

21G.735

Advanced Topics in Hispanic Literature & Film

Topic for Spring, 2001: The Films of Luis Buñuel

SYLLABUS

Professor: Elizabeth Garrels

Students view, in class, one feature-length or, at most, one feature-length and one short film per week by Spanish film director Luis Buñuel (1900-1983), that is, thirteen out of Buñuel's total production of thirty-two films. The subject includes two and a half hours per week of discussion dedicated to the films and related texts, including film criticism, the director's autobiography Mi último suspiro (orig. publ. in French, in 1982, as Mon dernier soupir), and the novel Tristana, by 19th c. Spanish writer Benito Pérez Galdós, (This novel inspired Buñuel's film of the same title, one of the director's eighteen films based on literary texts.) The subject considers the thirteen films in a loosely chronological fashion, from Buñuel's early silent surrealist classic of 1929 to his last film, "Cet Obscur objet du désir" ("Ese oscuro objeto del deseo," 1977).

Class discussion conducted entirely in Spanish; advanced reading knowledge of both Spanish and English required.

Assigned Readings

1. Luis Buñuel. Mi último suspiro (1982). Plaza y Janes.*
2. Benito Pérez Galdós. Tristana (orig. 1892). Biblioteca Pérez Galdós, Alianza Editorial (2a ed. 1999)*
3. Gwynne Edwards. The Discreet Art of Luis Buñuel: A Reading of His Films (1982; 2nd Ed. 1997). Marion Boyars.
On reserve only.
4. Peter W. Evans. The Films of Luis Buñuel: Subjectivity and Desire (1995). Oxford UP. **On reserve only.**
5. Linda Williams. Figures of Desire: A Theory and Analysis of Surrealist Film (1981). U.Cal.P. **On reserve only.**
6. Paul Sandro. Diversions of Pleasure: Luis Buñuel and the Crises of Desire (1987). Ohio State UP. **On reserve only.**
7. Selected articles by Sigmund Freud. Ask for the indicated volume of The Standard Edition of The Complete Works of Sigmund Freud. **On reserve only.**
8. Luis Buñuel, "Land Without Bread" (Lecture in Spanish, in spite of the title, delivered by Buñuel in 1940. Rpt. in Nickel Odeon: Revista trimestral de cine, #13, winter 1998, pp. 65-68. **Photocopy of lecture on reserve; also available on reserve in Buñuel, Escritos.**
9. Peter Brooks, from Ch. 1, section entitled "The Uses of Melodrama," pp. 11-20, from Ch. 2, section entitled

"Structures of The Manichaeon," pp. 28-36, The Melodramatic Imagination: Balzac, Henry James, Melodrama, and the Mode of Excess (1976). Columbia UP, 1985. **On reserve only.**

10. Joanne Hershfield, Ch. 5, "La devoradora: The Mexican Femme Fatale," pp. 107-131, Mexican Cinema/Mexican Woman, 1940-1950 (1996). **On reserve only.**

11. Octavio Paz. "Los hijos de la Malinche," Chapter 4 of El laberinto de la soledad (1950). English translation entitled The Labyrinth of Solitude also available. **On reserve only.**

12. E. Ann Kaplan, "Is the Gaze Male?," Powers of Desire: The Politics of Sexuality (1983), ed. Snitow, Stannell, Thompson, pp. 309-27. **On reserve only.**

13. Babington, Bruce and Peter William Evans. "The Life of The Interior: Dreams in The Films of Luis Buñuel." Critical Quarterly, vol 27, no. 4, winter 1985. 5-20. **On reserve only.**

14. John Berger, Ch. 3, Ways of Seeing (1972), 45-64. **On reserve only.**

All films will be viewed first in class on Wednesdays. Students will need to review many if not all the films, and can do this, after the in-class screening.

Recommended

1. Various entries in Michael Groden and Martin Kreiswirth, eds., The Johns Hopkins Guide to Literary Theory & Criticism. The Johns Hopkins UP, 1994 (ie. such entries as "Film Theory," "Feminist Theory and Criticism," "Psychoanalytic Theory and Criticism," "Sigmund Freud, and "Jacques Lacan").

2. Additional books on Buñuel, both in Spanish and English, including Exhibition Catalogues with copious photos, can also be found on Reserve for this class. See handout "Reserve List for Hayden Library Reserve" for titles.

Calendar of Assignments

1. Wed., 2/7/01 - Introduction to subject:

friendship
and
1920s.

-Lecture on Surrealism and the
of Luis Buñuel, Salvador Dalí,
Federico García Lorca in the

-View slides and web images of
Surrealist and other paintings.
-Review terminology useful in discussing
Buñuel's films.
-View "Un Chien andalou" (Paris, 1929,
minutes), by Luis Buñuel and Salvador
Dalí. (LLARC # SP 144)

2. Fri., 2/9/01 -Discuss "Un Chien andalou."
-Students are expected to have examined
the website
<http://cvc.cervantes.es/actcult/bunuel>.
-Read: Edwards, "Preface,"
"Introduction," and Chapter 1
pp. 9-60.

3. Mon., 2/12/01 -Discuss "Un Chien andalou"
-Read: Sandro, I. "Introduction:
Contexts for Analysis," pp. 1-22, and
II. "Subjectivity and The Desiring Eye:
Un Chien andalou," pp. 23-50.
.
- Recommended but not required:
Williams, "Introduction," xiii-xvii,
Chapters 1 and 2, pp. 3-105.

4. Wed., 2/14/01 - View "L'Age d'or" (Paris, 1930, 60
minutes). (# FR 249)
-Read: Evans, "Introduction."
-Buñuel, Chapters 1-6.
-Ovid, Book 1: "The Creation," "The Four
Ages," Metamorphoses (5 A.D.),
translated
Humphries, lines
from the Latin by Rolfe
1-162 (photocopy).
-Freud, "Character and Anal Eroticism"
(1908), The Standard Edition, Vol. IX,
pp. 169>.

5. Fri., 2/16/01 -Discuss "L'Age d'or."
-Read: Edwards, Chapter 2, pp. 63-86.
-Sandro, III, "Role Relationships and
The Articulation(s) of Desire: l"Age
d'or," pp. 51-70.

Mon., 2/19/01 - Holiday. (Mon.'s class held Tuesday.)

6. Tues., 2/20/01 -View "Las Hurdes" (English title:"Land
Without Bread") (Spain, 1932, 27

minutes) (#SP 144) (Students receive handout of shot sequence of film).
 -Read: Buñuel, Chapters 7-10.
 -Freud, Section II of "The 'Uncanny'" (1919), The Standard Edition of The Complete Works of Sigmund Freud, Vol. XVII, pp. 226-33.

7. Wed., 2/21/01 - -Discuss "Las Hurdes."

-View "Los olvidados" (English title: "The Young and the Damned") (Mexico, 1950, 88 minutes). (#SP 116)
 -Read: Buñuel, Chapters 11-14.
 -Luis Buñuel, "Land Without Bread" (Lecture in Spanish, in spite of title, delivered by Buñuel in New York City on March 18, 1940, to introduce a screening of the English language version of "Las Hurdes." Rpt. in Nickel Odeon: Revista, trimestral de cine, #13, winter 1998,

pp.

65-68.

8. Fri., 2/23/01 -Discuss "Las Hurdes" and "Los olvidados."

-Read: Edwards, Chapter 3.
 -Evans, Chapter 2, first pages up to Section 1, and all of Section 3.

9. Mon., 2/26/01 -Discuss "Las Hurdes" and "Los olvidados"

-Read: Buñuel, Chapters 16-18.
 -Octavio Paz, "Los hijos de la Malinche," Ch. 4 of El laberinto de la soledad (1950).
 -Consult the following website:

Also recommended = "The Mexican Film Resource Page" = <http://www.wam.umd.edu/~dwilt/mfb.html>

By today, Monday, Feb. 26, students must e-mail the instructor the name of the film they will discuss in their 10 pp. paper due on Wed., May 9. The 10-page paper is to be a monograph focused on a single film by Buñuel. Students

can choose among the following eight films: "Los olvidados," "Susana," "El," "Ensayo de un crimen," "Nazarín," "Viridiana," "El ángel exterminador," and "Tristana." To get some quick information re. these eight films, check out [Amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com) on the Web. Specifically, go to <http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/ts/browse-video>. In the "Search by Actor, Title, Director" box, write "Luis Buñuel" and click Go! This page gives you access to information on all eight films you can choose from for your papers. Click the desired film title and explore the options. Among other things, you should be able to get reviews, plot summaries, and the Maltin Summary (from Leonard Maltin's Movie & Video Guide).

10. Wed., 2/28/01 -

-View "Le Charme Discret de la Bourgeoisie" (Spanish title = El discreto encanto de la burguesía, English title = "The Discreet Charm of the Bourgeoisie") (France/Spain/Italy, 1972, 105 minutes). (# FR 185)

Read: Buñuel, Chapter 20.
-Freud, "Family Romances" (1909),
The Standard Edition, Vol. IX, 236-41.

11. Fri., 3/2/01 - Discuss "Le Charme Discret de la Bourgeoisie"

Read: Edwards. Chapter 9.
-Evans, Chapter 1.

12. Mon., 3/5/01 - Discuss "Le Charme Discret de la Bourgeoisie."

-Read: Buñuel, Chapters 15, 19, 21.
-Babington, Bruce and Peter William Evans. "The Life of The Interior: Dreams in The Films of Luis Buñuel." Critical Quarterly, vol 27, no. 4, winter 1985. 5-20.

13. Wed., 3/7/01 - View "Susana" (Mexico, 1951, 82 minutes).

(# SP 163)

Read: -Selections from Peter Brooks,
The Melodramatic Imagination: Balzac, Henry James, Melodrama, and the Mode of Excess (1976). From Ch. 1, section entitled "The Uses of Melodrama," pp. 11-20; from

Ch. 2, section entitled "Structures of
The Manichaeans," pp. 28-36.

Due today: Informal hand written blue book with reading notes and critical response to Buñuel's autobiography Mi último suspiro.

14. Fri., 3/9/01 -Discuss "Susana."

-Read: Evans, Chapter 2, Section 1.
- John Berger, Chapter 3 of Ways of Seeing (1972), pp. 45-64. (On reserve)

15. Mon., 3/12/01 -View segments of Mexican film "Doña Bárbara" (1943, dir. Fernando de Fuentes).
-Discuss "Susana."
-Read: Hershfield, Chapter 5, "La devoradora: The Mexican Femme Fatale," pp. 107-31.

By today, students should have seen (at least twice) their chosen film for their 10 pp. paper due 5/09/01, and should have sent the instructor by e-mail a paragraph in Spanish that defines the topic of their paper. The paper should discuss a particular aspect or theme of the film. It is to be a critical/analytical paper, not a description of the plot and not an overview of the film's history (production, history of reception, etc.).

16. Wed., 3/14/01 - View: "El" (Mexico, 1952, 91 minutes). (SP

-Reread Buñuel, Ch. 18, pp. 237-50.

17. Fri., 3/16/01 -Discuss "El."
-Read: Evans, Chapter 3, up until Section 1, and all of Section 2.

18. Mon., 3/19/01 - **Oral reports:** Each student chooses a short scene (max. 4 mins.) from either "Los olvidados," "Le Charme Discret," "Susana," or "El," and makes a video copy of it, shows it to the class, and discusses the scene in terms of 1) its filmic construction and 2) its relevance with regard to the film's narrative as a whole. (Time for 4 reports; each report = maximum of 12 minutes total.)

-Start reading Galdós's late 19th-century novel Tristana (1892).

19. Wed., 3/21/01 - View "Ensayo de un crimen" (English title: "The Criminal Life of Archibaldo de la Cruz") (Mexico, 1955, 91 minutes). (SP 137) (**This version has no subtitles.**)

-Read: E. Ann Kaplan, "Is the Gaze Male?," Powers of Desire: The Politics of Sexuality (1983), ed. Snitow, Stannell, Thompson, pp. 309-27.

20. Fri., 3/23/01 - Discuss "Ensayo de un crimen."

-View film clips from Hitchcock's 1941 film "Suspicion."
 -Read: Evans, Chapter 3, Section 1.
 -Reread: Buñuel, Ch. 18, pp. 250-53.

March 26-30 - Spring vacation.

21. Mon., 4/2/01 - **More oral reports.** (See Mon., 3/19. Time for 4 reports; each report = maximum of 12 minutes total. Any additional oral reports can be given on subsequent Wednesday afternoons.)

-Continue reading Galdós's Tristana.

22. Wed., 4/4/01 -View "Nazarín" (Mexico, 1958, 97 minutes)

-Continue reading Galdós, Tristana.

23. Fri., 4/6/01 -Discuss "Nazarín."
 -Read: Edwards, Chapter 4.
 Reread: Buñuel, Ch. 18, pp. 253-54.

On Fri., April 6, students are invited to pass in rough drafts or outlines of their 10 pp. paper, or of any part of it. This is optional, and is not considered work for extra credit. No draft will be accepted after 2:00 on the afternoon of 4/6. Drafts passed in on time will be read and commented on by the instructor and returned to students on Mon., April 16.

24. Mon., 4/9/01 -Finish discussing "Nazarín," "El," and "Ensayo de un crimen."

-Continue reading Galdós, Tristana.

25. Wed., 4/11/01 -View "Viridiana" (Spain/Mexico, 1961, 90 minutes). (SP 008)
- Read: Freud, "Lecture 33: The Psychology of Women," from New Introductory Lectures on Psycho-Analysis (1932).
26. Fri., 4/13/01 - Discuss "Viridiana."
- Read: Edwards, Chapter 5.
-Freud, "Fetishism" (1927), The Standard Edition, Vol. XXI, pp. 149-57.
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Monday, April 16 - Holiday.

27. Wed., 4/18/01 -View "El ángel exterminador" (Mexico, 1962, 95 minutes). (SP 115)
- Read: Freud, "The Uncanny" (1919, the entire article), The Standard Edition, Vol. XVII, pp. 218-52.
28. Fri., 4/20/01 -Discuss "El ángel exterminador."
- Read: Edwards, Chapter 6.
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29. Mon., 4/23/01 -Discuss Galdós's novel Tristana.

Pass in today: Informal hand written blue book of reading notes and critical response to Galdós's novel Tristana.

30. Wed., 4/25/01 -View "Tristana" (Spain/France/Italy, 1970, 105 minutes). (SP 152)
- Discuss Galdós's novel Tristana.
31. Fri., 4/27/01 -Discuss film "Tristana" and novel.
-Read: Edwards, Chapter 8.
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32. Mon., 4/30/01 -Discuss "Tristana" and novel.
33. Wed., 5/2/01 -**Oral reports**. Each student gives a brief oral presentation, with appropriate film clips, based on her or his 10-page paper.
34. Fri., 5/4/01 -**More oral reports**.
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35. Mon., 5/7/01 -**More oral reports**.
36. Wed., 5/09/01 - **More oral reports**.

Due today: 10-page double-spaced type written paper (or 250 words per page). Topics chosen earlier in the semester. See deadlines

37. Fri., 5/11/01 - View "Cet Obscur objet du désir"
(France, 1977, 103 minutes). (FR 247)

38. Mon., 5/14/01 - Discuss "Cet Obscur objet du désir."
-Read: Evans, Chapter 3, Section 3;
Conclusion.
-Williams, Chapter 4, pp. 151-54 and pp.
185-209; Chapter 5.

39. Wed., 5/16/01 -Discuss "Cet Obscur objet du désir."
-View film clips from Hitchcock's "North
by Northwest" (1959), from Almodóvar's
"Todo sobre mi madre" (1999), and from
"Un Chien andalous."

DETERMINATION OF FINAL GRADE:

1. Attendance* and quantity and quality of active participation in class discussions = 30%
- *Unexcused absences at more than two classes will negatively affect the final grade.
2. Blue book on Mi último suspiro, due 3/7/01 = 10%
3. Oral report on 3/19/01 and 4/2/01 = 15%
4. Blue book on novel Tristana due 4/23/01 = 10%
5. Oral report on 10 pp. paper, 5/2-5/7/01 = 10%
6. 10 pp. paper, due 5/9/01 = 25%

total = 100%

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