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PASCALE GILLOT

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ABSTRACT: This paper deals with the general topic of subjectivity and subjectivation, considered through a philosophical tradition opposed to the 'philosophies of consciousness': that is, a philosophical tradition, from Spinoza to Althusser, that rejects as a myth the supposed primacy and pre-social character of subjective identity.

THE MUNCHAUSEN EFFECT

Subjectivity and Ideology

Pascale Gillot

This paper deals with the general topic of subjectivity and subjectivation, considered through a philosophical tradition opposed to the ‘philosophies of consciousness’: that is, a philosophical tradition, from Spinoza to Althusser, that rejects as a myth the supposed primacy and pre-social character of subjective identity.

The rejection of this ‘myth’ indeed stands at the core of the theory of ideology developed by Althusser in a famous text first published in 1970, ‘*Idéologie et appareils idéologiques d’État*’ (‘Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses’).¹ This theory of ideology entails the conceptual disqualification of a pure, originary subjectivity that would be given before the inscription of human individuals in the institutions, apparatuses, and so on, of social formations. But it appears to be inseparable from a general, persistent questioning about subjectivation, since, according to the celebrated Althusserian claim, the fundamental mechanism of ideology is nothing else but *the interpellation of individuals as or into subjects* (‘l’interpellation *en sujet*’).

Althusser’s theory of ideological interpellation was quite influential, as regards philosophy, anthropology, linguistics, and social sciences in general, in the intellectual context of the 1970s. It is still an object of important debates in contemporary philosophy, concerning the question of ‘recognition’, subjectivation, and their social conditions.²

It could seem on a first reading that this theory of subjective interpellation presents some inner causal circularity, an undecidability, characterized by an unsolvable conflict between a thesis and an antithesis. In that precise respect – that is, in its undecidable character – it reminds us of the dilemmatic, conflictual structure inherent to the antinomies of pure reason described by Kant in the ‘Transcendental Dialectic’ of the *Critique of Pure Reason*.³ To put it briefly, the Althusserian subject is always a subjected one; it is necessarily constituted inside the realm of ideology, which would mean the antecedence of the Law (ideology) with regard to the constitution of subjective identity. Yet at the very same time, the subject has *always-already* been a subject, and this is the

very condition for subjective recognition, for the answer of the 'subject' to the call of the Law. This could mean that in a peculiar way, there would be some 'entity' like a subject even before the process of ideological interpellation; and this strange pre-existing subject would be a condition for the very functioning of the interpellation–subjectivation mechanism.

In that respect, the paradoxical Althusserian subject, which would in a disconcerting way precede itself in the subjectivation process, might be described as a '*Kippbild*-subject', oscillating in an endless, undecidable manner between a constituted and a constituting dimension. The *Kippbild* figure, in the present case, would then be the paradoxical, multistable representation of an undecidable conflictuality.

As a matter of fact, the apparent contradiction in this subjectivation process theorized by Althusser has been sometimes described as a 'Munchausen effect' (ME): an allusion to the fictionalized memoirs of *Baron Munchausen*, who, having fallen into a pond, pulled himself out of the pond by grasping his own hair.⁴ The 'subject-effect', in the Althusserian perspective, would present the same puzzling structure, the same causal circularity, as the grotesque adventure of Baron Munchausen. The ME would in that sense designate the famous '*circularity*' *problem* supposedly at work within the Althusserian theory of interpellation, as it has been underscored by many authors and commentators.⁵

The question is then the following: Is this circularity structure an effective one, in the Althusserian theory of subjectivity, or is it only an 'appearance'? In other words, what does the antinomy show us on these matters, and wouldn't it be possible, like Kant using the 'skeptical method' in the Transcendental Dialectic of the *Critique of Pure Reason*, to search for the hidden postulate, the 'point of misunderstanding', at the very basis of the 'contradiction' verdict?⁶

In this paper, I shall explore first the hypothesis that the ME verdict addressed to Althusser's theory might be symptomatic of an inadequate reading due to an ill-constructed problematization of subjectivation: a problematization articulated to the question of an 'origin', and thus leading to the so-called infinite dilemmas related to the '*Kippbild*-subject'. I will nevertheless try to show that one may still rightly evoke an ME, *concerning not the Althusserian approach itself, but the subjectivation process as such*: that is, the 'subject-effect', in so far as the latter is built upon a necessary, irreducible *contradiction*. For this argument, I will largely lean on the analyses propounded in the 1970s by the lin-

guist and philosopher Michel Pêcheux, former student of Louis Althusser. These analyses are precisely concerned with ideology, discourse, *subject-effect*, and *sense-effect*.⁷

I. THE ALTHUSSERIAN DILEMMA ABOUT IDEOLOGICAL SUBJECTIVATION: THE CIRCULARITY OF THE INTERPELLATION AS SUBJECT

Let us consider the main claims at work in the Althusserian theory of ideology, such as they were systematically developed in 'Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses' (IISA):⁸

- Ideology (the realm of the imaginary, the representation of the imaginary relationship of individuals to their real conditions of existence) is the necessary element of human life in so far as it is inseparable from any kind of social formation. This structural necessity of ideology is asserted through the provocative Althusserian claim: '*ideology has no history*'. It is directed against the traditional, mechanistic reduction of ideology to a mere vanishing echo, or reflection, of 'the real life'.
- '*Ideology has a material existence*' (Ideological State Apparatuses: Family, School, Church, Party, Syndicate, etc.).
- 'There is no ideology except by the subject and for subjects.'
- '*Ideology interpellates individuals as subjects*' ('L'idéologie interpelle les individus en sujets'). This last claim is specified as follows: 'There is no ideology except for concrete subjects, and this destination of ideology is only made possible by the subject: meaning, *by the category of the subject* and its functioning.' And: '*The category of the subject is only constitutive of all ideology insofar as all ideology has the function (which defines it) of "constituting" concrete individuals as subjects*'.⁹

Althusser illustrates this series of claims about the ideology–subjectivation conceptual device through a 'theoretical scene', which has the status of a thought experiment. It is the famous scene of the 'police hailing' ('Hey, you there!'), which is exemplary of the ideological 'interpellation as subject'. It reveals the subjection structure inherent to any subjectivation process (the subjection to the Law). It is meant to show the inadequacy of the traditional problematic of free will and immediate self-

transparency of consciousness; and it is also meant to replace the classical concept of a constituting subject with the concept of a *constituted subject*. The theoretical scene is described by Althusser in the following terms:

I shall then suggest that ideology ‘acts’ or ‘functions’ in such a way that it ‘recruits’ subjects among the individuals (it recruits them all), or ‘transforms’ the individuals into subjects (it transforms them all) by that very precise operation which I have called *interpellation* or hailing, and which can be imagined along the lines of the most commonplace everyday police (or other) hailing: ‘Hey, you there!’.

Assuming that the theoretical scene I have imagined takes place in the street, the hailed individual will turn round. By this mere one-hundred-and-eighty-degree physical conversion, he becomes a *subject*. Why? Because he has recognized that the hail was ‘really’ addressed to him, and that ‘it was *really him* who was hailed’ (and not someone else). [...]

Naturally for the convenience and clarity of my little theoretical theatre I have had to present things in the form of a sequence, with a before and an after, and thus in the form of a temporal succession. There are individuals walking along. Somewhere (usually behind them) the hail rings out: ‘Hey, you there!’ One individual (nine times out of ten it is the right one) turns round, believing/suspecting/knowing that it is for him, i.e. recognizing that ‘it is really he’ who is meant by the hailing. But in reality these things happen without any succession. The existence of ideology and the hailing or interpellation of individuals as subjects are one and the same thing.¹⁰

It seems on a first reading that these claims taken together present a circular structure: a logical circle, which takes the aspect of an antinomy, a conflict of reasoning with itself, in the Kantian way. The issue at stake here is the subjectivation process. A question appears: If the subject is not *constituting* (as it was considered to be in the classical metaphysics of the subject), but rather *constituted* and *determined* as such, in the very element of ideology, how does one *recognize* oneself as being a subject, this hailed, interpellated subject?

The apparent antinomy or *Kippbild* structure at work in the Althusserian approach to the constitution of subjective identity would then sound as follows: on the one hand, an individual is not a subject before he has been subjected–interpellated by ideology: the *Law of culture*, in the reappropriation made by Althusser of the Lacanian symbolic order.¹¹ This is the anti-idealist, anti-Cartesian claim that links subjectivity to subjection. But on the other hand, and simultaneously,

one may say that the very condition for an individual to be a subject that is to respond to the interpellation of the Law is precisely that he *recognizes* himself as being indeed the particular addressee of the call. ('It's me, it's really me!') The ideological mechanism of the turning round or conversion, inherent to the subjectivation–humanization process, supposes that the individual, even before turning round ('It's me!'), 'knows' that he is – already – a subject: *this* subject.

In a nutshell, interpellation – be it the police hailing, or, according to the 'example' of 'the Christian religious ideology' provided at the end of IISA,¹² the divine performative Call that the (Absolute) Subject-God exerts upon the subject (Moses, the servant of God, receiving the Law) – constitutes the individual *into subject*. It is then a prerequisite for the elaboration–production of subjective identity itself: Moses, subjected to the Law, to the Other Subject, asserts through this very subjection his own identity, with the answer: 'It is (really) I! I am Moses thy servant, speak and I shall listen!'

Yet it appears, on the other hand, that the *addressee* of such an interpellation, the individual who turns round and responds to the *External Call* (the policeman, or God himself), recognizes himself as its 'destinataire', as though the subject had always-already existed, *even before* being 'hailed' by the Other (the Law): that is, even before being constituted by and through this interpellation process. One could suppose then some prior, not yet interpellated figure of subjectivity that would also represent a causal pre-condition for the functioning of the subjectivation–interpellation mechanism.

We reach here the disconcerting structure of what could appear as a 'causal circularity' at work in the subjectivation process described by Althusser, which could be named, following a formula by Michel Pêcheux, 'the subject as the origin of the subject'.¹³ Such a logical circularity, characteristic (in appearance) of the subjective constitution *in* the Althusserian theory, and which could also be seen as a circularity between the external and the internal, is the target of a critique conducted by Slavoj Žižek in *The Sublime Object of Ideology*. According to Žižek, the 'weak point' of the Althusserian school on the topic of subjectivity would be that it fails in the task of explaining the subjectivation process as such: that is, the way through which the inscription of the individual in the 'external' frame of the Ideological State Apparatuses (the Church, the School, etc.) could give birth to the subjective (inner) recognition of oneself in the interpellation mechanism.¹⁴ This

would lead Althusser to suppose implicitly, in a paradoxical way *as regards his own theoretical premises*, a subject at the origin of the subject: that is, precisely an ME, which would reveal at the same time the dead end of Althusser's explanation. It appears undecidable, from Althusser's perspective, whether the subject gets entirely constructed in the External Call, or, on the contrary, pre-exists its own interpellation.

We are confronted here, through this causal circularity, with the *Kippbild* structure typical of the Kantian antinomies: a thesis (the constituted subject) and an antithesis (the always-already existing subject) oppose each other, but the discovery of the incompatibility between the thesis and the antithesis does not lead to any solution that would consist in attributing a *truth value* to one proposition or to the other proposition.

One would be tempted to conclude, then, that *Althusser's theory itself* is hopelessly circular, and that the absence of any solution regarding the – internal or external – ‘cause’ of subjectivation should lead us to abandon such a theoretical path, initially meant to represent a concurrent explanation to the Cartesian paradigm of the Cogito. Such a conclusion, though, might be too hasty, if one precisely considers the Kantian argumentation about the antinomies and their undecidability. The theoretical conflict between the two antagonistic theses of the antinomy cannot, by definition, be solved as such. Yet, as we have already remarked, the Kantian recourse to the ‘skeptical method’ permits going beyond this dialectical conflict between thesis and antithesis by showing that they constitute a wrong alternative, both being founded upon a *false premise*.¹⁵

Generally speaking, Kant's critical approach may be inspiring for our purpose, in so far as it suggests that the analysis of the antinomy has a heuristic function: on the condition that the ‘antinomy’ should be adequately considered: that is, not as a well-constructed problem, but rather as a *theoretical symptom*, the result of a ‘category mistake’, as Gilbert Ryle would put it.¹⁶ Using the sceptical method, we can then engage in the symptomatological search for the ‘hidden postulate’ that grounds the – contestable – verdict of an antinomy at work in the Althusserian theory of the subject. After all, the author of IISA himself, asserting his main theses about ideological interpellation, did call attention to the fact that what seemed to be a temporal process (the constitution into subject) in reality did not happen in time: this point did not strike him as a sign of weakness in his own theory. On the contrary, he

insisted upon the specificity of such a paradoxical mechanism, which accounted for the structural illusion of the subject: that is, the illusion of being a free, non-determined subject, what he called ‘the elementary ideological effect’. He himself connected this ideological illusion about the obviousness or ‘evidentness’ of being a free, originary subject to another pseudo-obviousness, that is, to another myth: the ‘transparency’ of language.¹⁷

II. THE ME 1: THE APORIAS OF THE ORIGINARY SUBJECT, ACCORDING TO ALTHUSSER AS READ BY PÊCHEUX

I will examine the hypothesis that, in the last instance, the Althusserian subjectivation process appears to be an antinomy if, and only if, one presupposes that there must be some kind of subjective condition *prior* to the recognition act, *before* the turning round as an answer to the ideological interpellation.

The analysis of the so-called antinomy is nevertheless interesting and has an epistemological function: it reveals, ultimately, that one falls unavoidably into a trap, a logical circle, if one tries to *theorize* the question of subjectivation through the *ideological* framework defined by the problematic of the *origin*, the ‘first cause’, *causa prima*.

Althusser saw these aporias, and this is particularly clear through the reading of the Althusserian texts on ideology, conducted by Michel Pêcheux in the 1970s. Such a reading will help us to dissolve a crucial misunderstanding concerning the ME about the subject: the ME, indeed, is located, not in Althusser’s texts, but, on the contrary, in the *idealist theory of the subject* of which he developed a radical critique.

Michel Pêcheux was a student of Louis Althusser at the École Normale Supérieure in Paris (Rue d’Ulm). He wrote a few articles on ideology in the *Cahiers pour l’analyse*¹⁸ (under the pseudonym of Thomas Herbert), before publishing an important book called *Les vérités de la Palice* (1975), translated into English under the title *Language, Semantics and Ideology (LSI)*. Pêcheux developed the Althusserian insights regarding ideology and subjective interpellation in relationship to structural linguistics, within the anti-idealist frame of a ‘discourse analysis’ (*analyse du discours*), identified with a materialist, anti-psychologist ‘theory of discourse’.¹⁹ He was then led to build what he called a ‘non-subjectivist theory of the subject’.²⁰

It is remarkable that Pêcheux himself mentions a ‘Munchausen effect’ regarding the topic of subjectivation. But according to him, the ME does not define, rigorously speaking, Althusser’s anti-subjectivist approach to the question of the subject. The ME characterizes, rather, subjectivism: that is, the repetition, in the field of theory itself, of the typical illusions produced by ideology – the *illusions of meaning and of subject*, the common illusions of a priority and ‘obviousness’ of meaning (*le sens*) and of subject, which were previously criticized by Althusser himself.²¹ The ME, in that respect, would be nothing but the typical circular structure of subjectivist and psychologist approaches in the fields of philosophy and semantics: a typical structure that would lead to the absurdity of asserting endlessly a subject at the origin of the subject, or a meaning at the origin of meaning.

According to Pêcheux’s critique of semantics, which is directly influenced by Althusser, the *vicious circle* characteristic of the duplication, at the theoretical level, of the pseudo-obviousnesses about subject and meaning, is the following:

The evident fact states: words have a meaning because they have a meaning, and subjects are subjects because they are subjects: but behind the evident character there is the absurdity of a vicious circle in which one seems to be lifting oneself into the air, like Baron von Munchausen [...].²²

The fundamental and essential issue of the critical reference to the ME, in the third part of Pêcheux’s book, *LSI*, appears then to be anti-psychologism. Indeed, the ME example intervenes another time in this book, in the Introduction, when Pêcheux evokes the Fregean critique of any psychological theory of knowledge. According to the logician Gottlob Frege, the reduction of a theory of knowledge to psychology leads to an absurdity:

‘Now since every act of cognition is realised in judgements, this means the breakdown of any bridge to the objective. And all our striving to attain to this can be no more than an attempt to draw ourselves up by our own bootstraps’ (*sich am eigenen Schopfe aus dem Sumpfe zu ziehen* – literally ‘pull ourselves out of the bog by our own hair’).²³

This strategic recourse to the ME verdict for the needs of the battle against psychologism and its dead ends is interesting. Althusser and Pêcheux’s anti-psychologism follows in that precise respect the Fregean logicist tradition, which could be called, in other – Foucauldian – terms,

the ‘philosophy of concept’. The ME accusation, therefore, might be understood as being equally directed against a philosophical correlate of psychologism, namely subjectivism, the representation of a free, spontaneous subject, or the representation of the subject *as* origin – of its own identity, acts, and so on.

We may conclude from such a particular understanding of the ME, that one is confronted with an antinomy regarding the Althusserian subject *if and only if* one asks this question of its origin. But it has to be acknowledged that Althusser’s materialist approach consists precisely in refuting this problematic of the origin and in attempting to define the subjective condition through the category of the ‘subject-effect’, the subject *as* effect.

The widely diffused hypothesis of an ME in the Althusserian theory of subjectivation appears then to leave aside significant theses involved in such a theory. First, such an ME regards *the subject only in its idealist definition as primary subject*: it defines the very *illusion* of being a *constituting* subject, as though the subject could endlessly precede itself. In the Althusserian theory, as it was understood by Pêcheux, on the contrary, the subject gets defined as a *necessary* ‘effect of the preconstructed’ (*un effet de préconstruit*). If we may allude to Pêcheux’s discourse analysis discussed below (Part III), the subject as subject of discourse is nothing but a paradoxical *causa sui* (the supposed prior subject) produced in reality as a *result*, an effect. It is the result of the *interdiscourse* dissimulated within an *intradiscourse*. The *interdiscourse* (the preconstructed), represents the complex whole of discursive formations, in so far as they are intertwined with ideological formations.²⁴ It always-already marks the place of the subject, in the ambiguities of syntax. At the same time, it conceals itself and its own causal effectiveness in the very production of its effects, which defines the typical causal structure of the unconscious and of ideology.

The concept of *discursive formation* plays a fundamental role here: although partly borrowed from Foucault, it is modified and reinserted within a Marxist theory of social–ideological formations (see note 19). Following the definition by Pêcheux, a discursive formation has to be understood as

that which in a given ideological formation, i.e., from a given position in a given conjuncture determined by the state of class struggle, determines ‘*what can and should be said*’.²⁵

As to the *intradiscourse*, it is defined as

the operation of discourse with respect to itself (what I am saying now, in relation to what I have said *before* and what I shall say *afterwards*, i.e., the set of ‘co-reference’ phenomena that secure what can be called the ‘thread of the discourse’ as discourse of a subject).²⁶

The condition for the constitution of the subject-form is precisely the absorption-forgetting of the interdiscourse in the intradiscourse: ‘interdiscourse *appears* to be the pure “already-said” of intradiscourse, in which it is articulated by “coreference”’.²⁷

This inversion of causality lies at the heart of the subject-form: the forgetting of an exteriority (the preconstructed, the interdiscourse based upon an intertwining – ‘*intrication*’ – between discursivity and ideology), that is, the dissimulation of the determination process linked to interdiscourse, produces this ‘interiority without exteriority’, which accounts for the *fantasmatic* structure of subjective identity.

This contradiction between ‘*causa sui*’ and ‘result’ is also fundamental in the constitution of the subject as other than itself, that is, as a speaking subject necessarily grasped into the symbolic network of *shifting effects* and into the *signifier process*. In that respect, Pêcheux has recourse to Lacan’s definition of the subject, when he decides to consider

*the subject as process (of representation) inside the non-subject constituted by the network of signifiers, in Lacan’s sense: the subject is ‘caught’ in this network – ‘common nouns’ and ‘proper names’, ‘shifting’ effects, syntactic constructions, etc. – such that he results as ‘cause of himself’, in Spinoza’s sense of the phrase. And it is precisely the existence of this contradiction (the production as a *result of a ‘cause of itself’*), and its motor role for the process of the signifier in interpellation-identification, which justifies me in saying that it is indeed a matter of a *process*, in so far as the ‘objects’ which appear in it duplicate and divide to act on themselves as other than themselves.*²⁸

In addition to depending on an idealist definition of the subject, the circularity problem furthermore emerges only in the field of a *problematic of the origin*: When was the subject constituted? What is *prior* to what (subject, interpellation, etc.)? But this problematic of the origin gets rejected by Althusser, precisely through the assertion of a ‘short-circuit’ between subjective identity and interpellation. By such a ‘short-circuit’

device, that is, by the claim that the constitution into subject should not be conceived as being inscribed within *a linear temporal frame*, Althusser intends to show that the question of the origin of the subject, the question of its spontaneous existence, has no theoretical sense. It is a fantasmatic question, for the subject cannot stand for its own origin (*causa sui*), that is, independently from the symbolic–ideological interpellation. It has always-already existed as inscribed into the symbolic order, that is, as a *constituted* subject. In the last instance, the circularity of the subjectivation process draws back to the circularity of the symbolic order itself, or ‘The Law of Culture’ already described in the article ‘Freud and Lacan’ (1964–65). The Law of Culture, Althusser maintains in reference to Lacan, necessarily precedes itself, according to a ‘retroactiveness’ structure, which indicates that it is the very condition for humanization–subjectivation and that it has ‘no outside’, no origin and no end, just like ideology itself. The fundamental problem lies not in knowing how the small human being will *transform itself* as a subject, for, ‘in reality, it is Culture itself that constantly precedes itself, absorbing what will become a human subject’.²⁹

III. THE PERSISTENT CONTRADICTION ABOUT SUBJECTIVITY: THE PHANTASY EFFECT (ME II) AND THE SUBJECT AS PROBLEMATIC ‘CAUSA SUI’

Yet it has to be acknowledged that the antinomy regarding the subject reveals itself to be not so easily reducible. One must still admit that something, on the very topic of subjectivity, resists the critical reading just mentioned: a specific contradiction about the subject-effect that has something to do with what Althusser called ‘the elementary ideological effect’.

This is precisely what is at stake in another reference to the ME, in Part III (‘Discourse and Ideology(ies)’) of the 1975 book by Pêcheux. In this book, apart from the passage from the Introduction already quoted, one finds another direct mention of the ME: it concerns the constitutive illusion of subjectivity, related to the ideological interpellation, its retroactive effect, and its structural contradiction as such. As though the subject itself were constructed upon a constitutive contradiction: the contradiction of a *causa sui produced as a result*. The ME, involved in the

subjectivation–interpellation process, now gets explicitly defined – through a psychoanalytical terminology – as a ‘phantasy’ effect:

One of the *consequences*, I believe, of the necessary obliteration within the subject as ‘cause of himself’ [*causa sui*] of the fact that he is the result of a process, is a series of what one might call *metaphysical phantasies*, all of which touch on the question of causality: for example the fantasy of the *two hands* each holding a pencil and *each drawing the other on the same sheet of paper*, and also that of the perpetual leap in which *one leaps up again with a great kick before having touched the ground*; one could extend the list at length. I shall leave it at that, with the proposal to call this phantasy effect – by which the individual is interpellated as subject – the ‘Munchausen effect’, in memory of the immortal baron who *lifted himself into the air by pulling on his own hair*.

If it is true that ideology ‘recruits’ subjects from amongst individuals (in the way soldiers are recruited from amongst civilians) and that it recruits them *all*, we need to know how ‘volunteers’ are designated in this recruitment, i.e., in what concerns us, how all individuals *accept as evident* the meaning of what they hear and say, read and write (of what they *intend* to say and of what it is *intended* be said to them) as ‘speaking subjects’: really to understand this is the only way to avoid repeating, in the form of a theoretical analysis, the ‘Munchausen effect’, by positing the subject as the origin of the subject, i.e., in what concerns us, by positing the subject of discourse as the origin of the subject of discourse.³⁰

Subject then, understood as the subject of discourse, is not its own origin. Yet, the ‘obliteration’, within the subject itself, of its constituted-constructed character, is, paradoxically, a *necessary* one. And such a paradoxical, yet unavoidable, obliteration represents indeed one main characteristic of the ‘subject-effect’. One recognizes here the specific mark of the elementary ideological effect related to the pseudo-obviousness of being a free, spontaneous subject: the fantasmatic cause of itself, *causa sui*.

Pêcheux tried to investigate and analyse this inner contradiction about the subject. For this purpose, he developed his work in a singular and acute manner, through a double reference. He made recourse to historical materialism, particularly to the Althusserian theory of ideology (itself deeply influenced by a Freudian–Lacanian perspective on the logic of the Unconscious); but he also referred to psychoanalysis, especially the – anti-psychologist – Lacanian perspective about the constitutive *division* of the subject, the *Ichspaltung*. His work was – and is – quite original and stimulating, for it gave birth to a new theoretical

frame, at the intersection of philosophy and linguistics, in a materialist perspective: the *theory of discourse*. This new framework was at the basis of Pêcheux's particular linguistic–philosophical approach to the *subject* – and to its constitutive contradiction – conceived as *subject of discourse*. It seems necessary, thus, to mention some central claims inherent to this ‘theory of discourse’.

The theory of discourse, also called *discourse analysis*, should not be confounded with Foucault's discourse analysis, although it is partly reworked from Foucauldian concepts, like the concept of discursive formation (see note 19). It permits us to conceive the subject not as a principle, but as an ‘effect’: the effect of a certain discursive–ideological device. To this end, Pêcheux takes up again the Althusserian linking between subjectivity and subjection. But he aims at ‘filling the gaps’ in the Althusserian theory: that is, in the present case, the still unclear general homology propounded in IISA between Ideology and Unconscious, and the ideological production of the subject.

In order to clarify this crucial question, he makes an important, even if very *critical*, recourse to linguistics, that is, to the scientific tradition opened by Ferdinand de Saussure, and also, quite remarkably, to analytic philosophy, as his quotations of the works by Rudolf Carnap and, above all, by Gottlob Frege indicate.

The general goal is to develop a scientific theory of ideology, inseparable from an anti-idealist understanding of the *subject-effect* and of the *sense-effect* (or *meaning-effect*). The recourse to the concept of *discourse*, for this programme, is crucial. It is exemplary of an attempt to go beyond the traditional alternative between a psychological semiology, and a pure formalism represented by the tradition of the theory of syntax opened by Frege and Carnap. This new theorization of discourse is deeply influenced by structuralism. At the same time, it criticizes the Saussurian dichotomy between *la langue* (language) – seen as an impersonal, systematic device and object of science – and *la parole* (speech), which would imply the activity of a subject, and whose *personal* dimension would prevent a properly scientific approach. In the Saussurian perspective, the category of subject, closely related to the category of sense-meaning, seems then to be left outside the grip of science. The use of the concept of discourse, by contrast, acknowledges the importance of *ambiguities* in the sphere of human language, hence the particular interest dedicated, at the beginning of *LSI*, to the functioning of *subor-*

dinate propositions, and to the classical grammatical distinction between explicative and determinative propositions.³¹

The persistent opacity, or ambiguity, of explicative/determinative subordinate propositions (of the type: ‘the man who is rational is free’ – ‘*L’homme qui est raisonnable est libre*’)³² marks the very fluctuating character of the distinction between Logic and Rhetoric within human speech. In that respect, these structural opacities (still denied, Pêcheux argues, by the formalist theory of syntax renewed by Noam Chomsky) always-already show the place of the subject – the subject of discourse. The subject, as a consequence, is nothing but an effect of an involuntary appropriation, in the intradiscourse, of a preconstructed discursive–ideological device, the interdiscourse. To put it more accurately, the subject – of discourse – appears to be the paradoxical consequence of a constitutive intertwining between the intradiscourse (the ‘personal’ dimension of discourse), and the interdiscourse (the ‘public’ dimension, which conceals itself as such in the speech acts and takes the appearance of a spontaneous discourse). In a disconcerting way, this linguistic structural interlacing between the personal and the public dimensions makes the classical conceptual partition between interior and exterior quite irrelevant for the conceptualization of subjectivity as – linguistic and ideological – effect.

This move allows us to reintroduce the category of subject within the scientific frame; it implies renouncing a mere formalism and choosing a materialist epistemology, which includes the ‘external factors’: that is, the social–historical or ideological factors, *inside* the realm of linguistic theory. At that stage, the relationship between linguistic theory and the Althusserian theory of ideology can be grasped.

To put it briefly, the subject is no longer identified with the individual, with the free person as the principle of its acts (such as speech acts), nor even with the subject of enunciation; it is rather understood as a produced subject, a *preconstructed* subjective position, always-already taken within a discursive configuration.³³ In that respect, the analysis of discourse is particularly concerned with the very ambiguities of discourse itself, its failures and traps: that is, with the very interstices in the discourse that mark the place of the subject. Analysis of discourse, as such, represents a significant specification of the theory of ideology, in a materialist perspective, which also draws the new lines of an ‘anti-subjectivist theory of the subject’.

One main postulate, in Pêcheux's programme, is the following: the 'obviousness' of sense, just as the so-called obviousness of being a subject, a free subject, is essentially illusory. It is constructed inside the discursive-ideological process. Yet the solution developed by Pêcheux for the *Kippbild* structure of subjectivation could appear as not entirely satisfying. It might seem to emphasize the theoretical importance of the *constitution* process, since this materialist perspective claims that there is no such thing as a free, prior subject, and that subjectivity is a pre-constructed effect. It would consequently seem to consider as secondary the other part of the Althusserian characterization of the subject, namely the thesis that there is an *always-already* constituted subject that recognizes itself as the *addressee* of the interpellation. In short, Pêcheux's perspective would seem to elude rather than answer the question of *reconnaissance*, recognition. Finally then, the *Kippbild* structure of subjectivity would offer some resistance to the materialist linguistic-philosophical reading just outlined.

What is at stake again here is the richness and the intricate character of the topic of subjectivity in its Althusserian meaning. This should lead us to investigate the reasons why the *Kippbild* structure cannot be dissolved completely; why it cannot, in the last instance, be simply identified with an illusory dilemmatic structure, that is, with an ill-constructed problem.

But precisely, on that neuralgic point, Pêcheux himself can still help us better understand such a complexity and irreducibility. He explains indeed that the subject-effect is not merely the result of a process, but *a result that is always anticipated*. The subject, then, can be as such understood through the structure of a specific *contradiction*, namely the (irreducible) contradiction of 'a *causa sui* produced as a result', according to the formula already mentioned. The main intertwined concepts involved in Pêcheux's possible answer to the hypothetical accusation of reductionism are the concept of *retroactiveness* (the retroactiveness of symbolic-ideological interpellation) and the concept of *obliteration* borrowed from psychoanalysis: that is, the necessary obliteration of the subject's conditions of constitution by and in the subject itself. These concepts reveal the structural paradox at the very principle of the subjective condition.

The following passage from *LSI* is particularly enlightening on this topic:

In fact, what the thesis ‘Ideology interpellates individuals as subjects’ designates is indeed that ‘non-subject’ is interpellated-constituted as subject by Ideology. Now, the paradox is precisely that interpellation has, as it were, a *retroactive effect*, with the result that every individual is ‘always-already a subject’ [...].³⁴

Clearly, the author of *LSI* does not try to eliminate the paradoxical nature of this ‘always-already’ existing subject from the realm of ideological interpellation. On the contrary, as stressed above, he appears to follow the Althusserian insight about the retroactiveness of the Law of Culture. This reactivation is certainly crucial for an understanding of how the subject might constantly ‘precede itself’ without being its own origin. Let us recall that Althusser, when he elaborated the concept of the ‘Law of Culture’ in his article ‘Freud and Lacan’, was influenced by Rousseau, but also, simultaneously, by Lacan and the notion of symbolic order. It is remarkable indeed that the concept of a retroactiveness of the symbolic–ideological interpellation, which Pêcheux developed on the basis of the Althusserian insights, recalls what Lacan in his *Écrits* named the ‘*retroversion effect*’ (‘l’effet de rétroversion’).³⁵ For Lacan, this ‘retroversion effect’ is characteristic of the subject in so far as the subject never coincides with itself: it tends to become what it had already been, according to a temporal distortion that differentiates the subject from the illusory autonomous ego, hence the assertion of a *misrecognition function* essential to subjective reflexivity and ‘recognition’. Undoubtedly, Pêcheux’s conception of the paradoxical, temporal distortion as the principle of subjectivation is strongly indebted to the Lacanian theorization of the subject.

This structural retroactiveness of the interpellation–subjectivation process is inseparable from the obliteration, or ‘forgetting’. As a matter of fact, such an obliteration is not denied by Pêcheux either, and gets, on the contrary, explicitly described as *necessary, since it is constitutive of the subject as such, and accounts for its irreducible paradoxical nature*. Pêcheux thus refers in the passage quoted at the beginning of this section to ‘the necessary obliteration within the subject as “cause of himself” of the fact that he is the result of a process’.³⁶ It is this very obliteration that is understood as leading to a series of ‘metaphysical phantasies’, among which one counts, of course, the subjective ME.

In other words, the structure of a necessary obliteration, entailed by the retroactiveness of the symbolic order, lies at the very ‘heart’ of the subject. In Pêcheux’s theory of discourse, the subject-form is, of

course, obtained through a process of forgetting as regards the antecedence of the unasserted – the interdiscourse – with respect to the intradiscourse itself. But this dissimulation of the primacy of interdiscourse, correlated to the fantasmatic causal inversion, indeed gets specified as a *double* forgetting process. This double forgetting is compared by Pêcheux to the Freudian theory of repression, in so far as it can be considered as a twofold repression: a repression dependent on the Unconscious system, and a repression dependent on the Preconscious system. Pêcheux isolates, in his theory of the subject-form of discourse, a first type of forgetting, which concerns the general dissimulation of the exteriority of interdiscourse within the discursive formation in which the subject is inscribed. But this ‘forgetting no. 1’ is doubled by a second forgetting, the ‘forgetting no. 2’, through which the subject identifies himself with the discursive formation that dominates him: this forgetting no. 2 is then

the ‘forgetting’ by which every speaking subject ‘selects’, from the interior of the discursive formation which dominates him, i.e., from the system of utterances, forms and sequences to be found there in relations of paraphrase, *one utterance, form or sequence and not another, even though it is in the field of what may be reformulated in the discursive formation considered.*³⁷

The double structure of the forgetting here is the very sign of its necessity. This necessity of obliteration or ‘forgetting’ ultimately refers then to the specific and paradoxical effectiveness or *causality of Ideology* in so far as it may be compared, and identified, with the *causality of the Unconscious*. It consists in dissimulating itself as a cause through the production of its effects, which reminds the reader of the Althusserian ‘structural causality’, already described in *Reading Capital* as ‘the effectiveness of an absent cause’ (‘l’efficace d’une cause absente’). According to Pêcheux,

the common feature of the two structures called respectively ideology and unconscious is the fact that they conceal their own existence within their operation by producing a web of ‘*subjective*’ *evident truths*, ‘subjective’ here meaning not ‘affecting the subject’, but ‘in which the subject is constituted’.³⁸

The crucial implication here is that the subjectivation process responds to the very logic of ideology, in so far as such a logic is linked to *the*

logic of Unconscious itself (the effectiveness of an absent cause). One must admit then the importance of such a homology for Pêcheux's particular project, which consists in developing the Althusserian programme: to propound a theory of ideology in the same sense in which Freud propounded a theory of the unconscious. The homology is particularly developed in the singular frame of his own theoretical contribution, discourse analysis, in so far as the relationship between interdiscourse and intradiscourse is concerned: such a relationship, the dissimulation of interdiscourse within intradiscourse, accounts for the constitution of this inversion structure, which is the subject-form.³⁹

We may add at this point that Pêcheux's linguistic and philosophical understanding of the subterranean effectiveness of ideology leans on a precise and neuralgic use of psychoanalytical categories, such as, for instance, the 'strangeness in the familiar', according to Pêcheux's particular understanding of the Freudian *Unheimlichkeit*.⁴⁰ The insertion of Freudian–Lacanian categories within the argumentation device of *LSI*, and inside discourse analysis in general, reveals the theoretical originality, the richness, of the attempt by Pêcheux to link theory of ideology and theory of the unconscious in the fields of Marxism, philosophy, and linguistics. This attempt is particularly striking as concerns his understanding of the structural inner 'discrepancy' between the interpellated subject and the 'always-already' existing subject, which makes explicit recourse to the terminology of 'contradiction'.⁴¹

This last point, connected to the claim of the necessity of obliteration and retroactiveness in the very constitution of the subject, shows that Pêcheux's fundamental perspective, far from being mechanistic or reductionist, might be heard as a singular development of Lacanian claims about the *Ichspaltung* and the structural, irreducible *contradiction* of the I that is the subject. We have already noticed the importance of the Lacanian concept of the 'retroversion effect' as regards the conceptualization of the 'retroactiveness' of interpellation. The reading of Lacan is also crucial for Pêcheux, if we consider his own thesis about the existence of a '*process of the signifier, in interpellation-identification*' meant as the process of subjectivation that Pêcheux himself defines as operating by '*contradiction*'. Recourse is made, for that scope, to the Lacanian understanding of the '*signifier*' as '*what represents the subject for another signifier*'.⁴² Such a reference to Lacan is also meant, quite remarkably, to refute the myth of a prior subjectivity, antecedent to the symbolic grip: that is the grip of the Unconscious, which is also the grip

of ideology. This materialist use of Jacques Lacan's work appears typical of Pêcheux's strategy, and more generally of what was called the Althusserian–Lacanian school in the 1960s–70s in France, with Jacques-Alain Miller, Jean-Claude Milner, and so many others.⁴³ It consists in rejecting the 'idealist reinscription of Lacan's work' from the part of psychoanalytical circles that disconnected the research on the unconscious from the research on ideology.⁴⁴ As a matter of fact, this strategy refutes by anticipation the *contemporary*, rather misleading reading of the Lacanian perspective about the subject as being irreconcilable, and even contradictory, with the Althusserian perspective about subjectivation–interpellation.⁴⁵

To conclude, it seems that one may find ultimately two moments of the *Kippbild* structure about subjectivity, understood through the concept of a 'causal circularity'.

The first figuration of the *Kippbild* (ME 1) would be the *antinomy*, critically analysed as the symptom of an ill-constructed problem in the field of theory, namely subjectivism: in that respect, the Althusserian insights about the aporias of any questioning about the origin concerning, simultaneously, sense (or 'meaning'), and subject, remain central. The heuristic function of the antinomy should not be neglected in so far as it authorizes the inquiry about 'the hidden postulate'. This is precisely the epistemological condition for a materialist (that is, anti-psychologist) theory of the subject, such as was propounded after Althusser by Pêcheux in the field of a critical approach to traditional semantics.

The second instance of the *Kippbild* structure here considered (ME 2) is the insistent, irreducible *contradiction* of subjectivation, which represents the singularity and specificity of the subjective condition, grounded upon a necessary obliteration of its own lack of originarity: the obliteration of its *constituted* character. Here lies the very *impossibility* of the subject, which accounts for its paradoxical, vanishing being (irreducible to the imaginary fullness of the *ego*): such a paradoxical, contradictory nature of the subject was already underlined by Lacan in his *Écrits*, which was a crucial reference for Pêcheux. The latter indeed did not try to avoid or reduce such an inner contradiction himself; he rather intended to explore it and to understand its singular structure, through an inquiry about the 'subject of discourse'. Such a linguistic–philosophical approach to the 'subject-effect' – led in the intellectual and political context of the 1970s, under the influence of structuralism,

psychoanalysis, and (non-mechanistic) Marxism – aimed at tracking down the split figure of subjectivity, its void and its failures. It did so within the element of discourse and ideology, beyond the traditional frontier between ‘private’ and ‘public’, as the strategic use of the conceptual couple intradiscourse/interdiscourse indicates. In its original and particular reading of Althusser *and* Lacan – or Althusser *with* Lacan – Pêcheux’s approach still represents one of the most stimulating attempts to understand the specificity of the subjective condition. This attempt indeed avoids two symmetrical traps equally powerful in contemporary philosophy, the social sciences, and cognitive science: psychologism as well as plain reductionism.

A long-lasting question remains, at the end of this analysis: What could be the relationship between the two figures of the *Kippbild*-ME about the subject, that is, between ME 1 and ME 2? There must be a relationship, and perhaps ME 1 – that is, subjectivism – might ultimately be considered as the consequence of an attempt to reduce the logical contradiction upon which the subject is built up (ME 2). The persisting strength of Pêcheux’s perspective on that topic consists in having rejected such a theoretical temptation. He engaged instead in a systematic confrontation with this fundamental paradox of the subject, which is indeed particularly crucial in the case of the ‘subject of discourse’. For anyone interested in the still-relevant programme of a non-subjectivist theory of the subject, this should constitute a good reason to go back to Pêcheux’s texts, which have somehow been left aside in the last few decades.

NOTES

- 1 Louis Althusser, ‘Idéologie et appareils idéologiques d’État’, *La Pensée*, 151 (1970), pp. 3–38; in English as ‘Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses’, in *Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays*, trans. by Ben Brewster (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1971), pp. 127–88; henceforth abbreviated as IISA.
- 2 See, for example, Slavoj Žižek, *The Sublime Object of Ideology* (London: Verso, 1989); Judith Butler, *The Psychic Life of Power: Theories in Subjection* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1997), Chapter 4; see also the critique addressed to the Butlerian perspective in Slavoj Žižek, *The Ticklish Subject* (London: Verso, 1999), Chapter 5.
- 3 Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, trans. and ed. by Paul Guyer and Allen W. Wood (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), I Transcendental Doctrine of Elements, Pt. II, Div. II, Bk. II, Ch. II The Antinomy of Pure Reason.

son, pp. 459–550, particularly pp. 467–69. The Kantian definition of the ‘antithetic’ structure characteristic of the antinomies of pure reason is deeply articulated to the notion of an undecidability, which accounts for an endless conflictuality at the principle of the antinomies that haunt Reason itself. I am strongly indebted, for this enlightening of the *Kippbild*’s logical structure through the Kantian antinomies, under the figure of undecidability, to the paper propounded by Catharine Diehl and B. Madison Mount, ‘*Kippbild* and Antinomy’, in the context of the ICI colloquium in February 2011.

- 4 Here is the anecdote underlying the ‘Munchausen effect’: ‘On another occasion, I wanted to get over a bog which did not initially strike me as so broad as I found it when already in the midst of my jump. Swinging round in mid-air, I returned to my starting point, in order to make a longer run-up. Nonetheless, the second time as well I jumped too short, and fell not far from the other bank up to my neck in the mire. Here I would certainly have died, had I not dragged myself (together with my horse, which I held fast between my knees) out again by pulling with all the strength of one arm on a lock of my own hair’ (quoted from Michel Pêcheux, *Language, Semantics and Ideology: Stating the Obvious*, trans. by Harbans Nagpal (London: Macmillan Press, 1982), p. 17 n. 13). As Nagpal, Pêcheux’s translator, notes, the famous anecdote is not present in Rudolph Erich Raspe’s *Baron Munchausen’s Narrative of His Marvellous Travels and Campaigns in Russia* (1786) nor in most subsequent English editions, but seems to derive from Gottfried August Bürger’s expanded German translation *Wunderbare Reisen zu Wasser und Lande, Feldzüge und lustige Abentheuer des Freyherrn von Münchhausen* (London, 1786).
- 5 See, in particular, Slavoj Žižek, *The Sublime Object of Ideology*, Introduction, p. xxv, and pp. 43–44; Mladen Dolar, ‘Beyond Interpellation’, *Qui Parle*, 6.2 (1993), pp. 75–96. See also, on a different approach, insisting on the paradigmatic importance of the ‘religious’ example in the Althusserian theory of interpellation, Judith Butler, *The Psychic Life of Power*, pp. 110–15.
- 6 In the ‘Antithetic of Pure Reason’, Kant makes recourse to a ‘skeptical method’ (irreducible to any type of classical scepticism) not in order to solve the antinomies as such, since their conflictuality is rigorously endless and undecidable, but rather in order to ‘dissolve’ them, i.e. to reveal that both the thesis and the antithesis share a ‘hidden postulate’, which is contestable and not interrogated as such in the very formulation of the antinomy. The aim of the skeptical method, which is very close in that respect to that of a symptomatological inquiry, is to reveal the paradoxical ‘point of misunderstanding’ shared by both the thesis and the antithesis, and to reduce the theoretical relevance of their antagonism (*Critique of Pure Reason*, pp. 468–69).
- 7 Michel Pêcheux, *Les Vérités de La Palice: Linguistique, sémantique, philosophie* (Paris: Maspero, 1975); *Language, Semantics and Ideology: Stating the Obvious*, trans. by Harbans Nagpal (London: Macmillan Press, 1982); henceforth: *LSI*, indicating also Chapter numbers.
- 8 Althusser, *IISA*, pp. 158–77.
- 9 *Ibid.*, pp. 170–71.

- 10 Ibid., pp. 174–75.
- 11 Such a reappropriation already constitutes the core of the article published by Althusser in 1964–65, ‘Freud et Lacan’, *La Nouvelle Critique*, 161–62 (1964–65), pp. 88–108; in English as ‘Freud and Lacan’, in *Lenin and Philosophy*, pp. 189–220.
- 12 Althusser, IISA, pp. 177–83.
- 13 Pêcheux, *LSI*, Part III, ‘Discourse and Ideology’, Chapter 8 ‘Ideology, Interpellation, “Munchausen Effect”’, p. 109.
- 14 Žižek, *The Sublime Object of Ideology*, pp. 43–44. See also Dolar, ‘Beyond Interpellation’.
- 15 Cf. Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, ‘The Antinomy of Pure Reason’, Sections II (pp. 471–75), V (pp. 508–10), and IX (pp. 549–50).
- 16 See Gilbert Ryle, *The Concept of Mind* (London: Hutchinson, 1949), especially Chapter 1.
- 17 Althusser, IISA, pp. 171–72.
- 18 See Thomas Herbert, ‘Réflexions sur la situation théorique des sciences sociales et, spécialement, de la psychologie sociale’, *Cahiers pour l’analyse*, 2 (1966), pp. 139–65; ‘Remarques pour une théorie générale des idéologies’, *Cahiers pour l’analyse*, 9 (1968), pp. 74–92.
- 19 Pêcheux’s approach to *discourse analysis*, which was very influential in the field of linguistics in the 1970’s, is partly indebted to Michel Foucault’s own theorization of discourse analysis. It seems that Pêcheux borrowed from Foucault the concept of *discursive formation*, first introduced in *L’Archéologie du savoir* (*The Archaeology of Knowledge*) (Paris: Gallimard, 1969). Nevertheless, Pêcheux himself, while acknowledging his debt to Foucault, also stresses the singularity of his own theorization of discourse, in the frame of Marxism and of a materialist theory of social–ideological formations. He thus criticizes the dependence of the Foucauldian analysis on a ‘sociology of institutions’ (See *LSI*, Conclusion, pp. 171–90). On this particular issue, see the comments by Denise Maldidier in her introduction to the new edition she propounded of the works of Michel Pêcheux, under the title *L’Inquiétude du discours* (Paris: Editions des cendres, 1990), pp. 43–60.
- 20 Pêcheux, *LSI*, 6, pp. 91–92.
- 21 Ibid., 8, pp. 104–05: ‘Now, and it is, I believe, at this precise point that the necessity for a materialist theory of discourse begins, the evidentness of the spontaneous existence of the subject (as origin or cause in itself) is immediately compared by Althusser with another evidentness, all-pervasive [...] in the idealist philosophy of language, the evidentness of meaning’.
- 22 Pêcheux, *LSI*, Introduction, pp. 16–17.
- 23 Ibid., p. 17, note 14, quoting Gottlob Frege, ‘Logic’, in *Posthumous Writings*, trans. by Peter Long and Roger White, ed. by Hans Hermes, Friedrich Kambar- tel, and Friedrich Kaulbach (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1979), pp. 143–44; ‘Logik’ (1897), in *Schriften zur Logik* (Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1973), pp. 63–64.
- 24 On the definition of interdiscourse, see Pêcheux, *LSI*, 9, ‘The Subject-Form of Discourse’: ‘Every discursive formation, by the transparency of the meaning con-

stituted in it, conceals its dependence on the “complex whole in dominance” of discursive formations, itself imbricated with the complex of ideological formations [...]. I propose to call this “complex whole in dominance” of discursive formations “interdiscourse”, with the qualification that it too is subject to the law of unevenness-contradiction-subordination which I have described as characterising the complex of ideological formations’ (p. 113).

- 25 Ibid., 9, p. 111.
- 26 Ibid., p. 116.
- 27 Ibid., p. 117.
- 28 Ibid., 8, p. 108.
- 29 Louis Althusser, *Psychanalyse et sciences humaines. Deux conférences (1963–1964)* (Paris: Le Livre de Poche, 1996), Seconde conférence, pp. 91–96.
- 30 Pêcheux, *LSI*, 8, pp. 108–09.
- 31 On the strategic philosophical use of this linguistic–grammatical question, see Pêcheux, *LSI*, Introduction, pp. 12–13 and Chapter 1, pp. 21–39.
- 32 Ibid., 5, pp. 78–79.
- 33 Ibid., 9, ‘The Subject-Form of Discourse’, pp. 110–29.
- 34 Ibid., 8, p. 106.
- 35 Jacques Lacan, ‘Subversion du sujet et dialectique du désir dans l’inconscient freudien’, in *Écrits* (Paris: Seuil, 1966), pp. 793–827 (pp. 808–09).
- 36 Pêcheux, *LSI*, 8, p. 108.
- 37 Ibid., 9, p. 123.
- 38 Ibid., 8, p. 104.
- 39 Ibid., 9, p. 117: ‘[...] it can indeed be said that intradiscourse, as the “thread of discourse”, of the subject, is strictly an effect of interdiscourse on itself, an “interiority” wholly determined as such “from the exterior”. The character of the subject-form, with the spontaneous ideology it contains, will consist precisely in an inversion of this determination [...]’.
- 40 Ibid., 8, p. 107.
- 41 Ibid., pp. 106–07.
- 42 Ibid., p. 108.
- 43 See the *Cahiers pour l’analyse*, published between 1966 and 1969 by students of Louis Althusser, in the framework of the ‘Cercle d’Epistémologie de l’École Normale Supérieure’.
- 44 Pêcheux, *LSI*, 8, p. 104, note 1.
- 45 See in particular Žižek, *The Ticklish Subject*, Chapter 5.

Pascale Gillot, 'The Munchausen Effect: Subjectivity and Ideology', in *Multistable Figures: On the Critical Potential of Ir/Reversible Aspect-Seeing*, ed. by Christoph F. E. Holzhey, *Cultural Inquiry*, 8 (Vienna: Turia + Kant, 2014), pp. 89–111 <https://doi.org/10.37050/ci-08_05>

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