

Review on the film "un perro andaluz" by luis buñuel

[Literature](#), [Russian Literature](#)



Un Perro Andaluz is a silent, surrealist short film co-written by Luis Buñuel and Salvador Dali and directed by Buñuel. According to Linda Williams, surrealism was inspired by the “ subsequent exploration of the relation between the unconscious thought and poetic production” (Williams 12). She explains that surrealists aim to separate the object from its function and present it as its own entity or being. Sequences of events are not controlled by reason but rather the creative flow of the artist. Surrealist films distort time and space to mimic the forms they hold in dreams in hopes to create an “ other-worldly” experience (Williams 13).

In Un Perro Andaluz, Buñuel aims to fully embody surrealist ideas as he questions rationality, provokes viewers, and explores sexuality, death, and love. First and foremost, the logicity of time and space are non-existent. Actions are not linear and the sequence of events are in an illogical order. The audience is constantly tossed back and forth in time with the aid of mere subtexts such as “ eight years later” or “ in the spring” to help their minds understand what is happening. Likewise, space is not limited to reason or consistency. This denaturalization of reality is meant to create a sense of uneasiness and unfamiliarity in the viewer. Buñuel deliberately deformatizes these concrete scientific concepts in attempt to separate the viewer from the physical world. For example, when the two main characters are fighting in their apartment and the woman runs away from the man into the other room, the man appears in the room she ran into, lying in a bed in her clothing. When the camera pans out, we see that she is in the same room in which she appeared to have run out of in the last scene. This warping of

space displaces the viewer from reality so much so that one almost feels like they have entered a dreamlike trance.

As a surrealist, Buñuel throws reason out the door and allows his ideas to flow freely. A character may start an action in one location and time and end it in another. For example, when the main character shoots his brother, the brother is shot in an apartment but transports to a forest as he falls from his wounds. It is hard to say for certain where events occur as locations are constantly changing mid-scene. In a very surrealist fashion, Buñuel's goal is to create a film that invokes creative freedom in his viewers and helps break down the subconscious constricting walls of reality. The film is an illogical sequence of scenes loosely connected through consistent actors. Buñuel merely sews together absurd and sometimes disturbing images. For example, in one scene, the male antagonist wipes off his mouth and replaces it with the woman's armpit hair. With no true plotline, viewers are forced to rely on their own subconscious to piece together the story. The mind is given the liberty to interpret what is happening on screen in its own way, thus leaving room for various interpretations and explanations. No two people will view *Un Perro Andaluz* the same way. Furthermore, as a true surrealist, Buñuel intends to "shake" the viewer with stark, intense close-up images, almost making the viewer feel as if it is them on the screen. One memorable example can be seen in an opening scene of the film when a woman's eye is sliced open. Viewers are meant to shudder in their seats as they watch this scene, envisioning the eye as their own. As we will explore in the next paragraph, these scenes of pain are always directly tied to sexual arousal in this film. Buñuel has an obsession with death and sexual desire.

Throughout the film, images of pain and sexual sensations are paralleled. For example, the scene when the woman's eye is sliced open is juxtaposed with the phallic shaped cloud passing through the circle-shaped full moon, an image that represents intercourse. Another common metaphor he uses is that of ants in a hand, symbolizing masturbation as in "pins and needles," when one's hand gets numb. The ants are denaturalized and no longer are viewed as ants but as a metaphor for sexual pleasure. When the male antagonist sees or feels pain, he gets sexually aroused. For example, when the woman slams the man's hand into the door, ants appear from his hand – again, symbolizing masturbation. To represent this phenomenon in the film, painful and sexual images are always paralleled. For example, when the woman with a severed hand in her box is standing on the road and almost gets run over by passing cars, the man becomes sexually aroused. And when the woman is actually run over, he begins to grope his partner's breasts. He turns manic, stalking his partner around the room as she refuses to comply. When he touches her breasts, he becomes corpse-like and appears dead. When the woman fights back, he begins to pull two grand pianos with a dead donkey on each one. Here we see several connections between sexual desire and death. Another example is the scene of the brother's death where as he falls to death, he grabs onto a naked woman.

In real life, Buñuel was fixated on the idea that his brother was evil. Maybe his relationship with his actual brother inspired this scene. Perhaps all of these scenes are a reflection of Buñuel's own life, in particular of his obsession with death and sexuality. However, in the ending of the film we do see the surrealist ideal of passionate love. The female protagonist finally finds

happiness. When she is walking along the beach with her partner and he checks the time, she pushes down his watch as if saying we are not operating on this time but instead in the time of love. Furthermore, the box is a metaphor for repression. When she reaches the beach, she is finally free. The transition from the confined apartment to the open, airy beach symbolizes her newfound freedom. As they walk along the beach, she kicks the box that once held the severed hand, a metaphor for leaving her past behind.

In conclusion, watching *Un Perro Andaluz* is a dream-like experience that consists of explicit sexual scenes, an irrational chains of events, and disturbing imagery. Buñuel aims to follow surrealist values and ideals while also reflecting himself and his passions in the film.