SLSA 2017 Out of Time

Lynn Turner (Goldsmiths)

Abstract

‘Give them some more time’: the ends of sacrifice in *White God*

Not just one among other slaughtermen, the father figure in [Kornél Mundruczó](https://www.google.co.uk/search?rlz=1C5MACD_enGB513GB565&espv=2&biw=1878&bih=790&q=Korn%C3%A9l+Mundrucz%C3%B3&stick=H4sIAAAAAAAAAOPgE-LWz9U3MDTISUk2MFbiAnEs0wuyS4y1xLKTrfTTMnNywYRVSmZRanJJfhEArEOs1zMAAAA&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwifqpS24uDMAhXHJ8AKHW-LB1cQmxMIpQEoATAR)’s 2015 film *White God,* is an abattoir inspector. It is he who decides what is ‘good to eat’. His judgement is thus firmly aligned with symbolic law above and beyond simple edibility, if there is such a thing. Yet at the film’s concluding scene, in the theatrical space of a courtyard flanked by abattoir buildings in a eugenically inflamed Budapest, he surrenders this power of decision or law making. This surrender is not entirely volitional but is the lesson inspired by the actions of his daughter, the lead human figure in a film otherwise dramatized by dogs. Facing a vast band of dogs, now violently aligned against all humans, the young girl realises her erstwhile exceptional status has run it course: music will no more calm the beasts and ‘fetch’ is a risible game that will no longer play. Lying down on the same plane as the dogs, the girl vacates her human verticality. Observing the scene from the abattoir balcony, her father hesitates. In the face of a panicking worker’s plea for protection, he says no, don't call the police yet. “Give them some more time”.

Through the prism of this extraordinary film, this paper will consider the possibility of revolution, the end of sacrifice and the gift of time.