

ROUTLEDGE STUDIES IN RELIGION AND FILM

The Silents of Jesus in the Cinema (1897–1927)

Edited by
David J. Shepherd



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2 *La Vie et Passion de Notre Seigneur Jésus-Christ* (Pathé-Frères, 1902–05)

Tableau Variation in the Early Cinema¹

Alain Boillat and Valentine Robert

An edition of the *Life and Passion of Christ* (*La Vie et Passion de Notre Seigneur Jésus Christ*) was produced by the firm Pathé in the early years of the twentieth century, making it one of the oldest religious films to be preserved.² As an extension of our earlier research on the film, we propose here to examine its principal material and aesthetic aspects.³ Given the proliferation of Passion Plays during the early years of the cinema,⁴ the role they have played in historical and theoretical discussions of the period⁵ and the complications of their study (e.g., nothing resembles Jesus more than another Jesus),⁶ we believe it would be useful to contribute to the knowledge we have today of this body of work by focusing on this one film. We will do so in two stages: the first part will be devoted to questions of a philological order and to observations regarding the material qualities of the film, which will allow us to gauge the degree to which each of the “tableaux”⁷ making up the film can be viewed as autonomous; in part two, we will examine the aesthetic consequences of our historical observations. Our task is to examine how the visual qualities of the film are the result of a desire to create a “tableau-effect” which situates this film within a broader genealogy. We will thus be able to use a concrete case to observe the ways in which the “cinema” of the period was the site of convergences among a variety of cultural series. Consequently, the film should be seen as forming part of a “meshing” phenomenon described by André Gaudreault in the following manner: “At the beginning of the twentieth century, intermedial meshing was so fertile in the world of cinematography that a great number of animated pictures paid tribute to other media or media spaces, if only in the topic they were addressing.”⁸

This is especially true in the case of filmed Passion Plays, which drew on an iconographic tradition with many branches. Our examination of the “tableau-effect” will enable us, in particular, to address the connections between “our” Pathé film and a practice little discussed in this context until now, that of the *tableau vivant*.

THE HISTORIAN OF (EARLY) CINEMA AND THE PHILOLOGIST

As is the case with any other body of early films (but to a greater extent here, as we shall see), certain methodological precautions are required for

our study.⁹ One might say that a film historian examining an early film (or body of films) necessarily finds him or herself in much the same position as a philologist studying the manuscript tradition of a medieval text. Not only do both observe the material aspects of an object that the ravages of time may have made incomplete, but they are confronted with complex phenomena of *variance*. Like the copyist, through whom texts were transmitted in the Middle Ages—an era of orality which some theorists have compared to the beginnings of film¹⁰—the moving picture exhibitor who determined the screening conditions (such as whether or not to darken the room, make available a booklet, provide a lecturer, pianist or sound machine, etc.) also acted upon the filmic “text” (in the semiotic sense of the term) by arranging as he saw fit the different tableaux he had purchased in sections or as a whole, thereby creating his own “editing,” and edition. Bernard Cerquiglini’s observation that medieval romances were marked by “intrinsic variance”¹¹ seems to offer a parallel: “The fact that one hand was first was probably less important than this continual rewriting of a work that belonged to whoever prepared it and gave it form once again.”¹²

As Charles Musser has shown, the editorial control of a film during the early years of cinematography fell entirely to the exhibitor—a form of “rewriting” if ever there was one—before gradually shifting to the production companies with the widespread introduction of multi-reel fiction films.¹³ In this respect, the shift from the sale of films to a rental system reduced the exhibitor’s room to maneuver. Laurent Le Forestier, in his socio-economic study of Pathé, has shown that the two systems co-existed until around 1910, but that the move from one to the other began around May–June 1907, after the film under discussion here began to circulate.¹⁴ Films from the first decade, probably more than at any other time in the history of cinema, were “semi-finished products” (to borrow Thomas Elsaesser’s felicitous expression¹⁵) which were only “completed” in the exhibition stage. As André Gaudreault and Philippe Gauthier have pointed out,¹⁶ this “editorial” activity was particularly apparent in the case of the Passion Play films, as the repetition of motifs and the proliferation of editions offered the exhibitor considerable possibilities for “mixing and matching.” The similarity of the scenes they showed and the significance of a pre-existing story made it possible, more than with any other kind of film, to efface the discontinuities resulting from the “editing” of heterogeneous elements, and thus to render the reading of these moving pictures linear. At times, this task was carried out by means of a lecturer’s speech (which in the case of the Passion Plays was closely guided by the booklets distributed by the film’s publisher¹⁷). In this respect, we could say that hewing close to the New Testament (or to liturgical convention) and to secular iconographic conventions kept the reading of the film in line, counterbalancing to a certain extent the show’s modular quality.

It would be reductive, however, to view variations in early film as arising only at the time of exhibition; as Gaudreault and Gauthier have remarked,

producers also did their utmost, particularly in the case of the Passion Plays, to "make something new out of something old." Indeed the marketing strategy of the publisher in question here—the firm Pathé Frères—was expressly one of "recycling" by periodically offering "new" Passion Play films for sale.¹⁸ Producers thus also contributed to this inflation of versions, something which, for the historian trying to identify a given film and construct its story-line, can muddy the water. Here the historian, like the philologist, has two major options: to stick with a single version in its existing state of preservation (which might be termed an "exhibitor's cut," or in any event a "collector's cut") in a tradition similar to that of Joseph Bédier,¹⁹ or to reconstruct a version presumed to be original and complete (which, following Le Forestier, we might light-heartedly call the "producer's cut"²⁰) by collecting and re-organizing various fragments—an approach favored by the philological method associated with the works of Karl Lachmann (and introduced in France around 1870 by Gaston Paris). Lachmann deduced his principles from the textual criticism of the New Testament,²¹ amongst other corpora, and indeed, New Testament scholars have also grappled with the theoretical complications of reconstructing an "original" text.²² Issues such as these are as relevant for the restoration and public screening of a film as for the publication of a text.

In order to respect the heterogeneity and instability of films from the period, we will follow Bédier's approach, persuaded that the search for an "original"—something that only makes sense when there is a degree of textual stability—is utopian and inappropriate in the particular context in which films were shown in the first decade of cinematography. In our view, historians should, initially at least, examine each film print from the point of view of its material singularity rather than attempt to reconstruct the presumed original unity of the film. In this way the historian will not overlook the principle of the *autonomy of the tableau* which, as we shall see, was prevalent during this period at every stage of the production and circulation of moving pictures.

In a body of work such as the Passion Play films it would even be desirable to develop something like a philologist's *stemma* (a schematic depiction in the form of a genealogical tree), but such an endeavor would only be made possible by bringing together observations obtained through the comparative study of a great many copies. This research, to a very large extent, remains to be done. Indeed, despite the manifest interest in Pathé's Passion Play films on the part of film historians (in particular through the impetus of André Gaudreault²³), few studies provide precise and illustrated references to what is shown in the films. Most of the time, the images required for any labor of comparative identification are not reproduced. The result is that our knowledge remains piecemeal, and the indispensable cross-checking between accounts is made very difficult. We will thus join the task of dating and examining the material with an illustrated aesthetic analysis of the representational strategies at work in the Pathé tableaux preserved at the Cinémathèque suisse.²⁴

DATING AND DESCRIPTION

Four major moments can be identified in the history of the Pathé Passion Plays: an initial version, in 1899, contained sixteen tableaux; a second edition in 1902 contained thirty-two;²⁵ a third in 1907 contained thirty-seven, which were no longer sold separately but in four groupings, reflecting a shift in the conception of filmic tableaux symptomatic of their loss of autonomy and modularity in favor of greater continuity; a final version dated 1913 was broken into forty-three tableaux (also sold in four groups).²⁶ The latter two versions of these Passion Plays have been well documented and the abundant textual and filmic material that has been preserved has made it possible to carry out in-depth analyses of them.²⁷ The first two, however, are less known, making the copies held by the Cinémathèque suisse invaluable for study of these films in the context of the pre-1907 period.

While Gaudreault and Gauthier have demonstrated that the final Passion Play was a remake of the third, "following almost step by step the découpage and mise en scène of the 1907 film,"²⁸ they hypothesize that the 1902 version was merely an extension of the 1899 version.²⁹ We have, however, gathered enough evidence to say that this second version too was a complete remake, meaning that all the tableaux sold in 1902 were new. This film's sixteen tableaux, which seem at first glance to have been taken from the 1899 list—they retain the same catalogue number and the same telegraph code—had in fact been rearranged and reshot, as demonstrated by the following: their titles were changed,³⁰ their content and status (in the sense of Pathé's recommendations) were modified,³¹ and they were shortened or lengthened.³² Indeed, as we will see, while Pathé thus marketed four successive and different series of Passion Play films, the version preserved at the Cinémathèque suisse shows that some tableaux were "remade" yet again and released in intermediary editions other than the principal ones listed above. In those days, film production was founded on the principle of the "remake," with each company imitating successful films published by competing companies. Pathé, however, appears to have explored the principle in an especially sustained manner, offering many remakes of its own films.³³ With the Passion Play films, this proliferation of versions reached unprecedented heights: the firm's catalogues were continually vaunting the "constantly growing favor" with which audiences viewed this "always new" program.³⁴

The specific nature of the early Passion Plays and the multiplicity of versions create almost insurmountable difficulties when trying to assign a precise date to the film we examined at the Cinémathèque suisse, whose two copies are of similar length (approximately 440 meters), one dazzlingly hand-colored, and the other in black and white, with five of its tableaux tinted. We echo the observation of Riccardo Redi following his viewing of a dozen Pathé Passion Plays: "It must be acknowledged that all attempts at dating are highly unsatisfactory and that the reconstitution of a homogeneous copy . . . was impossible."³⁵ Nevertheless, as our project did not

consist in reconstructing a whole copy, we can make a number of observations and advance a few hypotheses to enable us to get a better grasp of our subject.

We must emphasize first of all the extreme heterogeneity of these copies. The first, colored print is preserved in three reels and two fragments and contains twenty-seven tableaux and German intertitles.³⁶ The second is also in three reels, but has only twenty-three tableaux and its intertitles are in French.³⁷ It makes sense to consider them together, as two copies of the same filmic entity, because almost all their tableaux are in common.³⁸ Indeed one might even suppose that one of them (at least with regard to one of its tableaux) derives from the other, as two successive frames are out of focus in the same spot in both prints.³⁹ That the two films are also identical in length, is however, a matter of chance,⁴⁰ for they were archived at quite distinct times and differ greatly both in the number of their tableaux and in the number of frames in each tableau. Any attempt to date them thus involves studying each element of the film and accepting the fact that their dates will vary over a number of years.

MATERIAL INVESTIGATION

The material aspect of the films can be approached from the perspective of their colors. In one of the prints, a few tableaux have been tinted (as opposed to toned). The other print appears, on the whole, to have been manually colored using stencils.⁴¹ This absence of mechanization may be an indication of its date, considering that mechanical stenciling, begun at Pathé as early as 1903, entered into regular use in 1907 according to Laurent Le Forestier.⁴² We must qualify this conclusion, however, in light of the testimony of two former colorists—Elizabeth Thuillier, who operated an independent coloring workshop, and Germaine Berger, a stencil cutter at Pathé—both of whom indicate that the use of machines was not widespread and that coloring continued to be done by hand well beyond 1907.⁴³

We should also consider information printed by the publisher in the edge marks beside the perforations of the colored copy (practically no such information appears on the black-and-white print).⁴⁴ Information appears in the edge marks of two tableaux, *Jesus before Pilate* and *The Crucifixion*,⁴⁵ which explicitly indicates the date they were published: "PATHÉ FRÈRES PARIS 1905." The remaining tableaux bear the indication "PATHÉ FRÈRES PARIS" with no date. Paolo Cherchi Usai, who has examined these edge marks on Pathé films, reports that the latter phrase was printed from 1906 to April 1907.⁴⁶ Knowing that this film is different in every respect from the Passion Play published by Pathé in 1907 (which is better known by virtue of recent DVD editions to be discussed below), this information thus seems to indicate that we are in the presence of tableaux marketed in 1906. Nothing thus far, however, prevents us from thinking that these and

the two tableaux stamped "1905" are republished older versions. The edge marks give us only the date range, the latest possible date, leaving us to search elsewhere for the initial date of production of these tableaux (which were constantly being republished, given their success and their continuing presence in the catalogue).

The titles are another important piece of information. We must first of all point out that we discovered in the catalogues that it was only between 1903 and 1904 that Pathé began to systematize the use of titles on the film itself. The August 1904 catalogue begins with a "very important notice" to this effect:

With all our films, we supply a length of about 5 feet which is attached, and bears the title of the subject with our trade-mark; this protects us against imitators, and affords our clients the advantage of economising their expenditure, as the use of a second lantern for fixed titles is not required. We supply these titles in French, English, German, Spanish, Italian or Russian, as our clients may desire. Consequently, all those who procure our films through dealers, agents or others should, insist on having the title *in red* with our trade-mark, the Coq, to the right and left, which is the only guarantee that they are our manufacture and not merely copies.⁴⁷

Back in May 1903, however, the firm was still announcing that "all our films are furnished with a title in red bearing our trademark,"⁴⁸ providing neither the length nor tinting information and making no reference to film stock or to avoiding the use of the stereopticon, suggesting that these were glass plates. Indeed it was only in 1904 that Pathé began to publish its "Titles Announces" [*sic*] on film stock.⁴⁹ The red-tinted titles on the two Swiss archive's prints preceding each tableau thus appear to attest to their being published after 1903.

An examination of the content of these titles also reveals that they are in keeping with the terminology of the 1902 version of the Pathé Passion Play—apart from a few exceptions, such as the two headings, *Birth of Jesus* and *Passion and Death of Christ*, which appear as title cards in the colored print in a typeface absolutely identical to the others, but which, according to the catalogues, only appeared in 1907, when the Pathé Passion Play films began to be divided into sections rather than into tableaux, as we remarked above. Another exception is a title in the German copy which, by associating the Scourging and the Crowning with Thorns, appears to correspond to a heading (and thus to a tableau) from 1899 rather than 1902. But the French copy shows the same tableaux, with the official 1902 titles separately. In fact this Passion Play has several tableaux—or should we say *shots*?—which follow on from one another on the same set,⁵⁰ thereby providing a degree of instability in the titles—or should we say *intertitles*?—on the level of both their content and their positioning. The German solution of condensing the

titles of actions occurring on the same set into a single initial title card (as is the case with *Jesus in the Garden of Olives* and *Judas Kissing Jesus*, as we will show) has the advantage of simplifying by avoiding any segmentation. At the same time it responds to a general concern for precision, which often makes the German titles denser than the others even though the tableaux are the same (e.g., they specify that *The Holy Family* is “in Nazareth” and that the *Entrance to Jerusalem* is “on Palm Sunday,” and that we are witnessing not only the *Adoration of the Wise Men* but also the “Birth of Christ”).

Generally speaking, these title cards are another sign of the heterogeneity of the prints. There can be several titles for the same scene due to their reformulation (*The Strange Star* and *The Wise Men Follow the Star* appear on two distinct film fragments) or translation (*Jesus Sinking under His Cross* appearing suddenly in English following the French title *Jésus succombant sous sa Croix*),⁵¹ or more generally through variations in the typography or logo. As an example of the latter, we might cite the sudden appearance in the German copy of lower-case letters embellished with a different border from the others, which are set against a black background without a logo or ornamentation; or the alternation of two kinds of title cards with different logos in the French copy, which may be an indication of their date.

If we employ André Gaudreault’s detailed typology of the various roosters used in the Pathé logo, we find on six occasions the one used in Gaudreault’s example, *The Ingenious Soubrette* (Pathé, 1902), in which the roosters are not accompanied by the words “marque déposée” (trade mark) and are shown on a stage. On fifteen occasions we find the rooster which appears in *Bad Debts* (Pathé, 1904), which bears the words “marque déposée” and whose “cocky” appearance is far from the stylization seen in certain Pathé films from 1906.⁵² Unfortunately, our conclusions must again be qualified, because the logo alternates between scenes shot on the same set, and thus at the same time.⁵³ Note that we did not find any Pathé logo displayed on the film set itself, such as may be found in the 1907 version. On this topic, Gaudreault remarks that “we find [the company’s logo] on the sets of a good many films produced beginning in 1906.”⁵⁴

Finally, the biblical order of the episodes is not consistently preserved within each reel or from reel to reel. In the colored print, while the first and third reels display exemplary continuity, the first showing the beginning and the latter showing the end of Jesus’s life, the middle reel defies all narrative logic by transporting us from the Annunciation to the Last Supper and then without transition to the Wonderful Draught of Fishes! The French copy also has two fairly continuous reels, one showing the Death of Christ and his Resurrection and another containing a part of his Public Life, from the Expulsion of the Money Changers in the Temple to Judas’s Kiss. A much denser third reel, which runs through Jesus’s life from the Annunciation to the Crucifixion in an orderly and logical manner, leads us, however, without transition from the Entry into Jerusalem to the Appearance before Pilate. The only way we can imagine all this black-and-white

material being presented in a coherent manner is thus to interpose the reel on Jesus’s Public Life between these two tableaux in the long reel, in the gap caused by the narrative ellipsis. In the case of the colored print, despite the unsolvable “to-ing” and “fro-ing” of the second reel, the fact that both it and the first reel end with an intertitle announcing that “the next part is coming up” (*fortsetzung folgt*),⁵⁵ suggests that it was projected in this state. This encourages the presumption that, in the absence of an extraordinary lecturer,⁵⁶ this copy was more likely manipulated by a collector than an exhibitor, the result of a haphazard reconstitution of scattered fragments found over time. This may yet be an indication of its date—although the hypothesis is a risky one—if the second reel was obtained at a later date by the exhibitor, who was able to collect these “supplementary” scenes as his financial resources grew or as Pathé published them (in stages, gradually, or in revised versions). We shall see, moreover, that the four tableaux we believe to have been published not in 1902–03 but only in 1905 are among the eight tableaux in this second reel.

PUBLISHED AND CATALOGUED VERSIONS

While Riccardo Redi has drawn up a copious inventory of preserved copies of the Pathé Passion Play films (in particular in Italian archives),⁵⁷ we have unfortunately been able to compare the Cinémathèque suisse copies only with the copies distributed on VHS, DVD or the Internet. The two Pathé Passion Play films marketed on DVD (one published by Image Entertainment in 2003 and the other by Passport Video in 2004),⁵⁸ as well as the copy preserved by Gaumont-Pathé Archives and available online,⁵⁹ consist of the homogeneous 1907 edition, which is to say the best known third Pathé Passion Play film.⁶⁰

Nevertheless, there does exist a VHS copy published by Hollywood’s Attic in 1996⁶¹ which consists of a hybrid version, mixing the famous 1907 version with “our” version: here we find, scattered amongst thirteen episodes from the 1907 version, five tableaux from the Cinémathèque suisse film (*Jesus and the Doctors, Jesus and the Woman of Samaria, Christ’s Miracle with the Bread, Entrance into Jerusalem, Jesus Driving the Sellers from the Temple*). Does this mean that these five tableaux were produced later⁶² and that Pathé, during a transitional period, published parts of the 1902 version with excerpts from the 1907 version? Such a thing is quite possible, because we know in any event that the company released the first part of the 1907 version, *The Birth of Jesus*, in time for Christmas 1906, explaining that it was only the “first series” of their “admirable *Life of Jesus* film,” and remarking that “the following parts will appear later.”⁶³ Yet the heterogeneity of the film published on VHS is the result of a patching together (surely by a collector) which rules out any possibility of a concurrent edition, something demonstrated in the first instance by the hybrid nature of the

titles, which contain no fewer than four different logos⁶⁴ and one intertitle which functions not only as a “title” but also introduces commentary and dialogue, as films would do in the 1910s.⁶⁵ The anachronistic and fragmentary effect of this may be seen in that while this third Passion Play was sold in large groupings, it appears here in scattered tableaux which are taken indiscriminately from every grouping except the first to be marketed, *The Birth of Jesus*. The catalogues we have been able to consult have enabled us to establish the precise date of certain tableaux. The list of tableaux which make up the 1902 version and which are documented by the May 1903 to January 1905 catalogues, for example, are accompanied by three illustrations. We can thus assert with “certainty”⁶⁶ that the final tableau in the Swiss print, *Apotheosis*, was shot in 1902. *The Entrance into Jerusalem*, on the other hand, does not match (Fig 2.1 [a and b]) even if the difference is minute and attests to the degree to which these versions of the Passion Play imitate each other in almost literal “remakes.”

The poor image quality found in the catalogues doesn’t make this game of “spot the differences” any easier, but in the Cinémathèque suisse copy the door to the Holy City is more monumental, with broader pilasters flanked by verges, while the background is more developed, embellished with palm trees and houses. The crowd is not carrying palm fronds, as the people are quite visibly doing in the 1902 version. We thus know that the tableau in



Figure 2.1a *The Entrance into Jerusalem* documented by the May 1903 to January 1905 Pathé catalogues

the Swiss print does not date from 1902. Thanks to another illustration no researcher has ever identified, we can even go further because in this case it coincides completely with the film. The illustration appears in one of the catalogue’s monthly supplements and enables us to date the release of this scene to April 1905 under the title *The 1st Station: The Door where Jesus Was Presented to the People*.⁶⁷ This is thus an additional remake, an intermediate one, bringing the number of versions of this Pathé tableau to four⁶⁸—given that the *Entrance into Jerusalem* will be very different yet again in the 1907 and 1913 versions.

This invaluable April 1905 supplement tells us even more, because it did not publish this scene in isolation but rather incorporated it into a “film” entitled *In the Holy Land—Jerusalem* (no. 1205) which contains six tableaux, three of which, judging from their titles, appear to be remakes of scenes from the Passion Play film: 1) *Entrance into Jerusalem* (the only one for which an illustration is provided), 2) *The Mount and Garden of Olives* and 3) *The 3rd Station: Where Jesus Fell for the First Time*.⁶⁹ Nevertheless—and despite the fact that the film was purchased as a whole—the Cinémathèque suisse copy includes by all appearances the 1902 version of these two tableaux, because they are two “continuous” tableaux, each with a “sequel” shot on the same set: *Judas Kissing Jesus* and *The Miracle of St. Veronique* respectively.⁷⁰ These “continuations” (consisting of two connected tableaux) appear not to have been republished before the new official version in 1907. This enables



Figure 2.1b *The Entrance into Jerusalem* of the Swiss film archive’s print

us, therefore, with almost complete assurance, to date these four tableaux to 1902.

A further illustration from 1902 discloses an *Annunciation* that is *not* the same as the one found in the Swiss film (Fig. 2.2 [a and b]). Once again



Figure 2.2a *Annunciation* documented by the May 1903 to January 1905 Pathé catalogues

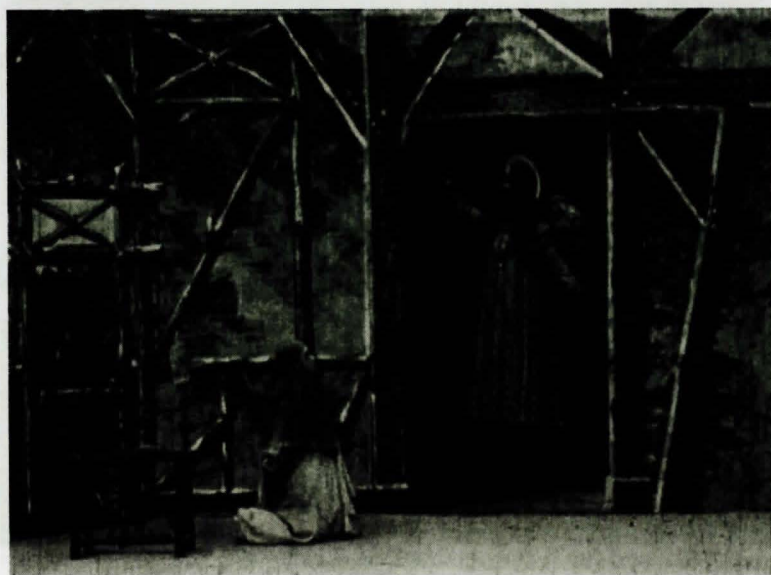


Figure 2.2b *Annunciation* of the Swiss film archive's print

the resemblances are striking: the same arrangement of the characters, the same kind of rustic set—but it really is from another shoot. The absence of off-screen space and resulting intensification of the tableau's "centripetal" dynamic (see below) might encourage the assumption that the tableau in the Swiss print is from an earlier date than that of the 1902 catalogue. Is it a remnant of the lost first version? No: that would be impossible, because no Pathé *Annunciation* existed before 1902—the 1899 Passion Play began with the Nativity. It is thus surely an intermediate version, made later than January 1905 (the last date the 1902 illustration appeared in the catalogue) but before 1907.⁷¹ Another element corroborates this hypothesis: the trick effect that occurs in this scene is a superimposition that enables the angel to appear miraculously. Unlike both the Passion Play film produced by Pathé in 1907 (which featured Segundo de Chomón's wonderfully innovative trick effects⁷²) and the one produced in 1913, this earlier film stands apart for its typically sober depiction of miraculous episodes, creating spectacle instead by means of the magic of color. As Joshua Yumibe puts it, "color functions in these [early] films [aiming at wonder] as one such technological trick—a modern form of magic that infuses the photographic image with animated color to further dazzle and move the audience."⁷³ Such color serves to enhance not only the miraculousness of the "Silent Jesus," but also the spectacle of the superimposed apparition of the Angel, whose bright rosa dress and gilded halo emerge from the blackness to illuminate the room. While this scene is thus suffused with color, the use of actual tricks elsewhere is very sparing indeed. In fact, the angel's arrival on the Mount of Olives to console Jesus is completely naturalistic: we simply see the angel appear from behind a large rock, walk towards Jesus—situated in the middle of the frame—and then leave the way he had come. This entering and exiting the frame is an example of the conception of space in the first decade of cinematography: to leave the frame was a little like disappearing by magic, as the existence of the off-screen space was denied by the composition of the image. The only other tableau to use a trick effect is the *Transfiguration of Jesus Christ*, which demonstrably dates from 1905 and which also uses superimposition enhanced by color effects: the red gown suddenly turns to a dazzling white, allowing it and the golden halo to irradiate the scene.

There are in fact two tableaux in "our" film which can be dated with certainty: the *Transfiguration* and the *Wonderful Draught of Fishes*. These two episodes (which did not exist in 1899) were announced in 1902, without indication of their length or price, because they had not yet been shot. Their continuing absence several years later is confirmed by their omission from the January 1905 catalogue. Henri Bousquet has identified their release date as September 1905, when the length of these "new" tableaux (twenty and forty meters respectively) is given in the catalogue supplement for that month.⁷⁴ This matches perfectly with what we can see in the colored tableaux under discussion here, for which we know not only the year but also the month of their release.

Two other tableaux, *Jesus Walking on the Sea* and *Lazarus Raised to Life*, were announced in 1902 with no length given and were still not completed by September 1905.⁷⁵ Gaudreault and Gauthier allow that they may never have been released; in any event, they are not a part of the film held by the Cinémathèque suisse.⁷⁶ Was this a deadline? Georges Sadoul, who also suggests the gradual genesis of this second Pathé Passion Play, remarks that these tableaux were “made over four years,”⁷⁷ and gives a final date of the end of 1905. We will not go beyond that date either, given the explanation published by Pathé in the November-December catalogue supplement, which presents the first scenes from the “next” Passion Play (of 1907). There Pathé claims that this new version “took a year of experimentation and effort” to prepare—rhetoric which may well be overblown but which we believe to be corroborated by industrial developments at the company including especially the creation of the new studio at rue du Bois.⁷⁸ This would mean that all of Pathé’s efforts to create Passion Play tableaux from 1906 on, in particular those expended by Ferdinand Zecca (who appears to have directed both versions), concern not the version under discussion here but the following one, which entered the catalogue in 1907.

As a result, our dating hypothesis suggests that the majority of tableaux in *Life and Passion of Jesus Christ* preserved at the Cinémathèque suisse derive from the 1902 version⁷⁹ (two of these tableaux were republished in 1905, as indicated by the edge marks) and that (at least) four tableaux are from a later date, placed on the market before the end of 1905. By specifying a period (1902–5) rather than a single year, we are able to make some sense of the ways in which these versions and remakes were linked, not least by Pathé itself, to promote and continue selling the work at a later date.⁸⁰ Moreover, it enables us to highlight the autonomy of the “tableau”: the variants differ because, in particular, Pathé deferred the release of certain episodes, which were sold as supplements.

THE TABLEAU AESTHETIC

If we are to refine the dating and understanding of our film, we must adopt an aesthetic approach and join material analysis to an awareness of the staging of the tableaux, in particular through comparison with other known versions of the film. This is possible because the same scenes, taken from the Gospels (or apocryphal tradition), were shot by Pathé several times using fairly different modes of representation which function as indications of the “evolution” of the so-called “early cinema.”⁸¹ In this respect, everything confirms that the majority of tableaux in “our” Passion Play pre-date the 1907 version for in the earlier film, space is conceived in a markedly more centripetal manner.

Evidence of this can be found in the juxtaposition of two tableaux: the first shows the Three Wise Men coming to celebrate the Nativity, walking

in procession before the viewer. The second takes place in the manger as the Wise Men arrive one by one from the background converging near the child in the center of the image. They enter through the stable door—a “frame within the frame”—creating an internal “*découpage*” within the image and thereby suppressing everything that lies outside it. The composition of these two tableaux and the dynamics of the action they depict rest entirely on a layering of the depth of the “stage”: the foreground suggested in the former is linked to the background of the latter. In the 1907 version, this two-shot frontal sequence was replaced by a lateral camera movement which has drawn a great deal of attention from film historians.⁸² This camera movement accompanies the arrival of the Wise Men, thereby suturing the space of the procession to that of the Holy Family by means of a back and forth camera movement not unlike the “slipping slides” found in magic lantern projections.⁸³ The tableau in “our” Passion Play is thus markedly more autonomous than that of the later version.

The importance of a centripetal conception of space is also evident in the architecture of the set. Compared to other known Passion Play films, the tableaux here only rarely offer a glimpse of a vista receding in the background. This absence is conspicuous in the *Annunciation*: Mary enters the field of vision by way of a front door which she closes behind her, but in the 1907 version, the door is replaced by a terrace opening onto a landscape.⁸⁴ Also, in the earlier version, the archangel appears in a black recess in the wall, filling the niche, while the archangel of the later version is framed in an open space which is obstructed only when he appears. In the film preserved at the Cinémathèque suisse, the visualized part of the diegesis appears to be entirely contained within a confined space. Thus the earlier depiction of the stable is much closer to a pictorial or theatrical tradition (living manger scene) than to the cinematic desire to create a “realistic effect” by means of moving images.

One episode in the life of Christ is emblematic in this respect: the tableau which in the Swiss version is called *The Holy Family in Nazareth*. This tableau is not derived from the Gospels and does not concern the divine qualities of the Messiah, but instead shows the everyday life of the Child Jesus. In the Pathé version from 1907 (Fig. 2.3a), a tracking shot takes us



Figure 2.3a *The Holy Family in Nazareth* tracking shot of the 1907 version

from the porch of the carpenter's house with the landscape in the distance into the house furnished with a window through which a village is visible in the distance.⁸⁵ In the Cinémathèque suisse version (Fig. 2.3b), the furnishings are shown in less detail and the set lacks the two openings onto the outdoors found in the 1907 version. In each case the composition is frontal, but it is even more so in the Swiss print, in which the camera is placed in a position strictly parallel to the back wall. This frontality is foregrounded by the proliferation of horizontal lines, in particular the log, the tool cabinet and the lower part of the window recess. Significantly, the window is largely outside the frame, as if to avoid the very idea of an extension of the space of the room. Every feature of the composition contributes to the impression of a closed space with no existence beyond the boundaries of the image. This self-contained space is criss-crossed with horizontal and vertical lines oriented toward the interior (e.g., the bars in the window, a beam, a plank leaning against a wall, the door frame, etc.), while the diagonal created by the hands of Mary—seated near the center of the frame—points toward the action in the background. Unsurprisingly, just as in the 1902 version of the *Entrance into Jerusalem* (reproductions of which may be seen in the catalogues), so too in this 1905 version, the *Entrance into Jerusalem* places us within the ramparts of the city rather than showing us Jesus entering the Holy City from without: we might say that, in this film, we are “always already inside.”



Figure 2.3b *The Holy Family in Nazareth* of the Swiss film archive's print

On a more general aesthetic level, this *Life and Passion of Christ* could be described as having what we propose to call a *tableau effect*—a phrase intended to evoke the pictorial and theatrical heritage of the term “tableau” used at the time by publishers of moving pictures.⁸⁶ This expression is particularly applicable to the filmed Passion Plays, in which the autonomy of the shot and the centripetal nature of the composition and framing culminate in a staging which tends to fix movement in stasis.⁸⁷ As in *Entrance into Jerusalem*, several shots in the film open on an empty field of vision which the characters gradually enter until the “correct” arrangement is achieved. In *Entrance into Jerusalem*, the crowd gathers and takes up position on each side of the entrance to the city to await Christ's arrival. When the Messiah arrives, everyone kneels and remains in this posture of veneration while Jesus himself, with slow and solemn gestures, gradually comes to a halt, his arm raised to the sky. This stasis does not last: the crowd immediately rises and the cortege moves out of frame. Yet the tableau still has a “pregnant moment” toward which each element of the staging converges.⁸⁸ This “pausing” of the action recalls the *Life and Passion of Christ* made by the Lumière company in 1898, with the difference being that this indisputably earlier film does not show the “undoing” of the pose, because most of the shots stop at the moment when the characters come to a stop, most often in a posture of adoration. This later Pathé film, on the other hand, tends to mitigate this stasis by placing it in a sequence which shows what happened “before” and “after,” to the point of presenting several episodes in a single tableau ordered by the successive crystallization of diverse meaningful postures.

The clearest example of this may be seen in the sequence of Christ falling, then speaking to the Women of Jerusalem and finally performing the Miracle of Veronica's veil.⁸⁹ In the film, these events retain their ambivalent temporal nature as “stations” on the Way of the Cross; while they unfold continuously in the same tableau, the pausing of the narrative at these points prompts the stencil-colored version of *Jesus Sinking under His Cross* to interrupt the immobile stasis of the women crying before the outstretched arm of Christ with a title card announcing the imminent depiction of the *Miracle of St. Veronique*, in which we find a subsequent suspension of the action in turn.⁹⁰ In this case, the breaking down of the gesture into successive phases appears to call for segmentation by the (*inter*)titles.⁹¹ All these films, moreover, are marked by a fundamental religious piety and hieratic quality, both in their solemn immobility and the sacred quality of the imagery, demonstrating the extent to which the religious realm is traditionally associated with highly codified and largely static gestures.

The recurrence observed in several Passion Play films of pausing or crystallizing identical gestures (Mary presenting the Holy Child in her outstretched arms, Jesus opening his arms in the form of a cross or raising his finger to the sky, etc.) can be accounted for by the iconographic heritage associated with the christological subject. Indeed depictions of Christ are at the root of

Western art; reworked by every artistic movement in every medium, the figure of Christ can only be approached through the filter of countless references and visual codes. This hypertextual quality—or more precisely this *hypericonic* quality—assumed even greater significance at the time of early cinema “tableaux.” As André Gaudreault has shown, before it was institutionalized, “cinema” was characterized by “nodes of intermedial connections” which placed it at the crossroads of numerous “cultural series.”⁹² By adapting the life of Jesus, the editors of moving pictures situated their products in an especially dense network of cultural series made up in particular of paintings by the great masters, popular Sulpician imagery, staged Passion Plays and illustrated Bibles. Such “intermedial meshing” may be seen in the way that some of the shots of the Passion Play film preserved in the Cinémathèque suisse cultivate not merely a tableau effect, but a *tableau vivant* aesthetic.⁹³

THE APOTHEOSIS OF THE TABLEAUX VIVANTS

While various tableaux vivants can be seen in the Swiss archive's Passion Play film—*Jesus before Pilate*, for example, is based on a canvas by Mihály Munkácsy—the film draws on a special iconographic source: Gustave Doré's illustrated Bible. Published in Mame's prestigious edition in 1866, his Bible was translated and published throughout Europe and North America beginning in 1867. Disseminated from the 1880s in the *Doré Bible Gallery*—in which the text was limited to captions dwarfed by the images—Doré's Bible illustrations met with “phenomenal worldwide success”⁹⁴ and its images were incorporated into the standard religious imagery of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Although his Bible has been celebrated primarily for its realism, especially in the English-speaking world, this collection of works by Doré is marked above all by its pronounced theatricality. From the outset some French critics deplored the similarity between “tableaux” in the theatrical sense of the term and Doré's plates with their exaggerated postures and their creation of a “stage-like” space.⁹⁵

This comparison was even more apt in that the tableau vivant was one of Doré's specialties. In 1864, for example, while he was working on his Bible, he visited Napoleon III in Compiègne and arranged, for the imperial couple's entertainment, a series of tableaux vivants specifically depicting religious themes.⁹⁶ In addition to this tableau vivant aesthetic, the realism of the costumes and settings found in Doré's drawings for his Bible probably appealed to those who worked on the Pathé films, who were thus able to take advantage of the prestige and fame of Doré by means of their “guilded” referencing of his visual style.⁹⁷

This interest in Gustave Doré is clear in Pathé's *Life and Passion of Christ* (1902–05), as several tableaux appear to borrow iconographic elements from the illustrator's work. This is the case with Christ's sermonizing

gesture of the raised arm with the finger pointing toward the sky. Recurring in the “posed” moments of Passion Play film tableaux, this gesture is seen in most depictions of Jesus in Doré's Bible, beginning with his first words amongst the doctors. In addition, the silhouettes of the slender palm trees and tall buildings in an “oriental” style outlined in the background bear a strong resemblance to Doré's designs. To be persuaded of this one need only compare the horizon of Pathé's *Entrance into Jerusalem* and *Jesus Driving the Sellers from the Temple* with that of Doré's engraving, *Jesus Blessing the Children*. The clothing in both the engraving and the films has the same drape, and one sees the same spectacular pomp around the Wise Men's cortege.⁹⁸ Finally, a tableau such as *The Lord's Supper*, (Fig. 2.4 [a and b]) which unmistakably re-asserts the frontality and symmetry of the scene specifically rejected by Doré, nevertheless displays formal similarities with the engravings in his Bible, as seen in the arrangement of the guests, the Ionic colonnades and the ornamental chandelier.

One might suppose, of course, that Pathé's producers were merely taking up iconographic motifs codified before Doré, rather than directly borrowing from him. Nevertheless, two “tableaux vivants” in the strict sense of the term attest to the *Life and Passion of Christ's* specific dependence on Doré's Bible in constituting exact reproductions: *At the Wedding Feast* and *The Resurrection*.

The Wedding at Cana tableau in the Pathé film (Fig. 2.5a) is a static composition which atypically decenters Jesus in the background to the left. With the immobile crowd before him as he solemnly raises his arm, the composition is animated only by a servant, busy filling the jars. At the moment when the water is turned into wine, the crowd, moving as a perfectly choreographed group, mimes successively their witnessing of the miracle, their impassioned astonishment and their prostration before the miracle worker, who holds his pose until the end of the shot. While none of these static shots corresponds exactly to the moment recorded in Doré's engraving of *The Marriage in Cana* (Fig. 2.5b),⁹⁹ it appears that the film explored the iconographic reference not so much to impart movement to the episode as to depict it in the form of a tableau vivant, giving the scene a properly hieratic flavor.

With *The Resurrection*, the principle appears to be the reverse: the film draws on Doré's work to better depict a continuous action, so much so that the decor copied from the engraving becomes the backdrop for three successive tableaux: *Placing him in the Tomb*, *The Resurrection* and *The Angel and the Holy Women*. Set against a backdrop which depicts an intermediary space between the tomb and the outside—a concrete “passage” between the world of the living and that of the dead—each of the tableaux opens and closes with a static shot and shows a complete movement (Fig. 2.6a–c). The first tableau begins with an empty space, into which the characters bring the body of Christ, seal the entrance to the Tomb and depart, while the soldiers



Figure 2.4a Gustave Doré, *The Last Supper* [illustration of the Bible], 1866



Figure 2.4b *The Lord's Supper* of the Swiss film archive's print

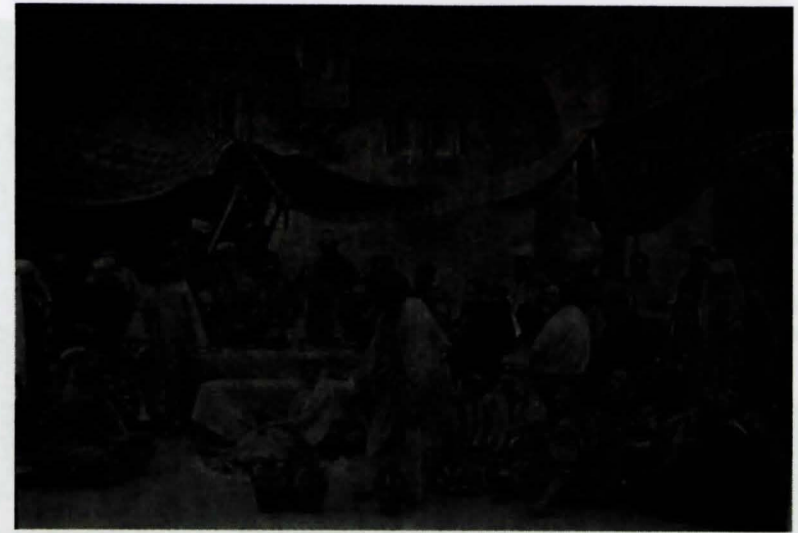


Figure 2.5a *At the Wedding Feast* of the Swiss film archive's print

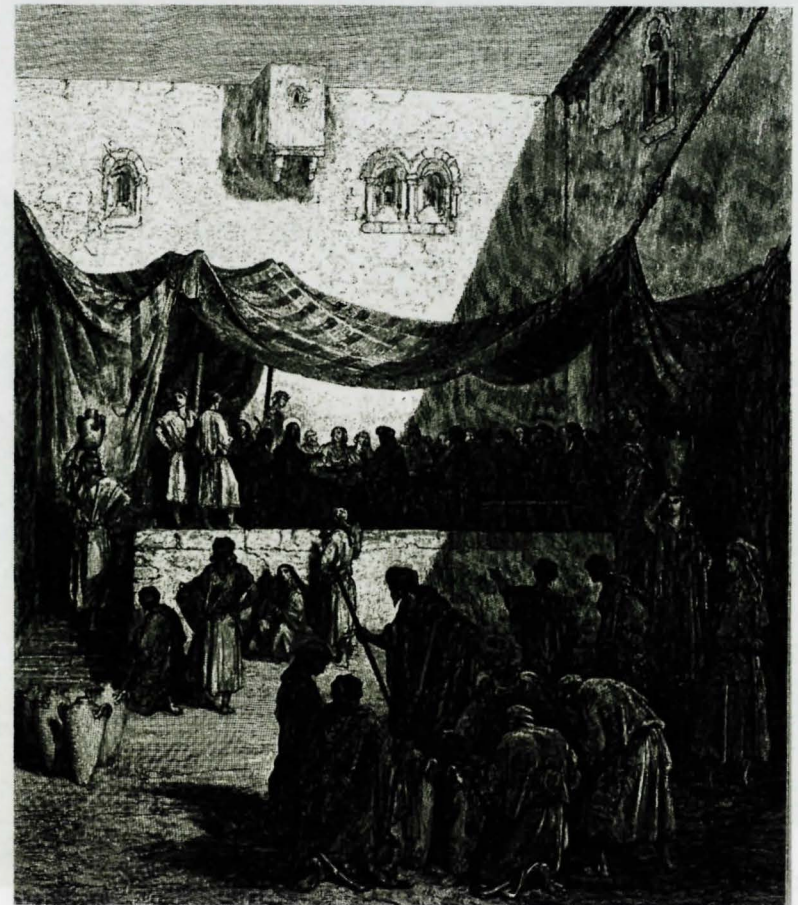
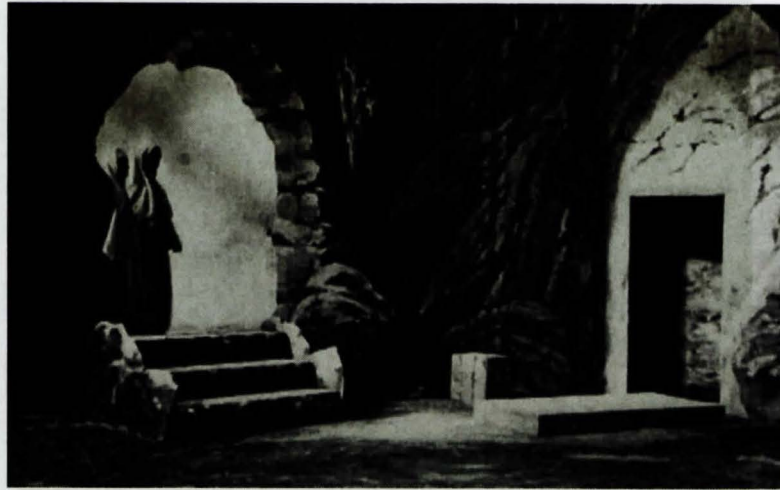
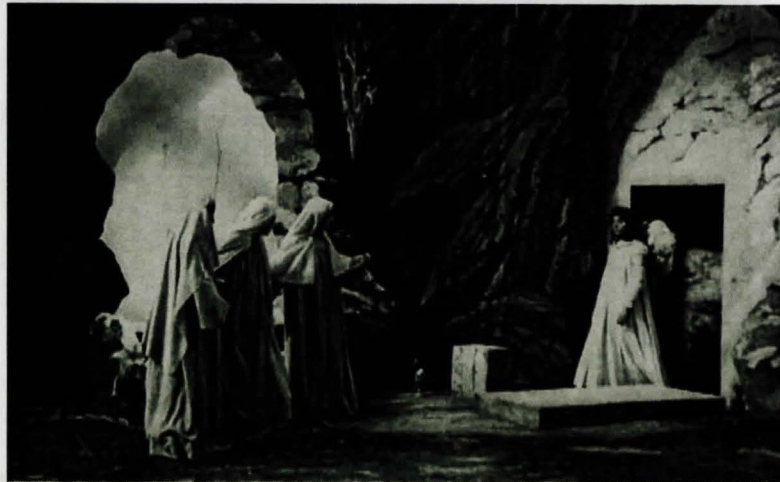


Figure 2.5b Gustave Doré, *The Marriage in Cana* [illustration of the Bible], 1866

and Mary Magdalene become immobile after assuming their positions to guard the tomb or pray. The Resurrection too is conveyed by a movement of entering and exiting the field of vision: an angel arrives and opens the sepulchre, and the risen Christ leaves and walks toward the light while the others remain motionless in the presence of this miracle. Finally, the Holy Women enter the empty tomb in order to see the wonder for themselves and, after a sign from the angel, leave the tomb to spread the Good News. In this case, filming Doré's *The Resurrection* (Fig. 2.6d) thus consisted of deploying the movement suggested by the pregnant moment of the illustration in every



(a)



(b)



(c)

Figure 2.6a-c *The Angel and the Holy Women* of the Swiss film archive's print

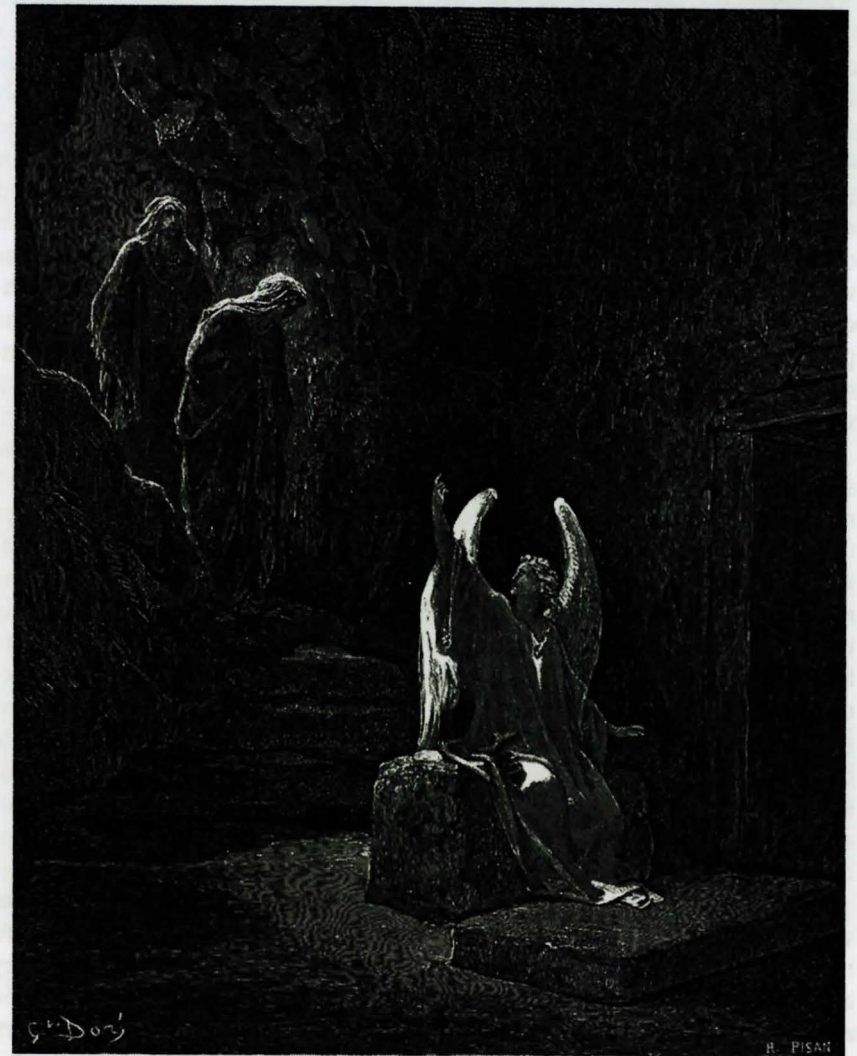


Figure 2.6d Gustave Doré, *The Resurrection* [illustration of the Bible], 1866

visual and narrative phase, while at the same time preserving the frontality and unity of the tableaux, whose limits are *arrested*, both spatially and temporally.¹⁰⁰ The movements of the actors are nevertheless organized around solemn *poses* (which are also *pauses*), the most evident of which freezes the astonishment of the guards and of Mary Magdalene when Jesus appears. While they do not replicate Doré's original composition exactly, these static shots magnify the hieratic quality of the images, with the filmic tableau taking on the appearance of a tableau vivant.

In addition to the two film copies we have discussed here, the Cinéma suisse holds two postcards that were among the promotional materials associated with the *Life and Passion of Christ*.¹⁰¹ In fact, these two images are exact depictions of the two tableaux based on Gustave Doré's model (Fig. 2.7 [a and b]).¹⁰² While their composition and arrangement are slightly different from the frames, the transformation of these scene stills into printed postcards, confirms their identification with Doré's own printed illustrations, while at the same time forming part of a new cultural series. Of course, these photographs taken on the set document a tableau vivant staged apart from the recording of the film. However, this autonomous exhibition of the pose, even if it is just a stage in the photographic reproduction of the work, is suggestive of the tableaux vivants Doré arranged in nineteenth-century salons. Given that the essence of the tableau vivant resides in the play of references, we might suggest that this Passion Play film and its commercial spin-offs offered an ideal opportunity to test such a practice in a variety of ways.

Our study has enabled us to highlight the extent to which *Life and Passion of Christ*, released by Pathé between 1902 and 1905, is a "palimpsest" made up of heterogeneous tableaux. It is thus not dissimilar in some ways to the hybrid Passion print preserved at the MOMA and discussed several years ago by Tom Gunning as an apt illustration of "the nature of the text in the history of early cinema."¹⁰³ Pathé's tableaux, remade regularly in successive versions, were freely compiled in innumerable ways before being eliminated, repeated or shortened over the course of many projections (and through damage suffered by the print). As we have demonstrated in our discussion of the various senses of the word "tableau," this filmic hybridity was also reinforced at the aesthetic level, through the density of iconographic intertextual references: each tableau offers a recycling of pre-existing imagery, taking its place in an intermedial network which includes other cultural series.

In the case of Doré's Bible, his engravings gave rise to a series of images which—thanks to technologies of mass reproduction¹⁰⁴—are much closer to the magic lantern slide and to cinematographic moving pictures than they are to unique and "auratic" paintings.¹⁰⁵ As the postcards have shown, the recycling of these images in Pathé's film set in motion "spin-off" imagery which in turn inspired new variations on these centuries-old iconographic



(a)



(b)

Figure 2.7a–b Promotional postcards of the *Life and Passion of Christ* preserved at the Swiss film archive

episodes across various cultural series. In this study, early cinema's rich iconographic and narrative relations with earlier practices have been illustrated by the variations and intermedial connections of two copies of the "same" emblematic early *Jesus film*. What it suggests is that the origins of early cinematic representations of Christ are thus not, in the end, all that cinematic.

Translated by Timothy Barnard

NOTES

1. This text is a revised and expanded version of an article published in French under the title "*Vie et Passion de Jésus Christ (Pathé, 1902–1905): hétérogénéité des 'tableaux,' déclinaison des motifs,*" *1895: Revue d'histoire du cinéma* 60 (Spring 2010): 32–63. This revision was necessary because, nearly thirty years after Riccardo Redi, it is still possible to concur with him that, as concerns attempts to date the Pathé Passion Plays, "the research that [we] have undertaken [these past few years] is far from finished. Each day new materials arrive and [we are] forced to correct [our] hypotheses." (Riccardo Redi, "La passion Pathé, de Ferdinand Zecca, problème de datation," in *Les Premiers ans du cinéma français*, ed. Pierre Guibbert [Perpignan: Institut Jean Vigo, 1985], 16). In the event, the new materials we had at our disposal and which enabled us to update this article come from Pathé editorial material archived at the Bibliothèque Nationale de France, the Bibliothèque du Film and, especially, at GRAFICS (Groupe de recherche sur l'avènement et la formation des institutions cinématographique et scénique, Montreal). We would like to thank André Gaudreault for providing us with access to the GRAFICS collection of Pathé catalogues.
2. The film was screened (on a DVD transfer) with commentary by Alain Boillat (available at www.unil.ch/usagesdejesus/page67722.html) during the "Jésus en représentations" conference held at the Cinémathèque suisse in Lausanne from May 7–9, 2009. This project received financial assistance from the Swiss National Science Foundation (SNSF) and was led by Alain Boillat, Pierre Gisler, Jean Kaempfer and Philippe Kaenel. Valentine Robert was project assistant, in charge of the film section. See www.unil.ch/jesus.
3. We were able to consult the two 35mm nitrate copies of this film on January 13 and 14, 2010 at the Cinémathèque suisse—national film archive (the facilities in Penthaz) on a flatbed editing table with a ground-glass screen. Our warm thanks to Frédéric Maire (director of the Cinémathèque suisse) and Caroline Neeser (director of its collections) for providing us with access to these copies, and to Carole Delessert (curator-restorer) for supervising our viewing and for the useful information she provided about the material aspects of these works. The images included here appear courtesy of the Cinémathèque suisse national film archive. The colored copy has since been restored by Bologna's "*l'immagine ritrovata*" film restoration and preservation laboratory.
4. On the dynamic of the production and standardization of these *Lives of Jesus* in early cinema see Valentine Robert, "Les Passions filmées: des codes en appropriation, un cinéma en canonisation," in *The Film Canon/Il canone cinematografico*, eds. Pietro Bianchi, Giulio Bursi and Simone Venturini (Udine: Forum, 2011), 371–79.
5. Since the work of Noël Burch we have been aware of the considerable role these films played in the process of rendering the linearity of the filmic signifier, in particular because of their peculiar narrative ambition, resulting from

- the fact that the Gospel story they tell is so well known to the majority of viewers. See Noël Burch, "Passions and Chases—A Certain Linearisation," in *Life to Those Shadows*, ed. and trans. Ben Brewster (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990), 143–61.
6. Identifying Pathé Passion Plays is indeed particularly complex. Ben Brewster and Lea Jacobs, analyzing one film preserved by the British National Film and Television Archive under the title *Vita e passione di Cristo* (1906), and another called *The Life of Jesus Christ* (supposed to be dated 1913) believe that aspects of the former film place it around 1902, while they date the latter to 1907. (Ben Brewster and Lea Jacobs, *Theater to Cinema: Stage Pictorialism and the Early Feature Film* [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997], 49.) Paolo Cherchi Usai, after screening a copy preserved at the Museum of Modern Art, remarked that it contained a patchwork of elements from 1902, 1907 and 1913. (*Silent Cinema: An Introduction* [London: British Film Institute, 2000], 141.) These difficulties in identifying works are often heightened by mistakes in recent filmographies. In the filmography published in an issue of the journal *1895* devoted to the Film d'art (1895 56 [December 2008]: 359), which the authors describe from the outset as "having no pretensions to be without error," the Archives du Film of the Centre National de Cinématographie reproduces a frame supposedly taken from *Jésus de Nazareth* (André Calmettes and Henri Desfontaine, 1911), whereas it comes from the Pathé film we discuss here.
 7. We will retain here the French word "tableau" (plural "tableaux") to describe these "scenes" or "views," despite that fact that during this period, "tableaux" are rendered as "pictures" in the English-language Pathé catalogues. This is hardly surprising in view of the fact that these latter catalogues were translated quite literally and sometimes erroneously from the French catalogues in the company's branch office in London. The description of the film *Life and Passion of Christ* thus announces that "this series comprises 32 pictures," listed in the following terms: "1st picture: *The Annunciation*/2nd picture: *The strange star*," etc. The polysemy of the word "picture,"—which today stands for the entire film—fails to convey the fragmentation of the complete film and does not encompass the reference to pictorial and theatrical "tableaux" connoted by the French term at the time. Accordingly, we will not use the terminology of "pictures." English-language scholars today employ the French terms to preserve these connotations and what they can tell us about the conception of *mise en scène* by early film companies such as Pathé Frères. (See the article "Editing: Tableau Style" in *Encyclopedia of Early Cinema* [London and New York: Routledge, 2005], 209–10 and all the English translations of the articles by André Gaudreault which examine this question.) We would add, finally, that Pathé's use of the term "tableau" in French at the time has more than one meaning: on certain pages of the catalogue it is a visual unit (a shot or a set) and on other pages a dramatic unit (part of the action, segmented even if it is unfolding in continuity on the same set). We will return to these questions over the course of the present study, because the Passion Play film we examine here illustrates this ambiguity.
 8. André Gaudreault, *Film and Attraction: From Kinematography to Cinema*, trans. Timothy Barnard (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2011 [2008]), 63.
 9. The methodological questions arising from the identification, dating and description of films from the early cinema have been addressed specifically in relation to Pathé in: *Pathé 1900: Fragments d'une filmographie analytique du cinéma des premiers temps*, ed. André Gaudreault (Sainte Foy and Paris: Presses de l'Université Laval/Presses de la Sorbonne Nouvelle, 1993).

10. In a discussion of the early cinema lecturer, Alain Boillat, *Du bonimenteur à la voix-over: Voix-attraction et voix-narration au cinéma* [Lausanne: Antipodes, 2007], 32–38 and 99–107, refers to the theses of the medievalist Paul Zumthor, which he proposes to apply to any unstable phenomenon of the film show, in particular with respect to its sound. (Cf. also Germain Lacasse, *Le Bonimenteur de vues animées: Le cinéma "muet" entre tradition et modernité* [Quebec City/Paris: Nota Bene/Méridiens Klincksieck, 2000], 128–31). Naturally, the principle of “untouched by human hands” associated with mechanical duplication (not only when recording the image but also when making copies of the film) considerably mitigates the degree of error arising from inattention which the philologist Zumthor attributes to copyists in the Middle Ages.
11. Bernard Cerquiglini, *In Praise of the Variant: A Critical History of Philology*, trans. Betsy Wing (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999), 51.
12. *Ibid.*, 57. The abandonment of the question of the “first hand” arises from the widespread rejection of the anachronistic application of the concept of “author” to medieval literature. The same can be said of early films, which for the most part were not signed. To extend the parallel, we might note that the term “palimpsest,” used by philologists to describe certain material signs of rewriting, is used to significant effect by Tom Gunning in his discussion of the Passion Plays. (See Tom Gunning, “Passion Play as Palimpsest: The Nature of the Text in the History of Early Cinema,” in *Une invention du diable? Cinéma des premiers temps et religion*, eds. Roland Cosandey, André Gaudreault and Tom Gunning [Sainte-Foy/Lausanne: Presses universitaires de Laval/Payot Lausanne, 1992], 102–11.) Examining the “Frankensteinian” genesis of a Museum of Modern Art copy, the product of at least three different versions, Gunning was one of the first to emphasize the heterogeneous nature of the Passion Play films and the “mix and match” use of their tableaux. See now also, David J. Shepherd, “Prolonging ‘The Life of Moses’: Spectacle and Story in the Early Cinema” in *Images of the Word: Hollywood’s Bible and Beyond*, ed. David J. Shepherd (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2008), 11–38.
13. Charles Musser, “The Nickelodeon Era Begins,” in *Early Cinema: Space, Frame, Narrative*, ed. Thomas Elsaesser (London: British Film Institute, 1990), 256.
14. Laurent Le Forestier, *Aux sources de l’industrie du cinéma: Le modèle Pathé, 1905–1908* (Paris: L’Harmattan, 2006), 57–58.
15. Thomas Elsaesser, “La notion de genre et le film comme produit ‘semi-fini’: l’exemple de *Weihnachtsglocken* de Franz Hofer (1914),” 1895 50 (December 2006): 67–86.
16. André Gaudreault and Philippe Gauthier, “De la nouveauté des Passions filmées du cinéma des premiers temps. Ou: comment faire du neuf avec du vieux . . .,” in *Jésus en représentations*, eds. Alain Boillat, Jean Kaempfer and Philippe Kaenel (Paris: Infolio, 2011), 176.
17. To accompany their Passion Plays of 1906 and 1907 respectively, Gaumont and Pathé both published very high-quality booklets (Gaumont described theirs as a “special illustrated artistic booklet”) providing each tableau with a narrative description based on the Gospels. While these brochures bear no signs of orality and appear closer to illustrated Bibles than to lecturers’ texts, they were explicitly intended for lecturers, as the *Pathé Catalogue* ([January] 1907: 245) makes clear: “To facilitate showing these scenes [from *La Vie et Passion de N.S.J.C.*], we have prepared a very elaborate text which should be read alongside the screening. These narratives match the action and convey the subjects particularly well to create a true moving-picture history of the life of Christ.” For more on this phenomenon in Zecca’s 1907 film for Pathé

- see Friesen, p. 79 in this volume and for discussion of the practice in relation to other biblical films of the silent era, see David J. Shepherd, *The Bible on Silent Film: Spectacle, Story and Scripture in the Early Cinema* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 30–31, 45–60, 91–94. For a discussion of issues around quoting and typography in these documents cf. also Valentine Robert, “Le Verbe en intertitre, l’Icône en photogramme: citations canoniques dans le cinéma muet,” in *Écritures et réécritures*, eds. Claire Clivaz, Corina Combet-Galland, Jean-Daniel Macchi and Christophe Nihan [Leuven: Peeters, 2012], 529–31).
18. Their article quoted above provides a detailed survey of these different versions, based on the catalogues that the Pathé company distributed to exhibitors to sell their “vues animées.”
19. For more on the various principles of textual philology (in a medieval context), see Pascale Bourgain and Françoise Vieliard, *Conseils pour l’édition des textes médiévaux. Fascicule III: Les textes littéraires* (Paris: École nationale des chartes, 2002), 9–26; Frédéric Duval, “La philologie française, pragmatique avant tout? L’édition de textes médiévaux français en France,” in *Pratiques philologiques en Europe*, ed. Frédéric Duval (Paris: Ecole des chartes, 2006), 115–50. Joseph Bédier became a leading figure in this field in the 1930s by developing a method which consisted of working with a sole manuscript rather than producing a patchwork text which may never have existed.
20. Laurent Le Forestier, “La version réalisateur comme attraction des productions DVD,” *Théorème* 11 (2008): 73.
21. See Sebastiano Timpanaro, *The Genesis of Lachmann’s Method*, trans. Glenn W. Most (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005).
22. For the increasing awareness of the complexity of any quest for the original text of the Greek New Testament see, e.g., E. Jay Epp, “The Multivalence Of The Term ‘Original Text’ In New Testament Textual Criticism,” *Harvard Theological Review* 92, no. 3 (1999): 245–81.
23. The original intention of the organizers of the first Domitor conference, held in Quebec in 1990, was to devote this international gathering to Passion Plays alone (although in the end, it examined the relations between early cinema and religion in a more general sense).
24. Our discussion here includes salient elements of the exhaustive information relating to each tableau and film title provided in an appendix (pp. 56–63) to the original version of this article published in the French periodical 1895 (see n.1 above).
25. Among these thirty-two tableaux, four were already announced but not yet available. They were to be shot and marketed in the coming years, but we know the actual release dates (September 1905) of only two of them.
26. For more on this film, see Brant, pp. 158–78 in this volume.
27. For more on the 1907 and 1913 films, see Friesen, pp. 78–97 and Brant, pp. 158–78, respectively, in this volume. Cf. also Emmanuelle Toulet, “La Passione Pathé del 1913,” *Immagine: Note di storia del cinema* 4, no. 1 (Winter 1985): 4–15.
28. Gaudreault and Gauthier, “De la nouveauté des Passions,” 185.
29. The 1899 version is poorly documented. The remaining archive material is hard to identify and difficult to attribute with certainty to particular production companies. The detailed description of the sixteen tableaux in the 1900 Pathé Catalogue (Paris, pp. 53–57) is very useful but doesn’t enable us to be certain that the film really was a purely independent production of Pathé and not a supplemented version of Hator’s Lumière’s Passion of the sort Gaumont appears to have been selling.

30. Without counting the addition of determiners or the stabilization of variants, there are six title changes in sixteen tableaux, often indicating changes of content. In 1899, the tableau *Chemin de la Croix* (*Way of the Cross*), for example, condensed several stages of the journey to Calvary into *Jésus succombe sous sa croix* (*Jesus sinking under His Cross*). *Flagellation et couronnement d'épines* (*Scourging and Crowning with Thorns*, 1899) became simply *La Flagellation* (*Scourging Jesus*), from which the crowning was of necessity removed, because it became the subject of a new autonomous tableau.
31. Beginning with its first version of the Passion Play, Pathé offered "smaller series" in order to "enable [its] customers to have a complete set" (of nine of the sixteen tableaux in 1899 or twelve or twenty of the thirty-two tableaux in 1902) containing "the most interesting and necessary scenes" (*Pathé Catalogue* [May 1903], 95). In 1903, some tableaux, such as *The Lord's Supper* and *Jesus Driving the Sellers from the Temple*, retained their original titles, but were suddenly declared essential, recommended in every series (of thirty-two, twenty and twelve tableaux), whereas they were not even included in the selective series in 1899. That these tableaux were newly-filmed would appear to be the most likely explanation for their reclassification.
32. Gaudreault and Gauthier, "De la nouveauté des Passions," hypothesize that Pathé might have inflated the length by means of "some sort of subterfuge (for example by stretching the length of the strip of film on which the tableau's title appeared) in order to raise the sale price." But, as we will discuss below, our research has revealed that Pathé only began to include the titles of its tableaux on film stock after May 1903, in the form of 1.5-meter strips of film delivered apart from the film and not counted in its length. The lengthening thus necessarily involved re-shooting the scene.
33. Gaudreault gives the example of the 1903 film *The Magical Hen* (*La Poule merveilleuse*), which Pathé "remade" in 1905 under the title *The Phenomenal Hen* (*La Poule phénomène*) (*Pathé 1900*, op. cit., 46). Laurent Le Forestier examines two versions of the 1905 film *Le Rêve à la lune* ("Mise en scène et mode de production: le cas du *Rêve à la Lune*," 1895 21 [December 1996]: 65–72).
34. *Pathé Catalogue* (March 1902, no. 4, "scènes à grand spectacle"), 27. This notice reappeared in the editions of 1903, 1904, 1905, etc.
35. Riccardo Redi, "La passion Pathé," 169.
36. This print is indexed as follows: [*Life and Passion of Christ*], no. CS 1944–0351–0001 (compilation of 1944–0351 + 1944–0352 + 1944–0353), silent, German-language intertitles, black and white colored by stencil ("stencil" does not necessarily mean a mechanical procedure; see our discussion of this elsewhere in the present text). It was deposited in the Basel film archives in 1944, which later became the Cinémathèque suisse. (On the history of this institution, see François Albera, "Langlois à Lausanne!" in *Cinéma CH: Réception, esthétique, histoire*, eds., Alain Boillat, Philipp Brunner and Barbara Flückiger [Marburg: Schüren, 2008], 203–20.)
37. [*Life and Passion of Christ*] no. CS 1992–2169–0001, Ganz deposit, silent, French-language intertitles, black and white with tinting.
38. With the exception of a single tableau, *The Flight into Egypt* (an episode not found in the color copy), all the tableaux in the black-and-white print recur in the color print.
39. This phenomenon, which lets us presume that the copies have an identical genealogy, occurs in the tableau of *Jesus driving the Sellers from the Temple* (colored print, reel two, fifteenth tableau, frames 58–59/black-and-white print, reel one, second tableau, frames 78–79).

40. There is a considerably greater number of joins in the colored print (in the form of tiny jumps of about five frames, often in the same tableau), which would explain in part why the print with the most tableau is not the longer of the two. The reason for these additional joins may be the "added value" that color gave the product, some of whose fragments we might well imagine interested film buffs or collectors. It is thus unsurprising to find a significant gap at the very moment when Saint Veronica turns towards the viewer to show Christ's face on the shroud in a compelling, exhibitionist gesture whose significance is almost liturgical. Furthermore, in several early cinema Passion Plays reputed to be later than this one, this iconic moment is made autonomous by means of a close-up cutaway. See Valentine Robert, "Acheiro-poïétique du cinéma: le Christ révélé par l'écran," in *Jésus en représentations. De la Belle Époque à la postmodernité*, eds. Alain Boillat, Jean Kaempfer and Philippe Kaenel (Gollion: Infolio, 2011), 367–97.
41. We base this view both on the opinion of Laurent Le Forestier and Laurent Mannoni, to whom we sent several photographs of film frames, and on the information found in the volume *Il Cinema ritrovato: Teoria e metodologia del restauro cinematografico*, eds. Gian Luca Farinelli and Nicola Mazzanti (Bologna: Grafis, 1994), 53–56.
42. Laurent Le Forestier, *Aux sources de l'industrie*, 150.
43. See the remarks by Elizabeth Thuillier in Laurent Mannoni and Donata Pesenti Campagnoni, *Lanterne magique et film peint: 400 ans de cinéma* (Paris: La Martinière/Cinémathèque française, 2009), 258; and by Germaine Berger in "Colour by Stencil: Germaine Berger and Pathécolor," an interview by Jorge Dana translated by Niki Kolaitis, *Film History* 21, no. 2 (2009): 180–83.
44. The edges of the black-and-white print are unmarked except for a single tableau, *The Flight into Egypt*, which is the one tableau not found in the color copy. It is marked "Pathé Frères Paris," but using a different type than that found in the color copy and with cut-out perforations.
45. To facilitate the reading of this article, we provide the English-language titles of tableaux, taken from English-language Pathé catalogues, but making the use of capital letters consistent.
46. Paolo Cherchi Usai, *Silent Cinema*, 191.
47. *Pathé Catalogue* ([January] 1905): 12 (emphasis in the original) for this English version. The notice was published in French in the Pathé catalogue of August 1904, 12.
48. *Pathé Catalogue* (May 1903): 12.
49. So far as we can tell, this list of "Titles Announces," [*sic*] (*Pathé Catalogue* [January 1905]: 19), which took the form of five-meter film strips, appears for the first time in the same French catalogue as the distribution notice for titles on film, which is to say in August 1904 (p. 17)—although certainty is precluded by the unavailability of catalogues from May 1903 and August 1904.
50. While this phenomenon appears to become more pronounced as "narrative integration" takes hold in films and the number of shots in a film increases, note that Pathé appears to have always maintained a degree of ambiguity in its use of the word "tableau." In the same catalogues, they announce some fairy plays (such as *La Fée des Roches noires*, 1902) "in two tableaux" where the word describes a visual unity determined above all by the set and encompassing the entire action unfolding there. Others such as *Les Sept châteaux du diable* are announced "in forty tableaux" where the word describes a dramatic unity of action, with several "tableaux" taking place on the same set (there are twelve sets for forty tableaux).
51. Using this indicator, it is possible to trace the way Pathé published its titles on separate film stock, one after the other and in several languages each time (or

- in any event in French followed by English; other languages may have been handled separately, which would explain the lack of a logo and the great variations in the German titles). In this case the title sent by Pathé to the exhibitor was a little too long, "spilling over" onto three English frames.
52. André Gaudreault, *Pathé 1900*, 39–42.
 53. The scenes bearing different logos but shot at the same place are: *Jesus in the Garden of Olives* and *Judas Kissing Jesus* (which the German titles condense onto one title card); *Jesus Sinking Under His Cross* and *The Miracle of St. Veronique*; and *The Resurrection* and *the Angel and the Holy Women*.
 54. Gaudreault, *Pathé 1900*, 30.
 55. These untinted title cards with ornate white lettering are a clear sign of an exhibitor's intervention.
 56. It was a daunting challenge for Alain Boillat who assumed this role at the screening of these reels in their present state of preservation at our conference. See n.1.
 57. Riccardo Redi, "La passion Pathé," 169–70.
 58. Note that the two DVD companies incorrectly date their *Vie et Passion de Jésus Christ* to 1902–5.
 59. At www.gaumontpathearchives.com.
 60. For discussion of possible "textual" variation even in the 1907 version, see Friesen, pp. 78–97 in this volume.
 61. This is a video cassette entitled *A History of Color in Silent Film* (Burbank, CA: Hollywood's Attic, 1996), a compilation of early colored films which presents the Passion Play in these terms: "The Life of Christ (1898), color by Thunderbird, with assistance of Pathé Frères." We thus contest the date 1898 which the video company gives without reference to the source of the copy it uses. Moreover, the film has nothing to do with the remaining archive Passion Play material from 1900 or earlier. It is composed with tableaux belonging mainly to the 1907 edition, and a few from the version we affirm was reshot in 1902 and the years which immediately followed.
 62. We will argue, moreover, that these five tableaux date from 1905 and not from 1902.
 63. *Pathé Catalogue Supplement* (November–December 1906), 35–36.
 64. These logos were identified by André Gaudreault in the productions from 1902, 1904 and 1906 and in an undated Pathécolor copy of *Marie-Antoinette* believed to have been produced at a later date. Gaudreault, *Pathé 1900*, 39–42.
 65. On a title card written not in red capital letters but in white type (capital letters, small letters and quotation marks) and decorated with the logo found in the Pathécolor film we thus read: "The Baptism of Christ in the waters of the Jordan. And there came a voice from heaven, saying: 'Thou art my beloved Son: in Thee I am well pleased.'" For the fuller development of dialogue inter-titles in the "Silent Jesus" tradition see Burnette-Bletsch's discussion of *The Shadow of Nazareth*, pp. 132–57 in this volume.
 66. We borrow this term from Riccardo Redi, who believes that "among the great abundance of double or triple scenes, with changing actors and a constantly changing set, only one thing can be said with certainty: the three shots published as illustrations in the May 1903 catalogue were made in 1902–3. [And] we are certain of their existence . . . until 1905." Riccardo Redi, "La passion Pathé," 170.
 67. *Pathé Catalogue Supplement* (April 1905): 18.
 68. That this tableau cannot be a mere rerelease of an 1899 one is proved by the fact that the former was pictured in the catalogue until January 1905 as a

- prime example of the novelty and quality of the 1902 version's staging alongside two tableaux which did not exist in the earlier version.
69. It would appear that the remainder of the film consists of documentary views of Jerusalem. Note that Pathé recommended that this film be shown "with our justly renowned Passion Play" (id.).
 70. This appears to have been the first depiction of the Veronica episode within the Silent Jesus tradition; see Shepherd, pp. 71–4 in this volume for discussion of its depiction in Guy's *La Vie du Christ* (1906).
 71. Moreover, Riccardo Redi's analysis of copies of the Passion Play also finds four different *Annunciations* (Riccardo Redi, "La passion Pathé," 170).
 72. Juan-Gabriel Tharrats, *Segundo de Chomón: Un pionnier méconnu du cinéma européen* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2009), 103.
 73. Joshua Yumibe, *Moving Color: Early Film, Mass Culture, Modernism* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2012), 71.
 74. Henri Bousquet, *De Pathé Frères à Pathé cinéma: Catalogue Pathé des années 1896 à 1906* (Bures sur Yvette: H. Bousquet, 1996), 877–78.
 75. Note that this is a final argument against the notion that the second version was not a complete remake but simply a continuation of the first. Bousquet, who thought that the first version had been completed by the second, copies the length of the 1899 film, thereby "covering up" the reality found in the catalogues, which is that no length or price was assigned to *Lazarus Raised from the Dead* between 1902 and 1905 (he lists only *Jesus Walking on the Sea* as having an "unknown length"). In fact, while the *Lazarus* scene did exist in the 1899 Passion Play, the episode which took its title and code in 1902 was not made available. Pathé—never shy to market its product—thus preferred to block publication of this scene (announced but impossible to order) rather than republish it unchanged. This shows how, for Pathé, the complete re-filming of these scenes from the Passion Play appeared to be an essential condition for rereleasing them.
 76. The non-release of *Jesus Walking on the Sea* may be linked with Méliès' earlier effort. The so-called "Cinema Magician" had edited *Christ walking on the Water* in 1899 and continued to distribute it until 1905 on both sides of the Atlantic (See Méliès' catalogues edited in Paris and New York from 1899 to 1905). The "most startling effect illustrating the biblical miracle of Christ" (*Star Film Catalogue* [New York, 1903], 19) was indeed a resounding success, known to be one of (if not *the*) first superimposition in film history. It would take some time for Pathé to rise to the technical challenge of such tricks, introducing them, as we have seen, only very gradually in the various tableaux and versions of its Passion Play.
 77. Sadoul apparently argues this point on the basis of a mis-interpretation of the catalogues, seemingly taking the description of the Passion Play in March 1902 (already published in 1900 to sell the very first version) as the first instance of the marketing of the film that Zecca "began shooting in 1902" (Georges Sadoul, *Histoire générale du cinéma: Les Pionniers du cinéma 1897–1909* [Paris: Denoël, 1947], 214–16). Nevertheless, Sadoul's assertion that the tableaux of which this film was composed were produced gradually and in great numbers is the same conclusion we have arrived at and wish to confirm sixty years later.
 78. See Laurent Mannoni, "Les studios Pathé de la région parisienne, 1896–1916," in *La Firme Pathé Frères, 1896–1914*, eds. Laurent Le Forestier and Michel Marie (Paris: AFRHC, 2004), 59–84.
 79. These opinions concerning the date of 1902 correspond with that of Roland Cosandey, who took part in discussions about this film in April 2009. Cosandey,

- moreover, wrote a report following his viewing of the DVD edition, which he sent to his interlocutors ("Helvetica—Passion Pathé ou: Un plus un égale deux ou . . . un," 25 March 2009).
80. In his caption for an illustration from *The Holy Family*, Sadoul (*Histoire générale*, 215) demonstrated his awareness of the difficulty: "This tableau, said by Zecca to have been shot by himself in 1905, could be a scene from the 1907 Passion Play."—which was indeed the case.
 81. We do not intend to argue, of course, for a linear conception of film history, especially in light of the fact that the depiction of Jesus in the cinema is seen as emblematic of the persistence of practices some scholars view as "primitive." (On this topic see Charles Keil, "From the Manger to the Cross: The New Testament Narrative and the Question of Stylistic Retardation," in *Une invention du diable?*, 112–20; and the introduction, "Montage," in *Jésus en représentations*, eds. Alain Boillat et al.) The fact remains, however, that a comparison of successive versions of a Passion Play film released by the same studio reveals significant changes with respect to their figurative paradigm.
 82. Georges Sadoul, *Histoire générale*, 216; Juan-Gabriel Tharrats, *Segundo de Chomón*, 103.
 83. This "slipping" movement is even more striking in the tinted versions, because the change in color occurs precisely at the point when we see the door of the manger. On the right we see a blue tint and on the left the image is colored in red hues with a stencil as if this diegetic threshold marked a single fixed image. (Moreover, the Pathé logo appears both to the right and left of this boundary, as if to copyright two distinct tableaux.) For a discussion of the concept of "slipping slides," devised while studying the early years of the comic strip, see Alain Boillat, "La figuration du mouvement dans les dessins de presse et albums illustrés signés 'O'Galop': des images en séries (culturelles)," 1895 59 (December 2009): 22–45.
 84. Strangely enough, we find this *vista*, in part at least, in the illustration for the *Annunciation* in the catalogue from 1902 to 1905, which nevertheless precedes the Swiss archive version (see above).
 85. This set is reproduced in Georges Sadoul, *Histoire générale*, 214, and is also found amongst the illustrations for Thomas Elsaesser's article "The Presence of Pathé in Germany" in *La Firme Pathé Frères*, eds. Marie and Le Forestier, 400. Note that this is a scene still and not a frame of the film: Joseph is seen outside the house in a space which, in the film, moves off-screen when we are shown the interior of the house. This composition in the still image demonstrates a desire to highlight the coexistence of interior and exterior, which in the tableau is accomplished only by means of a camera movement.
 86. Since the eighteenth century, when a "pictorial view of the dramatic stage" arose in the French stage entertainment milieu, the concept of "tableau" has described a unit delineated by changes to the set, characterized by a dimension not only dramaturgical (such as the "act") but also visual. See Patrice Pavis, *Dictionary of the Theatre: Terms, Concepts and Analysis*, trans. Christine Shantz (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1998 [1996]), 376.
 87. Note that the category of "immobility of the actors in a tableau" (André Gaudreault, ed., *Pathé 1900*, 59) appears in the catalogue of formal peculiarities compiled by the scholars in the GRAF (Groupe de recherche et d'analyse filmographique founded after the Brighton Congress). In the body of work this group studied, which included no Pathé "religious or Biblical scenes" (to employ the classification used by the catalogue of the day), this formal quality was seen in a single case: that of the finale of *Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves* (Zecca, 1902), in which the hero is seen in "seventh heaven" after

- the appearance of a fairy in a secularized version of an episode found in the Passion Play films (the Ascension).
88. While numerous tableaux in the Swiss archive Passion Play film thus converge toward one or several stases, at times the immobility required for a superimposition makes this a technical necessity.
 89. Note that this tableau, moreover, is highly representative of the tendency of the composition to picture a position where Christ "is going to arrive," thereby dramatizing his entrance into the shot. Thus the camera opens on a fraction of the Way of the Cross bordered in advance by the crowd awaiting Jesus, rising upon his arrival like the spectators of a hill-climbing race, to borrow Alfred Jarry's expression ("La Passion considérée comme une course de côte," *Le Canard sauvage*, April 1903)!
 90. The tinted black-and-white version does not contain this fragmentation and gives the entire title of *The Miracle of St. Veronique*. The title card *Jesus Sinking under His Cross* is applied to another tableau—included untitled in the color version—which shows Christ falling on another occasion (he falls three times) and the assistance given to him by Simon of Cyrene.
 91. This breakdown of the action into stages may perhaps be the source of other differences between the intertitles of the stencil-colored version and the black-and-white version. The German version, for example, (with its tendency to condense titles onto a single card) announces in a single title both *Jesus in the Garden of Olives* and *Judas Kissing Jesus (Jesus im Oelgarten. Der Judaskuss)*, while the French version states at first only *Jesus in the Garden of Olives* and then inserts a title announcing not only *Judas Kissing Jesus* but also *The Arrest (Le Baiser de Judas. L'Arrestation de Jésus)*, as if to designate different "phases" and "stases" of the action.
 92. André Gaudreault, "Les vues cinématographiques selon Georges Méliès, ou: comment Mitry et Sadoul avaient peut-être raison d'avoir tort (même si c'est surtout Deslandes qu'il faut lire et relire) . . .," in *Georges Méliès, l'illusionniste fin de siècle?* eds. Jacques Malthête and Michel Marie (Paris: Sorbonne Nouvelle, 1997), 111–31. Gaudreault returns to these questions in his recent summary volume: *Film and Attraction: From Kinematography to Cinema* (Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 2011).
 93. The term "tableau vivant" is used to describe the imitation of an artistic composition by a group of living but immobile (or partially immobile) people. Highly fashionable in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the origins of the tableau vivant can be found specifically in liturgical living manger scenes and Passion Plays in the Middle Ages. (On this topic, see Birgit Jooss, *Lebende Bilder: Körperliche Nachahmung von Kunstwerken in der Goethezeit* [Berlin: Reimer, 1998].) The aesthetic and historical issues raised by this practice make it, in our view, an essential concept for the study of the development of filmic tableaux (see Valentine Robert, "Performing Painting: Projected Images as Living Pictures," trans. Timothy Barnard, in *Performing New Media, 1890–1915*, eds. Kaveh Askari, Scott Curtis, Frank Gray, Louis Pelletier, Tami Williams and Joshua Yumibe [London: John Libbey, 2015]: 282–92) and for the analysis of the work of certain contemporary filmmakers (see Valentine Robert, "Le tableau vivant chez Raoul Ruiz, ou la perception en extension," *Décadrages* 15 [Fall 2009]: 21–56).
 94. Philippe Kaenel, "De l'édition illustrée à la bande dessinée: réimaginer la Passion au XXe siècle," *Relief* 2, no. 3 (2008): 312. Millicent Rose accounts for this success in the following manner: "For the bourgeois nineteenth century, to possess Doré's Bible was like owning a great cycle of masterpieces, like having a copy of Giotto's Arena Chapel in the family" (Millicent Rose,

- "Introduction to the Dover Edition," in *The Doré Bible Illustrations* [New York: Dover, 1974], vii).
95. William Blanchard Jerrold documents the way in which critics, such as Jules Claretie, saw these engravings as "too theatrical." He takes up their arguments to claim, on the contrary, that Doré was a "genius," which to his mind is apparent in the way the artist dramatizes his plates in the style of "drop-scenes," intensifying the "impressive grandeur" of these "melodramatic" illustrations which "suggest blue fire and stage carpentry" (William B. Jerrold, *Life of Gustave Doré* [Detroit: Singing Tree Press, 1969 (1891)], 140).
 96. Blanche Roosevelt, *Life and Reminiscences of Gustave Doré* (New York: Cassell and Co., 1885), 251.
 97. The sequential nature of the illustrations dotting the Biblical text—something made even more obvious by the *Doré Bible Galleries*' juxtaposition of images and reduction of intervening text—may also explain the appeal of these engravings for film-makers. For more on the cinematic attraction of Doré's pictures, see Valentine Robert, "Cinema and the Work of Doré," in *Doré, Master of Imagination*, ed., Philippe Kaenel [Paris-Ottawa: Flammarion-Musée d'Orsay-National Gallery of Canada, 2014], 287–295.
 98. While the ostentatious costumes and figures (both human and animal) stand out against the same starry night setting, the film inverts this trajectory and rejects the mysterious off-screen star; here the shot is made dynamic through the centripetal and frontal logic we have already mentioned.
 99. The moment recorded comes immediately before the miracle, illustrating Lessing's definition of the "fruitful moment": Christ, whom we can barely make out in the background, has his arm stretched out in the direction of the jars (we do not know if he is commanding that the vessels be filled or if he is transforming their content), but the crowd, ranged throughout the depth of the image and depicted in a great variety of postures, has not yet noticed the miracle.
 100. Note in this respect that the film reproduces quite precisely the arrangement found in Doré's *Burial of Jesus*, but places the group in the frontal setting of the *Resurrection*, which is identical in the three consecutive tableaux. These iconographic references are typical of the way the tableau was conceived as an autonomous unit in Pathé's *Passion Play* film, as the film depicts in a single place the two activities which in Doré take place in separate spaces.
 101. On the back of these two postcards appears the following undated remark: "Cinématographes et Phonographes PATHE Frères—PARIS." (La Cinémathèque suisse has added to it in pencil the reference number of the film, 1944–0351.)
 102. Our thanks to André Chevailler, then head of the Cinémathèque suisse photo archive, for his assistance and for making these postcards available to us and reproducing them for us.
 103. Tom Gunning, "Passion Play as Palimpsest: The Nature of the Text in the History of Early Cinema."
 104. François Albera has noted the importance of the history of technology, citing in particular the example of xylography (used by Gustave Doré). Although his observations concern the secular sphere, Albera's remarks also apply to our subject of study here. Between text and illustration (represented in our case by the Gospels on one hand and by Doré's engravings and Pathé's tableaux on the other), he mentions the role played by theatrical adaptations, reflected in our case in the tableaux vivants we have already discussed: "These depictions, there can be no doubt, supply a body of images and inflect the poses adopted . . . to highlight a 'pregnant moment.'" See François Albera, "Exposition au Musée d'Orsay 'Une semaine de bonté' de Max Ernst: 'la robe déchirée du réel,'" 1895 58 (October 2009): 132.

105. This comparison is even more apt in that the coloring of moving images by hand and then by stencil is an "engraving" practice, something demonstrated in particular by the large illustrated volumes of religious scenes produced at Epinal beginning in 1811. Coloring by stencil was a central element of these volumes' popularity. On this topic, see *Imagerie populaire française*, vol. 2, *Images d'Epinal gravées sur bois*, ed. Nicole Garnier Pelle (Paris: Réunion des Musées nationaux, 1996). While we have found no trace of colored editions of Doré's Bible, we know that John Eadie's illustrated Bibles, such as the *Holy Bible* published by C&A Ross in London in 1880, and the *National Comprehensive Family Bible* published by Cassell & Co. in London, Paris and Melbourne in the 1860s and 70s, included engravings by Doré and contained several color lithographs (these editions are listed on abebooks.co.uk). In addition, it was customary to release large illustrated volumes, such as *Les Français peints par eux-mêmes*, published by Curmer in 1840, or *L'Encyclopédie d'histoire naturelle* edited by Jean-Marc Chenu in 1850–61 for Marescq in two versions: one black and white and the other colored, echoing the "editorial" practice of Pathé, which distributed "our" *Life and Passion of Christ* in two versions, one in black and white and the other in color.