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| Black God, White Devil |
| Deus e o Diabo na Terra do Sol |
| *Black God, White Devil* is a 1964 film directed by Brazilian auteur Glauber Rocha. Shot on location in the Brazilian *sertão*, it launched the *cinema novo* movement and embodied the aspirations of a new political cinema, as outlined in Rocha’s 1965 essay ‘An Esthetic of Hunger.’ *Black God, White Devil* forms a trilogy with *Terra em Transe* (1967) and *Antonio das Mortes* (1969). It revolutionized the national film industry by merging the European avant-garde cinema (Soviet montage, Italian Neorealism, French New Wave) and Brazilian folk traditions.  In the film, a couple fleeing from poverty and law enforcement explore two ways of feeding their physical and spiritual hunger. Both of these prove unfulfilling. The first is by joining the messianic cult of a *beato* or saint (the black God). The second is by following a *cangaceiro*, an archetypal bandit from the sertão (the white Devil). *Black God, White Devil* shifted attention away from the dominant *chanchada* musical comedy in favour of an epic drama set on Brazil’s northeastern backlands. The highly symbolic plot fuses poetically with a soundtrack punctuated by Heitor Villa-Lobos’s *Bachianas Brasileiras*. Stylized performances, handheld camera shots, elliptical editing, and nonsynchronous sound disrupt traditional viewing habits, while also culminating in the dialectical fulfilment of a filmic refrain: ‘The sertão will become sea, and the sea sertão.’ |
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| Further reading:  (Johnson and Stam)  (King)  (Martin)  (Nagib) |