



Conclusion

Upon its release, *Inception* took the film culture by storm. A huge critical and financial success (which led some to doubt its intellectual potential), the film cemented Nolan's reputation (first established in his highly intriguing anterograde amnesia film with its reverse temporality, *Memento* [2000]), as one of the most thought-provoking filmmakers of his generation. In *Inception*, Nolan sets out to explore how the unconscious can be manipulated by external agencies. In a stunning and spectacular fashion the film builds up a scenario of shared dreaming as a device for stealthily depositing deceptive ideas into the unconscious. These ideas, once planted in the unconscious, take on a life of their own, forming the core principles of an individual's subjectivity. In order to pursue this central discourse of what constitutes our subjectivity and the knowledge of self in the film, I have followed Althusser's critique of ideology as the linchpin of my interpretative arguments, by demonstrating how many of the scenes in the film literally embody Althusser's critical doctrine of ideology and interpellation.

One of the salient features of capitalism is its creation of the myth of individuality; by deconstructing that myth by reference to Adorno's and Horkheimer's critique of the culture industry, I have proposed a line of argumentation that departs from programmatic leftist critics (cf. Martin Danyluk), who fault the film for not offering any real possibility for meaningful changes in the existing social relations.³⁶ Though seeing it as symbolic of ideology, I have tried to avoid the trap of reducing the film to some kind of political sloganeering.



Finally, I have mobilized Barthes's semiotic critique of the mythological language as a falsely produced discourse, in which the meaning that is "full" hides behind the form which is "empty," in order to reveal the central enigma of the film: It is not the idea that the subject seizes hold of, but the manner in which the idea is ultimately grasped and reproduced in the interiority of the character as his own, that is most reminiscent of ideology. As such, Nolan's *Inception* is an implicit critique of ideology in a capitalist system. It exposes the ideological and mythological character of capitalism through its evocation of dreams and memory, the substrate of the unconscious that forms the core of individual subjectivity.³⁷