

Strengthening Women's Consciousness and Anti-gaze

-- A study on the female character in the movie "The Disappearing She"

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Abstract: Based on Lacan's gaze theory and modern feminist thought, this article analyzes the Chinese film "The Disappearing She", placing women in the perspective of others' gaze, to explore the strengthening of female consciousness and how women can counter gaze, and contribute to the establishment of new era women, the rational handling of gender relations, and the promotion of gender equality.

Keywords: Gaze Theory; Anti-Gaze; "The Disappearing She"; Feminist; Female Images; Gender Equality.

1. Introduction

The famous French psychoanalyst Lacan proposed the famous theory of gaze. He believes that gaze is the explanation of the relationship established between the other and the self-subject, that is, people understand the world from their perspective while accepting scrutiny from all directions. [1] So, gaze has a duality: the first is the subject's viewing of the other, and the second is the other's viewing of the subject. This complementary relationship between seeing and being seen is two sides of the same problem and cannot be easily separated. In people's subjective gaze process, they inevitably become the object of other people's gaze, thus forming a symbiotic state of gaze and counter gaze. In this process, people's subjectivity gradually builds up. Lacan's gaze theory is widely used in film analysis and research. Based on Lacan's gaze theory and modern feminist thought, this article analyzes how the female image in the Chinese film "The Disappearing She" strengthens female consciousness and counter gaze in the perspective of another gaze, thereby achieving self-reflection and growth. This article aims to establish the image of women in the new era and promote gender equality by focusing on their inner world and external environment.

The anti-gaze mentioned here refers to the female anti-male gaze. The so-called "male gaze" is a psychological mechanism that objectifies women, transforms them into landscapes, and becomes desirable objects.[2] The male gaze not only reflects the mechanism of desire but also serves as a means of disciplining power. It is relatively secretive but ubiquitous. Foucault believed that power is implemented through strict monitoring, and that "any gaze will become a part of the overall operation of power". Through monitoring and observation, it inscribes power on objectified individuals, forming a "complex, automatic, and anonymous power that works endlessly". [3] Under this gaze, women's bodies and minds receive dual discipline. Anti-gaze, also known as antagonistic gaze or antagonistic gaze. It means the strengthening and growth of female consciousness.[4] With the progress of society, people's democratic consciousness has increased, and women's awareness has also begun to awaken and strengthen. Women's weight in the social, economic, and political fields has increased. With the awakening of modern women's self-awareness, many literary

works and movies have elaborated on feminist ideas. Such changes not only represent the improvement of women's status but also represent the progress of the entire society. [5] In these literary works and films, the idea of gender equality permeates every aspect of society, and a major reason for promoting this transformation is women's resistance to the male gaze.

"The Disappearing She" is full of suspense and twists. To celebrate his first wedding anniversary, the male protagonist He Fei took his wife Li Muzi on a trip to Southeast Asia. As a result, his wife suddenly disappeared. But suddenly, a strange woman claiming to be his wife appeared beside him. Although the face of the unfamiliar woman is very different from the original Li Muzi, the photos on Li Muzi's ID and their group photos have all turned into that unfamiliar woman. To prove that the stranger woman is not the real Li Muzi, He Fei searched everywhere for evidence. However, the unfamiliar woman and her gang closely monitoring him. Helpless, He Fei had to spend a huge amount of money to hire a well-known lawyer, Chen Mai, to help him find evidence. In their search for evidence, the true purpose of the stranger woman was gradually revealed: to force He Fei into becoming a mentally ill patient and to send him to a mental hospital or force him to commit suicide, and then inherit all his property. But the ultimate truth is that lawyer Chen Mai is a good friend of his wife. Chen Mai and a stranger teamed up to find the real culprit who killed Li Muzi. In the end, they discovered that He Fei was surprised and brutally killed his wife to pay off his gambling debts. But at its core, this is a film that reflects feminist ideas, focusing on feminism and achieving its antagonistic gaze by dissolving binary opposition and establishing female discourse. Its anti-gaze reflects a challenge to the supreme male rights, with the aim of constructing the female subject identity. The movie portrays powerful female characters such as outstanding lawyer Chen Mai and friend Fake Li Muzi, who, as representatives of the new type of women, provide a powerful counterattack to the male gaze.

2. Methodology

2.1. Literature Review

Combining existing research and theories on women's

consciousness, conduct a review to understand the research achievements and existing problems of predecessors, and reflect them in the article.

2.2. Text Analysis Method

Based on the specific analysis of the female image in the article, conclude. They are revealing the manifestation and influence of female consciousness in different fields. Study the contributions of women in fields such as politics, economy, culture, and education, as well as the challenges and obstacles they face.

2.3. Interdisciplinary Research Method

Female consciousness is an interdisciplinary topic that requires combining knowledge and methods from multiple disciplines for research. Research can be conducted by combining knowledge from multiple disciplines such as psychology and sociology.

2.4. Comparative Research Method

Compare the psychology and behavior of different characters in the work, analyze their similarities and differences, and summarize the effective information that supports this proposition.

3. How Casing Female Consciousness and Anti-gaze through Unwavering Tracing Down the Culprit

Chen Mai is a powerful woman who, through intense struggle, opposes gaze and gains control of discourse.

She is a presence of power, driving off-road vehicles, riding motorcycles, playing billiards, diving, and exuding a heroic spirit. She is independent, strong, brave, and pursues true love, possessing the independent awakening consciousness of a great female lead. She discovered that her best friend was missing, and she resolutely embarked on a dangerous journey. On the surface, she is a gold medal lawyer who is helping He Fei in a lawsuit to find evidence, with the sole intention of proving that his missing wife was a "fake wife"; Actually, she is persistent in finding her missing friend Li Muzi, finding evidence of the crime that led to her wife's disappearance, and seeking revenge for her best friend, the drama director Shen Man. The lighthouse confrontation scene, where He Fei and Chen Mai stand under the lighthouse, engaging in intense conflict and confrontation. Beside me were stormy waves, fiercely pounding the shore, as if angry or accusing. Chen Mai's eyes were powerful, questioning every word of He Fei. He Fei, a scumbag, is emotionally chaotic and collapsing, vehemently denying that he killed his wife. The detail of the cigarette in his hand being bent and wrinkled also suggests that he is guilty of being a thief. Although He Fei quickly adjusted himself and rebuilt his psychological defense line, Chen Mai confirmed that it was He Fei who caused the death of his friend. Before Chen Mai left, the camera gave her a meaningful close-up of her gaze. The connotation of this gaze is: It has been confirmed that Muzi's murder, she was desperate and angry, wishing to immediately strangle He Fei. The scene of the hospital's countdown pressing He Fei, Chen Mai, and He Fei pushing and pulling to the limit. Under Chen Mai's powerful verbal attack, the terrifying atmosphere created by Chen Mai's logically rigorous words, and the terrifying reminder of the countdown to surgery, He Fei finally collapsed his psychological defense and shouted out

the four words "Mosha Lighthouse". At this point, the film reached its climax! Chen Mai finally discovered the truth behind his friend Li Muzi's disappearance through his counter gaze at men: He Fei cruelly killed his wife to pay off gambling debts? The movie showcases Chen Mai's strong female consciousness through He Fei's collapse. This seemingly powerful man who deceives Li Muzi's emotions and controls his life and death is now vulnerable. This is a surrender of male power to women. The affirmation expressed in the movie by Chen Mai is also an appreciation of women's wisdom.

Chen Mai has a strong sense of female resistance. In her, the audience sees wisdom and bravery, as well as the perseverance and resistance spirit of women. In times of crisis, women are not weak or powerless, and the audience sees more possibilities for female images in girls. Of course, emphasizing feminism is advocating for women's grievances, not demanding that women's status and rights surpass those of men, to create new inequalities. Advocating feminism is based on gender equality.[6] Without this foundation, any theoretical peak will collapse. Only with gender equality, everyone has the freedom to survive, and the world will be more harmonious and beautiful.

4. Strengthening Women's Awareness and Anti-gaze through Deep Tracing Down the Culprit in Tiger Dens

Fake Li Muzi appears to be a snake and scorpion beauty on the surface, but she is a chivalrous woman with a strong sense of femininity willing to help her friends.

Fake Li Muzi was invited by Chen Mai to lurk around He Fei and assist in the investigation. Her performance carries a dramatic exaggeration, with a huge contrast, resulting in a strong visual impact. A charming and alluring face, a fiery figure, and coquettish words, yet the content of the words is a chilling threat and play. She went from gentleness to cruelty, from a gentlewoman to a beautiful snake and scorpion, her dangerous aura was truly chilling. When eating with He Fei at the beach. He Fei was almost driven crazy and directly asked the fake Li Muzi how much money she wanted to spare him. And fake Li Muzi sat directly on He Fei's body, leaned down in his ear, and said, "I don't want your money, I want everything from you!" With the gentlest expression, he said the harshest words. In the final climax scene, He Fei has collapsed, ready to return to the hotel and run away with a passport. But fake Li Muzi suddenly appeared, smiling at He Fei's evil charm while smashing a bottle onto her head. Later, blood flowed down her forehead, but at this moment she still smiled at the camera of He Fei. Wearing a red dress and a bloody smile, it became the light of this movie. She is willing to harm herself to obtain the truth. She disregarded the constraints of patriarchal society and, under the fearful gaze of He Fei, used a strong feminist consciousness to resist the male gaze, breaking free from the "other" object identity under the male discourse indoctrination system, and regaining recognition of women themselves with her released body. The man who controlled the real Li Muzi in her hands was defeated in front of the seductive woman, and her powerful female consciousness almost overflowed through the screen. She shattered the male gaze with her gaze, reaching the extreme of her anti-gaze towards the male.

It can be said that the eye-catching performance of fake Li Muzi is a supplement and reinforcement to Chen Mai's anti-

gaze. The two characters complement each other, showcasing the resilience and strength of women in resisting the male gaze. The movie showcases a special emotional bond through the mutual assistance between female characters. Chen Mai's identity as a lawyer is just a disguise for her investigation. Her identity is Li Muzi's best friend and drama director Shen Man. Everything was set by He Fei, with the aim of finding the truth about Li Muzi's disappearance from this mountain wolf. Fortunately, her friend was fair. The purpose of fake Li Muzi playing the role of Snake and Scorpion Beauty is to provide justice to real Li Muzi. Isn't this the standard girls help girls for women's mutual assistance? Which girl doesn't want to have such a good best friend around her, who is responsible for sobering up and persuading her to quit when she has a love brain attack and can eliminate all difficulties and do everything possible to help or even save herself when she is hurt by a scumbag? This kind of mutual assistance between women reveals the warmth and care of human nature, triggering people's thinking about family, friendship, and trust between people.

5. Conclusion

In summary, Lacan's theory of gaze well explains the role of gaze in subject construction. The movie "The Disappearing She" portrays women represented by Chen Mai growing up in anti-gaze and becoming representatives of modern new women. This article explores feminist thought in the form of film art, hoping that women can break free from being stared at and achieve freedom and independence. The movie portrays women's anti-gaze towards men while being stared at, establishing female discourse by deconstructing binary opposition and thus constructing female subjectivity, expressing the survival status of the "female other" with a fair attitude, exploring human nature through gender, and

uncovering the unique personality charm hidden deep within women's hearts. In the movie, repression, and reflection intertwine, and introspection and breakthrough work together, to some extent bidding farewell to the narrative mode of male discourse hegemony. The female characters in the movie are based on real life, depicting the living conditions of women and the gaze and reflection between the sexes [7]. Through gaze and reflection, it interprets female characters' unique practical significance and profound cultural connotations. This article deconstructs the character images mainly composed of Chen Mai, studies women's anti-gaze, investigates mutual support and unity among women, emphasizes the importance of women's strength and teamwork, and calls for society to give women equal opportunities and respect.

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