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AGNUS DEI

~~like~~

time

The ~~sitting~~ is the final days of the Hungarian Republic of Councils, the setting is the vast Hungarian plain, where desperate commune men are resisting the mounted forces of "white" terror. Killing by both sides is ritualistic, and observed with profound detachment by Jancsó's slow-tracking camera: as in all recent Jancsó, beautiful young women bare their breasts for ~~maximalist~~ symbolic purposes at regular intervals. This is the first film in which Jancsó makes no effort to separate metaphorical from literal ~~action~~ images, and with the result that continuity is sometimes evasive. In fact, the film is almost hermetic: most puzzling is the character of a ~~fanatical priest~~ fanatical priest, who stands between the two sides. Jancsó himself explains the film in terms of irrationality: "All over the world irrationality is spreading in an anxiety-causing way. The powers of irrationalism have been reorganized and are gaining ground in religion, nationalism and right-wing anarchy. In the larger part of the world people's participation in political and economic decisions is not ensured. Consequently they are in need of God and all forms of irrationalism."

AGNUS DEI / (EGI BARANY) 1971, Color, (35mm.) 90 min.,

Directed by Miklós Jancsó. Screenplay by Jancsó and Gyula Hernádi. Photographed by Janos Kende (Eastmancolor). With Márk Zala (priest), József Madaras (Varga), Lajos Balázsovits (Chanoine), ~~and~~ Anna Széles (Maria), and Daniel Olbrychsky (Daniel).
Distributed by Audio-Brandon Films.