

## Surface Without Depth: Postmodern Anxieties in David Fincher's *The Killer* (2023)

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### ABSTRACT

The research analyses David Fincher's *The Killer* (2023) by applying the theoretical lens of Fredrich Jameson's Postmodernism, particularly his concepts of wanning of affect, the zombification of subject, historical amnesia, and proliferation of simulacra. This study examines the film protagonist as a postmodern subject and how he displays emotional detachment, surface level identity performance, and historical numbness. It critiques the world of systematized structures, economies of consumer symbols, where identity is replaced by performance. The protagonist is neither a fully developed person but instead an empty form functioning in an abstract manner, using scripted behaviours within a simulated identity, an example of Jameson's postmodern subject. In short, the study shows how Fincher's film not only draws on imagery and motifs of violence and alienation, but it also stylizes a representation of current affective and ideological conditions. These themes not only characterize Fincher's cinematic world but also resonate with broader societal patterns where individuals, overwhelmed by hyper-consumption and digital mediation, experience identity crises, emotional disconnection, and a loss of historical awareness. The study suggests that embracing minimalist cultural values may offer pathways toward rebuilding meaningful human connections and countering the affective alienation of postmodern life.

**Keywords:** *The Killer*, zombification, historical amnesia, wanning affect, emotional detachment, consumer culture, postmodern anxieties.

### Introduction

In the contemporary media landscape, the postmodern cultural anxieties have taken the center stage where the movies often focus on the themes of shifting subjectivity and uncertainties of life. David Fincher's *The Killer* (2023) represents these concerns in an interesting way through the protagonist. The film has been adapted from a French graphic novel, written by Alexis "Matz" Nolent and illustrated by Luc Jacamon, and it was issued in 12 volumes starting in 1998. Later, it was staged by Fincher, from a meticulously crafted script by Andrew Kevin Walker-who also wrote Fincher's "*Se7en*"- the film is all about its own execution and "acts a minimalist nihilist action opera of *procedure*" (Gleiberman, 2023)

The protagonist is a paid assassin and his procedural routine, flattened emotions, are entirely shaped by capitalist logic, surveillance, and a robotic routine. Fincher is a widely respected Hollywood director and has secured many accolades including three Oscar nominations and an Emmy award for his directorial works. He is best known for crafting dark, psychologically layered films where he focuses on the darker side of human nature, social systems, and power dynamics. His subjects are often portrayed to be struggling with the dilemma of identity crisis, moral ambiguities, and existential crisis. Notable works like *The Fight Club* (1999), *Gone Girl* (2014), *The Social Network* (2010) are among the most celebrated where he presents his protagonist's struggles with their fragmented identities and the pressures of living in an emotionally disassociated society marked by the constant angst of capitalist ideologies.

Similar themes are also explored in *The Killer* where he observes the society and appears to be detached from his actions as an assassin and justifies his killings by mathematically calculating the annual death rate and birth rate and that his actions do nothing to disturb that balance. His mantra "Forbid empathy. Empathy is weakness. Weakness is vulnerability." (Fincher, 2023) shows his coldness and flattened emotional state, aligning with Jameson's concept of "waning of affect" and "zombie like subjects".

He also critiques the system when he says, "Since the beginning of history, the few have always exploited the many." (Fincher, 2023) Clearly, he understands the influence exerted by the powerful and rich people and how they manipulate the systems from behind closed doors. Jameson refers to it as the commodification of culture.

These themes resonate deeply with the postmodern ideas of Fredrich Jamesons. According to him the postmodern subjects are emotionally dumb, historically, disoriented, and are caught under the influence of late capitalism. He contends that, "the alienation of the subject is displaced by the latter's fragmentation; the waning of affect is replaced by free-floating intensities" (Jameson, 1991).

He articulates in *Postmodernism, or, The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism* (1991), that postmodernism marks a significant departure from the modernist emphasis on depth, authenticity, and historical continuity. Instead, it privileges surface, repetition, and pastiche, producing a cultural condition where individual experience is fragmented and simulated. The postmodern subject, in Jameson's account, is typified by a "waning of affect"—a loss of emotional depth—and a "zombie-like" mode of existence, whereby people become hollow agents of capital, consumed by labor and image.

Similarly, Koc A (2017) points out, Jameson defines postmodernism as a cultural designation of the final stage of capitalism, where the distinction between cultural and economic realms disappears, leading to the commodification of culture. Here even the simplest cultural artifacts are turned into commodified versions and have lost the actual value. Jameson's concept of Waning of affect, Zombification of the subject, Cultural stasis and historical amnesia, along with Simulacra and surface culture, which are the hallmarks of late capitalism will be applied in this research to understand the cultural and social anxieties discussed in the film.

### Research questions

1. How does the movie represent an emotionally flat and zombie like character?

2. In what ways does *The Killer* critique the conditions of late capitalism, particularly in its depiction of alienated labor and commoditized violence?

### Research Objectives

The objectives of this research are

1. To examine the protagonist's emotional detachment and procedural identity as a reflection of Jameson's description of "waning effect".
2. To understand the impact of living in a world surrounded by hyper-reality and shallowness.

### Research Significance

The study contributes to postmodern criticism by applying Jameson's concept on a 21st century movie. It explores the movie under the scope of postmodern cultural anxieties and beyond the framework of psychological thriller and action movies. It focuses on the impact of living in the capitalist society where endless labor, identity crisis, and emotional detachment have become the norm of the society. Moreover, the research expands Jameson's theory beyond canonical texts and explores how modern cinema continues to shape the post-modern aesthetic. Through this discussion the research also aims to address the growing discontent and the consumer culture that has been instigated through capitalist systems and how people should deal with the world of simulacra and simulation to develop a genuine connection with their surroundings by placing value in history, culture, and minimalism.

### Delimitation

The study solely focuses on the movie *The Killer* (2023) and does not include the novel version or other movies directed by David Fincher. While the film draws from genres like noir, thriller, and assassin lore the analysis is limited to theoretical exploration rather than genre studies. In addition, the analysis is based on Fredrich Jamesons theory of postmodernism and does not include other critical frameworks like psychoanalysis or affect theory, except where they intersect with Jameson's concepts.

### Literature Review

Fredrich Jamesons's theory of post-modernism, especially as outlined in *Postmodernism, or, The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism* (1991), offers an effective lens to analyze the cultural productions during the late capitalist system. He describes the postmodern subjects as emotionally dull, historically adrift, and hollow, shaped by simulations rather than deep structures. Film theorists such as Shaviro (2010) and Hutcheon (1989) have shown how postmodern cinema often features emotionally flattened protagonists, stylized violence, and fragmented narratives. David Fincher's *The Killer* (2023) exemplifies these traits: the hitman is emotionless, hyper-systematized, and defined by mantras like "stick to the plan" or "forbid empathy." His identity is entirely performative and commodified, echoing Jameson's notion of **simulacra** representations that have replaced real depth or experience.

Anderson (1998), in his work *The Origins of Postmodernity*, explores the political, intellectual, and genealogical origins of the postmodernist thoughts. He locates its roots in the Hispanic avant-garde of the 1930s but his true contributions lie in his efforts of mapping out the evolution of this ideology in the early 1970 to 1990's. According to him there are three key moments that shaped the postmodernist culture as we know it. The first moment is, The Declasses Bourgeoisie, a group of people that are no longer revolutionary or culturally productive. The second thing is the mediatized technology, which has intensified the simulation effect that has replaced substance with the surface. Lastly, the cold war served as a deadlock and marked the end of historical utopia, after which people started to get detached from politics and historical events. He calls the postmodern logic "complacent beyond precedent" and influenced by multinational capitalism. These thoughts resonate with Jameson's ideas and his logic of late capitalism where emotional depth is replaced by surface.

E. Westlake (2018) expands on Fredric Jameson's influential concept of the "waning of affect," examining emotional numbness and political stagnation in relation to the broader crisis of liberal humanism and its reliance on representational politics. Westlake builds on Jameson's analysis, which claims that postmodernity produces "signs without meaning" and that the subject is overwhelmed by "information without context" (Jameson, 1991). Westlake states that this state of affective withdrawal immobilizes the subject's capacity to imagine or realize social change, and very importantly, he argues that this is not simply a cultural malaise, but an ideological crisis in its most profound sense – it heralds the end of the liberal project that signifies rational progress and democratic reform.

He shows a new perspective on seeing the postmodern not as a lament of collapsing universalist ideas but as the dismantling of modernist liberalism as liberatory, which allows for emergent forms of politics. However, the essay also critiques how affect, while performatively visible, often fails to translate into sustained structural change, mirroring Jameson's sense of political impotency in late capitalism.

M Shukla (2019) argues, David Fincher's filmmaking style has frequently been characterized as containing elaborate visual detail, emotionally frigid environments, and control over narratives—qualities that contribute significantly to building postmodern affectlessness. Shukla (2019), in a thorough auteurist analysis of Fincher's films, contends that the director's "selections of shots in his films and camerawork make him an auteur" (p. 1). Citing Andrew Sarris's adaptation of auteur theory, Shukla emphasizes the way Fincher's resort to calculated camera placement, silky smooth tracking, and stationary framings creates visual tension as well as mirrors his protagonists' emotional detachment. The visual style is not so much an aesthetic preference but is also narrative in serving to create a sense of control, paranoia, and isolation—concerns that recur throughout Fincher's work, from *Se7en* (1995) to *Gone Girl* (2014). Fincher's aesthetic exactness is not merely form but serves as content, particularly in *The Killer* (2023), where the style itself exemplifies postmodern concerns Fredric Jameson identifies—surface without depth, repetition, and affective flattening. As Shukla points out, Fincher "uses camera angles and motion to reflect the internal state of his characters" (2019, p. 4), and in *The Killer*, this becomes static frames and effectively deadpan narration that uphold the protagonist's mechanical subjectivity. These stylistic inclinations thus make common cause with Jameson's theory of the decline of affect (1991), which proposes that Fincher's authorship is not only visual but highly ideological, inscribing the discontents of late capitalism in the very fabric of his films.

Similarly, Piers Macarthy's dissertation on *Pressure and obsessions in the films of David Fincher (2012)* focuses on identifying the thematic similarities in his movies he identifies themes like psychological weight of obsessions, and environmental pressure of society in movies like *Seven (1995)*, *The Social Network (2010)*, and *Zodiac (2007)*. Macarthy notes how these films portray workplace dynamics and psychological impact of working in close spaced offices that blur the line between reality and gradually driving personal drive into pathological compulsion. McCarthy asserts that "obsession is mostly shown as a mutation of characters' personal drive, or an extension of their duties for work," (Macarthy, 2012)

He further adds, "there is an overriding sense in each film that the workplace and environment have a pressurizing effect on the characters," (Macarthy, 2012). This critique also aligns with Fredric Jameson's notion of subjectivity under late capitalism—individuals hollowed out by systems of labor, discipline, and institutional control, which shall be explored in this research.

The interview anthology *David Fincher: Interviews (2014)*, edited by Laurence F. Knapp, offers a compelling insight into the director's evolving ethos—from commercial craftsman to philosophical auteur. Despite Fincher's own reluctance to accept the title of auteur he claims to be craftsman rather than an artist, highlighting his passion for making movies. The interviews document how Fincher got disillusioned of the corporate interference in his movies while he was directing *Alien 3*. This, in turn, led to the demand for complete creative control, which he exercised during the making of *Seven (1995)* and *Fight Club (1999)*. These movies explored the subjective arcs of the protagonists and their deep psychological and emotional struggles. As Fincher famously explains, "*I don't make movies to reassure people. That, to me, is a lie. Everything's not okay*" (Fincher in Knapp, 2014) Hence Fincher's ideas reflect a postmodernist approach, and he uses different mise-en-scène and cold aesthetic tone to demonstrate the postmodern traits. These interviews reinforce Fincher's position not just as a filmmaker, but as a subtle commentator on postmodern disaffection.

In his thesis, *David Fincher's white American antihero*, Andres Castrillion (2021), argues that Fincher's character reflects a Gen X identity crisis where they feel emotionally fragile, display narcissism, apathy, and detachment. He argues that these are all the characteristics of anti-heroes, and they respond to emasculation and social pressures through these characteristics. In movies this inner turmoil is depicted by using neo-noir techniques and special sound designs. The research also highlights how these anti-heroes resist institutions like family, religion, and government- and how female characters often serve as a catalyst for instigating the plot. Thus, he positions Fincher's work under the American cultural anxieties around masculinity, power, and estrangement. Hence, leaving room for exploring this condition under postmodern anxieties.

After thorough research on the previously existing data on the theory and the director's works it becomes clear that these concepts need further exploration and provide a compelling framework for analysing the emotional detachment and system apathy of modern-day cinema. Furthermore, after going through the interviews of Fincher and exploring the online databases it becomes clear that *The Killer (2023)*, has not been critically analysed in depth like his other works. Thus, there remains a gap to fill in the study of this modern tale and Jameson's postmodernist theory serves as an apt lens to explore the film's cold visual aesthetics, procedural repetition, and ethically vacant protagonist- an individual trapped in late capitalist routines, devoid of history, empathy, or authentic agency- a zombified subject as Jameson's theorizes.



## Methodology and Theoretical Framework

The research engages Fredrich Jameson's idea of postmodernism as discussed in his book *Postmodernism, or, The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism* (1991). He contends that the postmodern subjects are emotionally dull, fragmented, and historically adrift, and he terms this state as the "waning of affect" and the rise of zombie-like subjects. This metaphor fits perfectly with the description of postmodern subjects because like zombies- brain eating, emotionless, dull fictional beings- they feed on materialist things and fail to form real and meaningful connections. In this era, a new form of subjectivity and affect, labeled the schizophrenic subjectivity, emerges (Jameson, 1992, p. 26). This concept is referred to as "waning of the affect" where the subjects are so emotionally displaced, they can no longer form real bonds or meaningful connections.

Jameson's is also inspired by late capitalist ideologies where he defines the characteristics of late capitalist cultural productions. He implies that due to commodification of every aspect of life people have fallen into a trap of identity crisis and thus they are never satisfied with their condition. The fragmented subjects also fail to express their emotions and instead their feelings are fleeting intensities rather than the coherent, stable state of affections. He refers to it as "A prodigious exhilaration with the new order of things, a commodity rush, our 'representations' of things tending to arouse an enthusiasm and a mood swing not necessarily inspired by the things themselves" (Jameson, 1991) He maintains that the capitalist mindset has destroyed true value of things and in postmodern era even culture has become a commodity and due to lack of originality the people are just mimicking different styles and there is no originality.

Other concepts like, "historical stasis and cultural amnesia" and "simulacra and performativity" will also be applied on David Fincher's *The Killer* (2023), to investigate how affective detachment, emotional repetition, and cultural stasis manifest in contemporary realist fiction. The concept of historical amnesia is also connected with the previously mentioned concepts where the theorist claims that due postmodern temporality and the rejection of meta-narratives the modern society has reached a point where they can no longer relate to reality and because they challenge every institution they have nothing concrete to rely on and they just float in a historical amnesia, free to do anything they desire.

## Research Method

The research adopts qualitative, interpretive methodology grounded in close thematic analysis and critical theory. Rather than seeking empirical verification, the study emphasizes theoretical engagement and interpretive reading, drawing on postmodernist framework of Jameson's to uncover how narratives reflect and reshape understandings of identity, agency, and relationality.

## Data Collection

The data for this research has been gathered from a range of both primary and secondary sources. Primary materials include the script of the movie *The Killer* 2023 itself, alongside interviews and critics remarks, which provide insight into the narrative's thematic intentions. Secondary sources comprise peer-reviewed journal articles, scholarly books, and reputable online databases that offer critical perspectives on Jameson's post-modernism, zombie metaphor, and other theoretical contributions. In addition, selected reviews and critical responses

have been consulted to contextualize the movie's reception and cultural impact. This combination of sources allows for a multidimensional understanding of the themes and supports a theoretically grounded, interpretive analysis.

### Discussion and Analysis

In this section the research will focus on dismantling the movie's themes and the protagonist the killer, the discussion will identify the traits of zombi-like Jamesonian subjects and in this case Figure no 1 highlights all the main discussion points.

Concept	Key Definition	Application in <i>The Killer</i>
<b>Waning of Affect</b>	Loss of emotional depth in postmodern culture	Killer's procedural coldness, mechanical revenge
<b>Zombification</b>	Subject reduced to function, not feeling	Killer as emotionless laborer, affectless assassin
<b>Cultural Stasis / Historical Amnesia</b>	Present untethered from history	Ahistorical settings, temporal flatness
<b>Simulacra / Surface Culture</b>	Repetition of images without depth	Killer performs identity; aesthetic over meaning

Fig no 1

### Emotionless procedure and moral vacuum

The movie opens with a scene where we see a man sitting alone in a dark corner and through his voiceover narration we understand the context behind his situation. The man referred to as The Killer, is the protagonist who works as a paid assassin for a big corporate country that assigns him his targets. The Killer appears to be a man who follows strict procedures and regimes to stay in shape and to prepare himself for the killings. "We see The Killer first mostly in silhouette. He is seated erect in a straight backed, folding CHAIR, close enough to the window to be able to peer out." (Fincher, 2023)

These lines from the script introduce the protagonist as someone observing the world from outside and not actually being a part of it. He acts as a detached entity who observes the little things but does not get emotionally attached because his job requires it to be so. While observing the environment through his window he reflects again, "I am The Stranger amongst you." (Fincher, 2023) Thus, showing his emotional detachment.

Moreover, the protagonist does not show any signs of grief or remorse in the face of violence, even when his girlfriend is assaulted his focus is on punishing those people and he is guided by his mantra, "Stick to the plan. Forbid empathy." (Fincher, 2023) It shows that his revenge was not fiery or passionate but cold, calculated, and procedural. where he immediately sets out to destroy the people and even his corporation.

If we analyse this behaviour under Jamson's waning of effect, it becomes clear that the subject is desensitized from his surroundings. In a world saturated with images and simulations, deep feeling is replaced by surface-level reactions or disinterest. As Jameson argues, "intensities are now no longer personal feelings... but free-floating and impersonal" (Jameson, 1991). As The killer also mentions that "And avoid being seen. Which is impossible in the 21st Century... so at least avoid being memorable." (Fincher, 2023) Due to technical enhancement and constant surveillance it has become impossible to stay unnoticed, every move one makes is recorded and saved, which makes people cautious, and they refrain from showing their true nature. It also leads to the waning of affect where the postmodern subjects are unable to form meaningful connections with their environment.

This illustrates Jameson's claim that postmodern subjects are not driven by moral complexity or psychological realism; instead they act and respond to situations as a mathematical problem to be solved. The film's tone matches this emotional flatness and the monotone voiceover, the dim lights, and the ambient sound design strip away sentimentality from the scenes.

### **Zombie-like Mannerism**

According to Jameson's postmodern subjects are often rendered as automated and lifeless, reduced to perform repetitive tasks, which lack internal depth. Jameson calls it, "no longer has the coordinates to locate themselves within a meaningful social totality" (Jameson, 1991)

Similarly, the Killer's regime before he sets out for the assassination is reflective of his emotionally detached behaviour, which also resonated with Jameson's zombie-like subject. "My "process" is purely functional. Logistical. Narrowly focused, by design." (Fincher, 2023) "I'm effective because of one simple fact: I don't give a fuck." (Fincher, 2023) Jameson's (1991) theory resonates deeply with this cold and detached mannerism and his concept of Wanning of Affect where he argues, "In the most neutral way, we may describe this 'waning of affect' as the loss of the individual's capacity to express or even experience strong emotions" (Jameson, 1991, p. 14)

In addition, the protagonist appears to be a ghost within the system, he hides in plain-sight and adopts different aliases for himself. His identity is fluid but always hollow and he mimics different people like workers, office help, and tourists to achieve his aims. He checks into Airbnb's, eats bland meals, and purchases weapons like corporate tools. He has bunkers and storage facilities to store his fake passports, money, and weapons. Thus, his repetitive routine makes him alien to even his own feelings and emotions. He is not only alienated from others but from himself. These lines from the film show the need for repetition in his field to gain ultimate perfection, "Eliminating risk comes down to preparation, attention to detail, redundancies... redundancies... and redundancies." (Fincher, 2023)

Like a postmodern zombie, he is all movement, no interior. His labor (killing) is aestheticized but dehumanized. These lines from the film reflect the dehumanized nature of the killer, "I've actually grown to appreciate proximity work. Staged accidents. Gradual poisonings. Anything requiring a little creativity." (Fincher, 2023) This also shows how violence is commodified, and labor is depicted as an alienating task in late-capitalist society.

Hence, he appears as a zombie-like person with no emotions or actual connection with the task that he is performing but deeply infused with the desire to maintain perfection and



supremacy in his field. Similarly, zombies are also derived by the carnal desire to eat and consume their victims without having any consciousness.

### A World without Time

Jameson argues that postmodernism erases historical depth and creates a perpetual present in which the past is flattened into the background and the subjects seem to be living in historical amnesia. He writes, “we are condemned to seek the historical past through our own pop images and stereotypes of that past” (Jameson, 1991)

In the film, the protagonist is portrayed to be existing outside the world; his life is an enigma. There is no backstory or personal arc, and he seems to be living outside the time restraints, this is done deliberately, and the killer is situated in a historical scenario where no past is revealed, and no future is foreshadowed. For instance, the opening scene where the killer has been assigned a job the film does not reveal for a second who that person is or why he is placed on the target list. However, there is a feeling created by the director that the target is a high-profile politician or a government official. This situation resonated with Jameson’s concept of historical amnesia. “Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the law.” To quote... someone; can't remember who.” (Fincher, 2023) This quote illustrates how postmodernity leads to historical amnesia and the people even after quoting history do not know the concepts.

As Kırmızısakal (2024) argues, in this era, a new form of subjectivity and affect, labelled the schizophrenic subjectivity, emerges. This form of subjectivity can no longer historicize or position itself (Jameson, 1992, p. 21). Her idea of culture being a target of historicity crisis resonates deeply with the themes of the movie where the character is shown to be far removed from meaningful things and by portraying the postmodern anxiety of rejecting the meta-narratives he appears to anchorless and jumps around all over the world in the pursuit of his targets. He leaves a trail of bodies behind him and yet there appears to be no legal consequences or obstacles in his path, he just carries on with his killing spree, reflecting the postmodern trait of rejecting institutions like law enforcement.

Moreover, this historicity crisis is also prominent in Fincher’s other works like *Fight Club* (1999), where the protagonist The Narrator has fragmented identity and has split personalities reflecting his anxiety to connect himself with the real world. As P. Duncan (2016) explains, *Fight Club* dramatizes “a postmodern failure to access authentic feeling in a hyper-mediated world” (p. 42). The Narrator’s insomnia is not just biological — it’s symptomatic of an inability to emotionally situate himself. Similarly, in *The Killer*, the absence of temporal grounding makes the film feel suspended in an eternal present. This aligns with Jameson’s concern that capitalist realism forecloses the historical narrative. Fincher's environments are antiseptic and interchangeable, emphasizing the postmodern idea of cultural stasis—change without progress, action without consequence.

### Identity as Performance

Fredric Jameson’s postmodernism thesis posits that essentially, in a late capitalist culture, representation has come to replace reality. We no longer engage with the “real” world, but rather swim through a world of signs, simulations, and surfaces but rather “depthlessness” and the collapse of the distinction between the real and the imaginary (Jameson, 1991, p. 9).

The film serves as a dramatization of this condition. The Killer is shown as a performative actor. He wears many disguises—UPS driver, deliveryman, tech worker—as he provides misdirection, not merely as an identity to evade detection, but because there is no core self. His identity is simply a construction through functional roles and behavioural scripts. His daily life is not upon the revolving doors of brokerage houses, but rather on the impersonal management system of passwords, mantras, protocols. Even his music selection, The Smiths, which plays endlessly in his headphones, is not a genuine emotional interiority. This selection is a piece of carefully curated background noise, not a signal of his identity, but a prop for it.

Through this stylized detachment the film aligns with Jameson's concept of simulacra, which maintains that the subjects become a series of masked tasks far removed from interiority and history. Even his internal monologue, instead of providing psychological depth, is composed of repetitive slogans like "Stick to the plan" and "Trust no one," lacking introspection or morality concerns. His subjectivity is not explored but simulated—he does not think or feel, he enacts. There is no evolution or character arc, only the maintenance of a sleek, professional facade. In this way, *The Killer* exemplifies Jameson's concern that in postmodern culture, we live not through authentic experience but through the logic of images and systems.

Hence, it becomes clear that Fincher's movie shows a Jamesonian character who is affectless, depersonalized, and detached from history. Through its sterile environment, procedural logic, and stylized nihilism the film critiques the modern society where surface has replaced depth, systems have taken over morality, and labor has become zombified performance. He is not a man with conscience but a product of late capitalism. In short, Fincher doesn't just tell a story, but he dramatizes the cultural logic of our postmodern age by highlighting its anxieties.

## Conclusion

In conclusion, the film serves as a scathing critique of the post-modern society where the late capitalist ideologies have distorted the sense of reality and have led to the creation of hollow personalities that have no empathy and suffer from identity crisis. By applying Jameson's theory of postmodernity on Fincher's film the research highlights these crises and how they are depicted in modern day cinema. By focusing on key concepts such as the waning of affect, zombification of the subject, cultural stasis, and the proliferation of simulacra. The analysis demonstrates that *The Killer* epitomizes a late-capitalist, postmodern condition in which emotion is replaced by procedural repetition, identity becomes performative and fragmented, and reality is filtered through corporate systems, commodified routines, and aesthetic surface. The study also shows that these concerns are not just limited to art, and films but is very much reflective of our daily lives where modern day subjects are living their lives in highly simulated environments and due to the soaring rise in consumer culture, they are also becoming zombie-like, emotionally detached and psychologically scared. There is a clear sense of historical amnesia and cultural stasis, showing how the youth is living or mimicking just copies and there is no originality and there is no concern for the past and neither a vision for the future. The need of the hour is to introduce the minimalist culture so that the people may have more chances of forming strong connections with the history, culture, and even with our surroundings. This, in turn, may curb the challenge of emotional detachment and may enhance the relationship and identity crises that are the hallmark of post-modern society.

## Recommendations

This research focuses on exploring the postmodern anxieties of the film by applying Fredrich Jameson's theoretical framework. However, there remains a need for future research where the following areas can be explored in depth. Researchers can apply this theory in a comparative study of Fincher's other works. By integrating perspectives from psychology, media studies, and culture theory, interdisciplinary research can be conducted. A study on the usage of cinematographic techniques is also an important area that needs further exploration.

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