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### **Meat My New Self: Fleshing Out Bad Bodies in *Martyrs*, *Antichrist*, and *District 9***

This paper analyzes the intersection of meat, body, and bad social behavior in French drama *Martyrs* (2008), Danish art cinema film *Antichrist* (2009), and South African sci-fi war film *District 9* (2008). Elements within these films relate to the recent “torture porn” horror film.

Across different film genres we see a discourse of meat/flesh, of power, and of new selves. *Meat* is a motif drawn from horror, crystallizing issues of pain, of existentialist psychology, and of transformation. In horror, to become someone else takes pain and a pound of flesh. *Power* is both individual and ideological, investigating relations (borders/barriers) between sexes, between citizens, and between species. Such relations are both connections and borders between an “I” and an “Other,” borders which in the three films lie between victim and torturer, between husband and wife, between human and alien. *Bad Bodies* and the new self is created through pain and power by transgressing boundaries and creating new flesh, new identities, and new inappropriate (bad) behavior. Drawing on George Bataille’s notion of eroticism and transgression (2001), Giorgio Agamben’s (2005) political philosophy of zones of exception, and Søren Kierkegaard’s existentialist notion of fear and anxiety this paper reads the meat/body as a liminal zone interrogating Us and Them and creating new memories, new flesh, new transgressive identities.

The new bad bodies are erotic and lethal, alien and provocative. Where do they take us? Into heaven or hell, to new planets, new ways of seeing?