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SCRIPTING THE SAINTS

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Becoming a saint is no easy matter. Even after your life of devotion, service, and self-sacrifice has ended, often through a harrowing martyrdom, numerous obstacles still remain. The Roman Catholic Church normally requires a period of at least five years to pass after a candidate's death before a diocesan bishop can begin an investigation into the life and work of the Servant of God. A report generated by this investigation is sent to the Roman Curia's Congregation for the Causes of the Saints. If all goes well, the postulator assigned to the case recommends that the Pope proclaim the elevation of the Servant of God to the status of Venerable. Further elevation to the status of Blessed requires evidence of martyrdom or of a miracle, usually a healing, through the intercession of prayers directed to the Venerable. Full canonization as a Saint, which includes an annual feast day on the Church calendar and an authorization to consecrate church buildings honoring the Saint, requires evidence of a second miracle, though martyrs need only a single miracle. Although the five-year waiting period was recently waived for Mother Teresa and Pope John Paul II, Joan of Arc, who died in 1431, had to wait until 1920 to be canonized.

It might seem that nothing could possibly be harder than sainthood for a human being to achieve. But one additional gateway is even narrower: the one across the path to becoming a Hollywood saint. Considering their widespread veneration, remarkably few movies have been made about saints. Ann C. Paietta's *Saints, Clergy and Other Religious Figures on Film and Television, 1895–2003* includes 919 movies and 60 television series through 2003. As the expansiveness of Paietta's title indicates, however, most of the figures she includes are not saints but priests, nuns,

ministers, rabbis, or incarnations of the Dalai Lama who have not yet achieved sainthood. By my count, Paietta's exhaustive filmography includes only 85 movies featuring a total of 32 saints; not a single one of the television series she lists features a saint, although 13 television segments, along with 15 additional theatrical features, about saints have been released since she wrote. Hard as the way to movie sainthood may be, the way to Hollywood sainthood is even harder. Although 51 of Paietta's 60 television series are American, Hollywood productions account for a much smaller proportion of her feature films. Even well-established saints submitting their credentials for consideration for the American film industry are well advised that many are called, but few are called back.

The challenges involved in becoming a Hollywood saint stem from the fact that the strict list of requirements for sainthood, already far too demanding for most mortals to meet, is only part of an even longer list of requirements for Hollywood sainthood. Resisting the temptation to call these requirements "commandments", I call them "scripts" in order to emphasize their status as competing, imperative, yet flexible and contingent. Just as multiple scriptwriters produce many script versions for even the most routine movie, a given movie, whether or not it is a saint's life, is shaped by multiple scripts, explicit and implicit, that may issue from source texts, screenwriters, stars, directors, producers, industry practices, government, private and self-appointed censors, publicists, advertisers, reviewers, and the paying audience — often joined, in the case of movies about saints, by various organizations allied with the Church itself. The fact that many of these parties do not participate actively in the production of the film does not make their scripts less important; it merely makes them harder to predict by the parties whose business it is to predict them accurately under the threat of religious condemnation or commercial failure.

For this reason, Jeanine Basinger's comment on Mel Gibson's 2004 film *The Passion of the Christ* — "People have an entertainment experience, not a religious experience, at the movies. People who go to this movie will be going to a Mel Gibson movie"¹ — is altogether too simple. What Basinger frames as an either/or decision concerning which script filmmakers and audiences will follow is more commonly a both/and/and/and embrace of as many competing scripts as possible. The two foundational scripts for saint movies, as Basinger notes, are that they have a religious subject, in this case a particular saint or saints, and that they be entertaining. But even these two scripts generate many others. A Hollywood saint's life should have as its subject a well-known saint whose life or legend provides a hook that will entice audiences. The likelihood that it will be greenlit is greatly increased if there already exists an authorized version of the saint's life (e.g., the *Confessions* of Augustine of Hippo) or a popular play (Robert Bolt's *A Man for All Seasons*) or best-selling novel (Franz Werfel's *The Song of Bernadette*) about the saint. It is

¹ Quoted in: M. Dubin, "Passionate controversy", *Philadelphia Inquirer* 13.08.2003, p. F1.

assumed by all parties that the film will preach to the choir; its target audience is the faithful who are already believers, not those it seeks to convert to belief. So it should inspire more intense religious devotion among the devout without necessarily seeking to inspire any members of the audience to change their lives, their beliefs, or their behavior. It should tell a well-defined story shaped by a conflict between the heroic saint and some opposing force, typically either culminating in a climactic literal death or pivoting on the death-to-self required by the saint's conversion. It should include enough tactful exposition to insure that its audience comes away with the point of each scene and the trajectory of the saint's life as a whole. And of course it should conform to the obligatory strategies for commercial success in Hollywood, from star casting to stylishly expressive visuals, an appealing musical score, and the kind of branding indicated by the opening credits "*Joan of Arc* starring Ingrid Bergman/ A Victor Fleming production" and "Otto Preminger presents Bernard Shaw's *Saint Joan*". The first thing audiences settling into a screening of Michael Curtiz's 1961 film *Francis of Assisi* learn is that it is presented in CinemaScope. Another well-known saint movie begins with two screens that identify it as "A film by Franco Zeffirelli/ *Brother Son, Sister Moon*" — the only production credits that appear until the very end of the film. Even the deeply non-Hollywood 1950 film *The Flowers of St. Francis* is introduced as "Un film di Roberto Rossellini".

All these factors considerably complicate Michael Bird's judicious observation about the ability of worldly art to represent the sacred: "If art cannot give a direct representation of the dimension of the holy, it can nonetheless perform an important religious function: art can disclose those spaces and those moments in culture where the experience of finitude and the encounter with the transcendent dimension are felt and expressed within culture itself".² The encounter between mundane experience and the transcendent dimension, a difficult relationship to manage under any circumstances, must also pay due homage to scripts that demand a well-formed story of a well-known figure, a narrative formula accommodating a series of heroic conflicts, and the contradictory demands of producers, directors, stars, composers, and branding imperatives like CinemaScope.

Even though they are not expected to convert unbelievers to the true faith, saint movies carry two important lessons for adaptation scholars. One is a reminder that, given a movie's allegiance to multiple and often conflicting scripts, there is no universal agreement that any of these scripts is necessarily more important or exigent than any others. Church authorities may demand adherence to the known facts of a saint's life and to the tenets of Catholic doctrine it exemplifies; textual scholars may

² M. Bird, "Film as hierophany", [in:] *Religion in Film*, ed. J.R. May, M. Bird, Knoxville 1982, pp. 3–22.

expect close fidelity to source texts as different as *The Little Flowers of St. Francis* and *Joan of Lorraine*; studio heads may require the assistance of high-profile stars, rousing music, or titillating scenes of pre-conversion dissolution in the manner pioneered by Cecil B. DeMille in the 1920s. But precisely because every interested party is convinced that its scripts should be primary, none of them is *prima facie* preeminent over the others. The scripts that are most important to some parties to a given film may be far less important to the corresponding parties to a later remake of the same material. Even within a given production, the relative weight of different scripts emerges only through numerous rounds of negotiation and renegotiation that may continue long after the film is released when it is reevaluated by future generations.

The second lesson Hollywood saint movies have to offer adaptation studies is the vital importance of negative scripts. “Thou shalt not” is a commandment just as vital in filmmaking as it is in moral theology. Perhaps the paramount negative script is the injunction not to offend anyone at all likely to buy a ticket to the movie. Following this commandment has led to any number of anodyne saint’s movies that show the saint in question triumphing over forces no one in the audience could possibly identify with. A more specific application of this commandment is not to offend followers of the saint by desacralizing, demystifying, or otherwise besmirching the saint. Ridicule of the saint is permitted as long as it is clearly ascribed to characters whose judgment the film does not endorse or to saints like Francis of Assisi who see themselves as beyond the canons of worldly judgment. More to the point, the film must not offend the Catholic faithful who are its target audience. This injunction is surprisingly tricky to fulfill in practice because any number of saints’ stories are shaped by episodes in which they come into conflict with the Church authorities and teachings of their day. The most common solution to this problem is to contextualize these authorities and teachings as radically historical and therefore dated, as against the unworldly and presumably universal beliefs and behavior of the saints.

The need to respond to a large number of scripts, many of them inevitably conflicting with each other, rules out many saints from serious consideration as subjects of Hollywood movies. It is no mystery why we have no movies about St. Drogo, the patron saint of ugly people, or St. Jesús Malverde, patron of drug dealers, or St. Barbara, patron of fireworks, or St. Isidore of Seville, patron of the Internet, or St. Vitus, patron of oversleeping, or St. Bibiana, patron of the hangover, even though any of these might generate highly effective sketches on *Saturday Night Live*. But fans waiting impatiently for the release of movies about their own favorite saints should be advised that too little is known about most of the Apostles to make them good candidates for saint movies, that the feast of St. Christopher is no longer universally observed by the Church, and that St. Thomas Aquinas, vital as his *Summa Theologica* may be to the evolution of Church doctrine, does not have a

story of his own that “make[s] goodness interesting”³. The ideal saint movie, from Hollywood’s point of view, would combine a dramatic conversion, heroic action, a period setting that offered ample opportunities for sumptuous visual set pieces, breathtaking miracles, selfless sacrifice to an easily recognized greater good, and an inspirational expression of larger national, social, and cultural forces that would encourage contemporary audiences to identify more closely with the saint in question. It would be driven by dramatic conflict, end in uplift, and be irradiated in sanctity.

The fact that these scripts are logically quite contradictory does not prevent Hollywood from producing saint movies; it simply directs the industry’s attention away from St. Drogo and St. Thomas Aquinas to a relatively small number of saints who embody such conflicting scripts engagingly but non-threateningly enough to promise significant commercial appeal. Theresa Sanders has identified seven kinds of saints whose lives have most often been filmed: martyrs, ascetics and mystics, apostles and missionaries, miracle workers, ministers to the poor, heroes of the Holocaust, and teachers and preachers.⁴ Although she devotes an entire chapter to the Virgin Mary, she does not consider other virgin saints because Hollywood has shown little interest in recounting the lives of virgins unless they are relegated to supporting roles, as St. Clare is in lives of St. Francis, or their lives are marked by more dramatic developments, like that of Bernadette of Soubirous. If we compensate for the absence of virgins by adding another category to this list — worldly saints like St. Thomas à Becket and St. Thomas More — we can discern a wide range of possible scripts for the lives of saints and appreciate how selective Hollywood filmmakers have been in drawing on them. There is the script of becoming saintly, as opposed to the script of being saintly, a more static script rejected out of hand by Hollywood. There is the script revolving around the virgin saint’s refusal to submit to forced sex or marriage, a script best exemplified by Augusto Genina’s 1949 Italian film *Cielo sulla palude* (*Heaven over the Marshes*), an account of the brief life of Maria Goretti, produced a year after she was canonized. Whatever may have been the temptations of the story of a 12-year-old girl who died forgiving the housemate who stabbed her to death when she resisted his sexual advances, Hollywood has avoided this script as well. Instead it has focused on the script of miraculously healing witness (*The Miracle of Our Lady of Fatima*, 1952); the script of sacrificial asceticism (*Thérèse: The Story of Saint Thérèse of Lisieux*, 2002); the conversion script (*Brother Son, Sister Moon*, 1972); the script of conflict against worldly forces (*Becket*, 1964); and the script of conflict against the Church (*The Song of Bernadette*, 1943). In the process of whittling scripts of saints’ lives down to those most likely to achieve commercial success, it has focused particularly on two favored saints.

³ A.C. Paietta, *Saints, Clergy and Other Religious Figures on Film and Television, 1895–2003*, Jefferson 2005, p. 152.

⁴ T. Sanders, *Celluloid Saints: Images of Sanctity in Film*, Macon 2002, pp. 211–215.

It should come as no surprise that the first of these is St. Francis of Assisi (1181?–1226) because the life of Francis, born Giovanni di Pietro di Bernardone, seems already to have been drafted by a Hollywood scriptwriter. Born to a successful Italian silk merchant and a Provençal noblewoman, the boy was raised to assume control of the family business and assumed an appropriately worldly lifestyle. When he enlisted in a military expedition against Perugia, he was captured and imprisoned for a year before he was ransomed and returned home to resume his carefree life. But his second military adventure was cut short by a voice shortly after he left that bade him return home and await further guidance. While he was praying in the ruined chapel of San Damiano outside Assisi, he heard the voice of Christ commanding him to repair his house. His attempts to restore the chapel using funds from the family business set him at odds with his father, who instituted legal proceedings to force his son to give up all claims to his patrimony. The young man responded in court by renouncing both his father and his inheritance, settling into a life of poverty, begging, and prayer. Inspired by the passage in Matthew's Gospel in which Jesus commissions the Apostles, he began to gather others committed to the simple life inspired by the example of Jesus and led a pilgrimage of his first 11 followers to Rome, where Pope Innocent III endorsed the order even though Francis had never become a priest. After the Pope's official authorization, Francis's order rapidly grew to include many more followers, including Clare of Assisi. Inspired to share his vision of saintly simplicity outside Italy, Francis attempted journeys to Jerusalem and Morocco but had to turn back both times and was advised against traveling to France. He did, however, join the Fifth Crusade with the goal of converting the Sultan of Egypt, a nephew of Saladin, to Christianity. Although the Sultan received Francis respectfully, neither he nor his followers converted, and after a trip to Acre, Francis and the friar with whom he was travelling left for home. Here new challenges awaited Francis, for the order he had founded had grown large enough to produce factions deeply split over the strictures of the *Regula primitiva* Francis had established for the order. Renouncing the leadership of the order, Francis withdrew into a solitary life. A vision he received during the Feast of the Exultation of the Cross reportedly left him with the stigmata, wounds in his hands and feet and side recalling those of the crucified Christ. His declining health led to his death in a hut close to his birthplace as he sang a psalm of praise to God.

It is a remarkably eventful life, largely defined by a series of dramatic conflicts that would seem to be a scriptwriter's dream: the way of the Italian merchant father versus that of the aristocratic Provençal mother, the call to military service versus the call to peace, obedience to the saint's earthly versus his heavenly fathers, the simplicity of Francis's order versus the pomp and hierarchical rules of the Vatican, the imperative to evangelize abroad versus the command to sustain the community at home, the prayerful confrontation with the Sultan of Egypt over the true faith, the battle over the governance of the order of Franciscan friars, the status of Francis

as both a contemporary ascetic and an avatar of the suffering Christ. So it is all the more remarkable that the first film about Francis, Roberto Rossellini's *Francesco, giullari di Dio* (*The Flowers of St. Francis*) (1950), passes over virtually all these conflicts in silence. Rossellini's film largely ignores the events of Francis's public life in order to focus on a series of nine vignettes based mostly on material in *The Little Flowers of St. Francis* and *The Life of St. Juniper*, two anthologies of "wonder-stories"⁵ based on the lost *Floretum* compiled a generation after Francis's death by Ugolino of Montegiorgio.

Francesco, giullari di Dio neglects other Hollywood scripts as well. Instead of well-known movie stars, Rossellini casts as Francis and his followers a dozen amateur performers drawn from the monks of Nocere Inferiore Monastery. His only reference to Francis's historic meeting with Pope Innocent III is an opening voice-over that announces: "Here is Francis, returning to Rivortorto from Rome with his companions". Francis's meeting with the sultan is transferred to his simple-minded follower Ginepro (Juniper), whose meeting with the comically armored warrior Nicolaio (Aldo Fabrizi, the only performer listed in the film's credits) ends with Nicolaio's decision to lift his siege of a walled city. Although the film unfolds largely as a series of meetings between Francis or Ginepro and outsiders or newcomers like Sister Clare or the leper whom Francis at first shuns but then embraces, and although conflicts occasionally break out — in the opening sequence, for example, the monks discuss the different ways they would conduct the order if they were in charge, which none of them wishes to be — Rossellini everywhere mutes both conflicts and signs of individuality among the brothers. Francis himself is so far from a heroic individual that he is hard to identify in the opening vignettes, which consistently emphasize the simplicity and strength of his community.

Upon the release of his film, Rossellini explicitly acknowledged his decision to ignore the obvious scripts for a life of Francis:

I never meant to re-create the life of the saint. In *The Flowers of St. Francis*, I don't deal with either his birth or his death, nor do I pretend to offer a complete revelation of the Franciscan message or of its spirit, or to tackle the extraordinarily awesome and complex personality of Francis. Instead, I have wanted to show the effects of it on his followers, among whom, however, I have given particular emphasis to Brother Ginepro and Brother Giovanni, who display in an almost paradoxical way the sense of simplicity, innocence, and delight that emanates from Francis's own spirit.⁶

Following this hint about the film's "antinarrativity", Peter Brunette links it to what Henri Agel has called "Rossellini's 'aesthetic of insignificance' or 'banality.' [...] History — or better, historiography — on the other hand, is linear, fully

⁵ A. Livingston, "Introduction", [in:] *The Little Flowers of St. Francis of Assisi*, New York 1965, p. XV.

⁶ R. Rossellini, "Francesco, giullari di Dio", *Epoca* 18.11.1950, no. 6 (reprinted in booklet accompanying DVD release of *The Flowers of St. Francis*, New York 2005, pp. 10–11).

elaborated, logical, supremely rational, and, above all, coherently *narrated*. Thus Rossellini must necessarily reject its methodology to remain true to the ‘divine madness’ that afflicted Saint Francis and his followers and their crazy world of faith”.⁷ Rossellini’s film not only declines to tell the story of Francis’s life; its structure does not so much take us into his world as it allows us to spend some time in the world of a community already established in the film’s opening shot and unthreatened by conflict at the end, which finds Francis and his followers leaving their shared home and going their separate ways to witness to the Gospel by imitating the simplicity and self-denial of Christ.

Although Rossellini’s film provides a powerful script for Hollywood films about Francis, most of its power is that of a negative script or anti-script. The credits for Michael Curtiz’s 1961 *Francis of Assisi* run over a background of Giotto’s frescos of highlights from Francis’s life from the Basilica of St. Francis of Assisi, just like the first American release (but not the Italian release) of *Francesco, giullari di Dio*. From that point on, however, *Francis of Assisi* does everything it reasonably can to distance itself from the earlier film. Unlike Rossellini’s film, it is a well-formed narrative whose opening intertitle explains exactly where and when it is set and introduces its hero, a heroically dominant figure played by Bradford Dillman, by name. Its opening scenes show the high-living young Francis wenching, gambling, and enlisting in military service with his new friend, Count Paolo de Vandria (Stuart Whitman), though he does pause to give alms to a persistent beggar. While he is riding off to war, Francis hears an otherworldly voice. The first time, he ignores it, but the second time, he follows its injunction to turn back. Upon his arrival home, his story immediately divides his parents, and he is soon arrested for desertion and thrown into a prison under the rising Paolo’s authority until his friend Clare (Dolores Hart) urges Paolo to free him, and Paolo responds by granting clemency to all his prisoners.

Paolo asks Francis’s help in pressing his own courtship of Clare, whose father has already given him permission to wed her. When Francis, who has heeded a heavenly call to rebuild a local church by begging for stones, gently declines, Paolo denounces him bitterly, and the growing rivalry between the two men becomes the central structuring device in the film, taking precedence over the understated drama of the growth of the Franciscan community, Francis’s pilgrimage to Rome, his initial rejection and ultimate endorsement by the Pope despite Francis’s refusal to moderate the strict rules he has established for his order, and Francis’s acceptance of Clare as a Benedictine Sister, a scene interrupted by the entrance of her shocked father and Paolo, who cries, “A curse on all your saints!” and strikes a statue of the Madonna and Child with his sword.

⁷ P. Brunette, *God’s Jester*, [in:] Booklet accompanying DVD release of *The Flowers of St. Francis*, New York 2005, p. 7.

Receiving the blessing of the gravely ill Pope, Francis travels alone to the Holy Land. When two Saracens set their leopards to attack them, he charms the animals into a preternatural calm and proceeds to seek peace with an unnamed sultan (Pedro Armendáriz). After his offer to enter a roaring fire along with the sultan's priests to determine whose god is more powerful ends inconclusively — an event already described in St. Bonaventure's thirteenth-century life of Francis — he proceeds to a walled Saracen city, where he meets Paolo, who, come for violent conquest, taunts the futility of his former friend's efforts: "Who do you think you are — God?", just as Brother Juniper (Mervyn Johns) enters to tell Francis that Cardinal Ugolino (Cecil Kellaway) and Brother Elias (Russell Napier), who have plotted to wrest the order from his control, have already turned its chapel into a library. Returning home, Francis enters a room that looks astonishingly like a twentieth-century lending library complete with monks sitting behind a counter and consulting manuscripts. After clashing there with Elias, who has lifted the most stringent rules of the order to encourage its spread, he retreats to a cave, where Sister Clare visits him to discover that he has become almost completely blind. His prayer following her departure ends with his collapse in a cruciform shape with the stigmata on his hands and feet. In the following scene, Paolo begs Clare to ask Francis for his forgiveness, and the two are finally reconciled on Francis's deathbed. Clare is left to deliver a posthumous farewell, blessing, and valediction to all her childhood friend has accomplished by resisting the worldly ways exemplified by Paolo in the last of the many expository speeches the film uses to tell the audience what is happening, which conflicts it reveals, what is at stake and why it is significant, and how they should feel about it.

Eleven years later, *Brother Son, Sister Moon* finds completely different ways to depart from the low-key, anecdotal, anti-narrative scripts of *Francesco, giullari di Dio*. Like *Francis of Assisi*, Franco Zeffirelli's film is framed as a narrative, though it covers less of the saint's life than Curtiz's film, beginning at about the same time with the departure of Francesco (Graham Faulkner) from Assisi with a military campaign, although omitting the opening intertitle that rooted him so firmly in a particular time and place. Instead of placing Francesco's visit to the Pope halfway through the film, Zeffirelli reserves it for the climax, marking the halfway point instead with Francesco's beatifically decisive break in open court from the increasingly exasperated father he has antagonized by the unworldly ways he had assumed ever since returning, ill, mute, and alone, from the military expedition. The first sign of Francesco's recovery from the coma into which he has fallen is his rapt attention to a bird singing outside his window as the pop singer Donovan's song "On This Lovely Day" plays. To the amazement of his neighbors and the alarm of his parents, he defies death by venturing out onto the ridgeline of the building's roof in deliciously slow pursuit of the bird, which at length he cups lovingly in his hand. This episode leads Clare (Judi Bowker) to tell him that the same townsfolk who thought him "fine

and intelligent” when he went to war now consider him mad, but that she thinks he was mad before and has only now become sane.

Instead of being structured by Francis’s ongoing rivalry with Paolo de Vandra, *Brother Son, Sister Moon* follows *Francesco, giullari di Dio* in celebrating the innocence of Francesco’s childlike devotion to God. Unlike Rossellini, however, Zeffirelli visualizes this devotion in visually resplendent terms. The materialistic world Francesco will abjure is sumptuous; he and Clare are both strikingly beautiful; the camera often lingers on Francesco’s body, whether he is bathing with his followers or stripping himself naked in court to renounce his patrimony; and the film repeatedly shows Francesco walking through lush meadows eternally in flower except when they are covered in equally photogenic snow. The sensuous visuals are backed up by Donovan’s gentle quasi-folk musical score, confirming Francesco as an irresistibly charming New Age hero, an avatar of 1970s counterculture value poles apart from Rossellini’s visually nondescript title character, who can barely be called a lead, let alone a hero. Francesco’s status as a counterculture hero transplanted back 750 years ensures that when he is finally admitted to his climactic papal audience, it is not enough for Pope Innocent (Alec Guinness) to bless and authorize the Franciscan father. Instead, overruling the cardinals who have greeted Francesco’s decision to set aside the carefully worded petition his friend and follower Paolo (Kenneth Cranham) has prepared for him to break into scriptural prophecies that cite the lilies of the field and the treasure laid up in heaven with cries of “Blasphemy! Out!”, the Pope tells him, “We are encrusted with riches and power. You, in your poverty, put us to shame”, then prostrates himself before Francesco and kisses his feet. A final zoom-out of Francesco walking slowly away from the camera into another gorgeous meadow over a reprise of “Brother Son and Sister Moon” makes it clear that Zeffirelli, like Rossellini, is more interested in celebrating Francesco than in telling the story of his life — but that the Francesco he is celebrating is a saintly prefiguration of the rebellious youth culture that had exploded throughout Europe and America in the 1960s.

Although it is less well-known than either Rossellini’s or Zeffirelli’s films, Liliana Cavani’s *Francesco* (1989) is worth consideration because it charts a course that tacks so delicately between the two. *Francesco*, a German-French coproduction with limited American distribution, bears hallmarks of both a Hollywood and a non-Hollywood saint’s life. Its leads, Mickey Rourke as Francesco and Helena Bonham Carter as Ciara, and its musical score by the pop group Vangelis seem clearly calculated to attract an American audience. Yet the film’s desaturated color scheme, greatly emphasizing earth tones over the colorful pageantry of Curtiz and Zeffirelli, comes much closer to replicating Rossellini’s black-and-white visuals in color. Its structure, a series of flashbacks in which Francis’s followers gathering after his death recall representative moments from his life, might seem to hearken back to the episodic structure of *The Little Flowers of St. Francis*, Rossellini’s principal source, to audiences who did not know that none of these episodes is actually drawn

from *The Little Flowers*. Even though the resulting structure may be fragmentary, lingering over particular episodes rather than emphasizing the narrative connections between them, it is still recognizably narrative in ways Rossellini's film is not, presenting pivotal moments in Francesco's life in chronological sequence.

The film lacks any single obvious moment of conversion like the voices Francis followed in Curtiz or Zeffirelli or Francesco's fascinated pursuit of a songbird in *Brother Son, Sister Moon*. Even after spending a year as a military prisoner, Francesco still dreams of becoming a knight, though once he returns home again he sells land and begins "to live among the poor and the lepers". Cavani displays as much male flesh as Zeffirelli, but the impact of her displays is different. Francesco's stripping of his body during the lawsuit his father has brought is more matter-of-fact than titillating, and later when Brother Ruffino (Paco Reconti), who cannot bring himself to preach in public, follows Francesco's facetious advice and enters a church unclothed in order to get the attention of the faithful, his nakedness is treated as an embarrassment to himself, a scandal to his audience, and an opportunity for Francesco to indulge in his single showiest gesture in the film when he takes a painted crucifix from the wall, plants it in the assembly's midst, urges them not to "drive away a man who wants to become a saint", and leads a pair of brothers in quiet prayer until the crowd pelts them with stones. When the brothers visit a weary-looking Rome, they are greeted not with outrage but with boredom by jaundiced prelates who ask, "What man can strip himself of everything, and live like a lamb, at the mercy of wolves?". Once Francesco has received the Pope's blessing, the film focuses on his increasingly unsuccessful attempts to retain control of his order under a strict rule of self-sacrifice and self-abasement. It is not until he awakens after collapsing alone in the forest to discover punctures in his hands, feet, and side that he smiles broadly, realizing that these wounds align him with the crucified Christ, and tells the faithful Brother Leone (Fabio Bussotti): "Deus mihi dixit! God spoke to me again!", striking for the last time before its hero's death a balance between Europe and Hollywood.

Given the extraordinary variety of conflicting scripts his life suggests, Francis might seem the perfect Hollywood saint. But there is another saint who has been even more attractive to the American film industry: Joan of Arc. The 19-year-old villager (1412?–1431) from Domrémy who appeared at the court of Charles, the Dauphin of France, at the point of the country's lowest fortunes in the Hundred Years' War, talked him and his advisors into putting her in control of his military forces on the grounds that the divine visions that came to her assured her that only under her command could they lift the English siege of Orléans, led the French army to an improbable series of victories that allowed the Dauphin to be crowned King Charles VII at Reims before she was captured by the Burgundians, sold to the English, and kept in a secular prison at Rouen, endured a harrowing ecclesiastical trial whose transcript has been preserved to the present day, was convicted of heresy for repeatedly wearing male attire, and suffered martyrdom when she was burned

at the stake. She became a folk hero of France even before a posthumous papal investigation reversed her conviction as unjust and cleared her of all charges in 1456. Nineteenth-century Orléans bishop Félix Dupanloup led vigorous efforts toward her further rehabilitation, and Joan was beatified in 1909 and canonized in 1920. But her sanctification only conferred formal recognition on her legendary status. Stephen W. Richey observes that “[t]he people who came after her in the five centuries since her death tried to make everything of her: demonic fanatic, spiritual mystic, naive and tragically ill-used tool of the powerful, creator and icon of modern popular nationalism, adored heroine, saint”.⁸ George Bernard Shaw, in his Preface to his 1924 play *Saint Joan*, summarizes the conflicting scripts her life offers more tartly when he says that Joan is “the most notable Warrior Saint in the Christian calendar, and the queerest fish among the eccentric worthies of the Middle Ages”.⁹ The figure of Joan embodies so many scripts — the young virgin come to the royal court, the illiterate peasant who entrances the courtiers who scorn her reports of visions but are desperate because they have exhausted every other military option, the powerful warrior who leads her homeland’s army to decisive victories over a foreign invader, the innocent victim caught up in Machiavellian political intrigues disguised as ecclesiastical proceedings, the heretic condemned by a Church that would later embrace her — that both embody power conflicts and conflict dramatically with each other that even more than Francis of Assisi, she seems to have lived a life designed to be filmed, as she was as early as 1898 in Georges Hatot’s one-minute short *Exécution de Jeanne d’Arc* and *Jeanne d’Arc*, the vastly more ambitious fifteen-minute film Georges Méliès released two years later.

It is therefore surprising that the first and still the most distinguished feature film about Joan ignores virtually all these conflicting scripts for an agonizing focus on the last day of her life. Broadly speaking, films about Joan can be readily categorized by how they apportion the time they spend on Joan the supplicant, Joan the warrior, and Joan the accused captive. But Carl Theodor Dreyer’s decision to pass over practically all of her brief life — his film not only does not include any scenes of her life before she is imprisoned but indeed makes very few references to it — gives his film an uncompromising sharpness. Like *Procès de Jeanne d’Arc*, which Robert Bresson released 34 years later, Dreyer’s 1928 *La passion de Jeanne d’Arc* rigorously eschews both most of the dramatic events of Joan’s brief but turbulent life and most of the possibilities for visual melodrama in the courtroom proceedings against her. Purging his film of spectacle, stars, and earthbound action, Dreyer, like Bresson basing his screenplay on the original transcript of the legal proceedings against Joan, produces a landmark of austerity that still moves many viewers deeply in a textbook example of what Paul Schrader has called transcendental style in film — a style Schrader sets against that of “the conventional religious film,” which

⁸ S.W. Richey, *Joan of Arc: The Warrior Saint*, Westport 2003, p. 1.

⁹ G.B. Shaw, *Saint Joan, Major Barbara, Androcles and the Lion*, New York 1956, p. 3.

“uses a style of identification rather than of confrontation” in films whose spectacular visuals and expository dialogue

amplify the abundant artistic means inherent to motion pictures: the viewer is aided and encouraged in his desire to identify and empathize with character, plot, and setting. For an hour or two the viewer can become that suffering, saintly person on screen; his personal problems, guilt, and sin are absorbed by humane, noble, and purifying motives. The spiritual drama, like the romantic drama, becomes an escapist metaphor for the human drama. A confrontation between the human and the spiritual is avoided. The decisive action is not an unsettling stylistic shock, but the culmination of the abundant means used throughout the film. It fulfills the viewer’s fantasy that spirituality can be achieved vicariously; it is the direct result of his identification.¹⁰

Although he sets Dreyer’s film against the kinds of conventional religious dramas exemplified by *The Ten Commandments* (1956), *A Man Called Peter* (1955), and for that matter *Francis of Assisi*, Schrader considers it a less pure example of transcendental style than Bresson’s; he describes it as “a transcendental film which indulges in expressionism”¹¹ and “illustrate[s] how the style (or a part of it) functions in a hostile environment”¹² marked by Dreyer’s lifelong uncertainty “whether art should express the Transcendent or the person (fictional character or film-maker) who experiences the Transcendent”.¹³ Hence both Dreyer and Bresson “depict the historical Joan, but whereas Dreyer emphasizes, in Bazin’s terms, the psychology of her existence, Bresson emphasizes the physiology of her existence”.¹⁴

Whatever the merits of *La passion de Jeanne d’Arc* against those of *Procès de Jeanne d’Arc*, it is utterly unsurprising that that the principal influence of Dreyer’s film on most later screen biographies of Joan is its impact as a negative script, a catalogue of errors these later films are as eager to correct as the inquisitors were to correct the Maid of Lorraine. Victor Fleming’s *Joan of Arc* (1948) provides what might be called the official refutation of Dreyer in its return to the tastefully inflated production values of Cecil B. DeMille’s lost spectacle *Joan the Woman* (1916). Fleming’s film, based on Maxwell Anderson’s 1946 *Joan of Lorraine*, a play-within-a-play about the effects a production of the story has on the troupe of actors who perform it, jettisoned the frame story, recasting itself as a straightforward biography of Joan from her early conviction that she has been called to rescue her nation from the English. Repeating her Tony-winning starring role from Anderson’s play, Ingrid Bergman strikes a keynote of calmly centered nobility. The film sets her story in a Technicolor world of glowing pastels photographed against cerulean skies, though its palette darkens once she is betrayed, captured, and imprisoned. The film’s departures from Dreyer begin with its sweeping narrative, its foursquare expository

¹⁰ P. Schrader, *Transcendental Style in Film: Ozu, Bresson, Dreyer*, Berkeley 2018, pp. 181–182.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 41.

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 44.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 133.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 144.

speeches, and its proportions: only the last third of the film finds Joan in captivity, first to the Count of Luxembourg (J. Carrol Naish), then to the English to whom he cynically sells her. Although the many tight closeups of Joan during her trial and the sweeping left-to-right panning shot introducing Joan to the English court are clearly borrowed from Dreyer, the film goes out of its way to supplement what it takes to be the limitations of his film. Unlike Dreyer's leading performer, Renée Jeanne Falconetti, a stage actress who never made another film after her performance in *La passion de Jeanne d'Arc*, Bergman is exquisitely made up throughout her ordeals; her face glows rapturously even when tears are streaming down it. Unlike the opaque, often indistinguishable inquisitors in Dreyer, Joan's accusers constantly provide helpful glosses of their own and each other's behavior — especially Bishop Pierre Cauchon (Francis L. Sullivan), who confides in the Earl of Warwick (Alan Napier) that “we will burn her, but first we must discredit her”, leading the Bishop of Avranches (Taylor Holmes) to complain, “This is not a religious but a political trial”, a judgment that has the effect of whitewashing the Church for modern audiences. Avoiding any of the ambiguities of Dreyer's ending, which takes Joan directly from a fiery death to her ascent into the hearts of all the French, Fleming's film, scripted by Anderson and Andrew Solt, provides a closing voiceover in the voice of Joan's sympathetic bailiff, Father Massieu (Shepperd Strudwick), assuring the audience that history has not only vindicated Joan but elevated her to heroic status.

The film follows what Ingvald Raknem has identified as the primary conflict in Anderson's play: not between her and her English accusers, but between her and the callous Dauphin (Jose Ferrer, in his screen debut) and his equally corrupt courtiers, who force her to acknowledge that “those she trusted and reckoned with in her struggle of liberating France had betrayed her”.¹⁵ Just as “Joan's discovery of evil in the world is the mainspring of his play” that teaches the actors dramatizing her life “the value of having a faith and of basing one's life on faith”¹⁶ despite the constant temptations and counterexamples that surround her, *Joan of Arc* finds both nobility and triumph in the moral struggles it exteriorizes through dialogue and visual pagantry.

Otto Preminger's *Saint Joan* (1957), based on Shaw's 1924 play, corrects not only Dreyer but Fleming in shifting its star power away from Joan to those who surround her — the cast includes Richard Todd, Anton Walbrook, John Gielgud, Felix Aylmer, Finlay Currie, Bernard Miles, and a woefully miscast Richard Widmark as the antic, feeble-minded Dauphin — in order to emphasize her initial obscurity and her imperishable commoner status, a status she never completely loses in Shaw's dry-eyed portrait of her as shrewd, plain-spoken, and transcendently matter-of-fact. Graham Greene's screenplay, though it follows Shaw in its equal attention to

¹⁵ I. Raknem, *Joan of Arc in History Legend and Literature*, Oslo 1971, p. 230.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 235.

Joan before and after her capture, adds a prologue in which Joan appears in a dream after her death to the Dauphin, whom she consistently calls Charlie, looking forward to the 1456 Epilogue in which Shaw had dramatized Joan's posthumous haunting of the Dauphin in the light of 25 years of historical hindsight and rehabilitation and casting the whole film, like *Francesco*, as a series of flashbacks, though one that is considerably more tightly integrated. The film's principal innovation, its casting of the unknown Jean Seberg as Joan, was savaged by contemporaneous reviewers who thought Seberg lacked the necessary gravitas for the role. In hindsight, however, Preminger's decision to plant this newcomer at the center of a galaxy of veteran stage and screen performers has come to seem both prophetic, because of the wider fame Seberg achieved in Jean-Luc Godard's *Breathless* three years later, and judicious, because it mirrored the position of the obscure villager Joan in her own star-studded life, and incidentally cast the film's more scathing reviewers as reprising the roles of inquisitors themselves.

The earthy naturalism of Luc Besson's epic-length *The Messenger: The Story of Joan of Arc* (1999) marks still another frank rejection of earlier screen Joans from Dreyer to Preminger. Besson's film, the only one to date that casts a younger actress (Jane Valentine) as the eight-year-old Joan in an extended prologue that makes this one of the most inclusive of all saints' lives onscreen, takes its heroine from childhood to death. This prologue also adds a personal motivation — revenge for the burning of her village and the murder and rape (in that order) of her older sister — to her saintly determination to expel the English invaders from her homeland. It is an eminently logical foundation for what is essentially a superhero movie, portentous, supernatural, heart-pounding, and starring the certified action heroine Milla Jovovich, who had firmly established her genre credentials as a messianic superhero in Besson's futuristic fantasy *The Fifth Element* two years earlier.

More than any other screen Joan, Jovovich attempts to present a complete heroic ideal. She does not merely provide inspiration for the troops of the Dauphin (John Malkovich) attempting to retake Orléans but proves her valor by leaping the pointed fence on her horse to enter the walled city and slashing the rope on the drawbridge to admit the invading French, and her military acumen by reversing a catapult and using it as a replacement drawbridge into the walled city of Reims. Her adventures bring Joan into dramatic conflict with courtiers, warriors, Burgundians, English, and church elders, each of them determined that the others shall be responsible for her martyrdom. Unlike Ingrid Bergman's Joan, whose voices fall silent but then resume while she is imprisoned in Rouen, Jovovich's Joan is abandoned by all her voices once she is captured — all except one. It is this voice, which she calls The Conscience (played when she is a child by Richard Leaf and later by Dustin Hoffman), that ultimately persuades her to confess that she has been proud and stubborn — The Conscience adds selfish and cruel — exactly the qualities for which the film's target audience has presumably most admired her.

Theresa Sanders observes that “Jovovich’s performance at times calls to mind the mannerisms of someone suffering from schizophrenia. By the end of the film, we are not sure if we have been watching someone in need of psychiatric treatment, someone destined by God to restore the fortunes of France, or both”.¹⁷ As Sanders notes, many other commentators have diagnosed the historical Joan with schizophrenia, which would surely be the most likely diagnosis any medical professional would give a latter-day Joan who reported hearing voices. What is most fascinating about Besson’s film and Sanders’s assessment of its heroine is not the question of their historical accuracy but their implication of a third variety of scripts that are essential to understanding the lives of Hollywood saints. In addition to injunctive scripts that command “thou shalt” and monitory scripts that command “thou shalt not”, there is an essential third category of scripts that have been sorely neglected: irrelevant scripts that we might have assumed to have power over saints’ lives but have none. Of the many scripts irrelevant to the lives of movie saints (e.g., “thou shalt provide a happy ending”; “thou shalt be sure to show the Church in a favorable light”; “though shalt not compromise the dignity of the saints or show them in defeat”), two are particularly notable. The first is indicated by the label “lives of the saints”: most movies about saints are not in fact comprehensive biographies of the saints and see no reason to apologize for the fact that they are not. The irrelevance of the label “lives of the saints” is especially pronounced in the case of European films like *La passion de Jeanne d’Arc* and *Francesco, giullari di Dio*. But it is equally applicable to films like *Saint Joan* or *Brother Son, Sister Moon* that restrict themselves to pivotal moments, moments of conversion or victory or invincible innocence, in their subjects’ lives, which are presented as far more important than those lives themselves. Even if it were possible to present a comprehensive life of a saint in a two-hour film, there is no evidence that it would be desirable to anyone in particular.

The irrelevance of the label “lives of the saints” is not of the same order of magnitude as the implicit command to stick to the known facts of the saints’ lives, a genuine script that sometimes seems irrelevant because it has been compromised either by the creator’s ignorance — as Shaw “lacked interest in the Middle Ages, was ignorant of the period as a whole, and its peculiarities were uncongenial to him”¹⁸ — or the need for negotiated settlements with other, contrary scripts. It is more closely related to a second, even more fundamental irrelevant script: the command that a saint’s life has to be about a saint. For a saint is no more indispensable than a saint’s life for a Hollywood saint’s life.

It may be hard to become a saint and even harder to become a Hollywood saint, but it is easy to make a saint movie without any saints. The title of Ann C. Paietta’s

¹⁷ T. Sanders, op. cit., p. 207.

¹⁸ I. Raknem, op. cit., p. 180.

filmography — *Saints, Clergy and Other Religious Figures on Film and Television, 1895–2003* — already indicates a slippery slope in cinematic representations of saints. Paietta’s listings include *The Adventures of Robin Hood* (1938), *It’s a Wonderful Life* (1946), *The Bishop’s Wife* (1947), *The African Queen* (1951), *M*A*S*H* (1970), *The Exorcist* (1973), and *The Omen* (1976), none of which include saints, but not movies about heaven, hell, angels, or devils like *Here Comes Mr. Jordan* (1941), *Heaven Can Wait* (1943), *Angel on My Shoulder* (1946), *A Matter of Life and Death* (1946), *Alias Nick Beal* (1949), *Wings of Desire* (1987), *Heaven* (1987), or *Dogma* (1999). Paietta’s rationale for including *It’s a Wonderful Life* alone among angel movies — “Even though it does not have a religious figure except an angel this film demonstrates how one person can make a difference in people’s lives”¹⁹ — indicates just how slippery this slope is.

Nor is it obvious how the line between saint and non-saint movies could be drawn more firmly anywhere else. Saints are either absent or relegated to minor roles in most of the biblical epics of the 1920s and 1950s. Despite their titles, *St. Elmo’s Fire* (1985), *Household Saints* (1993), *The Boondock Saints* (1999), *Lives of the Saints* (2004), *Saint of 9/11* (2006), *Ain’t Them Bodies Saints* (2013), *St. Vincent* (2014), and the television series *The Saint* (1962–1969) are not about saints. *Becket* (1964) and *A Man for All Seasons* (1966), two celebrated movies about saints, can readily be seen as entries in cycle of prestigious studio productions that examine conflicts between religious and secular motives — *The Cardinal* (1963), *The Agony and the Ecstasy* (1965), *The Shoes of the Fisherman* (1968) — that are not about saints, a cycle that comes to an end with *The Lion in Winter* (1968) and *Anne of the Thousand Days* (1969), in which religion plays a decidedly minor role in Realpolitik costume dramas. The case of *The Agony and the Ecstasy*, in which Michelangelo Buonarroti (Charlton Heston, who had memorably played Moses and Judah Ben-Hur) repeatedly clashes with the worldly warrior Pope Julius II (Rex Harrison) over the Pope’s command to the sculptor to provide decorative frescoes for the Sistine Chapel, is especially striking. Although the Pope is Christ’s Vicar on Earth, he ultimately acknowledges that Michelangelo’s absolute devotion to his art over his health, his personal well-being, his loyalties to other people, and his life makes him the more religious figure. As the ailing pair sit together a few feet beneath the ceiling on which Michelangelo, inspired by an amusingly literal vision he has seen in the morning clouds, has painted God’s creation of Adam, the clerical patron tells the reluctant painter: “What you have painted, my son, is not a portrait of God; it is an act of faith”.

Tempting as it may be to label *The Agony and the Ecstasy* a faux-saint movie, it is far more in keeping with Hollywood’s elastic approach to sainthood — indicated for example by Twentieth Century Fox’s DVD release of *Francis of Assisi*

¹⁹ A.C. Paietta, op. cit., p. 76.

in a boxed set that also includes *The Song of Bernadette*, *A Man Called Peter*, and *Gospel Road: A Story of Jesus* (1973), co-written by its star, the pop singer Johnny Cash — to label it a saint movie that does not happen to include a saint. More secular saints abound in movies: Father Flanagan in *Boys' Town* (1938), George Bailey in *It's a Wonderful Life* (1946), Kris Kringle in *Miracle on 34th Street* (1947), or, to go farther afield, Lou Gehrig in *Pride of the Yankees* (1942), Bruce Pearson in *Bang the Drum Slowly* (1973), and Mr. Spock in *Star Trek: The Wrath of Khan* (1982).

Is it right to call George Bailey and Lou Gehrig saints? Their films certainly invest them with saintly qualities, embroil them in moral conflicts, and give them opportunities for conversion experiences almost as powerful as that of the Christmas sinner-turned-saint Ebenezer Scrooge. The question of what makes an ordinary human being a saint in the eyes of a Church that may take 500 years to elevate a candidate it had once condemned to death is perhaps better recast as a question about who decides who counts as a saint, on what grounds, and for which followers. Sherlock Holmes's London lodgings at 221-B Baker Street (an address that did not exist when Arthur Conan Doyle created his indelible hero) display hundreds of letters written by correspondents who seem to regard Holmes as real, talismanic, and uniquely powerful. In *Letters to Juliet*, Lise and Ceil Friedman, reviewing a small fraction of the thousands of letters to Shakespeare's heroine answered by secretarial volunteers in Verona, note that “[a]dolescents often seek practical advice. [...] [T]hey admire the courage and decisiveness she demonstrated in standing up to her family. [...] Many letters are effusive testimonials to happiness. Others seek a blessing, some sort of spiritual protection for their love. They write to Juliet as if she were a saint, recalling some of the earliest notes left at her tomb site”.²⁰ Appalachian novelist Sharyn McCrumb used the inspiration the fans of NASCAR driver Dale Earnhardt provided to update the pilgrimage of *The Canterbury Tales* in *St. Dale* (2005) and two sequels. Elvis Presley may remain for the moment the object of worship for only a select cult, but Princess Diana seems to edge closer to secular sainthood every year.

Some of these figures take us far from the movies, and we might reasonably conclude that Hollywood is no more than a way station along the path of sainthood and saintly worship, sacred and profane, or that the industry is so reluctant to risk offending the Church that it will look for saints far outside its circle. But another conclusion seems more judicious: that both Hollywood and its audience maintain a deep hunger for sanctity wherever it is to be found, along with a particular appetite for saintly experiences found in unexpected places that are likely to suggest both conflict-ridden narratives and fruitfully multiple scripts. The deepest lesson of Hollywood sainthood is suggested by George Bernard Shaw, who writes in his Preface to *Saint Joan*:

²⁰ L. Friedman, C. Friedman, *Letters to Juliet*, New York 2006, p. 113.

I have before me the letter of a Catholic priest. "In your play," he writes, "I see the dramatic presentation of the conflict of the Regal, Sacerdotal, and Prophetical powers, in which Joan was crushed. To me it is not the victory of any one of them over the others that will bring peace and the Reign of the Saints in the Kingdom of God, but their fruitful interaction in a costly but noble state of tension". The Pope himself could not put it better; nor can I. We must accept the tension and maintain it nobly without letting ourselves be tempted to relieve it by burning the thread.²¹

Scripting the saints and thinking about the many ways the saints have been scripted remind us that however great the appeal of the saintly apotheosis, it is always rooted in the still more primal desire for conflicts to be resolved or transcended by the impossible, all-too-human attempt to be faithful to hopelessly competing scripts.

SCRIPTING THE SAINTS

Summary

This essay approaches Hollywood movies about saints by analyzing the problems involved in attempting to follow both the scripts provided by the subjects' lives and the surprisingly varied and often equally demanding scripts required of Hollywood movies in general and saints' lives in particular. Focusing on Hollywood movies about St. Francis of Assisi and Joan of Arc, it considers the impact of three kinds of scripts: positive demands to be dramatically well-constructed, inspirational, entertaining, uplifting, visually and sonically appealing, helpfully explicit in its exposition, and historically accurate; negative demands to avoid offending followers of the saints, members of the Catholic Church, and anyone else who might reasonably be construed as members of the target audience and to avoid the errors of earlier saint movies; and what might be called irrelevant scripts, those that might seem necessary for Hollywood saints' lives to follow but that are actually either optional or impossible to follow.

„SKRYPTOWANIE” ŚWIĘTYCH

Streszczenie

Niniejszy szkic jest próbą przybliżenia hollywoodzkich filmów o świętych za pomocą analizy problemów wynikających z próby dochowania wierności zarówno scenariuszom dostarczonym dzięki życiorysom świętych, jak i zaskakująco odmiennym oraz często równie wymagającym scenariuszom, których oczekuje się od hollywoodzkich filmów w ogóle, a od filmów o świętych szczególnie. Gdy przyjrzymy się hollywoodzkim filmom o św. Franciszku i Joannie d'Arc, zauważymy wpływ trzech rodzajów, używając psychologicznego albo informatycznego terminu, skryptów: 1. skrypt pozytywnych wymagań, aby film był poprawny dramaturgicznie, inspirujący, rozrywkowy, podnoszący na duchu, atrakcyjny wizualnie i dźwiękowo, z wyrazistym przesłaniem; 2. skrypt wymagań negatyw-

²¹ G.B. Shaw, op. cit., p. 37.

nych dotyczących unikania urażenia ludzi czczących świętych, członków Kościoła katolickiego i kogokolwiek innego, kto mógłby być postrzegany jako członek grupy „targetowej” filmów, oraz wymóg uniknięcia błędów wcześniejszych filmów o świętych; 3. skrypt, który można by nazwać skryptem nieistotnym, ten, który może się wydawać wzywaniem do naśladowania hollywoodzkich świętych, ale który tak naprawdę jest albo tylko opcjonalny, albo niemożliwy do realizacji.