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Language and ideology in film theory: The case study of the LAP model

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Abstract: The present paper attempts to explore the application of what is generally referred to as "LAP," the Lacanian–Althusserian Paradigm, in the area of film studies. I shall demonstrate the early examples of the parallel employment of Lacanian and Althusserian theories to the analysis of subjectivity in the area of Anglo-American film theory with reference to its representation in cultural studies. This paper will also examine examples of those works that were highly critical of following the LAP model. Focusing on the major theoretical works conducted in the British context, particularly by Stephen Heath and Colin MacCabe, the present study shall also investigate the critiques of such readings. However, a major argument of the present research is that none of these models achieve a synthesis of the two theories, or arguably set out to do so. In outlining the various versions of the model this study also presents a literature review of the most well-known theoretical positions that draw on both the Lacanian and Althusserian theorization of the subject in the area of film studies. The present study demonstrates that while most of the responses to the LAP model appear to be ambivalent, there have also emerged radical critiques of such application maintaining that it not only totally overlooks the esthetic and technical aspects of films but also lacks the all-inclusive feature it claims for, mostly due to their incompatible treatment.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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PUBLIC INTEREST STATEMENT

The area of film studies has a close association with literary and cultural theory in a way that most of the approaches followed in contemporary criticism are applicable to, and influenced by, the research conducted in film theory. One of the approaches to the analysis of identity construction and representation is generally referred to as the Lacanian–Althusserian paradigm, which provides a model for film criticism based on, as the title implies, the critical notions of the French theorists of the 1960s and 1970s, Jacques Lacan and Louis Althusser. This paper examines major examples of the employment of this method while addressing those works that were highly critical of such application. It is concluded that whereas most of the responses to this model are ambivalent, there are also some works that radically discard such application due to its neglect of the esthetic and technical aspects of films and their incompatible treatment.

Subjects: Theatre & Performance Studies; Cultural Studies; Media & Film Studies; Literature

Keywords: film theory; language; ideology; subjectivity; LAP

1. Introduction

The application together of Lacanian and Althusserian theories of subjectivity in the area of film studies first began in France and, then, was followed in Britain in the 1970s. There were, afterward, a number of harsh criticisms of such parallel employment. A noticeable battlefield for the opponents and proponents of following the "Lacanian-Althusserian paradigm" (LAP) in recent decades has been the area of film theory and criticism. Although there have emerged a number of harsh criticisms of this model in recent literary and film theory, there are also a number of critics that have argued for the possibility of such a convergence and applied it to the reading of both literary texts and films.

A famous example of the controversies in this area was the conflict that appeared on both sides of the Atlantic between British experts in literary and film theory and a number of American film critics. The early examples of the Althusserian readings in film studies appeared in the early 1970s in France as a response to serious political issues surrounding the events of May 1968 and the struggles in Vietnam and China. This was a time when, instead of a merely structuralist outlook, the direction of critical readings of film changed through developing explicitly political preoccupations.

The articles of *Cahiers du Cinema* reveal how dominant Althusserian ideas were during this period. The major concern was with identifying which films were in the service of the transmission and reproduction of the dominant ideology and which films served to demonstrate the mechanism behind the transmission of ideology. Another influence on the reading of films was that of Lacanian psychoanalysis, particularly in its exposition of the subject's unconscious desires and conflicts. The LAP model for the analysis of subjectivity emerged in this time in France. This influence spread to Britain and the result was the publication of *Screen*, a journal clearly influenced by *Cahiers du Cinema*. As Todd McGowan in *The Real Gaze: Film Theory after Lacan* argues, the French critics, including Christian Metz, Jean-Louis Baudry, and Jean-Louis Comolli, together with the British critics associated with *Screen*, like Laura Mulvey, Peter Wollen, Colin MacCabe, and Stephen Heath, were among the first theorists that brought psychoanalytic concepts to film studies (2007, p. 3). However, while the French critics were influenced by the Marxist theories of Louis Althusser, the British theorists were under the impact of the oeuvre of both Althusser and Raymond Williams.

The present paper, after introducing the methodological aspects and approach of the research, provides the review of literature by addressing the salient examples of the application of the British LAP model to reading films as well as highlighting the major critical concepts in the area of film studies. Accordingly, the exploration of the premises of "the apparatus theory," founded and developed by Christian Metz and Jean-Louis Baudry in the French-based critical discourse, does not constitute the central focus of the present study. Then, the objections to the LAP model in film theory, particularly in the American context, are elaborated through reference to the major examples both in critical theory and in cultural studies. Finally, the concluding section of the study is presented which focuses on the prominent figures who have investigated the interrelationship between language and ideology in the criticism of films.

2. Methodology: Objectives and the approach

Considering the LAP model as a critical approach in investigating subjectivity, the present paper contends that the exploration of *this model* provides a more comprehensive account of the process of the subject formation than a purely psychoanalytic or structuralist Marxist analysis of the term. The paper, thus, considers this model as a critical perspective for the analysis of the representation of subjectivity in films. This approach is, first of all, applicable to different phases in the development of the subject including both the infantile and mature years. Furthermore, it investigates the subject

from two different aspects that are its close affiliation to both language and ideology. Likewise, it brings into consideration the relation of the subject to both the individual and the social, and, thus focuses on language as the realm where they meet.

The objectives of the present research are twofold. First, it aims to focus on how the represented subjects in the films are positioned between language and ideology, and how their identity is constructed in terms f\of their association to both language and ideology. Secondly, it demonstrates how the application of the LAP model to reviewing an artistic work is illuminating in a better understanding of the representation of the subject's identity. Therefore, the goal of the present research could be categorized as the exploratory study, which structures and identifies new problems in the area of cultural criticism.

The present study compatibly provides a close analysis which consists of selection and discussion of theoretical and descriptive material as well as a detailed comparison of theories in terms of their applicability. The research method of the present paper is, thus, qualitative and categorized as theoretical study; correspondingly, the present paper will be entirely literature-based in that, in the academic library research, the conclusions are based on the analysis of data of a particular area. Being a case study, the present paper includes a close and in-depth examination of a single event in contemporary cultural theory, which is the Anglo-American response to the LAP model.

3. Critical concepts and literature review

A Lacanian–Althusserian approach toward film studies was employed in Britain from the 1970s onward. It was most evident in the works of Stephen Heath and Colin MacCabe, with Stephen Heath's *Questions of Cinema* (1981) in particular as a pioneering study. As mentioned in the preface to his book, most of the articles of the book are those of *Screen* in the early 1970s. The first chapter, "On Screen, in Frame: Film and Ideology," focuses on both Althusserian and psychoanalytic approaches in order to bring into consideration the "construction of the subject."

Heath's concept of "cinematic apparatus" is manifestly Althusserian in that it considers cinematography as an ideological apparatus. Moreover, his idea of "the structure of the subject" with reference to "the symbolic" is based on his readings of Jacques-Alain Miller, Lacan's most original disciple (1981, p. 14). In the concluding remarks of his "Language, Literature, Materialism," Heath argues that the formulation of "sociology of literature" is instrumental in further investigations of "the problem of language." He writes:

> The point is not to add linguistics to literature but to arrive at a linguistics capable of including the specific-material-effects of (literary) texts and extending the historical and political implications of those effects. It's here that I'd come back to the importance of psychoanalysis again, to the way in which Lacan has developed Freudian theory in the direction of "a materialist theory of language"; a theory that poses just that question of the construction of the individual as subject in the symbolic. (1977, p. 74)

The "linguistics" Heath argues for paves the way for a further development of a materialist theory of language, one that explores both the construction of the individual psyche and the formulation of ideology. As far as the development of the "individual psyche" is concerned, Heath considers the Lacanian notion of the triplet orders of subjectivity to be of high merit, and, for the formulation of ideology, Heath refers to both classical Marxist doctrines and Althusser's conception of ideology as present everywhere.

On the other hand, Colin MacCabe's work in reconsidering the ideological functions of cinema was also among the first attempts to develop film theory and criticism. Influenced by the cultural and literary theories of the 1960s and 1970s, MacCabe attempted to read films according to Althusser's Lacanian-colored definition of ideology as the "imaginary relation to the real conditions of existence." MacCabe argued the consideration of film as a representation of contradictory discourses and

not as a window that opens up to reality. In his "Theory and Film: Principles of Realism and Pleasure" MacCabe dealt with the relationship between "contradiction" and "the real" in the following way:

> ... I argue that film does not reveal the real in a moment of transparency, but rather that film is constituted by a set of discourses which (in the positions allowed to subject and object) produce a certain reality. The emphasis on production must be accompanied by one on another crucial Marxist term, that of contradiction. (1976, p. 11).

Thus, for MacCabe, film's paradoxical relation to the representation of the real, a Lacanian term, should be considered through contradiction, which is a manifestly Althusserian concept. Later in the same article MacCabe talks of the relation of the Symbolic to the Imaginary. He seems to solve the problem by referring to Lacan's idea of the dominance of the phallus. He also interprets Lacan's theory and contends that the lack is filled by phallus. He states:

> As speaking subjects we constantly oscillate between the symbolic and the imaginary – constantly imagining ourselves granting some full meaning to the words we speak, and constantly being surprised to find them determined by relations outside our control. But if it is the phallus which is the determining factor for the entry into difference, difference has already troubled the full world of the infant ... The phallus becomes the dominating metaphor for all these previous lacks. (p. 14)

MacCabe's approach to the Althusserian subject is that it is one without an unconscious because it is not being subject to the signifier. MacCabe, though referring to the essential differences between Lacan and Althusser, applies a LAP in his criticism of film and made this method a dominant trend in *Screen* (See MacCabe, 1985, pp. 4–17).

Dealing with the problems involved in any critical attempt that seeks to bring Althusser and Lacan's theories together, Celia Britton addresses the Althusserian concept of interpellation and argues that it happens when the subject is already a subject in Lacan. Britton writes:

> In practice, critics who have worked on the basis of a conjuncture of Althusser and Lacan have tended to ignore the specifically specular features of interpellation. The closeness of the two theories on a more global level has meant that a great many Althusserian critics have incorporated some Lacanian ideas into their work... in Britain this project has been carried on above all in the pages of Screen, in the mid- to late seventies, while its impact on literary studies has been rather less. (1995, p. 245)

Britton considers the Lacanian and Althusserian theories of the subject as two theories that were most significantly influential in the transition of structuralism to post-structuralism. She contends that both theories challenged the idealist perception of the subject as free, decision-maker, and autonomous. These critical approaches, thus, presented an anti-humanist notion of the subject. For Britton, the affinity between the theoretical developments that Lacan and Althusser introduced into psychoanalysis and Marxism, respectively, is categorized only in the realm of their incredible criticism of structuralism. As for the impact of *Screen* that sought to explore the closeness and association of these two theories, Britton argues that this critical effort had a rather little influence on literary studies.

The crucial point, however, is that the attitudes toward the subject in both Lacan and Althusser could be distinguishably interpreted. For instance, Lacan's concept of the subject of the unconscious, as Lorenzo Chiesa suggests, can designate two different meanings: "the *unconscious* subject" and "the subject *of* the unconscious." "The subject of the unconscious is, for Lacan," he writes, "both the *unconscious* subject, a psychic agency that is opposed to the agency of consciousness (or, better, self-consciousness), and the subject *of* the unconscious, the subject subjected to the unconscious" (2007, p. 35). The subject that is subjected to the unconscious is also subjected to the language he/ she is exposed to. Chiesa further discusses the Lacanian subject in four different areas that are "the subject of the Imaginary," "the subject of the Real," "the subject of the Symbolic," and "the subject

of the Fantasy." Therefore, the term "the subject of the unconscious" needs more elaboration in that a number of other terms including "the subject of desire" and "the subject of language" are also employed by the scholars of the Lacanian psychoanalytical approach.

As for specifically defining the Althusserian version of the subject, one could argue that there are—similar to what is observed in the literature on Lacan—quite a few terms used to signify the Althusserian concept of the subject. Whereas "the subject of ideology" is frequently employed to demonstrate Althusser's idea of the subject, Pierre Macherey and Stephanie Bundy in an essay on the impacts of the Althusserian thought on Judith Butler contend that "a theory of authority is developed in Althusser's text, one which is marked through-and-through by exploitation of the religious paradigm" (2014). "The subject of authority" in their understanding of Althusser is in close congruity to "the productive subject," a term later Macherey employed while exploring the Foucauldian paradigm of subjectivity by referring again to the Althusserian structural Marxist approach (2015).

There are frequent references to the similar treatment of both Lacanian and Althusserian theories of the subject in literary, cultural, and film criticism. For example, While Leigh Wilson regards the works of both of Althusser and Lacan as "structuralist rereadings" (2006, p. 170), Andrew Bennett and Nicholas Royle categorize them as a Post-Structuralist (2004, p. 172). The easy conflation of Althusser and Lacan is symptomatic of a broader attempt to divide theoretical positions into neat compartments, often with a limited exploration of the foundations and structures of competing positions. However, other critics have been more circumspect in their analysis. In an interview with David McInerney on her book, Caroline Williams refers to Althusser's relation to Lacan and Lacanianism as a "complex matter." She states:

> Althusser clearly recognised a certain affinity between Lacan's own project to read Freud and his own symptomatic reading of Marx, as well as the former's own intellectual marginalization and his own. His published correspondence with Lacan (1963–1966) is certainly indicative of this. Althusser even offered a seminar on Lacan in 1963–4 and was actively involved in Lacan's arrival at the Ecole Normale. He was deeply interested in the latter's work at this time. (2005)

As Williams further argues, "Althusser's distance from Lacan" was to be "strongly marked" in the latter phase of their intellectual life. Also, discussing the similarities of Lacan and Althusser's theories of the subject is considerably distinguishable from presenting a unified theoretical approach in terms of both approaches. Terry Eagleton, for example, merely points to the parallel lines of these two theories and is not concerned with a new approach based on them:

> The relation of an individual "subject" to society as a whole in Althusser's theory is rather like the relation of the small child to his or her mirror image in Lacan's. In both cases, the human subject is supplied with a satisfyingly unified image of selfhood by identifying with an object which reflects this image back to it in a closed, narcissistic circle. In both cases, too, this image involves a misrecognition, since it idealizes the subject's real situation. (1983, pp. 172–173)

Whereas Terry Eagleton appears much influenced by the Althusserian theory of ideological subjection, Stephen Heath and Colin MacCabe, though focusing on ideology, are more concerned with the Lacanian premises in their references to the Symbolic and the Imaginary. However, pointing to the impact of both Lacan's and Althusser's approaches and their close association, they have not yet succeeded in coming up with a converged theory that includes both approaches. They have also not focused on the possibility of a unified adoption of both approaches and their accounts hardly unified.

4. Objections to the LAP model in film theory

4.1. Major examples

Both Heath and MacCabe's intellectual contribution to *Screen* and their evaluations of film studies according to the Lacanian and Althusserian theories of the subject aroused a number of critical responses. David Bordwell and Carroll Noel were among those who responded critically to this theoretical orientation and criticized its consequences for film studies. "LAP," as Bordwell christened the LAP, was charged with being a "monolithic theoretical entity" that was attractive to critics because of its claims of "systematicity and comprehensive." He also argued that the proponents of LAP later "began purging their shelves of Althusser and Lacan" and, then, turned to "cultural studies" (1997, pp. 140–141).

Bordwell's views concerning LAP and his perspectives on film studies later motivated severe replies. Peter Lehman presented a harsh critique of Bordwell's idea of pluralism in film theory in *Cinema Journal* (See Lehman, 1998, pp. 90–92). Furthermore, Kay Young's response to David Bordwell in the "Especial Issue" of *SubStance* is a well-known example of the hot controversy over the application of LAP in film theory (Young, 2002).

Stephen Heath's *Questions of Cinema* (1981) gave birth to a new heated debate between Heath and Noel Carroll. Among his criticisms of Heath, Carroll pointed to the foundation to Heath's program as being "too Althusserian" (1983, p. 88). Carroll's criticism of Heath goes back to his long paper entitled "Address the Heathen" (1982) and it was followed by a number of books such as *Mystifying Movies: Fads and Fallacies in Contemporary Film Theory* (1988) and *Philosophical Problems of Classical Film Theory* (1988). Heath/Carroll debates in *October* and other journals including *Post-Theory* gained a significant attention in the period 1982–1983.

In his later works, Carroll particularly criticized the theoretical formulations of the "Parisian" traditions in general and Lacan and Althusser in particular. He harshly criticized the preoccupation of British critics with these theories, and, finally, renounced the post-structuralist theories in film studies. For example, he radically refuted Kaja Silverman's *The Subject of Semiotics* (1984) mainly because of her concern with a Lacanian–Althusserian model in her book. Carroll wrote:

> … there is a presumption among Althusserian-Lacanians that if human actions have certain structural conditions, they constrain human action in a way inimitable to autonomy. Languages have both syntactical rules and semantical rules. But it is strange to think of these as constraints that preclude autonomy. For these very features of language are what enable the speaker to speak – to, for example, denounce capitalism. If the language lacked these structural conditions, nothing could be said, which would in fact be a real blow to the possibility of human autonomy. (1988, pp. 78–79)

Noel Carroll's criticisms of the LAP model merely focus on the mechanical applications of these theories in the area of film studies. The earliest employment of the term "LAP" goes back to Carroll's *Mystifying Movies: Fads and Fallacies in Contemporary Film Theory,* where he dedicates a full chapter to exploring it. Addressing Althusser's definition of "ideology" and Lacan's concept of "the construction of the subject," he examines the inevitable influence of psychoanalysis on Marxism while, toward the end of the chapter, criticizing the "presuppositions" of the LAP model of reviewing films (1988, pp. 73–77). However, he does not present a critical investigation into the nature of these two theories or their limitations. His responses are general in the sense that he joins the mainstream criticism against post-structuralism and attempts to link Althusser and Lacanian thought to the now dominant post-structuralist criticism in the States. Most significantly, he does not provide his readers with a thorough philosophical reading of the limitations that would face any attempt that seeks to merge these two theories.

Carroll, Instead of presenting a critical reading of Lacan, simply expresses his uneasiness with psychoanalytical approach. He develops, in the next stage, a simplistic skepticism toward the whole heritage of psychoanalysis. Carroll, however, is mostly critical of a mechanical application of these theories to the area of film studies. As Vernon Shelty writes in his review of Bordwell and Carroll's *Post-Theory: Reconstructing Film Studies* (1996), "read Lacan on the Mirror Stage and Althusser on Ideological State Apparatuses, and the theoretical foundations of mainstream film study were yours in an afternoon" (1999, p. 476) This ironical interpretation by Shelty clearly demonstrates the reductionist application of both theories not only in film theory but also in the area of literary criticism in general. However, the main problem with Carroll's investigations is their simplistic evaluation and radical refutation of a major part of the whole tradition of contemporary critical theory.

Another simultaneous employment of the term LAP in film studies is observed in Kristin Thompson's *Breaking the Glass Armor: Neoformalist Film Analysis* (1988). She considers the LAP model as only one of the many methods of what she calls Neoformalist approach to analyzing films. Similar to Bordwell and Caroll, she, too, renounces the claims that argue for the comprehensiveness of this model. "Neoformalism," she writes, "offers a reasonable sketch of an ontology, epistemology, and aesthetics for answering the questions it poses, and these are not commensurable with the presuppositions of the Saussurean-Lacanian-Althusserian paradigm" (p. 29). Throughout the first chapter of her book, which is a critical investigation into the methods supposedly engaged in Neoformalist approach, she contends that the LAP model, contrary to what is generally demonstrated, not only does not fully explore the multi-dimensionality feature in films but also is incompatible to both philosophical and artistic aspects of Neoformalism.

More recently, there have emerged a number of film studies in terms of Deleuze and Guattari's criticism of both Lacanian and Althusserian concepts of the subject. Deleuze and Guattari did not directly work in the area of film studies; however, their ideas have proved to be of central interest to recent reading of films in that they provided an outstandingly insightful critique of a number of both Lacanian and Althusserian concepts. Hence, Allan James Thomas in *Critical Dictionary of Film and Television Theory* contends that "this critique [that of Deleuze and Guattari] has entered film theory in a sporadic fashion at best, perhaps due to the formidable conceptual and stylistic difficulty of their writing" (2014, p. 152).

While Althusser redefined ideology as having "a material existence" (1971, p. 112), Deleuze and Guattari dismissed ideology as "the most execrable concept obscuring all of the effectively operating social machines" (2013b, p. 79). In addition, through re-examining Althusser's critique of the simplistic and one-to-one relation between the base and superstructure in reductionist Marxism, Deleuze and Guattari radically denounce the deterministic fatalism of the Althusserian framework of thought. According to them, subjectivity is not "a condition internal to language" (p. 151); it is, however, the product of a network of assemblages including a versatile system of signs and forms of expression. Deleuze and Guattari's views come close to those of Judith Butler in that she contends that the subject, while conceived in Althusser as totally under the inevitable impact of ideology with no emancipations at work, can move toward the status of becoming an active agent who constructively succeeds in re-signifying the signifying chain (1997, pp. 111–112).

As for Deleuze and Guattari's critique of Lacan, they argue that desire is not, as Lacan maintained, constituted within negativity and does not function based on lack; however, they contend that desire could be conceived of as a productive force. Lacan argued lack is engendered when the subject encounters the other in both the mirror stage and language acquisition phases. Negativity for Lacan emerges upon the entry of the subject into the Imaginary and, particularly, the Symbolic. Desire in Lacan is posited as driven by this lack which functions in terms of negativity. On the other hand, Deleuze and Guattari focused on the idea of "desiring-machines," which function by productive flows. They argued that "desire constantly couples continuous flows" (2013a, p. 7). Hence, the "machinic assemblages" in Deleuze and Guattari is highly critical of the Lacanian rather familiar concept

of the desiring subject in that desire now becomes positive and productive whereas, in Lacan, it was conceived of being a lack that functions in terms of negativity.

4.2. The LAP model in cultural studies

The re-examination of Althusser's idea of the relation of ideology to subjectivity in the area of cultural studies has been considerably influential in the study of films. Stuart Hall is a renowned example of the critics who have commented on the relation of ideology to subjectivity. Hall refers to those moments that the subjects are located in new ideological "positions" in the following way:

> People with identities and relations to language already secured nevertheless can find themselves repositioned in new ideological configurations … ideologies have to struggle to recruit the same lived individuals for quite contradictory subject places in their discourses. I want to ask how people who already have an orientation to language nevertheless are constantly placed and replaced in relation to particular ideological discourses that hail and recruit them for a variety of positions. (1988, p. 68)

He critically reads Althusser's theory of subjectivity arguing that the subjection to ideology may also have an opposite direction; this happens when the subject may influence the ideology. Therefore, the subjection to ideology has a twofold designation: although ideology hails the subject, the subject is consciously aware of being hailed by ideology. Moreover, there is always an internal dialectical process at work that is in parallel to what happens outside. As for these two external and internal processes, Hall seems to "reconcile" Lacan with Foucault. In his response to the theoretical limitation posed in Althusser he finds a solution by combining an "external" discursive realm and "psychic" acts of identification. For Hall, identity is "the meeting point" between

> on one hand, the discourses and practices which attempt to "interpellate", speak to us or hail us into place as the social subjects of particular discourses, and on the other hand, the processes which produce subjectivities, which construct us as subjects which can be "spoken". Identities are thus points of temporary attachments to the subject positions which discursive practices construct for us. (1996, p. 6)

Hall criticizes Althusser for providing a theory of subjectivity that has resulted in the "two sides of the problem of ideology." (1985, p. 102) A similar treatment regarding theoretical limitations in Althusser can be observed in Michele Barrett's *The Politics of Truth: From Marx to Foucault* (1991). She criticizes Althusser's attempt to develop Marxism through Lacanian terminology. She writes: "Althusser's substantive contribution to the theorization of subjectivity—his development of the concept of "interpellation"—attempts the impossible task of integrating Marx and Lacan" (1991, p. 83). As a result, any discussion of the concept of "ideological language" in any artistic work of art is due to fail in that language, being abstract, and ideology, being concrete in Althusserian terms, cannot be converged.

The contribution of Althusser's thought not only to Marxism but also to cultural studies in general and film studies in particular should not be underestimated. Althusser enjoys a wide popularity among media and film studies. His concept of Ideological State Apparatus is not only widely applied to the reading of films, but also meets further theorizations and re-considerations. For example, Michael Sprinker names "a number of distinctively Althusserian themes that have achieved general currency" and have been later "subject to development and refinement." (1995, p. 203) A quick look at the eight Althusserian theses mentioned by Sprinker in his paper would be illuminating in reconsidering Althusser's influence in other areas of the human sciences such as esthetics and politics. Among the Althusserian theses that are in close affinity with the present study are, first, the relative autonomy of the superstructures and the reciprocal action of the superstructures on the base, and, secondly, the permanence of ideology and the specificity of art in relation to ideology (p. 204).

The application of the LAP model to the criticism of both film and cultural studies has been recently evaluated in the popular Hindi cinema, Bollywood. Ronie Parciack (2016), while reflecting on the ontology of cinema in Hindu context, argues that "the theories built on the LAP depict certain aspects of the potency ascribed to the medium, but remain within the subject captured by a false, misleading image." She writes:

> This does not imply that such theories are redundant and inapplicable to political or psychological readings of Indian cinema. Quite the contrary: such readings have proved to be effective and reflect dominant trends in cultural studies. Nevertheless, such theoretical presumptions impede a better understanding of both the aesthetic and metaphysical foundations embodied in Hindi films. (p. 101)

Although her first response to the question of the application of the LAP model is ambivalently, she ultimately expresses her uneasiness with this model since, according to her, it overlooks the esthetic aspect of the films. Providing a culturally sensitive reading of Hindi films, the book is mostly engaged in the exploration of the vernacular arenas of popular culture and mass communication through the analysis of Hindi cinema.

More fundamentally, there are also a number of works that have argued against any possible convergence of Lacan and Althusser not only in film theory but also in the other areas of the humanities. These objections have a long history of incongruity that first began with attempts to reconcile Freud and Marx. This reconciliation is now being further complicated in that it goes back to the debates over the simultaneous application of both Marxism and Hegelianism. Lacan's obvious Hegelianism and Althusser's insistence on Marx's rupture with Hegel are manifestly incongruous in their analysis of the representation of subjectivity. Therefore, the question of the representation of the "ideological language" in film studies originally goes back to a theoretical controversy between film critics of the both sides of the Atlantic. The above-mentioned debate over the application of the LAP model in the area of film theory is not simply a twentieth-century problem (Warminski, 1995, p. 118). The mentioned debate rather originally goes back to the nineteenth-century sharp epistemological break that attempted to remove from Marx all Hegelian colors.

As earlier, demonstrated, there are certain differences in the Lacanian and Althusserian theories of the subject that need more attention. For example, a major criticism of the theoretical cogency of the LAP model is that the Lacanian and Althusserian accounts cannot be presented in the form of a unified theory since they are dealing with two essentially dissimilar objects of study. Whereas Lacan was concerned with the unconscious and language as based on "lack," Althusser considered ideology as having a "material" existence. Therefore, in order to argue for LAP one should also demonstrate the conditions of the convergence of "lack" and "material." Moreover, while Althusser related the subject to ideology and the social, Lacan contemplated on its relation to the unconscious and the individual. In addition, each one of these theories is concerned with a particular stage of the development of the subject; whereas Lacan dealt with the formation of the subject's unconscious through language acquisition in the pre-oedipal and oedipal periods, Althusser worked on the role of ideologies mostly in the post-oedipal life of the subject.

5. Conclusion

The present paper examined those theoretical works that have attempted to make a parallel use of both Lacanian and Althusserian theories of the subject in the area of film studies. It sought to investigate the position of the subject between language and ideology as represented in film theory. In its early applications, the LAP was both employed and harshly criticized in the area of film theory and criticism. Lacanian and Althusserian theories of the subject were also applied in cultural studies without a deep investigation of the problems that emerge in such convergence. Whereas Stephen Heath and Colin MacCabe advocated the application of the LAP model in film theory, David Bordwell and Noel Carroll harshly criticized it.

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In order to investigate the relation between language and ideology as represented in the artistic works it is illuminating to focus on the Lacanian and Althusserian theories of subjectivity. However, Althusserian Marxism and Lacanian Psychoanalysis have a long history of incongruity that not only originated from Freud's inventive method at the beginning of the twentieth century but also began with Marx's criticism of the German idealist tradition in the mid-nineteenth century. Althusser's framework of thought was epistemologically different from Lacanian theory in that while Lacan was influenced by Hegel, Althusser attempted to purify Marx from all Hegelian colors.

As explored in the paper, although attempts have been made in the areas of film and cultural studies to bring language and ideology together in the form of an "ideological language," these attempts met radical evaluations in the area of film theory. The LAP that provided a model for film studies in the 1970s and early 1980s faced serious revisions in the late 1980s and the 1990s. If applied without a critical investigation of the incongruity between both constituent theories, the LAP model shall suffer from certain theoretical weak points that emerge in such amalgamation, some of which were highlighted above.

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