

which favours Orson Welles' deep focus and depth of visual field to Eisenstein's montage of attractions. Indeed, his montage works through the motifs of the novel as *de-montage* combining other means of cinematic narration such as usage of darkness and light, compositions of particular pictures in continuity and discontinuity and – perhaps in this Fassbinder work more than in his other films – handling of sound. Thus Fassbinder's masterful TV series transforms Döblin's very particular narrative into a movement that joins spaces and times, language and society, and subjectivity and its negative reflection as a part of the "metaphysics of social circumstances", to use Elsaesser's expression. Thenceforth, understanding becomes a politics of images and, consequently, a placement of the imaginary into the core of reality. In view of my quest, the most important aspect concerns the drama of a shattered selfhood. Fassbinder's film therefore forms the character as a never-accomplished person; moreover, ". . . / his identity is put to the test not according to the narrative transformations that confirm the hero in his full self-possession. Instead, the narrative 'empties' him, readies him for his complete merger with the social body" (Elsaesser, 1996: p. 220). Here, *de-montage* is at work: it is moving Biberkopf's personality. Therefore, Fassbinder's reading of the novel is far from a passive grasping of the content; it is a kind of re-reading, which opens the novel to a new understanding; it makes the dimension of *de-montage* visible by taking a clear view on the impacts of capitalism within the protagonist's subjectivity. A psychoanalytical viewpoint, especially linked to women and gender studies, is somehow presupposed and probably consciously communicated by the film. The entire gallery of ruined personalities from the margins of society (thieves, pimps, prostitutes, etc.), with the central character of Franz Biberkopf, makes possible an abundant deciphering of the novel in psychoanalytical terms.

Construction of sexual identities in the novel clearly exposes a connectedness between individual relationships and social repressions, otherwise visible in many of Fassbinder's films. What brings the novel – as well as Fassbinder's TV series – closer to a Lacanian articulation of psychoanalysis than to its Freudian source, is especially Döblin's presentation of the main character. Very interesting points in the narrative line are many Biberkopf's encounters with political agents of the Weimar Germany, like Nazis and communists, but these encounters do not result in the main character's adding any political attribute to his identity. One can say that the character of Biberkopf is constructed as a negative reflection of so-