
Transgressing Femininity Through Three Phases of Food Symbolism and Consumption in Věra Chytilová's *Daisies*: A Study of Feminism Through Absurdist Lens

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Abstract

Heterosexual relations require the woman to be nothing more than a server. This role of serving is incommensurate with her participation as a consumer. Consumption of heavy foods compromises the existence of women as desiring subjects. The idea of the fasting girl associated with a religious, chaste, and dainty attitude is one of the patriarchal thought processes that has continued through the ages. However, such a concept is reversed in Věra Chytilová's absurdist film *Daisies* or *Sedmikrásky* set against the background of the 1960s Czech Republic. The two women protagonists are called Marie whose culinary habits form the movie's focal point. They engage in voracious consumption of nutritional foods in sequences and their destruction, especially towards the film's end. Their gluttony is depicted in a unique cinematic form using several cinematic techniques where their consumption and destruction of food are shown in different instances of the disjointed film narrative. Such association of food with the two incognito women transcending their puppet-like stature highlights the metaphorical idea of the destruction of the patriarchal attitude bringing the audience close to the idea of upliftment of not only a particular class of women but the community of women as a whole. The paper aims to assess such transgressive attitudes of the two women about food consumption in three phases interrelated to each other. Interspersed Feminist Criticism has been used to support the radicalism of the two Maries. Feminism is unfurled further through several cinematic techniques supporting the consumption in these phases.

Keywords: cinema, consumption, patriarchal, woman, feminism

Introduction

Věra Chytilová is a significant name in the avant-garde movement of Czech cinema. She was the sole female filmmaker to make her way to the Czech New Wave, providing her movies with a surrealist approach through obfuscated imagery and narratives. Her oeuvre includes various issues related to the political corruption of the Czech Socialist regime. But more than revealing political corruption, her works are well-noted for feminist representation. Although she refused to be a feminist, her works involve deep within it the issue of women's independence. Perhaps, it was because of the individualist that she was that led her to reject such labels. The word "feminist" attached with it a negative idea in Central Europe during her time where people had minimal knowledge regarding women's empowerment in a space that only acted as overpowering for masculinity and regressive for femininity. *Daisies* is the most popular of all the Chytilová films. The imagery and sound effects that the movie makes use of are absurd and incomprehensible at times, but it is this very fact that provides the movie with psychological depth, playing with the minds of the audience and providing them with a new vision of womanhood. It is not only the lack of traditional plot structure and focus on the "typical" womanly attitudes of high-pitched laughter and flowery dresses that makes the movie feminist in its approach but the idea of food scattered throughout the narrative reverts the view of traditional femininity. The Victorian idea of "The Angel in the House" is reversed and women are seen as gluttonous and sensual, providing them an equality with their male counterparts. The two Maries, played by Jitka Cerhová and Ivana Karbanová, bamboozle old men changing their names once to Jarmilla, Julie, and once to Marie, gifting themselves with fluid personalities. Both the characters are presumably known as Marie by the audience to highlight their virginal essence, creating an emphasis on their independence from men. They childishly consume and destroy food. Such infantile behavior as expected from women by men is brought to the two Maries's advantage as they turn such an inferior status to their power. Bliss Cua Lim brings forward the idea behind the two Maries' behavioral patterns in her essay "Dolls in Fragments: *Daisies* as Feminist Allegory" as she states the two women as "recalcitrant dolls who realize the limits of their position and set out to overperform their constructed characteristics." (54) The interconnections are aptly made between the three main phases of food consumption by the Maries as projected in the research as The Modern Garden of Eden, Consumption of Masculinity and The Initial Dining Scene and the Last Scene of Gluttony and Destruction. The three scenes depict how the Maires transgress their puppet-like designation and turn into a quest for food

consumption. They are feminists in every approach and not merely unthinking dolls or delicate “daisies.”

Social Background

To comprehend a literary or cinematic piece, one must delve deep into the historical context of the particular time. The subject proves to be significant only when put against a certain historical context and there is an effort to bring forward a change in that period. *Daisies* (1966), is an important cinematic production that highlights the political turmoil of its period. Communism was the ubiquitous regime in Eastern Europe in the 1960s which came to the limelight later in the popular 1983 “Letter of the Presidium of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia” that criticized the wrongful property acquisition by Communist party members. (Plaček et al. 3) The letter acknowledged the prevailing existence of theft of socialist property for personal advantage and bribery in return for personal benefit. Such a sense of the corruption of the so-called “Communist” regime that hindered the free expression of individuals, depending on totalitarian values in actuality is brought forward by *Daisies*. The new waves that emerged from the Soviet sphere of ascendancy attracted great attention from government officials and critics who were interested in showcasing the disparity between “free” artists in the West allowed to follow personal expression, state artists in the East working through politically dictated channels, and the new waves of Eastern and Central Europe, a citadel of freedom within an oppressive Communist regime. It is this latter category that *Daisies* fall into. James Tweedie in *The Age of New Waves* writes that the “libidinal energy of youth can be harnessed for revolutionary politics.”(34) Such “revolutionary politics” is performed as *Daisies* eliminates all narrative threads, going against socialist realism, replacing the conventional modes with short-term pursuit of pleasure by the two young women, of which the consumption of food becomes imminent. The film suggests that personal gratification is a socially powerful act notwithstanding how counterproductive it may seem, especially to the “Communists”. Hence, “Auto-annihilation” is a radical alternative to “continued obedience to a social order run by old men.” (34)

A Short Survey of Literature

The literature review is essential to summarize previous work on my discussion topic, Věra Chytilová’s *Daisies*, and point out the research gaps within it. The absurdist film remains a popular area of discussion in the literary circle. However, despite its publicity,

the work remains undervalued among the masses who remain oblivious to the production. There have been several articles and books published on the topic. However, I have attempted to bring out my unique observations adding to the previous observations on the topic, providing a unique way of viewing the research. Orisel Castro, York Neudel, and Luis Gomez in “Eroticism and Form as Subversion in *Daisies*” have focused mainly on the topic of eroticism that the two Maries promote. The article focuses on the three deadly sins of Gluttony, Lust, and Sloth that the two girls challenge. To do so the girls perform in a puppet-like manner without any psychological depth throughout. I have explored the two protagonists transcending their doll-like statures to satirize the patriarchal system that remains enclosed within its garb of “Communism.” Bliss Cua Lim’s popular essay “Dolls in Fragments: *Daisies* as Feminist Allegory” discusses the topic as multivalent enabling both a critique of the two Maries’s excesses as well as the latent feminist undertones present. However, I have explored staunchly the feminist side of the narrative which is shown by the excessive gluttony that is supported by the absurdist cinematography which becomes valid amidst the Communist chaos. Katarina Soukup in her “Banquet of Profanities: Food and Subversion in Vera Chytilová’s *Daisies*” discusses how gluttony and food operate as metaphors of blasphemy assisting in transgressing cultural norms. I have included the idea of reversal of cultural norms through gluttony, however, I have also added my unique observations and connecting points in the narrative strategy of the film in the research extending on the symbol of the Garden of Eden, Food as Phallic Symbols and the Dining Scenes where each of these scenes is shown to have connections with each other. Several critics have extended upon the cinematic techniques of *Daisies*. *The Age of New Waves* by James Tweedie touches upon the historical context that led to the absurdist cinematography in the New Wave Czech films. I have related my observations regarding the cinematography interrelating its absurdity with that of the gluttony occurring throughout the film.

The Modern Garden of Eden: A Cinematic Symbol of Female Rebelliousness

The idea of the omnipresent food and its consumption is introduced as *Daisies* begin. From this instance, the two Maries “subvert and destabilize ‘totalizing regimes.’” (Soukup 39) Their first act of contemplation before devouring the apple from the sole tree present amidst the meadows is reminiscent of the scene from *Genesis* with its Biblical Tree of Knowledge. This forms the first phase depicting consumption in the narrative through fruits. An act of devouring as well as exposition. As they pluck the apple from the tree, the act becomes a parallel to Eve’s disobedience in a patriarchal

world. Such a defiance is carefully supported by the disjointed cinematic form. As the film begins, the continuity of space is violated by Discontinuity editing that fractures the conventional logic and structure of the narrative. In this case, such a discontinuity moves against the political agenda of Communism that is presented with its garb of socialist pretensions, which in actuality suppress minority groups, women forming an important part of it. Marie II announces herself as a “panna” in the beginning which may mean a puppet. However, such a role is defied as Marie I slaps Marie II, and they end up in a colorful world detached from the black-and-white marionette-like space and begin to play with an existence detached from patriarchal dictates. According to them if everything is turning bad, they would go “bad” as well. Such digression termed as “bad” is depicted as they extend their initial contemplation of consumption of fruits to actualization through the performance of their eating. In the beginning sequences of the film, Marie II insists Marie I “come” with her as Marie I inquisitively asks “Where to?” (*Daisies* 05:30-05:31) Marie II states “Someplace where something’s going on.” (*Daisies* 05:31-05:33) Immediately after the conversation ends in the scene, the most basic editing transition of the “cut” occurs with several scattered green apples falling on the floor. However, such a basic transition is not to be interpreted with less significance. These apples act as a sort of exposition of what will take place immediately after- the defiance of the Maries to the set “Communist” norms through consumption throughout the narrative. The allusion to The Garden of Eden is everpresent throughout the film. In the scene, immediately after their drunken exploit at the bar, the Maries are shown in their fluid room in the presence of a green mattress, leaves, and apples of which they take successive bites. Instantly after Marie II consumes the apple, she picks up the ringing telephone to answer in an assertive tone “Die, die, die” (*Daisies* 22:10-22:14) to the external world of censorship. The next act of defiance arrives with the Maries visiting the restaurant and eating green apples, grapes, and cakes at the expense of an elderly, rich scientist. It is to be noted that the first dish that is brought to them is green apples instead of regular foods. This forms an exposition of the larger menace that the two women would commit toward the end. The gender roles are reversed here as Marie II questions the old man regarding his personal life as he “spoil/s” them: “How old is your old lady?” (*Daisies* 26:49:26:52) Not only Marie II but Marie I who had been pretending all along that she is afraid of being “fat” joins to satirize the old man: “Don’t you realize we are still developing?” (*Daisies* 25:56-25:57) Ultimately they are able to insult the man who leaves their company on being continually questioned by the Maries. It is understood as Marie II states Marie I “this is the fifth one to leave” (*Daisies* 27:12-27:14) that they gain such authority to devour their choicest foods by manipulating men through their tricks- feminine beauty, the only weapon they own in the patriarchal

sphere. Hence, their acts of devouring fruits interspersed in this phase of dominant images of apples prove them Eves in the modern Garden of Eden. Their lack of identity, that they are introduced as no one's mother or sister or daughter or wife provides them the autonomy to assert themselves recklessly. The lack of identity is hence an identity in itself, different from the initial marionette or "panna" phase with creaking sounds of moving limbs. The Non-Diagetic insertion of frames of different leaves as seen as the Maries complete their absurd dance before The Tree of Knowledge is an avante-garde exposure to the apparatus-political rebelliousness by the two Maries as they continually eat fruits outside and within their fluid sphere of the room: once a space covered with leaves while once a space occupied with streamers and fire. The room being fluid detaches itself from the connotations of the traditional Garden of Eden. The first book of *Genesis*, King James's version depicts the scene of Eve's rebelliousness as subservient even though radical: "When the woman saw the tree was good for eating and a delight to the eyes,...she took of its fruit and ate. She also gave some to her husband, and he ate."(2) The difference between the traditional Eve and the Maries is that the Maries do not offer food or serve food to the men. Instead, they are meant to devour.

Consumption of Masculinity: Use of Food as Phallic Symbols

One of the most important scenes in the narrative is where the Maries indulge in the consumption of foods that are phallic shaped. This is the second phase where the Maries assert their power as they consume masculinity, quite literally. Jacques Lacan's distinction between Phallus and Penis in his essay "The Signification of the Phallus" must be taken into consideration where Lacan states that Phallus is "the signifier that is destined to designate meaning effects as a whole..."(579) In stating this he proves that men intrinsically have power because of having a penis as the male organ is not true but that it is the idea of the phallus with power and superiority over women provide the latter with a subjugated position. Věra Chytilová hence makes use of the two Maries as her cinematic devices to bring forward this issue of the vagueness of the superiority of the phallus making it insubstantial. She accomplishes the function by letting the Maries not only devour phallic-shaped food materials but slice them and peel them to render the meaning attached to them useless. They devour the sense of "masculinity" as provided to them and they refuse to accept themselves as inferior. The scene takes place with the vague promises of Marie II's male lover over the telephone. In one of the previous scenes, it is shown that his attachment to her is merely sensual as he states that he wished she had "never come" into his life the moment she covered herself up. However, as she exposes herself naked to his gaze as he consumes wine she is crowned

with a burst of the trite Spenserian yet lusty idealization: “You are heavenly and yet so human.” (*Daisies* 27:42:27:46)

As the lover makes his vows of love, the Maries without responding to his vague affirmations cut, slice, and devour sausages, pickles, and a banana as if in a revolt to undermine the power associated with the idea of masculinity that deems the female as sexual objects, infantilizing them and placing them high on a pedestal without flaws – perfect and peerless. To bring such a revolutionary essence within the scene the Maries set fire to the streamers in the room-the room that previously acted as a parallel to The Garden of Eden now resembles a disheveled shack where the women move towards greater attainment of individuality despite the marionette-like role attached to them with their queer walks, jumps and mechanized tone of speech at times. Marie I realizes this empowerment as “something great.” Setting fire to the streamers with the background church Operatic music, they renounce the feminine identity attached to them without any regret, considering it holy rather than blasphemous. They begin to make sense of the world through the senselessness attached to them. The protagonists also slice an egg along with the phallic foods. An egg is symbolic of female fertility. Hence, its slicing highlights the denial of the conventional sexuality associated with women as mere “dolls” for the satisfaction of sexual appetite or as child bearers. Instead of love, the two women crave heavy and nutritional foods as they surf through a food magazine expressing their desire to eat more. The women debate over which food to eat talking about “chicken” and “steak tartare” as the lover pathetically expresses his vain love over the telephone. However, the moment Marie I tries to munch on the cut piece of paper believing it to be real food, she realizes that in a spoilt world, one needs to be as spoilt. They cannot eat what they like unless they fool their lovers with their beauty. Such an absurdity is captured with the cinematic effects of “jump cuts”, an edit to a single sequence of shots as the camera focuses on Marie I’s face munching on the magazine paper, capturing the strangeness of her reaction paralleling the strangeness of the situation. Another significant part of the scene that must be taken into consideration is the moment Marie II tries to chop Marie I’s toe with her pair of scissors soon after Marie I states “Another piece of yummy meat.” (*Daisies* 35:00-35:03) Instantly after, Marie I repeats the same with her fork, pricking Marie II’s stomach. Even though they do not resort to cannibalism, terming each other as “crazy” in their attempts to chop each other, a satire is presented through the absurd act that the female that is represented as corporeal and innocent is nothing more than a piece of meat- they are not ideal and are as grotesque as men with their pretensions of ‘masculinity’, that the women too have desires which the patriarchy can never decipher.

The Initial Dining Scene and the Last Scene of Gluttony and Destruction: Double Reflections of Patriarchal Sneer of Female Expressiveness

Despite the discontinuous narrative structure, the only element that the audience finds continuous is that of the food symbolism and its consumption by the two Maries. Věra Chytilová scatters food imagery and its presence within the narrative structure. However, the intensity of gluttony is evident in the first and the last dining scene which Chytilová inserts to present her radical view to counter the prevalent corruption of Communism that censors natural freedom. Hence, connected through food consumption, the narrative arrives at a full circle. The connectivity between the first dining scene and the last forms the third phase. In the first scene, Marie I is seen to be under the pretentious garb of being afraid of becoming “fat” and trying to fit into the world as constructed by patriarchy for women- the world of the corporeal angel who put all their pleasures aside to satisfy the pleasure of the man. However, in this first dining scene, Marie II is seen to defy such circumscribed norms for women. As the waiter asks “Will the lady have something to eat too?”(08:08-08:09) she replies without waiting for the older man to speak for her: “ Yes. And something to drink too.”(*Daisies* 08:09-08:13) The moment the waiter suggests a dish, Marie II petulantly replies that she is hungry for “a bite of something” but proceeds to order an entire chicken: “I’ll have the chicken. Is it big enough?” (*Daisies* 08:33-08:36)She then extends to order several other dishes including cakes, pastries, and several bowls of soup. Her manner of eating refrains from adhering to the conventional norms of table mannerisms as she devours the whole chicken with her bare hands, hiccupping while stuffing herself with desserts, spitting food on the man’s face as she talks while taking a mouthful from a pastry. She blatantly conveys to the man not thinking of the reputation of the “angel” associated with women: “I have a grand appetite!” (*Daisies* 9:50-9:54) Helena Michie in *The Flesh Made Word: Female Figures and Women’s Bodies* notes that “the portrait of the appropriately sexed woman ...emerges as one who eats little and delicately. She is as sickened by meat as by sexual desire.”(17)However, here Marie II is not afraid of expressing herself freely through food, also an attempt to express sexual desire. However, the world in which they live proves to be unsuitable for fulfilling such a pleasure and even when they attempt to satiate their craving, they face harsh judgments as is evident as the gentleman becomes consecutively irritated observing her wild hunger straining his eyebrows, frowning his face and trying to reject the sweets that the waiter arrives with. Marie II also eats the food in reverse beginning with the desert and ending with the main course leaving no scope for conventionalism. Helena Michie also

states that “the unmistakable phallic nature of cigars and pipes serves as an equally unmistakable sign of male dominance and betrayal.”(16) The two Maries are seen to deny such phallic dominance as they enjoy cigars along with the gentleman despite his seeming discomfort. Marie II irks the old gentleman by snatching away his cigarette while Marie I laughs with her woodpecker-like laugh at the heaviness of the coffee spoons. The Maries assert their dominance as Marie II starts to question the man regarding his personal life: “Do you have children?”(10:30-10:31) and “How old are you?”(10:46- 10:47) Such questioning arrives at a climax when Marie I joins the questioning with Marie II in the next dining scene with the scientist. Despite such assertive questioning, the man refrains from answering and cross-questions highlighting his sneer against the feminine efforts of upheaval: “Why are you so interested?”(10:47-10:48) Nevertheless, the scene is provided special significance with the drench of monochromatic colors of violet, yellow, green, and gray to highlight the feminine assertiveness of the scene despite the prevalent masculine hindrances. Jump cuts take place like in the previous scenes where the audience is provided the sign that something significant is occurring. The background music with the fusion of classical and pop also creates a radical atmosphere for the scene.

The force of the Maries arrives at its pinnacle in the last banquet scene. This becomes their ultimate orgy and also the connecting thread with the first dining scene. Hence, Chytilová attempts to create coherence to provide the scene with vibrancy and depth. From the beginning, the scenes had no congruity or connection in its narrative leaving aside the food segment. However, here one finds a correlation between the events occurring in the film. Throughout, the two Maries were seen as nothing more than mere objects to men despite their assertion – once being asked to not be “mean” and provide sexual favors while the other time asked to “kiss” in return for dining indulgences. They hence decide to travel to some other place where they would not be “spoiled.” As they arrive at the countryside, an abstract space detached from the urban corruption they realize no one notices them as they steal corn stalks from a gardener. The two characters find themselves separated from the “normal” generalization of female representation. Once the patriarchal restrictions are done within the abstract space of the momentary countryside, they become important only to their feminine selves. They assure themselves: “We’ve got our whole life ahead of us!”(*Daisies* 53:55-53-59) Once again, the mixture of monochromatic colors to depict the water as the Maries look at it while Marie I declares their freedom enhances the assertive mood of the scene. The background music of a high-straining violin further adds to the effect. It is at this instance that no one feels “pity” for them. They are not pathetic puppets at this moment but indulge in

their high-pitched laughter without men around them to judge or sneer at them. Indeed, the constructed femininity has disappeared into “thin air” and they realize that they “exist after all.” They assert this new-found individuality as they enter the banquet-hall to indulge in gluttony and satiate their never-ending hunger. The initial dining scene finds its reflection in this ending scene of the Maries being depicted as “man-eating daisies” (Soukup 41) When in the first scene only Marie II indulged in a “no one notices” attitude devouring the whole chicken with bare hands, spitting while eating desserts with no respect for table manners, offending the phallic figure seated before, here both the Maries seem to be involved in the process assuring themselves from time to time: “No Problem”(Daisies 01:07:24-01:07:30) Here, both the “Daisies” indulge themselves in a vulture-like consumption of every food that comes to their sight. Marie II initiates the devouring process as she dips her bare hand into the mixture of mashed potatoes, licking her fingers as she eats from it, instructing Marie I “See, carefully.”(Daisies 1:01:28-01:01:36) Marie I follows her stand and proceeds on with tasting all the dishes rejecting the use of cutlery. She ultimately merges her hand into one of the egg dishes, squashing its contents into an incongruous mixture, eating them with both her hands while Marie II repeats the same process as she sits to eat beside her. The part of the scene where they begin to devour voraciously is backed by the music of a trumpet depicting a victorious mood. In one of the instances, the brunette, Marie I accidentally breaks a glass and there is a sharp squeal. This squeal transforms into an “orgasmic collage of color magazine”(Soukup 41) with the squeal as the only sound as the background noise. This may depict that they have no concerns for the havoc they create for it is the only means through which they can express their appetite freely. The scene echoes the previous dialogue of Marie II as she states to Marie I while pouring milk for bathing that “why can’t one say, ...egg” instead of “I love you.”(Daisies 46:52-47:07)The Maries prefer free expression through the medium of food rather than the repressive love that society offers them. This brings one to the concept of Mikhail Bakhtin’s “grotesque body” as previously introduced in the essay. He states that the distinctive character of the body is “its open unfinished nature, its interaction with the world...it swallows, devours...grows at the world’s expense.” (281) The bodies of Maries are depicted as free spaces, which when brought under a restraining order becomes artificial and puppet-like. It is this restrictiveness that the two Maries wish to get rid of. After indulging in their orgasmic orgy, the Brunette and the Bonde begin to throw large chunks of cakes at each other instead of ingesting them. This must not necessarily be seen as an act of wastage or the denial of the girls to ingest. Instead, the wastage may be seen as a satire exposing the gluttony of the Communist officials. Even though, the destruction seems horrible with the two Maries stomping and smashing food with their

high heels, walking on the table as if on a fashion show, attention must be paid to the undertones: “the destruction of so much food seems...horribly wasteful-unless...we think of the guests for whom it was intended. Could such a small group...have eaten all that food?” (Eagle 233) Every act of the Maries transcends the doll-like unconsciousness. It seems as if through conscious efforts there is an attempt to expose the irrelevancy of the totalizing regime. The two Maries when provided a chance to make “amends” pick up the scattered bits of food from the floor and serve it on plates, they arrange the smashed pieces of plates and arrange them in a disjointed manner on the table and as they do so they state “everything will be...clean and orderly.” (Daisies 01:11:59-01:01:12:01) However, the irony is that nothing is clean or orderly as the food is no more edible—those are soiled and spoiled. So, even though the girls state that they have become “good”, they have not in the eyes of the patriarchy as depicted by the censorship of the Communist regime. The male sneer with which the film’s dining scene began with the physical presence of the older gentleman frowning over the gluttony of Marie II finds reflection in the invisible male sneer in this scene. This male authority censoring female expression is depicted aptly through Chytilová’s cinematic vision. The Maries are dressed in newspapers. The newspapers under the prevalent regime of the period were censored with no free flow of expression. Hence, the girls clad in these newspapers seem to be ordered by the authorities to adhere to the conventional “norms.” The black and white color of the scene frame as they try to be “good” is shown as a phallic device splitting the Maries from their colorful world; the one filled with the fluidity of the green apples. However, the girls are conscious enough to not adhere. They have discarded their puppet-like stature. They have made an ironic order out of the chaos and they realize it full-fledgedly. Marie II states to Marie I: “After all, we are really happy” (Daisies 01:15:15-01:15:17) to which the other Marie replies: “But that’s not a problem.” (Daisies 01:15:22-01:15:23) Their gluttony depicting disorderliness and outsmarting the conventional authority is not rewarded and they suffer destruction as the chandelier falls on them to their utmost horror which is evident on their faces. It is to be applauded that the two women do not adhere to the set norms, rather they accept the consequences that lead to the depicted death for the sake of attaining full expression. The first scene ends with many similarities with this ending dining scene in the overconsumption of the Maries, their dismissal of the male scoff, and personal expressiveness. Their destruction is immediately followed by cuts of the overarching destruction that the Communist authority imposes on individuals through their censorships, firings, and destruction of buildings. Women as individuals lose their relevance under such circumstances. Hence, the gluttony and destruction of food by the Maries seem to be optimistic in the face of the larger issues that evade any amendments.

Hence, not coincidentally Chytilová states that the film is meant for those “who get upset only over a stomped-upon bed of lettuce.” (*Daisies* 01:15:45-01:15:58)

Conclusion

Vera Chytilová brings forward a criticism of the prevalent regime that treats feminine assertiveness as nothing more than a farce which it is not except a farce that is pointed at the society. The Maries reject their doll-like existence at the very beginning of the film. Despite the presence of marionette-like movements from time to time in the film, they are no longer a tool handled by patriarchy. They may be viewed as free-expressing individuals with a certain psychological depth on a quest to demonstrate themselves as thinking and relevant through their unquenchable thirst and insatiable hunger for food, wishing to be always surrounded by it. The narrative is not merely about food consumption and how it satisfies hunger, but the moral that food is a means of expression that goes against censorship of any kind- here the focus is solely on feminism. The Maries’s consumption and the relevance of each kind of consumption are aptly depicted in the research under the different subheadings. Each holds a significance that becomes more concentrated with the usage of the cinematic vision of Chytilová. “Woman is lovely in the act of eating” (11) Pennell asserts in her *The Feasts of Autolykus: The Diary of a Greedy Woman*. The Maries are hence lovely in their act of eating where the term “lovely” depicts their radical nature as visible through their youth and vitality. They are meant to challenge and subvert rather than be the subservient. Just like the food imagery, patriarchal dominance is an omnipresent factor in the film. The Maries never give in to the dominance but are rather destroyed for they do not give in. Chytilová through her absurdist lens brings forward the issue of such masculine snobbery.

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