historisk sammenheng. Marx' analyse er en analyse av varesamfunnet. Og det skjer faktisk noe helt grunnleggende med litteraturen og kunsten når den, etter den industrielle revolusjonen, blir en vare på markedet" (Arild Linneberg i <http://www.nrk.no/nyheter/kultur/lesekunst/teorier/2082008.html>; lesedato 11.08.15).

For den tyske filosofen Theodor W. Adorno kunne ikke noe være kunst hvis det bekreftet rådende samfunnsforhold, og altså ikke stod i en motposisjon til disse forholdene (Dörner og Vogt 2013 s. 87).

For den amerikanske litteraturforskeren Fredric Jameson, "with his motto "Always historicize," the text is an alibi for ideological formations that are subtextual. The heroic task of the critic is to wrench a text's ideology into the light, "massy and dripping," as Jameson puts it (245; qtd. in Crane 92), so that it can be unveiled and resisted" (N. Katherine Hayles i <http://ade.mla.org/content/download/7915/225678/ade.150.62.pdf>; lesedato 03.08.17).

Den amerikanske forfatteren Francis Scott Fitzgeralds *The Great Gatsby* (1925) er en av de meste kjente romanene skrevet på 1920-tallet. "Written and set during the post-World War I economic boom of the 1920s, F. Scott Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby* (1925) can be seen as a chronicle of the American dream at a point in this nation's history when capitalism's promise of economic opportunity for all seemed at its peak of fulfillment. "Get-rich-quick" schemes abounded, and many of them succeeded, for it was a time when stocks could be bought on a 10 percent margin, which means that a dollar's worth of stocks could be purchased, on credit, for ten cents. So even the "little man" could play the stock market and hope to make his fortune there. [...] Jay Gatsby, the character who seems at first to embody the American dream and the hope capitalism thereby offers to all, reveals, upon closer inspection, the hollowness of that dream. In true rags-to-riches style, Gatsby has risen from extreme poverty to extreme wealth in a very few years. [...] If Gatsby is the novel's representative of the American dream, however, the dream must be a corrupt one, for Gatsby achieves it only through criminal activities, a fact that severely deflates the image of the honest, hardworking man that the dream is supposed to foster." (Tyson 2006)

"Operating against *The Great Gatsby*'s powerful critique of capitalism is the novel's subtle reinforcement of capitalism's repressive ideology. This countermovement operates in three ways. First, the unflattering portraits of George and Myrtle Wilson deflect our attention from their victimization by the capitalist system in which they both struggle to survive. Second, because Nick is seduced by the American dream Gatsby represents, his narrative romanticizes the protagonist, obscuring the ways in which Jimmy Gatz's investment in the dream produced the amoral Jay Gatsby. Third, the lush language used to describe the world of the wealthy makes it attractive despite the people like the Buchanans who populate it. Perhaps *The Great Gatsby*'s most obvious flaw, from a Marxist perspective, is its

unsympathetic rendering of George and Myrtle Wilson, the novel's representatives of the lower class. George and Myrtle try to improve their lot the only way they know how. George clings to his foundering business, and Myrtle, in a sense, tries to start one of her own by marketing the only commodity she has in stock: she "rents" her body to Tom Buchanan, hoping he'll want someday to "purchase" it by marrying her. They are victims of capitalism because the only way to succeed in a capitalist economy is to succeed in a market, and, as neither George nor Myrtle succeed in the only markets open to them, they are condemned to the "valley of ashes." Their characterizations, however, are so negative that it is easy to overlook the socioeconomic realities that control their lives." (Tyson 2006)

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