

Andrzej Zulawski: Hidden Corner Referred to by Phantasm

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Abstract

Žižek can deeply explore the phantasm art and political philosophy contained in Lacanian psychoanalysis through the film, and use it to reflect the society full of phantasm. Andrzej Zulawski has a personal style and sense of innovation, and he is also one of the most controversial film masters. His creation contains profound philosophical thinking, which reflects the anxiety of individuals in the real society. Zulawski's films usually spare no effort to show the strong personal style, expressing strong soul collisions, the dark lust and death through mysterious religions and rituals, extreme character emotions, crazy behaviors, grotesque plots, crazy language, and abstract symbols. These elements run through almost all of Zulawski's films, making the film stained with the color of a cult film. This article will try to uncover the core of trauma from the perspective of Žižek's psychoanalysis, as well as the absurd phantasm under the rotation of perspectives. At the same time, this article will also discuss Zulawski's narrative strategies and techniques, the traumatic core of the ear presented in the film, and the deep-seated anxiety revealed by it, so as to examine the theoretical value of the director and his creation.

Keywords

Desire; Stare; Drive; Phantasm.

1. Introduction

The term cult film itself used in the 1970s to describe the culture that surrounded underground films and midnight movies. Since the publication of Danny Peary's *Cult Movie* in 1981, the term *Cult Movie* has been widely used. Cult movies are defined by Peary as "special films which for one reason or another have been taken to heart by segments of the movie audience, cherished, protected, and most of all, enthusiastically championed." In cult movies, Cult has two interpretations: One is religious terms, referring to worship and sacrifice; the other is extended to fanatical worship, superstition, and object of worship. Cult films refer to films with unique shooting techniques, weird themes, unusual styles, controversial, and with strong personal opinions. They are usually produced at low cost and are not market-led. In the subculture circle, they are highly loved and respected.

Zulawski's films usually spare no effort to show the strong personal style, expressing strong soul collisions, the dark lust and death through mysterious religions and rituals, extreme character emotions, crazy behaviors, grotesque plots, crazy language, and abstract symbols. These elements run through almost all of Andrzej Zulawski's films, making the film stained with the color of a cult film. Zulawski has a personal style and sense of innovation, and he is also one of the most controversial film masters. On February 17, 2016, Andrzej Zulawski died of cancer at the age of 75. He is naturally unruly and always looks at the world calmly. Most of his works are grotesque and bitter, with the perception of "hell in the world", but they have mixed reputation for their extremely strong emotions and postmodernist dramatic structure. And his work has a skilled use of the French New Wave style: shots pushing and pulling, abrupt soundtracks, and jump editing of scenes. Actors always have large obscure confessions, the lens

is full of wonderful metaphors and symbols, and the tone of the film is cold and oppressive. He aimed the camera at the dark side of human nature, forcing actors to tap their deepest potential to serve his work.

Anatole France said that all great works are the author's autobiography. Zulawski's creative characteristics stem from his childhood experience during World War II. He was born in the former Soviet Union in 1940 with cruel experience of war deeply imprinted on his soul. Therefore, he believes that human beings have no innocent childhood but just that one morality overwhelms another morality, and one life replaces another life at all. This traumatic experience directly affected Zulawski's later film style. He believes that "in a period of chaos, artistic creation seeks order and rules, and desires to correct the chaos; and in a period of order, chaos should also become a sought-after element of artistic creation." It is precisely because of this creative concept that he has always been a controversial director. Zulawski has alternative talents and is good at using the lens to delicately portray the most complicated and obscure corners of human nature, so he loves to give characters a kind of unusual personality, such as crazy, restless, hysterical, betraying the soul, and having sexual intercourse with devil.

2. Surreal Dream of Dreams: Violence and Death

As Žižek said, film doesn't give you what you desire, it tells you how to desire. In essence, artistic creation is a displacement and sublimation of the creator's inner phantasm, a revelation of the meaningless world, and finding a support point for one's own existence. Zulawski uses dreams to show the social problems in reality, intertextually linking reality and phantasm and staring at them. Because suppressed desires can be met in dreams in a different way, narrating dreams in dreams on a surreal level, the purpose of which is to discuss the problems revealed by phantasm and traumatic cores. The movie provides the audience with an illusory control over the visual domain, and uses signifiers in the content to map the implicit meaning. The film itself is to make those deep illusions that are suppressed and those illusions that are usually inexpressible become clearly visible. Zulawski combined the deep metaphors of the narrative to give full play to each character and thematic event in the film, guiding the audience to examine the subject in a simple and simple way, and digging out the original trauma hidden by the madness of nature when human facing primitive problems. The film *Possession* tells of a husband looking for his wife who ran away from home inexplicably. At first he suspected that his wife had been derailed, but he did not expect that the object of his wife's derailment turned out to be the devil. In the end, the devil used his wife to reshape his body and descend into the world. The devil in this film was not eliminated as usual, but successfully descended on the world and appeared as a human being. He can easily capture people's hearts, let them commit crimes and enjoy the joy of killing. At the end of the film, the devil came to Helen's house and knocked on the door of the room. The air defense alarm sounded in the air. The sound of bombing resounded through the sky, and the lights flickered. War and destruction were brought to the world by it.

The film *Possession* uncovers a terrifying life mystery with a grotesque suspense structure. In this puzzling film, whether it is the plot structure or the juxtaposition of multiple references, Zulawski still discusses the presence of the body. At the end of the film, there is a scene where the soul is out of the body, but this soul has nothing to do with the body, just like the husband and lover in the film can only listen to Anna. Desire depends on the phantasm space to exist. If people lose the support of phantasm, they will have no desire, and then they will lose the meaning of living in the real world. Therefore, if the phantasm is prevented, it will leave a traumatic vacancy and make the gaze absent. In fact, this demon is an entity imaginary by Anna's own desires. The demon in the film is actually an entity illusioned by Anna's own desire, and

the illusion represented by the demon drives Anna's desire in reality. The devil represents the wife's id in the film. For the wife, it contains primitive desires and impulses that take physical pleasure as the first criterion. The supremacy of happiness is the fundamental principle of the id. And this terrifying monster eventually became the "eternal watcher" in Žižek's mouth, descending into the world with a recast body, turning the soul out of the body from the scouted one to the surveillant.

3. Phantasm Reference: Sexual Desire and Love

Žižek believes that phantasm is a screen on which people can project desires. The common support point between the unified reality order and the abyss of nothingness is phantasm, whose overcumulative accumulation will create nightmares.

The film *Mad Love* exquisitely presents the opposition between love and sex, and points out that the madness of the characters is closely related to their overflowing erotic desires. When Mary, the character played by Sophie Marceau, wanders between the two men, the hysterical mood inadvertently triggers the erotic desire in love. The end of the film finally explains the reason for Mary's madness, which stems from the realistic impact she suffered when she was young. She lost her father at an early age, and her mother died unexpectedly after a failed marriage. All these shocking events were enough to make her lose her most basic sense of security as a person. These traumatic events triggered her fantasy of reality and a desire to recreate a happy dream. The resulting Electra complex made her hesitate to linger between the two men. The core of the phantasm is desire, and the most intuitive way to externalize desire is lust. In this way, Mary wants to be satisfied, but sometimes love and security are not perfectly integrated. For Mary, security is more important than love. Unfortunately, she did not find the love that could bring a sense of security to her. The short-lived climax does not mean lasting love, she eventually died between erotic desires. Žižek believes that the core of phantasm is desire, and desire is expressed through phantasm. In the film *Possession*, the actress plays two roles, so the actor always meets a woman who looks the same as his wife. This mirrored setting reflects the split but entangled characteristics of human nature. The director created two women on both sides of the mirror, Anna and Helen, implying that the demons in the film were transformed by the desires of wife Anna. Zulawski embodied an ideological demon into reality, reflecting the phantasm in wife's heart, that is, the demon representing self-desire. For the wife, the self is based on the primitive desire and impulse based on physical pleasure and the supremacy of happiness.

In the film, the wife loves her husband deeply, and the result of this love acting on her is that she keeps her self-demand to be loyal, and this restraint is very strong. However, because the husband is always out to work and has a lot of secrets, the wife loses her sense of security, feeling scared, lonely, and helpless. This traumatic emotion forces her to have an affair. Love, the lack of security, and the externalization of anxious emotions become the catharsis of the most straightforward desires. The wife obtains the love and security that cannot be obtained in her husband through sexual intercourse with the devil. Wife Anna said that she was struggling between loyalty and affair. From the perspective of Freud's three-self personality, affair can represent the self that completely conforms to id, while loyalty represents the superego that is restrained by the outside world. Anna in the film did not dare to face her husband, in fact, because she did not dare to face herself, just as when she said that her husband made her feel sick, she was actually disgusting her own behavior. When facing her husband, she felt happy for her future freedom, and at the same time deeply blamed herself. The male protagonist in the film wants to fully possess Anna, while the latter longs for freedom. The two unsuitable people

magiced out their own inner demons. The tour guide satirized the kind of love which is too crazy, possessive, and will lead each other to destruction.

4. Conclusion

Andrzej Zulawski used his lens to depict an phantasm world with the author's personality for the audience. Most of his films were influenced by Freud's psychoanalytic aesthetics, and gradually moved closer to psychoanalysis in the process of seeking a change in his own aesthetic perspective. Every detail and every suspense in his film reveals the uneasy heart of the characters in a subtle way. Zulawski's films usually spare no effort to show the strong personal style, expressing strong soul collisions, the dark lust and death through mysterious religions and rituals, extreme character emotions, crazy behaviors, grotesque plots, crazy language, and abstract symbols. They express the survival anxiety for individuals, so that the cores of these anxiety form external images, which can be perceived by the audience.

Zulawski puts the horrible and real phantasm of the daydream in the real world with a method that hangs it outside the reality but reflexively bridges the reality, tearing away the trauma of human nature. Zulawski puts the horrible and real phantasm of the daydream in the real world with a method that hangs it outside the reality but reflexively bridges the reality, tearing away the trauma of human nature. With this, he counterattacked the terrible desire mearing a mask of demons and war, interspersed symbolic scenery and things in the narrative of the film, leading the audience to imagine strange spectacles, presenting the inner anxiety of the people outside the screen in the film, and exposing the dark side of human nature to the lens and lights.

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