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| **About you** | **[Salutation]** | Lorenzo | J. | Torres Hortelano |
| [Enter your biography] | | | |
| Universidad Rey Juan Carlos (Madrid, Spain) | | | |

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| **Your article** |
| Viridiana (Luis Buñuel [1961]) |
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| Along with *L’Âge d’or* [*Age of Gold*, 1930], *Viridiana* is a noteworthy point in the filmography of director Luis Buñuel that it was the film where the director felt he enjoyed the most freedom of production. It was the first film he had made in Spain since going into exile in 1939. A dark tale of sexual drive and death, the film centres around Viridiana, a novice about to take her holy vows, must leave the convent to visit her uncle Don Jaime, who has paid for her studies. During her visit, Don Jaime tries to convince her to stay, but fails and commits suicide, causing Viridiana to resign. She stays at the mansion to practice Christian charity, accepting a group of beggars into the estate. Finally Jorge, Don Jaime’s natural son, arrives and alters her fate. The script utilises a recognisable logic interspersed with scenes of surrealistic dark humour, such as when Viridiana, at Don Jaime’s request, wears his dead wife’s wedding dress, or when the beggars sit around the table in the same arrangement as Leonardo da Vinci’s *The Last Supper* (1495-1498) accompanied by music from Handel’s *Messiah* (1741). These scenes are a kind of Deleuzeian ‘impulse-image’ which induce in Viridiana an existential shift from God to mankind. In fact, one of the most interesting aspects of the film is the modernist and irreverent manner in which Buñuel treats elements connected to Catholicism. It is the first Spanish film to win the Palme d’Or at the Cannes Film Festival. |
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| Further reading:  (Faulkner)  (Gutiérrez-Albilla)  (Jones)  (Poyato)  (Sundt) |