

## **Basic formulations and methodology**

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The aim of my research project was to conduct a detailed, critical analysis of contemporary, philosophical film theories that are related to a two volume book by French philosopher, Gilles Deleuze – *Cinéma 1. L'Image-Mouvement, Cinéma 2, L'Image-temps*. The main thesis I have organized my project around was the claim, that the most prominent, contemporary achievement in the European film theory is inspired by/or polemically derived from Deleuzian film philosophy.

In order to clearly demonstrate and prove my arguments, I have delineated a map of film theory that consisted of all the former and current methodologies and attempts in the history of film studies. My methodological approach was based on Foucauldian concepts of archeology and genealogy, as well as a study of *épistemes*, power–knowledge relation, discourses and the condition of particular film theories' potentiality within the history of academic thinking about the film.

Among other theorists, Michel Foucault was not alone in his approach. There were several other philosophers who similarly undertook the problem of historical examination as a basic notion of understanding changes in thought, knowledge, art, discourse. For the purpose of my project I have included their critical theories in order to better understand the shifts and development of film theory in relation to historical conditions. To name few of the philosophers that I have derived inspirations from: Walter Benjamin, Pierre Bourdieu, Theodor Adorno, Georges Didi-Huberman, Fredric Jameson, Jürgen Habermas, Gilles Deleuze, Henri Bergson, Karl Marx, Jacques Rancière.

The caesura of the project was a complete film theory by Gilles Deleuze, inspired by Bergsonian philosophy and presented in the acknowledged book, *Cinéma 1. L'Image-Mouvement, Cinéma 2, L'Image-temps*. Following the genealogical/archeological examination of film theory, I introduced and examined the key concepts of Deleuzian thought that allowed me to place his work in the historical context and define a state of knowledge in film studies of the time. Meticulous studies of Deleuzian film theory have laid the foundations for the essential part of the project – examining contemporary, philosophical/political film theories.

## **Research focus and main goal**

In the final part of my research I have collected, compared and analyzed some of the most prominent contemporary academic writings that included philosophical study of film. I decided to focus my attention on few philosophers, who are representatives for contemporary, European piecemeal theorizing: Giorgio Agamben, Alain Badiou, Jean-Luc Nancy, Jacques Rancière, Slavoj Žižek. None of the above philosophers have formed a complete film theory *par excellence*. They all make use of cinema and film in order to exemplify broader ontological or epistemological problems. They make references to politics, sociology, philosophy, aesthetics, psychoanalysis or culture studies and consider film as a phenomenon that can clearly demonstrate their academic theories. Although their thinking about cinema and film is different from each other and their works are related to various academic disciplines, they all seem to derive inspiration from Deleuzian film theory, using it as a starting point for their studies.

The main purpose of the research project was an attempt to construct a contemporary film theory that is based on philosophical thoughts and involve political, social and cultural studies. I did not wish to form a complete film theory, similar to those, popular in the 50's or 60's. My ambition was rather to illustrate from a theoretical perspective, a shift and progress of contemporary, philosophical film thought as a particular discourse practice that is coherent with/and symptomatic to the (late modern) philosophical *épisteme* as such. In this sense all of the examined philosophers show similarities in their general approach to film by relating it to the problems of metaphysics, rebuilding a concept of subject, combining aesthetical examination of cinema with politics and ethics and also illustrating how film and philosophy are related to each other in terms of producing concepts, knowledge and new forms of visual experiences and cognition.

## **Conclusions and further research perspectives**

As a result of my research studies at Columbia University, New York, I have come to conclusion that all of the authors that I examined in terms of contemporary political film theories form a specific, consistent group. By placing their concepts and theories in relation to Deleuzian film theory I have also discovered several dialectical relations to it. They are at the same time symptomatic to contemporary philosophical thought that's ambition is to surpass the crisis of postmodernism as a failed realization of emancipatory project. The consequence

of it is visible in the ways all of the theoreticians I examined are willing to rebuild the concept of metaphysics and reject the notion of postmodernism as a philosophical paradigm that is focused on deconstructing the idea of subject, truth, reality, etc.

One of the main aim of my research was to illustrate how all of the authors try to reclaim conditions of possibility for contemporary forms of cinematic images by problematizing and rethinking its relationship to both modernity and postmodernity in their various visual forms of existence. By arguing for a new, political approach to cinema and proposing alternative, “post-postmodern” idea of film studies I suggested conducting critical analysis based on redefining the ways (post)modern theories and practices expressed relations between the subject and the object, form and matter, real and appearance, public and private.

Both modern and postmodern modes of production of visibilities go beyond simple technological and aesthetical conditionings and possibilities and are interlinked with broader, social, cultural and political grounds. In other words, what appears on aesthetic level of representation was already possible to appear before it did as a result of political, social and cultural conditionings and distinctions. The need to reexamine cinematic images in relation to modern and postmodern theories is based on the fact that both of them were misleading and wrong in terms of abandoning this fundamental relationship between aesthetics and politics. Moreover they didn’t focus their attention on the distribution of potentiality (understood after Giorgio Agamben) in the visual forms with relation to political power.

Before entering new cultural period that is funded on critical rejection of postmodernism and implementation of new, affirmative cultural paradigm, I find it significant to perform a genealogy of cinematic images in its relationship to modern and postmodern culture. The importance of my research does not simply rely on justifying various contexts for the possibilities of cinematic images as such but crucially rethinking their legacies and propose new, alternative approaches to the ways visibility can be thought nowadays. In other words, the shift I proposed reverse the Benjamin’s concept of aestheticization of politics into the politicization of aesthetics as a basic methodology of my approach to reclaim the potential of cinematic images and its political grounding.