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Mother Joan and Her Discontents: Ken Russell's *The Devils* (1971) and Jerzy Kawalerowicz's *Mother Joan of the Angels* (1961)

Ken Russell's infamous film of the possession by demons of a convent of Ursuline nuns in 1600s France is a *cause célèbre* of British censorship. The heated debate surrounding the making, censoring and banning of this film during the 1970s in the UK is extensively covered by Mark Kermode in, among other places, his documentary *Hell on Earth* (C4, 2002) where he uncovers the seemingly lost sequence 'The Rape of Christ'.

In this paper, however, I wish to compare Russell's *The Devils* with a less well-known version of the events at Loudon which was made in Poland a decade before: the austere, black and white *Matka Joanna od Aniołów*. I will discuss these two films in terms of their very different visual and narrative presentations of the same subject matter, but will also unite the two films through a consideration of Sigmund Freud's *The Future of an Illusion* (1927) and *Civilisation and its Discontents* (1930). These two texts explore the relationship between religion, society and power; a relationship which is crucial to both films. It is in the comparison between the two films in terms of Freud, that I hope to focus the issues in *The Devils* that may have been particularly relevant to 1970s British culture.