

Document Citation

Title	Egi barany
Author(s)	Gene Moskowitz
Source	<i>Variety</i>
Date	
Type	review
Language	English
Pagination	
No. of Pages	2
Subjects	
Film Subjects	Egi barany (Agnus Dei), Jancsó, Miklós, 1971

Egi Barany
(Agnus Dei)
(HUNGARIAN—COLOR)

Paris, July 6.

Hungarofilm release of Mafilm Studio production. Directed by Miklos Jancso. Screenplay, Gyula Hernadi, Jancso; camera (Eastmancolor), Janos Kende. Reviewed at Palais De Chailiot, Paris, June 19, '71. Running Time: 90 MINS.

Varga Jozsef Madaras
Priest Mark Zala
Chanoine Lajos Balazovits
Maria Anna Szeles
Madeleine Jaroslava Schallerova
Daniel Daniel Olbrychsky

Magyar filmmaker Miklos Jancso has evolved a distinctive style making his films as recognizable as Jean-Luc Godard, Michelangelo Antonioni and Federico Fellini. Jancso keeps to near and far historical times with an unusual mastery of intricate but long camera movements and is more interested in a collective fresco than individual personification.

This may make it difficult for commercial chances abroad though he did well in France with his look at Hungarians caught up in the Russian Revolution in "The Red and the White," but is yet to make a dent Stateside. However, he has been noticed by buffs and critics at various film fests.

His new one is no easier than his others and perhaps goes even further in delineating the excesses of both right and left at a time of upheaval. Here he returns to 1919 when the short-lived Bela Kuhn Commune has been overthrown and Commune and rightist factions are still fighting it out in the countryside.

Killing by both sides becomes a ritual and Jancso also keeps undressing girls, either for swims or before they are executed. Intimations of Lesbianism are also there but these are sidebar tics of his that are rarely used erotically. Commune men have captured some priests and one is an epileptic hysteric given to harangues, dashing into a nearby lake and using the scriptures to preach violence. He is not killed for the effect on

the peasants, and especially the women, is feared.

One Commune man commits suicide when he sees they are being overwhelmed. It is intimated that Admiral Horthy is about to take over helped by aristocrats and the rich. Film swings back and forth between Horthy men killing peasants and the Commune coming in to kill some Horthy men then being captured and killed to a final wiping out of most of the Commune men.

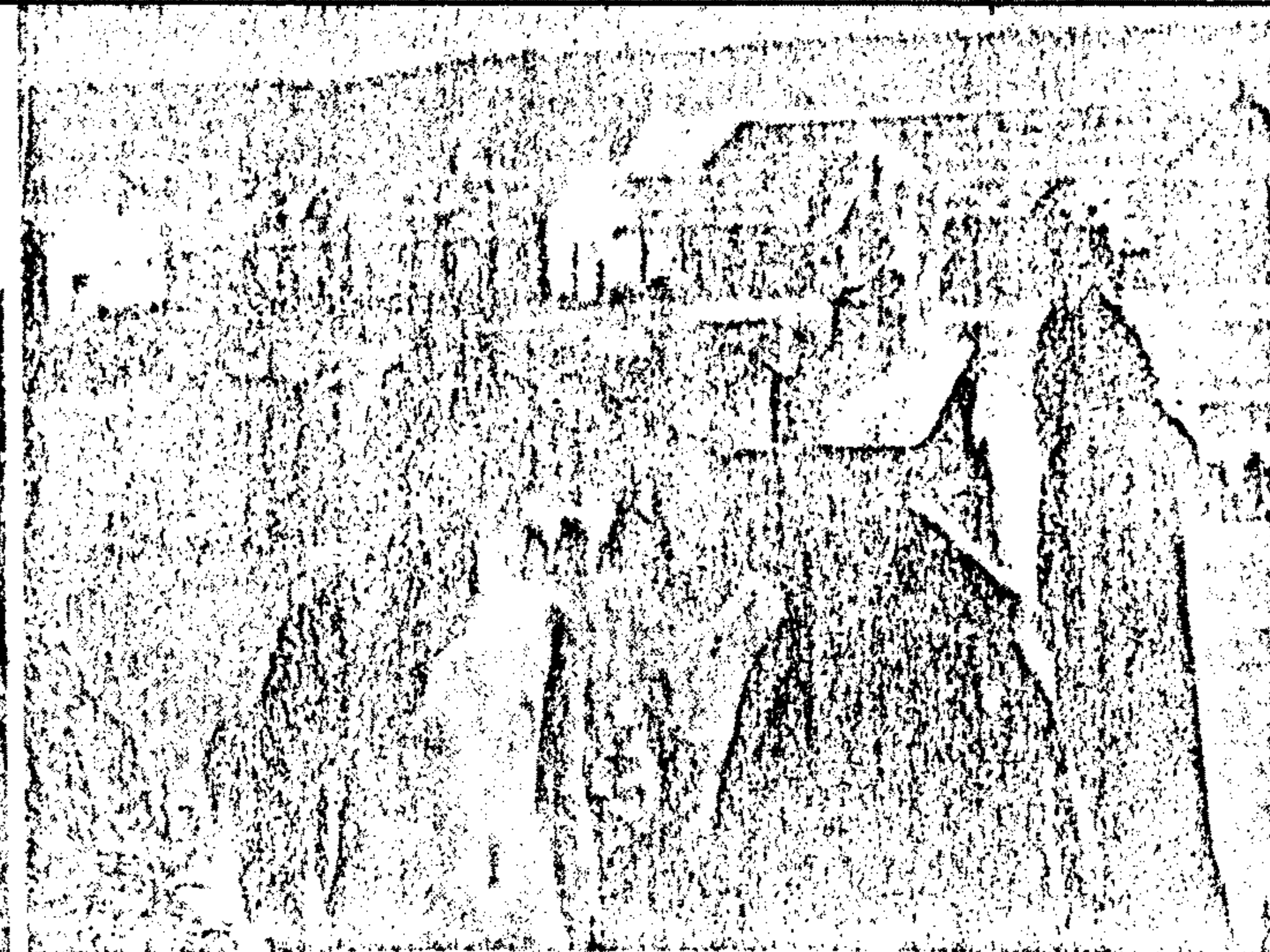
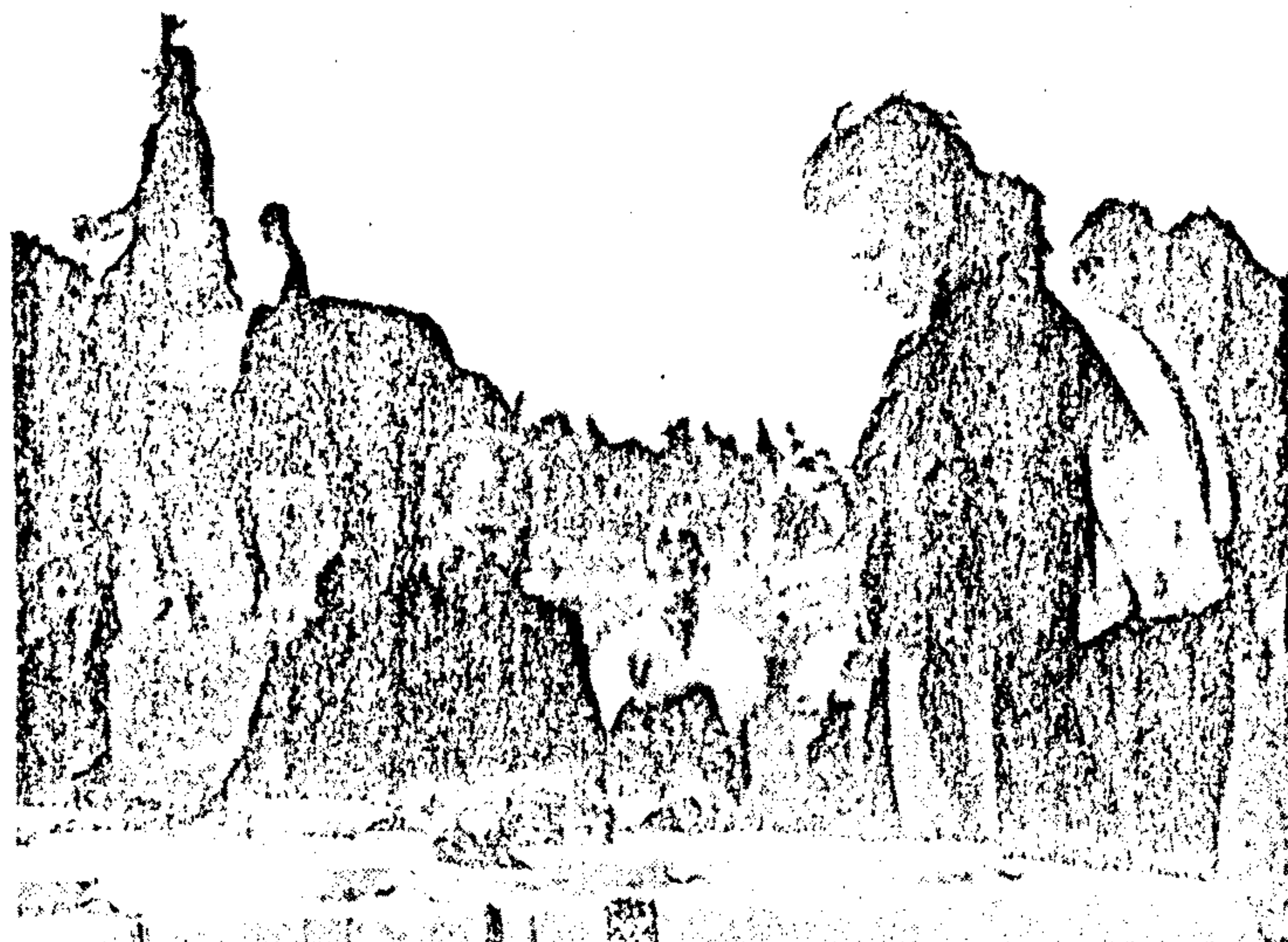
The peasants are now for the Horthy men and during a party the epileptic priest helps execute both Commune men and suspected peasants himself. He, in turn, is shot by an enigmatic, romantic young officer.

So the ritual repetition of violence, and the priests for and against each side, may lead to involuntary laughter and some excess. But Jancso's intricate but unobtrusive camera lays out this time of revolt and gives it an almost epic flair in spite of the lack of characterization and less than specific characters.

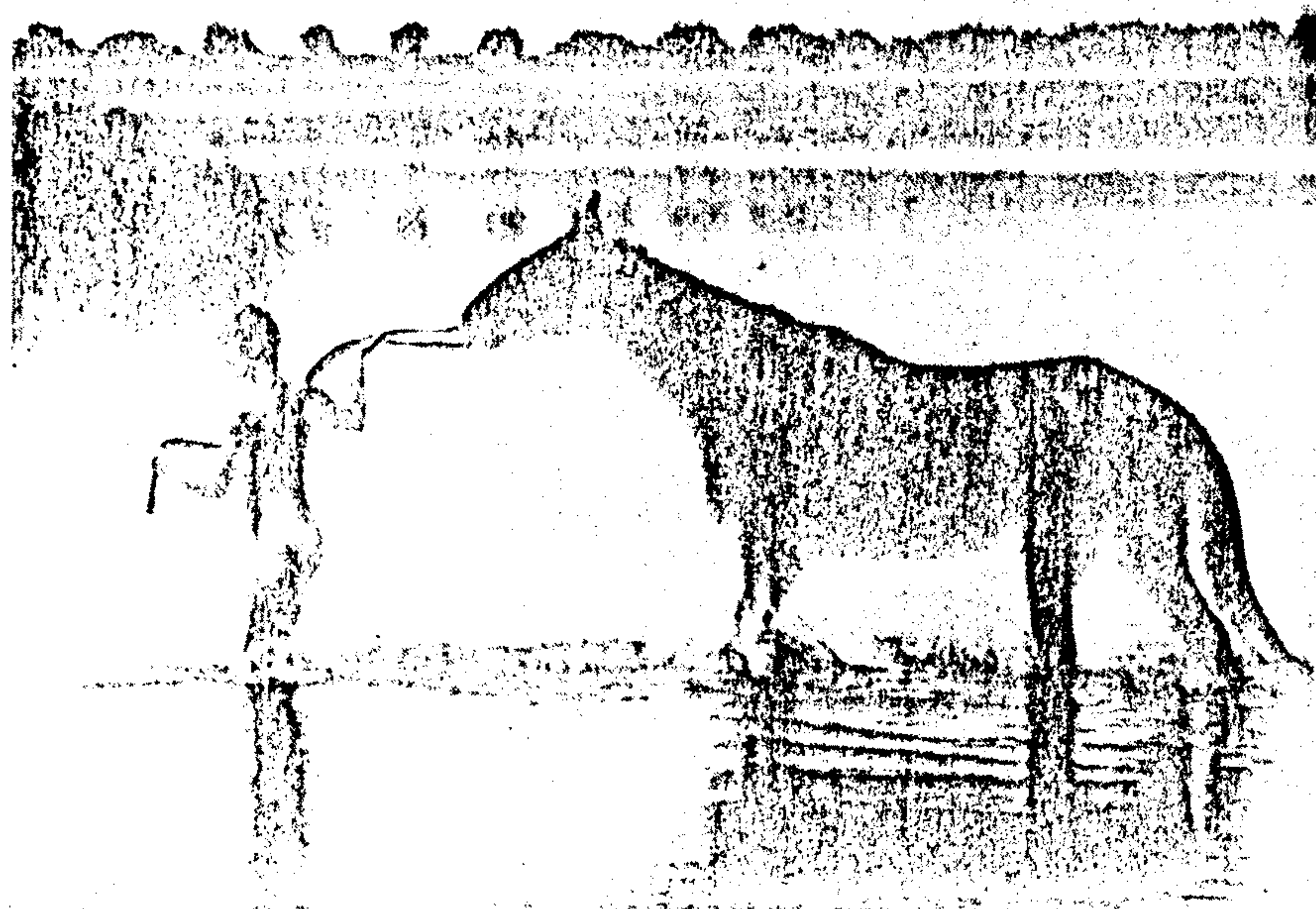
Beautifully lensed, and played with brio, the film is difficult, sometimes hermetic, but always gripping and giving insight into the terror and violence of revolutionary times that are never clear-cut or easily defined. Mayhem on both sides are shown, albeit there is some more humanity on the part of the Commune.

Jancso remains a maverick in Eastern Bloc filmmaking and is building a body of work looking into the 1848 revolt that led to police brutality and betrayal of the prisoners of each other, the Russian Revolution incidentally "The Red and the White" was a Magyar-Russo coproduction cut drastically by the Russians, the days of the Commune, the early days of the Communist takeover after the last war and the terrorists of the '30s.

This film will be part of the Hungarian showing at the coming Sorrento Fest and should get interest and the usual pros and cons though no indifference. Mosk.



Above left: the fanatical priest (Mark Zala) sits at table in a scene from Miklos Jancso's powerful "Agnes Dei" in which revolutionaries and counter-revolutionaries fear, use and finally cynically discard the fanatical 'prophet'. It is a world that murders to the accompaniment of gipsy music, feasts and military parades and prim punctilliousness sits strangely on violence. Right: another scene from this fine film which was seen at several festivals last year.



Agnes Dei: directed by Miklos Jancso. Set in August 1919, with the final days of the Hungarian Republic of Councils. A fanatical priest stands between the Reds and the Whites