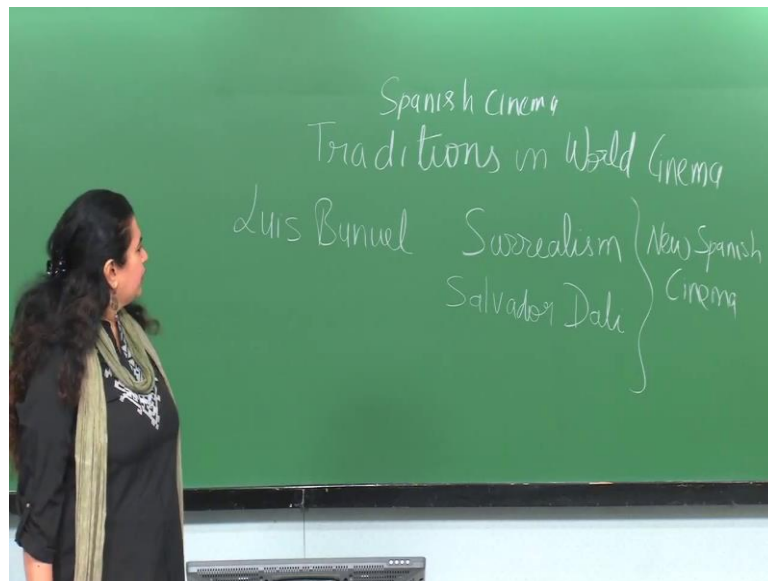


**Film Appreciation**  
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**Lecture - 09**  
**Traditions in World Cinema New Spanish Cinema**

(Refer Slide Time: 00:22)



Good morning. So, we continue with our lectures on traditions in world cinema. I will be talking about Luis Bunuel, the great film director from Spain and yes so, the focus is on Spanish cinema. Let me right that on the board; I have to inter written it. We are going to talk about traditions in Spanish cinema. So, key words would be Luis Bunuel, surrealism, which is a device, a theory; we will be talking about it.

It is a literary concept and a term and how people like Bunuel utilized it. We will also talk about Bunuel's collaboration with the great artist Salvador Dali, who was a supreme survivalist. We will later go on talk about a new Spanish cinema, the contemporary greats in the world of Spanish cinema. Now, before I start, I would like you to watch this clipping. Due to copyright reasons, I will not be able to show you the exact or the complete scene, but please focus on the link; this particular link. It is scene from Alfred Hitchcock, his Spellbound and it has a scene, which is called Dreams Designed by Dali, Dreams designed by Salvador Dali. So, while talking about Bunuel, we will also be talking about surrealism and Salvador Dali; therefore, the importance on this particular

scene. So, please watch the scene and I will get back to it. I won't be able to show you the scene, but please do that on your own. So, what did you watch in that scene? Plenty of eyes; Gregory Peck, the great Hollywood star and Ingrid Bergman. So, you watched Gregory Peck, being hypnotized. He is on a psychiatrist couch; he is being hypnotized and what does he see; eyes all over, and this was a dream sequence designed by Salvador Dali.

Notice his preoccupation with eyes, with human parts, bodies and at certain times, even the grotesqueness of bodies. What do eyes suggest? Is it at the eye of the camera? Is it the human eye or eye of the subconscious? So, *Spellbound* was a movie that owed a lot to Hitchcocks or the studio's understanding of (refer time: 03:36) theory of psychoanalysis and that is what the story is all about, and this is what; this is one expect that Bunuel and Dali, the two modernist were interested in. So, we have been talking about the cinema as a modern art. So, these were the modernist. So, psychoanalysis was key element of this period and this is what we are interested in.

So, one of the earliest surrealist films was the *Seashell and the Clergyman*; it was written by Antoine Artaud, the man who gave us the concept of theater of the upset and directed by Germaine Dulac, released in 1928. So, surrealism has always been an integral part of cinema, even today. Now and then, we have the concept of dreams and dreams within dreams, devices used by film makers in order to show that there is a thin line between what is real, what is subconscious and which and what is dream. So, for the case, as you know we have been talking about surrealism in Spanish cinema. So, Luis Bunuel, as the forefront of Spanish cinema and for decades, Spanish cinema was associated with the work of Luis Bunuel, who lives between 1900 to 1983. He made a very bitter caustic documentary called *Law Hurts* in 1932. After that, he was forced to go into exile to various parts of Europe. He did not direct another film for a staggering 15 years. He worked sporadically, as a producer in Paris Hollywood and Madrid, before immigrating to America in 1938 to escape fascism. A famous quote, attributed to Bunuel is Thank god, I am an atheist. Now, look at this gesture position; look at the contradictoriness of the statement. Thank god, I am an atheist. Bunuel was born in Spain and he is regarded as one of the most iconoclastic and rebellious of directors.

He has a very savage and recommend rather cynical view of mankind. He was an enemy of General Franco, Spain. As I have already told you, he was forced to live in exile in Mexico. His work revealed his commitment towards anti fascism, anti-clericalism and

anti bushisms. So, these tendencies; he was extremely against them; his works illustrate that. He was a surrealist and what is surrealism? Surrealism was a confrontational and experimental art form, which is a 20th century avagaan (refer time: 06:48) movement in art and literature. It attempted to revise the existing definitions of reality and to release the creative potential of the unconscious mind by the irrational gesture position of images. So, unconscious mind, gesture position of images; you know, contradictory images that don't go together. We will be talking about that in a moment.

The founder, the founding father of this movement, is the poet and artist Andre Breton, who published the first surrealist manifesto, which was a critic of excessism, rationalism and materialism of western society, and sort to reveal the creative potential of the unconscious and gesture posed images of the real and imagine, and the imagine to very disturbing, disconcerting effects. The surrealist were concerned with creating the marvelous; the marvelous aspect of the human mind and the gesture posed unrelated words and objects, concerned and were concerned with definitions and perception of reality; what is real? What is unreal? What is subconscious and were also, preoccupied with the insights of the subconscious.

Now, Salvador; coming to Salvador Dali, who is one of the master artists of this period. Dali lived between 1904 to 1989, and collaborated with Luis Bunuel, on films such as Ashiya and the Law. This is a famous, very well known movie. It was their attempt; Dali and Bunuel's attempt to explore subjectivity, the dream subjectivity, as seen in the dream states, and must concern with subverting the logic of representation. Dali has also created an artistic work, a painting or dream, caused by the flight of a bee, around a pomegranate, a second before awakening, which has symbols of fertility, virgin Mary, resurrection. We have been talking about how anti-clerical and anti-factious and how iconoclastic these people work. If you watch, if you look at the painting and I suggest you do it. It is a 1944 painting and it will tell you how, various images contrasting images are gesture posed here, in order to reveal the workings of a subconscious or the unconscious. Dali's interest and dreams keep in the influence; what rather influenced by the writings of Dr Sigmund Florin and Bunuel and Dali, both represented or reflected that the writing are forayed in the work.

Coming to surrealism again; surrealism is based on the belief in the superior reality of certain forms of previously neglected associations in the omnipotence of dream and in the disinterested play of thought; that is what Andre Breton defined or explained that as.

Dali's fascination with gesture posing images can be exemplified by his painting, *Telephone and the lobster*. Dali was always fascinated by the image of lobster and how suddenly, lobster can find its way on most unexpected places. So, he also designed famously, for various (refer time: 10:49) in France and lobster would be painted or printed on beautiful fashion gowns and also, they just seen, where the telephone receiver is painted in the image of a lobster and how do these to go together when the idea is gesture position of seemingly different images, in order to move us, to shake us out of complacency and let us think, look at things in a different way.

Surrealism as an art, was influenced by (refer time: 11:30) by the teachings or the writings of (refer time: 11:32) and dedicated to the expression of imagination as revealed in dreams, free of conscious control of reason and free of convention. At its core, surrealism is an expression of imagination. It is different from the expression is that we need to understand that which is another key device or theory, we keep talking about expressionism is different from surrealism, because it is a general term for mode of representation in visual arts, which is used in extreme reaction, against realism or naturalism and presents of world violently, distorted under the pressure of intense personal moods, ideas and emotions. So, that is where we have to differ; expressionism is quite violent. Image and language express feelings, and imagination rather than represent external reality. Expressionism is more a mood and idea; emotion conveyed about a certain subject matter. I would suggest that you watch the opening short of *Ashia en dalo*, which was released in 1928. It is known for its non nutritive structure and surrealism.

The movie famously opens with a close up shot of a woman's eye; that is what we are let to believe; that is a woman's eye and a hand, holding razor, razor blade and then, the blade places the eye ball of that woman. Now, this scene was so, this image was so shocking. The people were shaken out of their, you know, they were completely on the edge of the seat and that is this supposed to mean; what was Bunuel and rather what were Bunuel and Dali trying to suggest here. I would recommend that there is plenty of interpretation of this particular scene. Many people have seen it as young artists, Bunuel and Dali's effort to shake the (refer time: 14:01) out of the complacency, and also to force them to look at cinema as kind of heart; not just a means of entertainment.

There are other shocking imagery and images and scenes as well; for example, the scene of a severed hand, where these worms and ants crawling all over it, and a very

expressionistic winding stair case. So, these are the scenes that make us think that what actually, is the meaning of reality; what is reality and what is subconscious. Bunuel also made famous film or quite a success film called *The Age of Large Dolls*, which was released in 1930, and it was called, generally labeled as surrealist frenzy. Again, it is subversive; it is anarchic; it looks at various ideas, sex, religion, society in very subversive and interrogative way. Women's characters in all directors are known for their meaning towards certain kinds, representation of certain kinds of characters and Bunuel's characters are essentially, hypocritical and selfish and the compromise any principle in order to find instant ratification.

One example is *Bel Desire*, which was released in 1967, starring Catherine Deneuve and John Sorrell, which is a movie about unfulfilled desires, sadomasochism and again, as characteristic of Bunuel. It is a blend of reality, fantasy and dreams. I will, So, *Bel Desire* is a very well documented film. Many of you would be, I mean, suggest that if you have not watched the movie, then you please do watch at least, clippings of the film. They are available on the net and I would like to talk to you about an equally, great film of Bunuel, which should be done in a course like this so, which is called *Viridiana*. The *Viridiana* was released in 1961. It won several festival prizes and represented Bunuel's return to Spain, after decades, overseas. It is plot; it is a story of a young girl, *Viridiana*, played by Sylvia Pinel, who is a, she is a devout person about Christian, a saintly character, who attempts to lead a truly Christian life and ends; how she ends in disaster for herself and people around her. She is a young girl in the beginning and she is about to enter a convent, but just before this, she is advised by her mother to visit an elderly uncle, who lives in the country side. Now, on seeing the young girl, the uncle is in a force to remember, he recalls his dead wife, who died on their wedding night. So, the uncle drags her and put in the wedding gown of his diseased wife and tries to rape her.

However, somehow she, that act doesn't take place, but later on, we find that the uncle hanged himself to his death using a jump rope. Now, *Viridiana* holds herself responsible; she is guilty like a true Christian if she is tremendously, responsible for this horrible tragedy and she takes responsibility for her uncle suicide, and decides to stay back to take care of her uncle's estate, along with her uncle's illegitimate son George. So, to continue her act of contrition, repentance, she invites a group of diseased beggars from a nearby town to come and live on her uncle's estate. You know there are several abundant cottages; nobody is using them. So, she comes, invite these people that

homeless, the destitute, the lappets to come and stay on the estate. There is a famous (refer time: 19:12), where we see Viridiana futile attempts to save these ratchet characters through prayers and George's efforts to restore some kind of order and balance on the estate.

One day George and Viridiana are away on some businesses, and the beggars take over. They break into the mansion and stage a sort of parody of Leonardo Da Vinci painting, the last supper; I am sure most of you are aware of that, but if you are not, please do look up this painting, the last supper by Da Vinci. Now, this scene in Bunuel, there is, it is like a freeze. It is the beggars, arrange themselves around the dining table and they have the meals exactly, the way it is shown in the last supper, accompanied by the strains of Handel, the classical musicians. His symphony Masaya and once Viridiana and George return, one of the lappers nearly rape Viridiana. All this finally, leads to the breakdown of a spiritual pride. The film was righteous and black famous and not surprisingly, the Spanish government attempt to destroy all the prints of the film; however, the film had already reached Cannes Film Festival, and was awarded (refer time: 20:48) award. The theme, something that has been regular in Bunuel; it exposes the follies of human nature; human beings, as Bunuel says or suggest, are beyond redemption; that is his theme.

Then the film is also read as an anti-Catholic and anti-factional apparel that Bunuel shot in catholic Spain. The film was officially denounced by the Vatican and (refer time: 21:18) them as insult to Christianity. Bunuel's *The Exterminating Angel* 1962 movie is a (refer time: 21:30) comedy. It is again quite anti (refer time: 21:37) repeated, a theme which was repeated very frequently in Bunuel. So, the story takes place in a beautiful mansion, a big aristocratic house, where the dinner guest arrived and their eye to eye. The same scene is repeated twice; why? We will look into it. We will look at it. The (refer time: 22:01) and walk through the white door away and then, they arrive again. It is a supremely crafted scene. The dinner guest arrive, the (refer time: 22:12) walk through the white door away and then, they arrive again; the same guest, seen from higher camera angle and then again, they (refer time: 22:24) and walk through the white door away. Soon, we realize after the initial niceties and pleasantries are exchanged, we realized that the cook and all the servants or waiter; they quit their jobs and just leave; leaving the owner the mistress of the house (refer time: 22:48). What is she going to, how is she going to manage this event without the aid of her servants?

Now, soon he realized that the guest are all capable, incapable of leaving while the

servants are rescued the guests are, sort of trapped in the house, and it is all mysterious. This is not supernaturalism happening here. There is no explanation given here. They are just not able to leave the place. So, gradually, they are well cultivated mass, the civilized mass, start slipping away. They resort to slandering each other, and reflect baser human emotions, such as greedless and jealousy. They keep on getting desperate. They try to get out, but cannot and then, they become increasingly, savage like our, you know, (refer time: 23:52). They smash furniture around the house. They start killing each other and also, kill the sheep, wandering into the house.

Now, what was sheep doing around the house; that is also left unexplained, but they kill the sheep, cook them on a fire meat from broken furniture. We realize they cannot wash their filthy, their stink. There are no toilet facilities and when an old man dies and two lovers commit suicide, these guess, the civilized guess stuff the corpses into a closet for future use, and it is hinted that the supply of sheep has run out, and we know what, how they are going to sustain themselves now.

The prisoners finally, attempt to reconstruct the circumstances, leading up to the imprisonment, and they are able to get out. So, again it is a story of Buzza Kuldesak; this kind, the upper class has reeled a stagnation point, a dead end; there is no escape for them. Although, they have defeated the workers, the rich are trapped in their own wealth. The film, the last scene of the film set in a cathedral, where these people, who have just escaped from this mansion were come together and pray, offer thanks. However, the entire congregation finds itself, unable to leave the church and a flock of the sheeps suddenly, enters the building and that is the way the movie ends. Again, this is an example of Bunuel's scathing attack on the middle class, on the upper class of his society of this Spanish world.

A gentler approach, is still a satire, but a gentler approach to attacking the (refer time: 25:59) seen in Bunuel's, a discrete charm of the (refer time: 26:03) in 1972. The film is a French language film, starring Fernando Rey, was a regular of Bunuel. Fernando Rey is also the character of a frog in William Franklin's *The French Connection*. He is the man who smuggles drugs in America. So, people would recall; there was some kind of associations. So, he was a star of international stature. It also starred John Pearl and Christopher Walken. It won the Oscar as best foreign film and it has screenplay by John Cloth Carrier.

Now, why I am telling you these names, because as a student of film appreciation, it is important that you realize or that you come to appreciate these names. John Cloth Carrier is a phenomenal screen writer. Some of you who may be interested in the art of a screen writing, would know that he has spent several screen plays for many great films. (refer time: 27:18) was also written by him and so was *The Unbearable Lightness of Being*, which was made in 1980s, late 1980s, starring Daniel Delus and it is based on Milan Kunderas novel in the same name. Now, a brief background to the discreet charms of the (refer time: 27:42), which was made at a time in social unrest globally, was at its height. We had the Vietnam war, students unrest and forces of counter culture, interrogating the western society.

This was also a period when the upper middle class, the (refer time: 28:03) was a fashionable target of disdain. I keep talking about Jack Nicolson's *Five Easy Pieces*. You must watch this film. It was released around the same time and again, you can see the leading man, the protagonist in a contemptuous attitude towards the upper class in which, he is born. So, the *Discreet Charms* is considered as a worthy successor to *The Exterminating Angel*. Along the same line, how (refer time: 28:34) have reeled the dead end, cull the suck, but it is gentler in its satiric bite. It is a satire about the foibles and the follies of the privilege class. It is extended, rather as a, this structured as an extended dream in the subconscious of Don Ruffle (refer time: 28:58) France from the Latin American country of Miranda, which is shown as the factious military dictatorship.

Don Ruffel's dream, which includes the dreams of others and dreams within dreams concerned so, the repeatedly frustrated attempts of six friends to dying together in a civilized way. The food is the symbol. Now, see in *The Exterminating Angel*, the guests were unable escape. In the *Discreet Charms of the* (refer time: 29:30), these six friends charming, civilized gentle friends and gentle in the sense, you know, the ladies and gentleman of high society; they are unable to sit down and have a civilized meal. There are repeated attempt do so, but all the attempts are frustrated. Food becomes a major (refer time: 29:53). So, dinner is the central social ritual. Generally, we see in the upper class, food is displayed as a way of exhibiting ones good manners, taste, class and wealth; something that we can talk about, talk over again.

So, using food as an imagery and satirizing in the upper class. One movie as I have already told you; it exists in a dreamlike, it is structured in a dreamlike state. It has multiple dreams and fantasies and the distinction between the real and the unreal is



question. Several scenes are repeated and with good reasons so, it is repetition, is used here as the esthetic device. You know, repetition is one esthetic device in literature and film to explore certain state of mind. I would suggest here that you watch *Ground Hog Day*, in order to understand the esthetic device; reputation as an esthetic device. So, Bunuel feel that reputation is fundamental to human experience, and it can be used to explore certain human; functioning of the human mind. So, from here we move on to Bunuel's another great movie, *The Phantom of Liberty*, which was a social satire, made in 1974. It has Bunuel's experiment a lot. It is a free form, free flowing film, interconnected stories and he come minds every possible story telling devise, including narrative painting, the gothic mode, the esthetic device, the flashback, the dream sequence and a lesson to other films to create a narrative, which is circular and self reflexive.

Bunuel's next great film was that object, *That Upsquare Object of Desire*, released in 1977, which interrogates the theme of love and desire. It is about a young Spanish woman, who flirts and then shingles a middle aged friend widower. Very interestingly, and again in continuation with Bunuel's iconoclasm; I will tell this group's name, the revolutionary army of the infant Jesus. I have been talking about the reself reflexivity and circularity of narration in the Bunuel's films. There is also much that can be said about his influence on younger film makers. Now, see in (refer time: 32:57), there is a famous scene, where Catherine (refer time: 33:03), who plays the prostitute by day. She opens her box, which is given to her by one of the clients. We never got to know what is in the box. So, this concede was repeated famously, by Talentino in *Pulp Fiction*. John (refer time: 33:21) opens the box and we don't no what is in the box.

Again, coin brothers Barton Fink use the same idea; Barton Fink in 91. There is the box, but we do not know what it is. David Linjon's *Manholin Drive* too, we saw such as what is in the box and there is a key, which is left up there, you know, be it is up to first to find out what is in the box. So, when Bunuel was asked what is in the box in (refer time: 33:51), he non silently answered, anything you want; open and it is so, beginning of you know, a modernist and beginning of a post modernist; whatever you want there to be. Now, I had spoken at length about Bunuel and to wind up the session, I would quickly refer to the new Spanish cinema. One of the major film maker of this period is Guillermo Del Toro. He is known for his Spanish language, dark fantasy pieces, such as the gothic horror film, *The Devil's Back Bone* and renowned movies pass labyrinth(refer time:

34:42). He had also made American action movies such as Blade part 2 and Hell Boy. His science fiction master film Pacific Rim, is also quite famous and his most recent film is The Haunted Mission, starring Ryan Gosling.

One of the most important film makers on contemporary scene is Pedro Almodovar again, from Spain. He is known for his prowess and wildly funny films. He is one of the most well known Spanish director, without a doubt in recent times, and his great films are Kika, Metador, High Heels of Labyrinth, Passion attained, Women on the verge of a Nervous Breakdown, All About My Mother, which is also, you know it has a course of a street car name, desire. Almodovar cinema bears the stamp of Ingmar Bergman, Woody Allen and also Fassbinder, the German film maker, Rainer Werner, Fassbinder. His unmistakable styling shows that he will be the most famous. He is indeed the most famous Spanish film maker next to Luis Bunuel. In conclusion, what do we realize is that Spanish cinema remains unique for its distinctive blend of darkness and surrealistic style. You watch films ranging from Bunuel's cinema and then, you come down to films like (refer time: 36:22) attain and you find that there is a distinct element of darkness and surrealism. So, extremely interesting things happening there in Spanish cinema.

Thank you very much. We meet for our next class.

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