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Luis Buñuel's NAZARIN (1958), from a screenplay by Buñuel and Julio Alejandro, based on the novel by Benito Pérez Galdós, with Francisco Raba! Marga López, and Rita Macedo, marks Buñuel's creative peak in his Mexican period just before his remarkable European reraissance initiated by Viridiana. Rabal plays a virile defrocked priest storming across a brutal , countryside with a troupe gof deformed misfits and freakish mendicants. The story possesses more sociological detail than usual Ifor Bunuel, perhaps because such ammunition was exquisitely appropriate for a fable depicting hierarchical Christianity drumming out one of its members for following the hardest teachings of Christ. Nonetheless, the artist remains ascendant over the pamphleteer in this ironical proposition that both the Vatican and the undeserving wretched of the earth would probably crucify any returning Christ who upset the puritans and moneylenders of the church vestibules. Cinematographer Gabriel Figueroa, who had worked a

John Ford-Graham Greene The Fugitive, provides a much harsher view of the landscape than he did in the Americanized slant on an odd-priest-out in Mexico. The Ford film was too topical; the Buñuel is wondrously timeless.