“Un Chien Andalou (An Andalusian Dog)”– Narrative Analysis with Cinematographic Features and Rasa Theory Elements

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ABSTRACT

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Un Chien Andalou (An Andalusian Dog) 1929 directed by-Luis Buñuel & Salvador Dali is a notable film in film history. This text is conducted under qualitative research method and relates consistent art movements (Dadaism and Surrealism) with this film and also the director’s view on filmmaking. Finally, this text explains the narrative of this film with various cinematographic features and Rasa Theory elements.

KEYWORDS

Dadaism, Surrealism, Rasa Theory, Narrative, Cinematography

1. INTRODUCTION

Un Chien Andalou (An Andalusian Dog) 1929- remains the most famous short film ever made. If one hasn’t seen it, should prepare him for one of the strangest, craziest, most darkly fascinating movies of all time. This film was carefully constructed so that nothing in it makes sense. Maybe that’s why so many people are obsessed with this film. Different researchers have explained it in different ways. That also includes the title, which means "an Andalusian dog," even though the film has nothing to do with Andalusia and there isn't a dog in sight. This film was written and directed by two surrealist artists- Salvador Dali and Luis Buñuel. To know about the film’s narrative, cinematographic aspects and its philosophy of aesthetics, we need to know about the background of this study.

1.1 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Background of this study includes the directors’- Salvador Dali and Luis Buñuel- philosophy of aesthetics and the art movements of that time. Since the film belongs to 1929, the influence of the then art movement- Dadaism and Surrealism- is here.

1.1.1 DADAISM

According to Andre Breton -founder of surrealist movement, “CUBISM was a school of painting, FUTURISM a political movement and DADA is a state of mind". Dada is French for "a child’s hobby horse". This word satisfied the Dadaists desire for something nonsensical. Dada was a mindset or attitude than a single identifiable style. It began independently in New York, Zurich and emerged in Paris, Berlin, Cologne(Geiger, 2005).

A random look from the Dadaists manifesto’s-dada knows everything, dada spits on everything, dada says "knowthing", dada has no fixed ideas, dada is never right, we are incapable of treating seriously any subject, let alone this subject: ourselves. Example -Marcel Duchamp painted a moustache and goatee on a reproduction of Leonardo’s monalisa(Brown, 2011).
Dada paralleled the views of Sigmund Freud. Freud was a Viennese doctor. He developed the fundamental of psychoanalysis in his book "The Interpretation of Dream”. He argued- Unconscious and inner drives control human behavior (Freud, 1900).

1.1.2 SURREALISM:
1924 Dadaists joined the surrealist movement and "first surrealist manifesto” published. Surrealists incorporate many of the Dadaists techniques. Their special interest was in the nature of dreams and exploration of dream and unconscious (Tansev, Kleiner, Croix, & Horst, 1995).

Surrealism developed along two lines- Naturalistic surrealism and Biomorphic surrealism (Gauss, 1943). In Naturalistic surrealism, artists present recognizable scenes that seem to have metamorphosed into a dream or nightmare images. Salvador Dali and René Magritte were practitioners of it. We have seen it in “Un Chien Andalou” (Buñuel, 1929). In Biomorphic surrealism, automatism is notable features. Automatism is the creation of art without conscious control. Joan Miro produced these types of abstract composition.
1.2 ABOUT THE DIRECTORS AND THEIR PHILOSOPHY OF AESTHETICS

"Un Chien Andalou" was made by headstrong two young men in their 20s, intoxicated by the freedom of Paris during the decade of the Lost Generation. Luis Bunuel said that if he were told he had 20 years to live and was asked how he wanted to live them; his reply would be to dream all the day (Russell, 2005). The idea for the film began when Buñuel was working as an assistant director for Jean Epstein in France.

According to Bunuel, surrealists didn't consider themselves terrorists and they fight with society through scandals (Bunuel, 2013). Bunuel went to spend a few days at the house of Dali, a fellow Spaniard, and told him of a dream he'd had, in which a cloud sliced the moon in half, "like a razor blade slicing through an eye. Dali countered with his own dream about a hand crawling with ants. They wrote the screenplay together, and Bunuel directed, taking only a few days and borrowing the budget from his mother (Bunuel, 2013).

Surrealists want to bypass logical, everyday thinking in order to express the vast realms of experience - passions, obsessions, extremes of love, hate, hope, fear - that reason and rationality can't fully account for, much less tame or control (Tansey et al., 1995). Dali did this by painting hallucinatory visions and sporting a mustache that looks like a lethal weapon. He studied Richard von Kraft ebbing, Sigmund Freud and invented "paranoiac critical method " which is “To materialize the images of -concrete irrationality-with imperialistic fury of precision in order that, the world - of imagination and of concrete irrationality -may be as objectively evident as the exterior world of phenomenal reality(Finkelstein, 1975).”

Buñuel did it by directing dozens of films that attack commonsensical values and conventions with ferocious glee. Dreams were the nourishment of his films, and from his earliest days as a surrealist in Paris in his late 70s, dream logic was always likely to interrupt the realism of his films(Bunuel, 2013). It was made in the hope of administering a revolutionary shock to society. That was then, this is now. Today, its techniques have been so thoroughly absorbed even in the mainstream that its shock value is diluted. It is an ancestor of today's independent digital movies.

In collaborating on the scenario, their method was to toss shocking images or events at one another. Both had to agree before a shot was included in the film-"No idea or image that might lend itself to a rational explanation of any kind would be accepted," Bunuel remembered to open all doors to the irrational and keep only those images that surprised us, without trying to explain why(Bunuel, 2013).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role in film</th>
<th>Luis Bunuel</th>
<th>Salvador Dali</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>photo</td>
<td>Director</td>
<td>Script Writer, Idea generator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Born</td>
<td>February 22, 1900, Calando, Teruel, Spain</td>
<td>May 11, 1904, Figures, Catalonia, Spain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Known for</td>
<td>Filmmaker</td>
<td>Painting, drawing, photography, sculpture, writing, film, jewelry</td>
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<tr>
<td>Movement</td>
<td>Surrealism</td>
<td>Cubism, Dada, Surrealism</td>
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<td>Notable works</td>
<td>films-</td>
<td>The Persistence of Memory (1931) oil on canvas</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Un chien Andalou</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• L'Age d'Or</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Los olvidados</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Subida al cielo</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Robinson Crusoe</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Ensayo de un crimen</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Nazarín</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Died</th>
<th>July 29, 1983 (aged 83)</th>
<th>23 January 1989 (aged 84)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mexico City, Mexico</td>
<td>Figures, Catalonia, Spain</td>
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2. METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study is to analyze the narrative of the film *Un Chien Andalou* (1929) with cinematographic aspects and Rasa Theory elements. The research design of this study is exploratory and qualitative in nature. Research approach of this study is observation, specifically indirect-non disguised-structured-human observation. The film *Un Chien Andalou* (1929) is already determined to be observed with cinematographic aspects and Rasa Theory elements. Data collection process will be both primary (observing the film) and secondary (related books, theories, online articles about the film, cinematography and Rasa Theory). This study has used narrative analysis procedure to analyse all these data.

3. DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

In this section, this study will analyse the narrative of the film *Un Chien Andalou* (1929) with cinematographic aspects and will apply the basic elements of Rasa Theory in it. As we know, Narrative analysis is a genre of analytic frames whereby researchers interpret stories that are told within the context of research and/or are shared in everyday life and scholars who conduct this type of analysis make diverse—yet equally substantial and meaningful—interpretations and conclusions by focusing on different elements (Allen, 2017). These elements include, but are not limited to, how the story is structured, what functions the story serves, what is the substance of the story, and how the story is performed.

3.1 NARRATIVE OF THE FILM

To describe the movie is simply to list its shots, since there is no story line to link them. The movie contains several thematic references to Federico García Lorca and other writers of that time. For example, the rotting donkeys are a reference to the popular children’s novel *Platero y yo* by Juan Ramón Jiménez, which Buñuel and Dalí hated (Finkelstein, 1975). Anthropologist Jean Rouch has reported that after filming was complete, Buñuel and Dalí had run out of money, forcing Buñuel to edit the film personally in his kitchen without the aid of a Moviola or any other technical equipment (Bunuel, 2013).
As there is no scripted story of that film, so this text will explain the narrative with cinematic aspects-5c of cinematography- Camera angle, Continuity, Cutting, Close-up and Composition(Mascelli, 2005).

3.1.1 TITLE1-"ONCE UPON A TIME": We see a shocking establishing shot as a close up-sharpening a razor.it is enough to create tension among audience(Buñuel, 1929). Then some mid shots of an aged man who is smoking and sharpening the razor. He goes to balcony with that razor and looks upon the sky- a moon, about to be engulfed by a thin cloud (a close up). According to Buñuel, he shot the opening scene first because he considered it the easiest, and probably because he knew it would be instantly notorious.

Then cut to a close-up of a young woman (Simone Mareuil) being held by the man (as he was sharpening the razor, also the event of engulfing moon and cutting eyes are similar in style) as she calmly stares straight ahead. Another cut occurs to the moon being overcome by the cloud, then a cut to a close up of a hand slitting the eye of an animal with the razor, and the vitreous humor spills out from it. However, in an interview in 1975 or '76, Buñuel claimed that he had used a dead calf's eye(Bunuel, 2013). Through the use of intense lighting, and bleaching of the calf's skin, Buñuel attempted to make the furred face of the animal appear as human skin.

engulfing moon  
cutting eyes

3.1.2 TITLE2-"EIGHT YEARS LATER": A slim young man (Pierre Batcheff) bicycles down a calm urban street wearing what appears to be a nun's habit and a striped box with a strap around his neck. We see a tracking shot here following the bicycle. Also editing devices “dissolve”-when the nun dress dissolves into another scene.

A cut occurs to the young woman from the first scene (whose eyes were stitched), who has been reading in a sparingly furnished upstairs apartment. She hears the young man approaching on his bicycle and casts aside the book she was reading. The image it shows a painting by Vermeer, whom Dali greatly admired and often referred to in his own paintings(Finkelstein, 1975).

The Lace maker by Vermeer
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She goes to the window and sees the young man, in a high angle frame, lying on the curb, his bicycle on the ground. She emerges from the building and attempts to revive the young man. Later, the young woman assembles pieces of the young man's clothing on a bed in the upstairs room, and concentrates upon the clothing. The young man appears near the door. The young man and the young woman stare at his hand, which has a hole in the palm from which ants emerge. A slow transition occurs focusing on the armpit hair of the young woman as she lies on the beach and a sea urchin at a sandy location.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hand with ants</th>
<th>the armpit hair</th>
<th>a sea urchin</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="image1" alt="Hand with ants" /></td>
<td><img src="image2" alt="the armpit hair" /></td>
<td><img src="image3" alt="a sea urchin" /></td>
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There is a cut to an androgynous young woman, with bobbed hair and dressed in rather masculine attire, in the street below the apartment. She pokes at a severed human hand with her cane while surrounded by a large crowd and a policeman. The crowd clears when the policeman places the hand in the box previously carried by the young man and gives it to the young woman. The androgynous young woman contemplates something happily while standing in the middle of the now busy street clutching the box. She is then run over by a car and a few bystanders gather around her. Majority of them were shot in high angle shots.

Lots of high angle in that sequence

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Lots of high angle in that sequence</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="image4" alt="Lots of high angle in that sequence" /></td>
<td><img src="image5" alt="Lots of high angle in that sequence" /></td>
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OTS

Depth in composition
The young man and the young woman watch these events unfold from the apartment window. The young man seems to take sadistic pleasure in the androgynous young woman's danger and subsequent death, and as he gestures at the shocked young woman in the room with him, he leers at her and grasps her breasts. The young woman resists him at first, but then allows him to touch her as he imagines her nude from the front and the rear. The young woman pushes him away as he drifts off and she attempts to escape by running to the other side of the room.

The young man corners her as she reaches for a racquet in self-defense, but he suddenly picks up two ropes and drags two grand pianos containing dead and rotting donkeys, stone tablets containing the Ten Commandments, two pumpkins, and two rather bewildered priests (played by Jaime Miravilles and Salvador Dalí) who are attached by the ropes.

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**Dragging two grand pianos and others**

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**Dead Rotten donkey**  
**Two priests**
As he is unable to pursue, the young woman escapes the room. The young man chases after her, but she traps his hand, which is infested with ants, in the door. She finds the young man in the next room, dressed in his nun’s garb in the bed.

3.1.3 Title 3-”AROUND THREE IN THE MORNING”: The young man is roused from his rest by the sound of a door-buzzer ringing (represented visually by a martini shaker being shaken by a set of arms through two holes in a wall).

The young woman goes to answer the door and does not return. Another young man, whom we see only from behind, dressed in lighter clothing, arrives in the apartment, gesturing angrily at him. The second young man forces the first one to throw away his nun’s clothing and then makes him with his face to the wall, as if in disgrace.

3.1.4 Title 4-”Sixteen years ago: We see the second young man’s face for the first time (and discover that he is also played by Pierre Batcheff) as he admires the art supplies and books on the table, forces the first young man to hold two of the books. We have seen some slow motioned shots here a. This was done through changing shutter speed of camera.
The first young man eventually shoots the second young man when the books abruptly turn into pistols. The second young man, now in a meadow, dies while swiping at the back of a nude female figure which suddenly disappears into thin air. A group of men come and carry his corpse away. Here compositions of group shots were amazing.

The young woman returns to the apartment and sees a death's-head moth. The first young man sneers at her as she retreats and wipes his mouth off his face with his hand. The young woman very nervously applies some lipstick in response. Subsequently, the first young man makes the young woman's armpit hair attach itself to where his mouth would be on his face through gestures. The young woman looks at the first young man with disgust, and leaves the apartment sticking her tongue out at him.

As she exits her apartment, the street is replaced by a coastal beach, where the young woman meets a third man with whom she walks arm in arm. He shows her the time on his watch and they walk near the rocks, where they find the remnants of the first young man's nun's clothing and the box. They seem to walk away clutching each other happily and make romantic gestures in a long tracking shot.
3.1.5 **TITLES-“IN SPRING”**: In Buñuel’s original script, the final shot was to feature the corpses of the man and woman “consumed by swarms of flies”. However, this special effect was modified due to budget limitations, with the film ending with a still shot of the man and woman, who had been walking in the previous beach scene, half-buried in the sand and apparently dead.

**After all the confusion an ending…**

However, the film abruptly cuts to the final shot with a title card reading “In Spring,” showing the couple buried in beach sand up to their elbows, motionless and perhaps dead.

**3.2 ACCORDING TO INDIAN AESTHETICS–THE RASA THEORY**

We may also apply “The Rasa Theory” in this film. *Rasa* is the thing that crafted into an art piece by the artist and relished by a sensible spectator. Rasa’s are consisting of so many *bhavas*. Bhava is state of mind (Ibkar, 2015).

*Soka* (grief): when the young man’s cycle crushed on road, the young woman cried and felt grief for him.

*Krodha* (anger): when the young man holds two pistols to kill his replicated version.

*Vaya* (frightened): when the androgynous woman saw a car was coming towards her without taking a break, she felt the arrival of death.

*Vismaya* (astonishment): when the young man gave books to the replicated one and suddenly the books turned out to pistols, the young man was surprised.
Hasya(laughter): the young woman went to beach and met a man, his hand seemed perfect to her and she smiled.

Rati(love): after watching the androgynous woman’s death the young man raised his sexual desire.

Utsaha(energy): to resist the rapist the young woman pushed him and pulled a racket to counterattack.

Jugupsa(disgust): when the young woman saw the young man’s, face turned out to her armpit hairs.

Santa(peace): when the young woman found her best life partner she settled and found contentment.

Since no one has applied Rasa Theory elements on *Un Chien Andalou (An Andalusian Dog)* 1929 before, this time it has been applied on it.

4. CONCLUSION:
*Un Chien Andalou (An Andalusian Dog)* 1929 is such a film which can’t be set in any specific equation of film. This film is mysterious, confusing, shocking and meaningfully meaningless. These features are the real beauty of this film which have made it a unique film of the history. So, to analyze this film, typical cinematographic aspects are an easy topic to analyze it. Apart from this typical part, this text has also tried a new arena which is analyzing the film with Indian Rasa Theory.

The limitation of this study is that only basic elements of Rasa Theory has been applied on *Un Chien Andalou (An Andalusian Dog)* 1929 narrative. So this study is certainly not something perfect about analyzing the film *Un Chien Andalou (An Andalusian Dog)* 1929, but this text can be useful as an attempt at least.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR
Shaolin Shao is involved as a Manager at “Dhaka University TV” since 2017. She worked on different projects with BBC Action Media, UNDP, and UN Women Bangladesh and so on. She is continuing MTFP (Masters in Television, Film & Photography) Degree at the University of Dhaka and carried out Bachelor degree in TFP from the same University. She played role as a Researcher at “Dhaka University Research Society” since 2012 and has been related with research relevant to Media and Mass communication. She had two articles published in national journal named “Bangladesh Cinema and Television Institute Journal” and “Magic Lanthon”. She also has International Journal in Global Journal of Human-Social Science (Online ISSN: 2249-460X Print ISSN: 0975-587X) Volume 19 Issue 11 and International Journal of Arts and Humanities (ISSN: 2581-3102) Volume 03, Issue 09.

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