

 PRAGDA | SPANISH FILM CLUB

# DISCUSSION GUIDE



## SUN AND DAUGHTER

A film by CATALINA RAZZINI

Bolivia, Spain, Germany / 2022 / 84min  
Spanish, Aymara, with English subtitles

## BEFORE WATCHING THE FILM:

### BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Before watching a film, it is important to know the current events and history of the country that film comes from. Learning about the filmmaker is also a relevant way to gain insight on the context in which the film was produced. You can learn more about Catalina Razzini at <https://pragda.com/film/sun-and-daughter/>

### INTRODUCING THE FILM

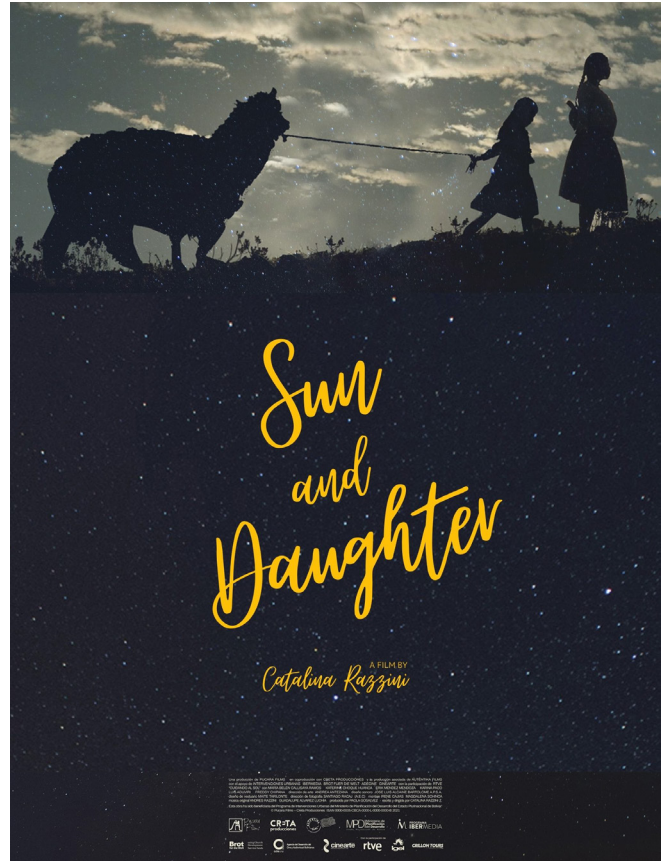
A **film synopsis** is a piece of text designed to summarize the film's narrative, genre, style, and key participants in a way that appeals to a wide audience. The synopsis is part of the film's marketing process and tends to follow a traditional format. Read this synopsis for *Sun and Daughter*:

Ten-year-old Lucía's family lives in the Island of the Sun (Isla del Sol) in the middle of Lake Titicaca in Bolivia; a place that's as mystical as it is picturesque. When her father breaks from their routine one morning and leaves for the city to make money, Lucía finds it difficult to cope with his absence, building her daily life around the expectations of their reunion.

After school, Lucía and her younger sister Maribel weave Totora reeds into figurines that her mother sells to numerous tourists. But the rhythm of life on the island and the passage of time help her realize her father is no longer the person she longed to have back. She must find her own path. Lucía is thinking of going to the city herself, but she has no money. It's time she took her destiny into her own hands.

With a subtle commentary on environmental tourism and the exploitation of "the other" that goes two-way, Catalina Razzini's touching rural tale masterly captures the landscape of Isla del Sol.

- > From the film synopsis, can you imagine the genre and tone of the film? From this same text, try to identify the main events of the film's plot and the socio-political context of the film.
- > Do you think that the film will have a political message? Cite specific language from the synopsis to support your answer.
- > How do the trailer, poster, and still images encourage you to watch the film?
- > Viewing the marketing materials alone (i.e. trailer, poster, and still images available at <https://pragda.com/film/sun-and-daughter/>) without the aid of the synopsis, can you make any assumptions regarding what the film is about?



## AFTER WATCHING THE FILM:

### NARRATIVE

- > What is your initial impression of the tourists from La Paz that Sebastián guides on the island? How do they compare to Lucía's family and the other native inhabitants of this island?
- > To where does the girl's father leave? What effect does his absence have on Lucía and her family?
- > How does Lucía and her mother make their own money while her father is in La Paz?
- > How would you describe Lucía's relationship with her mother? In what ways do they mirror each other? What do you think fuels their moments of conflict?
- > Think about the myth of the "son of the sun, who lives in the city under the lake". In what ways does the story represent Lucía's life on the island?
- > Describe the scene where Lucía's mom teaches her and her sister to cook. How does this scene exemplify the theme of these children being forced to mature beyond their years?
- > What is Lucía's reaction when her father finally returns? Does she react how you expected? Why do you think she reacted this way?
- > Compare and contrast Lucía's scenes with her dad at the beginning of the film and at the end. What do you attribute these differences to?
- > The final scene shows Lucía journeying to La Paz on a motorboat she bought with her saved money, smiling joyfully, while her dad questions Sebastián back on shore. What do you think happens to Lucía beyond the credits? What evidence does the film provide to support your hypothesis?



### CINEMATIC TECHNIQUES

- > How would you describe the film's use of nondiegetic music? What affect does its usage or lack thereof have on the tone of the film?
- > What is the camerawork like? Is there a lot of camera movement, or is the frame mostly static? Analyze how this movement (or lack thereof) shapes our perception of the film.
- > Describe Lucía's dream sequence in the lake referencing the scene's colors, lighting, and editing to analyze the meaning of her dream.
- > The scene of Lucía's first menstrual period begins with a minute-plus long take. What does this cinematic choice imply about the significance of this development?
- > How would you describe the lighting in the film (bright, dark, etc.)? How do you think this stylistic choice fits the mood and themes of the film?



## CINEMATIC TECHNIQUES *continued*

- > Reflect on the scene of Lucía's dad's return to the island. How do the framing and camera angling in this scene express Lucía's muted emotions?
- > Describe the editing and framing in the penultimate scene as Lucía takes a last look at her family before running away. What do these cinematic choices imply about Lucía's current feelings toward her family?



## THEMES

- > Think about the title *Sun and Daughter*. Do you think this is a fitting title for the film's themes? What is its significance to the story?
- > The film operates around the inciting event of Lucía's father leaving the household to seek work in a distant urban city while Lucía, her mother and sister are left to fend for themselves. How does the film tackle domestic gender roles in Bolivian society?
- > At its core, *Sun and Daughter* can be classified as a coming-of-age film. Why do you think the filmmakers chose a preteen girl as the story's protagonist? How is Lucía's age and developing maturity core to the story?
- > Describe the commentary on environmental tourism and the mutual exploits between the islanders and the tourists. What is your takeaway on the filmmakers' goal in presenting this theme?
- > Like Lucía in her current situation, much of the film plods along with this feeling of "waiting". How does Lucía ultimately take agency in her own life as opposed to waiting for someone else to direct her? What drives her to achieve this personal growth?
- > Although we're never exposed to the city of La Paz, the urban city is ever-present in the film. For Lucía, what do you think the city symbolizes? Why do you think she dreams of going there? How does this relate to the universal idea of the American Dream?
- > Think about the lake as it relates to the sun god myth as well as a barrier between the bustling city and the rural island. What is the significance of the lake from Lucía's perspective, and how does she overcome the personal challenges it poses?

