

Lecture No. 5: Sociology of Text

Preface

The problem of the relationship between literature and society has remained a focus of controversy and disagreement, according to the different opinions of thinkers, researchers and critics since the era of Plato, and long before the emergence of the term sociology. Sociology, new branches were opened in sociology, including a special branch of literature and criticism, which is the sociology of literature (or the sociology of the text), whose name has become familiar to many readers.

And if sociology is one of the modern sciences, and the sociology of literature is a new science in the field of sociology that is still in its inception and formation, then the sociology of the text is not yet complete and is in continuous development, and the French Pierre Zima tried Since the seventies until now, defining its theoretical concepts and new methodological tools and applying them to literary texts, just as the sociology of the text, according to Zima, dreams of applying its concepts and methodological tools to philosophical, religious and ... texts.

Sociology and literature remained far from each other until relatively recently, and from this divergence there is a conflict between the individual approach to psychology and psychoanalysis on the one hand, and the collective approach to sociology on the other, and this problem is still prominent in modern criticism to Now, the sociology of the text tries to overcome it by combining the social approach with the psychoanalytic approach, which leads them to the sociolinguistic situation, the collective dialect, and the semantic and narrative structures of the imaginary text.

And after removing the barriers between the social sciences, the new students crossed between history, anthropology, art, politics, literature and economics, and the rule of specialization was overthrown, which forbade the humanities to deal with questions of politics and power, which are at the core of people's lives, which angered the guards of the institution. And sparked a wave of addressing the new historicism and its sources of influence.

And with the removal of the traditional barriers between sociology and literature, the call came for a new specialization bearing the name of the sociology of literature as a new field of sociology.

There have been many attempts to analyze literary forms within the framework of a social context, but most of them were based on the data of positivist and materialistic philosophies that see in literature a depiction of reality or a reflection of it, but the sociology of the text according to Zima believes that it is not possible to describe the relationship of the text to society, relying on these ideas resulting from unconvincing conformity or similarity that reduces texts to conceptual ideas that cannot be verified. The sociology of text focuses on the question of whether the relationship between a literary text and its social context can be described on an empirical level. Such a description cannot be achieved unless literature and society appear from a linguistic perspective.

1- The concept of text sociology:

Based on Zima's proposition in linking the text to social reality and taking into account this matter during the study and analysis, it becomes clear that the sociology of the text is an approach that cares about the relationship of literature to society from a socio-linguistic perspective developed from what was before, but it goes beyond in its theoretical and methodological theses the concepts and approaches of the sociology of literature. Especially the traditional studies that tend towards direct matching (reflection and similarity) between the contents of the literary text and the social facts by focusing on the external, reference and documentary data, and neglecting the textual structures: the semantic and the narrative that the sociology of the text gave its importance in the analysis of texts.

The concept of the sociology of the text or the sociology of the text is also defined by modern social critics - especially Pierre Zima - as the science that is concerned with the issue of knowing how social issues are embodied in the semantic and narrative levels of the text, and not only the literary text, but also transcends attention to linguistic (discourse) structures. For theoretical and ideological texts and others, the sociology of the text as a critical sociology seeks to define the relationship of discourse between theory and ideology, and between theory and imagination. In the analysis of texts or a technique with an intellectual return to being a critique of society.

2- The emergence of the sociology of the text:

The roots of interest in the relationship between literature and society extend back to a period that precedes the emergence of sociology, but rather before August Kant developed the concept and definition of sociology, that is, since Plato.

Sociology and literature are two modes of knowledge, even if they differ from each other, but there is a common factor that unites them. Paying attention to the relationship of literature to society means building bridges between them and recognizing the overlap and mutual relationship between literature and society. Tracking the relationship between literature and society is a long-discussed matter that needs publications, and it is enough for us to present some ideas that contributed to the emergence of the sociology of the text.

Pierre Zima believes that sociology has sought - since the inception of Marxism and the sociology of knowledge that Karl Mannheim founded between the two world wars - to interpret political, philosophical and literary texts in view of their social contexts, and perhaps many opinions paved the way. For the sociology of the text, for example, the criticism directed by Marx to the Hegelian philosophy, and the conservative perception mentioned by Karl Mannheim, which involves what he called ((reconstruction of the view of the world from the social point of view. And George Lukács had in turn raised the same issue, especially the relevance between political, philosophical or aesthetic ideas and the society that created them.

As for Lucien Goldman, he concluded by assuming structural analogies between philosophical or literary works and between some of the “world visions” such as “tragic sexuality” that he established between them and the ideas