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MODERNISM BETWEEN EAST AND WEST:
THE HUNGARIAN JOURNAL MA (1916-1925)
AND THE INTERNATIONAL AVANT-GARDE

DISSERTATION

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for
the Degree Doctor of Philosophy in the Graduate
School of The Ohio State University

By

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* * * * *

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1997

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ABSTRACT

The Hungarian journal Ma [Today] (Budapest 1916-1919; Vienna 1920-1925), was Eastern Europe's most visible and recognized participant in international avant-garde artistic culture in early 20th century Europe. This study evaluates the active role of Ma as crafted by its editor Lajos Kassák (1887-1967), analyzing its reception of contemporary art and theory, and its critical response to the primary issues of avant-garde culture. This study questions the prevailing methods of modern art history, founded on the study of Western European art, and predicated on creating singular stylistic classifications and narratives which proceed from one formal style to the next. Such art history is unable to incorporate the art of Ma, due to the different political and social context, reception processes and synthesizing tendencies of Eastern European avant-garde movements.

The Ma group's vision of avant-garde art was forged during the massive social and political changes occurring in Eastern Europe during the era of World War I. They created art with the goal of improving their nation, and were first challenged to integrate art into political life during Hungary's 1919 Communist regime. When that political experiment failed, Ma relocated to Vienna, and became a platform from which to participate in the ideological debates of international avant-garde art. Divided over the relationship between politics and art, and geographically and culturally separated from the
primary centers of Western European and Russian art activity, these Hungarians received and processed avant-garde art in a way different than at the center. Through their response to the Congress of Progressive Artists via De Stijl, their interpretation of Expressionism, Futurism and Cubism, and their simultaneous experimentation with Dada and Constructivism in typography and art, Ma is a document of the reception and synthesizing processes of this Hungarian group. This study culminates in an analysis of the Hungarian differentiation between International and Russian Constructivism, and Kassák's development of the Constructivist theory Képarchitektúra [Picture-architecture]. Finally, Ma is reintegrated into the avant-garde of Eastern Europe, demonstrating its artistic and ideological connections with others operating in a position on the continent between East and West.
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One does not complete a project of this scale and complexity without the assistance of a number of individuals and organizations, which I will take the opportunity to thank here.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

In 1925 El Lissitzky and Hans Arp published their famous anthology Die Kunstismen [The Isms of Art], which has subsequently been lauded as one of the earliest attempts to take stock of the art of the early twentieth century, and fashion some kind of stylistic and developmental history of its various movements. In an interesting editorial twist, the book was arranged backward chronologically, so we begin at the end with abstract film and Constructivism, the culmination point of modern art's history for Lissitzky and Arp in 1924. Full of illustrations bounded by the crisply geometric typography of Constructivism and fronted by short explanatory texts seeking to encapsulate the meaning of each of the "isms," Die Kunstismen is a tour de force in verbal succinctness and visual precision. Subsequently cited as a pioneering effort, Die Kunstismen has been followed by a long line of books and anthologies attempting to chart a history of avant-garde art in the early twentieth century. However, despite the fame of Lissitzky and Arp's effort in 1925, they were not the first two artists to attempt such an anthology. In 1922, a full three years before Die Kunstismen, László Moholy-Nagy and Lajos Kassák, two prominent members of the Hungarian avant-garde, had produced their own version of such a work entitled Új művészek könyve [The Book of New Artists] in both Hungarian and German. It began with a manifesto by Kassák, and was
followed by a number of illustrations of art works and reproductions of contemporary architecture, machinery and industrial constructions. Clearly in this book one was meant to freely associate among the illustrations, and to comprehend the interrelatedness of contemporary art and technology. Unbounded by typography, and uncontrolled by textual definitions, the book ended with Hungarian versions of constructivist compositions and the abstract film studies of Viking Eggeling and Hans Richter. The very arrangement and design of Új művészek könyve clearly demonstrates the different take that the Hungarians had on contemporary art in this period. Lissitzky and Arp in their book discerned an apogee, a culminating moment that previous movements had led up to, hence the backward arrangement. Through textual definition, numbered examples and arranged groups, they guided their readers back through the genealogy of art "isms", creating a mini-birth story in reverse. In the Hungarian book, the viewer thumbed through a far less codified and sequential presentation of various styles and movements (unlabeled), and more importantly, was urged to account for the integral role of contemporary society and technology in the development of that art through the reproductions of machines and architecture. These Hungarians declined to prophesy a culmination point for contemporary art, nor could they comprehend an explanation or definition of art that did not seriously integrate the social and technological context of contemporary life. From Kassák's opening manifesto to Eggeling and Richter's abstract film studies, the reader was to understand art as a philosophical and social mission, not a progression of stylistic movements. It is not difficult, then, to understand why Die Kunstismen has retained a pioneering role in modern art history, and Új művészek könyve has been largely forgotten. Modern art history has come to prefer stylistic definitions, clearly delineated groups, and progressive
narratives based on formalist criteria. Unfortunately for them, the Hungarians would provide none of that. In the annals of modern art history, one result has been the loss of the Hungarian presence in the context of international avant-garde art. In this case, written history is misleading. My study in essence will be an attempt to recoup that history, but more importantly, to explain how and why the Hungarians produced such a different vision of modern art in 1922.

Although Western European and even Russian avant-garde movements of the early twentieth century have attracted considerable scholarly notice since their inception, comparatively little attention has been paid to the other Europe, namely Eastern Europe,\(^1\) and the role the avant-garde played there in attempting to bridge the gap between art and life, and between the past and the future. This study aims to correct some of those omissions, and compelling argue for the importance of evaluating the active role that the Eastern European avant-garde played not just within its own territory, but also on the larger international stage. However, the point is not to simply add a footnote on yet another unfamiliar territory to the extensive literature on avant-garde art. Instead, my approach is three-fold: to chart an active and participatory Hungarian presence in the larger ideological and artistic debates within international avant-garde art; to describe a stylistic development that is not like that typical of Western European art, due to the different political and cultural context, reception processes and synthesizing tendencies of most Eastern European avant-garde movements; and, perhaps in a more subtle way, to expose and question the methods and categories of modern art history as it has been written to date, which have either excluded Eastern European material altogether, or have been unable to satisfactorily designate or
incorporate Eastern Europe's role in the larger history of international avant-garde art.

The particular vehicle for this study is the Hungarian journal Ma [Today], edited by Lajos Kassák and produced in two stages; from 1916 to 1919 in Budapest, and after forced political emigration, from 1920 to 1925 in Vienna. This journal brought the Hungarians the highest international involvement and visibility of any of the Eastern European avant-garde movements, as it interacted with the plethora of avant-garde journals being produced in Europe in the first decades of the 20th century. Although the literature on the Hungarian avant-garde involved with Ma is relatively extensive, no study has focused in depth on their most visible and vocal platform, the journal itself. This approach provides a reorientation to the subject, and necessitates a different approach to the material. With the journal as the center of study, individual artists and critics are discussed primarily in terms of their involvement with this publication. Therefore, biographical information and in-depth stylistic analyses of individual artists are not here, but are more properly available in the monographic literature. Another result of this approach is that the artist László Moholy-Nagy, the most familiar Hungarian to most readers, appears only in this study as he interacts directly with the core group around the journal; whereas the work of Lajos Kassák, editor and chief ideologue of Ma, is the primary catalyst for many of the issues to be discussed. The reorientation afforded by focusing on the journal rather than on a series of individual artists, gives us access to the public role of the Hungarian avant-garde in the larger international arena, and the processes by which that role was developed and refined in the journal's manifestos, essays and art criticism. Additionally, inasmuch as Kassák's literary and artistic work was the guiding force of the journal over a number of years, it provides a unique opportunity
to carefully trace the stylistic and ideological evolution of an Eastern European avant-garde artist as presented in a public forum. Over the course of the journal we can follow the reception and synthesis of a number of Western European avant-garde movements by Kassák and the Ma group, such as their combination of Dada and Constructivism, that can at least give us some sense of how the Eastern European avant-garde differed in substantial ways from that of Western Europe. The journal *Ma* is then, on one hand, a visual and verbal record of this alternate evolution.

To better appreciate why I choose the term "alternate", a brief discussion of Eastern Europe is in order here. It is perhaps tempting, and most usual, to define Eastern Europe in distinction to Western Europe, as if it were the tail's side of the coin, or the dark continent on the continent of Europe. For centuries less economically and industrially developed than Western Europe, regrettably a mysterious and largely unknown land to the majority of Westerners, and most recently the fringe of a hostile Soviet empire, too often Eastern Europe has only penetrated international consciousness in excessively romantic or negative terms—as the haunt of Dracula, the birthplace of World War I, or the site of recent ethnic cleansing. Although this conception of Eastern Europe does have some basis in fact (for example, the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand at Sarajevo did force the nationalistic tensions and alignments among the protagonists leading to World War I), it does little to explicate the social and historical context of this region, or help us to determine what factors do constitute substantial differences from Western European development and history. Geographically, Eastern Europe can be broadly defined as lying between the eastern boundaries of Germany and Austria, and the western border of Russia. Throughout much of their modern history, the states within this region were dominated by the large, multi-
ethnic empires of the Ottoman Turks, the Russians and the Habsburgs, which impeded these states' independent social, economic and political development. Additionally, there was little ethnic, religious or linguistic homogeneity within these states, as borders constantly fluctuated, ethnic populations were mixed, and each conquering empire imposed their own languages and religious practices on the subjugated. As a result, Eastern Europe became a patchwork of ethnic and/or linguistic groups that conformed little to the national boundaries traced on maps, a situation markedly different from that in Western Europe. To constitute a national identity, then, often took the form of maintaining the native language or religious beliefs despite pressure from above, and not necessarily appealing to a geographic sense of nation, as this was often in a state of flux, if it existed at all. Some states were more fortunate in this situation than others. The Hungarians, for example, were able to forge a dual monarchy with the Habsburgs, which afforded them some measure of self-rule, and even the power to control the Slovak and Croatian populations within their state boundaries. A single nation of Poland, on the other hand, simply ceased to exist on the map for over a hundred years, not to mention the Czech lands and the Balkan states which were completely subsumed within the Habsburg empire. World War I and its concluding treaties proved decisive in this part of Europe, establishing new independent states, but also laying the groundwork for the ethnic and irredentist tensions that were to plague Eastern Europe throughout the twentieth century. Due to the German and Habsburg war loss in World War I, Poland was restored to a republic, and the new nations of Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia and Romania (roughly as we know it today) were created, all of them benefiting from Hungary's loss of 2/3 of its territory and nearly 60 percent of its population. This then is the immediate background for the study that follows, as we discuss the national and
international activities of the Hungarians around Ma in the context of this completely reorganized and newly reconstituted Eastern Europe.

My acknowledged interest is the role of the journal Ma as a representative of the Eastern European avant-garde in the larger history of the international avant-garde in the early twentieth century. Therefore, the emphasis of what follows lies in the years 1920-1925, when Ma was forced into political exile in Vienna, and subsequently into closer proximity to the West. The necessary historical and political background that led to this exile status, as well as some introduction to the history of the journal itself is provided in Chapter Two, which focuses on the Budapest years of 1916-1919. The remainder of the text is divided thematically rather than chronologically. Roughly the chapters are keyed to certain "isms" or styles, and in part this is determined by Hungarian practice in this period. Generally, the Hungarians received Western styles (and Eastern in the case of Russian Constructivism) in toto, as already established entities. They were understood not only as formal styles, but as a cluster or group of ideas, with ideological, political, and even national associations, for certain tasks suited and with specific social or political import. How they were initially conceived and developed in the West, and even their sequential order of development, was not maintained in the transference and reception processes of the Hungarians. Thus a chronological approach to the material is counterproductive. Instead, my approach enables us to chart the proactive reception habits of the Hungarians vis-à-vis avant-garde art— their reactions to and adaptations of aspects of the various "isms," in respect to their goals, purposes and situation, often in interesting and different ways than conceived of or intended at their source. After this consideration of the Hungarians in the larger context of the international avant-garde, the final section reintegrates them into Eastern
Europe, and details their relationship with groups of the avant-garde there. Here national divisions are the organizing principle, in keeping with the spirit of the times in the refashioned Eastern Europe of the early 1920s.

1925, the year Die Kunstismen was published, was also the last year of publication of the Hungarian journal Ma. Faced with serious financial constraints and banned in several of the Eastern European nations, the journal was able to publish only a few issues its final year. In 1926, the conservative government of Hungary issued a general amnesty, and many of the expatriate Hungarian artists, including Kassák, returned home to a Hungary little interested in avant-garde art and the social principles that were the foundation of Ma's program. Undeterred, and maintaining his primary goal of improving his own nation, Kassák published two more journals, and continued to practice as an artist and graphic designer. In the West, however, with the notable exception of Moholy-Nagy, Hungarian art and artists were largely forgotten, particularly in our modern art history which tends to privilege the French. The following will not only remove that restriction, but also enable us to share the Hungarians' alternate vision of avant-garde art that was encapsulated in Új művészek könyve.
There has been much discussion of late in the literature, primarily among historians, on what term to use for this part of Europe. Various suggestions have included Central Europe or East Central Europe. I have retained Eastern Europe, the terminology which became standard during the Cold War, for several reasons. One is that the designation Central Europe can unfortunately be interpreted to include Germany and Austria, two states whose history and role in this area are very different than the states under discussion in this study. For the majority of the present population, Eastern Europe is the familiar and meaningful term by which to designate this area. I do appreciate the reasons that have been offered for refining the terminology to Central Europe, but I do not believe it is defined clearly enough to have usurped the term Eastern Europe. Perhaps this will change in the future, but at present Eastern Europe still seems the most useful. Also, many of those who define Central Europe include only Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Poland, thus omitting Yugoslavia and Romania, two countries that figure in this dissertation. For a sampling of this debate see the introduction to Lonnie R. Johnson, Central Europe: Enemies, Neighbors, Friends (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), the introduction to Piotr S. Wandycz, The Price of Freedom: A History of East Central Europe from the Middle Ages to the Present (New York: Routledge, 1992), and Chapter 1 in Jacques Rupnik, The Other Europe: The Rise and Fall of Communism in East-Central Europe, (New York: Pantheon Books, 1988, 1989), among others.


I realize that some Hungarian readers may be unhappy with this characterization of Hungarian fortunes in comparison to others. However, I am trying to be somewhat objective in this description, and in comparison with other states in this region which had no independent existence at all, Hungary in that sense was more fortunate.
CHAPTER 2

THE BUDAPEST PERIOD OF MA (1915-1919) AND CONTEMPORARY HUNGARIAN POLITICS: FIRST LESSONS IN THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN POLITICS AND ART

The Budapest years of Ma, including Kassák's first foray into publishing a journal, A Tett [The Action], is the period in which he and his circle would encounter their first serious challenges in terms of how to coordinate the social goals of art with contemporary politics. In many ways, the issues raised in this period would continue to affect the journal Ma and its contributors until the journal ceased publication in 1925. As Kassák developed Ma into a public and promotional platform for the group's art work and theories, increasingly the journal and its supporters came into conflict with the political and social realities of a Hungary suffering the loss of World War I, and subsequent regime changes. Such conflicts came to a head during the 1919 Communist government of Béla Kun, when the Ma group was finally confronted with a political program postulating the deep systemic changes in society that would seem to dovetail with Ma's artistic and social theories. This would present the Ma group with the opportunity to play a role in political events, an opportunity little granted to avant-garde groups in Western Europe. Ma's response to this opportunity, and the resulting lessons learned concerning the possible relationship between politics and art form the basis of this chapter.
In 1915, while World War I struggled through its second year, Kassák began publication of his first journal A Tett in Budapest. As was his colleague Franz Pfemfert in the journal Die Aktion published in Berlin, Kassák in A Tett was decidedly anti-war, a very unpopular sentiment amidst the heightened nationalistic fervor in the first years of the conflict. A Tett's emphasis was political and literary, with some space given over to the visual arts, as befitting Kassák's vision of encouraging the New Man, who with the benefit of a more equitable social order, would commence to build a new world, both symbolically and concretely. Critical to this enterprise was Kassák's belief that the literary and visual arts were interconnected and analogous to one another, thus they faced the same challenges and had similar responsibilities in terms of modernizing Hungary, as well as the rest of Europe. As if to emphasize the international scope of this task, in August of 1916 A Tett published its international number, including the work of such enemy nationals as Emil Verhaeren, Libero Altomare, Wassily Kandinsky, Mikhail Arcubasev and Nikolai Kulbin. After only seventeen issues, A Tett was banned by the Austro-Hungarian authorities for its anti-war stance and internationalism. Never one to be deterred, within two months Kassák had launched his new journal Ma.

Kassák's experience with A Tett and its banning by the government led to a shift in emphasis on the pages of Ma. Deciding that fine art was more difficult to police than literature, Kassák led Ma into becoming a far more art-oriented journal than A Tett had been. Additionally, Ma branched into publishing separate works of literature, sponsored musical performances and a theater group, and ran a gallery for the exhibition of contemporary art. The Hungarian avant-garde's conception of the creative individual whose task it was to create a new, transformative art for contemporary society was
proclaimed immediately by Kassák in the first issue of Ma in November of 1916. In his essay "A plakât és as új festészet" [The Poster and the New Painting], Kassák identified the poster as a vehicle suitable for the radical, purifying new message of the artist in a modern society beset with social problems. The poster's proclamatory, aggressive force could express the faith and strength of the artist seeking to change contemporary life, each of his posters would "set out to be living interrogation marks and exclamations." It was a forecast of the same debate that would plague Ma and Kassák in Vienna as well, when again inspired by Russian events, several artists would leave Ma because of a perceived lack of political commitment in the journal and its ideology.

Real political events in Hungary quickly overtook artistic debate. With the Austro-Hungarian loss of World War I, Hungary itself was plunged into social and political chaos. In mid-November, 1918 a bourgeois Republic was proclaimed under the leadership of Count Mihály Károlyi, who with the best of reform-minded intentions made one of his first acts dividing up his own estates to distribute land to the peasantry. Perhaps Károlyi's moderately left Republic could have done much to relieve the economic and social suffering of the majority of the Hungarian population, and with that belief it was
popularly supported in the beginning. However, events largely beyond Károlyi's control quickly scuttled such hopes. The economic toll exacted by the war, the incursions of Entente armies on all borders seeking to gain more Hungarian territory, and Hungarian Communists and Socialists working within Budapest to sabotage the government proved too much for the fragile Republic. In March of 1919 Károlyi turned over the government to a coalition of Socialists and Communists, controlled by the Communist Béla Kun, and the Republic of Councils period began. From March to August 1919, thus in only 133 days, this social and political experiment proved to be a disastrous failure for the nation. Defying some of Lenin's most basic prescriptions for a successful revolutionary government, Kun allied the Communists with the Socialists to maintain control, refused to placate the peasants with some land reform, instead immediately forcing the socialization of agriculture, and issued a staggering number of social and economic edicts that managed to severely antagonize both the urban and rural populations. Unpopular at home, and under the threat of Romanian military advances on the capital, Kun and his government resigned, fleeing the country on August 1. After a six-day social democratic trade-union government which was quickly overthrown, the conservative rightist government of Admiral Miklós Horthy eventually assumed control, gradually stabilizing the country. He was to remain in power as Regent until removed by Hitler's armies in 1944. From Kun's regime to Horthy's eventual solid control of the country, the Hungarian population suffered not only economic depravation, the incursion of the Romanian army, and the hostilities of the Entente powers, but also waves of terror and mass murder launched by both the left and the right. Although seldom enjoying a peaceful history as an Eastern European nation, these years were some of Hungary's most difficult.
This troubled history severely affected Ma as well. Both the Károlyi and Kun governments attempted to reorganize and include cultural affairs in their political programs. Under Kun a Directorate of Arts was formed, which was to financially and educationally aid artists, as well as acquire their works for state collections. Other artists were enlisted in workshops to teach students of proletarian background. All such programs involved artists both of Kassák's immediate circle, as well as the earlier generation of Hungarian modernists.9 Other public tasks for artists included the May 1 decorations for Budapest, posters produced for the Republic of Councils, and fresco plans for the Parliament building.10 Again, both artists from the Ma group as well as other Hungarian modern artists participated, likely seeing this as their opportunity to affect social change and modernization through art, a goal they had been advocating throughout the decade. Kassák and Ma's direct ties to activities sponsored by Kun's government, however, are not so clear. Kassák apparently was appointed to the Directorate of Writers which was headed by György Lukács, who also served as the Cultural Minister of the Kun government, but Kassák seems not to have been publicly active. In general he avoided any direct involvement in political or party matters.11 A sense of his ambivalence concerning political parties and government ties is found in the text "Activism,"12 which strongly reflects his belief in the individual's power and duty to revolutionize the spirit and ultimately create political and social change. First delivered as a speech in February of 1919, before Kun had taken power, the essay was reprinted in Ma in April of 1919, thus in the midst of the Communist experiment in rule.13 Given its contents and philosophy, it can be understood as Kassák's brave refutation of some of the major tenets of the Communist belief system, as well as his attempt to underline the separate and higher mission of Ma and the artistic avant-garde in general, as distinct from
political parties. In his text, Kassák recognizes the power and importance of
the proletariat as the one force capable of rendering substantive social
change. Yet, Communism itself is presented as merely an economic system,
one that is a necessary step toward revolution, but as a party unfortunately
prone to becoming entrenched as a power and resistant to further change and
progress. It is the individual, Kassák postulates, and especially the artist, who
is responsible for inciting the spiritual revolution among the masses and
instigating change, a process that necessarily comes before the work of
political parties. It is also the artist's duty to advocate the never-ending
revolution, one that is not satisfied with the status quo of a political party, but
forever pushes forward. This is clearly the role of the artistic avant-garde,
which Kassák praises as the true instigators of the Russian revolution (not
Lenin and Trotsky), and the same revolutionary role that Cubism, Futurism and
Expressionism play in the West. All in all, this was a gutsy philosophy for
Kassák to expound under a Communist regime. However, the relationship
between Ma and the Kun government was not immediately and entirely
hostile, which illustrates the conflict that Kassák must have felt between the
opportunity to take part in revolutionary political events, versus his
overarching belief in the mission of the artistic avant-garde. Ma, for example,
did benefit financially from the Kun government in the form of subventions
which allowed the publication of expanded issues of the journal from May to
July of 1919.14 It was also Kassák's habit to periodically change the subtitle of
Ma, and we can trace the political radicalization of Ma in this period through
these title shifts. From February to March, 1919, coinciding with his
"Activism" essay, the journal was subtitled "Aktivista Művészeti Folyóirat"
[Activist Art Journal], beginning in April, thus coinciding with the Republic
of Councils rule, it was changed to "Aktivista Művészeti és Társadalmi
Additionally, in May of 1919, a critical celebratory month for a new Communist government, Ma published a number of small supplements which are clearly political in their content. In its supplements Ma published, for example, excerpts from Lenin's "State and Revolution", and an essay by Iakov Sverdlov, a key Soviet player in the attempts to Bolshevize the Hungarian party, and push revolution within Hungary itself. Despite Kassák's later attempts to downplay or even deny any dealings with Kun's government, the evidence above suggests it may have not been that clear cut and simple. Recently, further documentary evidence has been published which reveals a correspondence between Kassák and the government requesting financial and other material support for the journal and its subsidiary activities. However, Kassák could not long play both sides of the fence. He clearly believed in the absolute autonomy of art, but as was typical of many radical Communist government leaders, Kun found avant-garde art incomprehensible and unsuitable for communicating his message, and publicly labeled Ma a "product of bourgeois decadence". Kassák responded immediately. The June, 1919 issue of Ma carried his "Level Kun Bélához a művészet nevében" [Letter to Béla Kun in the Name of Art], a defensive, and at the same time, defiant statement addressed directly to the political leader. In it, Kassák rehearsed the radical pedigree of Ma, yet insisted on the absolute freedom of the individual artist from party stricture or control in his pursuit of the continual spiritual revolution of the human being. Ma produced only one more issue after this statement, whether because it was banned or because of a paper shortage is still unclear. Whichever the case, Kun's end was near as well. On August 1 his government fell, and his leaving the country was a forecast of the fate awaiting Kassák and many of the avant-garde as well. Whatever their actual involvement with
Kun's regime had or had not been, as far as the Horthy government was concerned they were all suspect, and most were forced into exile.

Kassák reached Vienna early in 1920, a rather popular destination for many of the Hungarian exiles of this period. In short order, he re-launched the journal Ma. Unbowed and unrepentant, the first essay of the first Viennese issue addressed the international community of artists with his message of the spiritual and creative power of the artist, of the Idea, over the political party. In one way, the experiences of that last year were to prove far from over with the move to Vienna. The debate over the relationship between politics and art would continue to bedevil Kassák, the journal Ma, and many of the artists and writers who were involved in its circle throughout the Viennese period, eventually causing serious rifts within this group of the Hungarian avant-garde. Only now, these debates would take place on a much larger, international stage with the move to Vienna. One substantive change in this period was Kassák's decision to begin practicing as an artist as well as a writer. In 1921-22 he would develop his theory of Képarchitektúra [Picture Architecture], the fullest expression of his belief in the ability of art to create the spiritual and ideological inspiration in mankind necessary for perpetual revolutionary change, ideas we have seen that had their beginnings in the Budapest period of Ma. Kassák postulated that the visual language of this style (Figure 44), with its strict geometric planes and spatially active formal relationships, would activate and inspire man's psyche toward a new way of viewing and shaping the world. And although Kassák would consistently keep Hungary as his primary concern throughout his years of exile, and continue to publish his journal almost exclusively in Hungarian despite the isolation the language barrier caused, he would look on the Viennese years with great pride:
Ma had a unique role in that it did not formally belong to any specific party or group. It functioned continuously and instead of a limited, narrow vision at home, without any assistance, it carved a role for itself between friends and enemies, rising to the occasion, growing from a restricted Hungarian enclave to a solid and important universal forum for the young artists of the world.25

The following is a discussion of the complicated and conflicted role that Kassák understood Ma to be playing on the international stage, and how it was that a relatively obscure Hungarian journal could and did fashion such a presence for itself in the international avant-garde art scene of the 1920s. Perhaps the best way to do that is to begin with what these Hungarians understood avant-garde art of their day to be, and how that understanding shaped their forum Ma.
1 For an extensive background on the literary scene in Budapest in this period, particularly the dominant journal Nyugat [West], as well as Kassák's early literary career and journal in this context, see Mario D. Fenyo, "Literature and Political Change: Budapest, 1908-1918," in Transactions of the American Philosophical Society, 77, Part 6 by The American Philosophical Society (Philadelphia: The American Philosophical Society, 1987), 1-156. For a comprehensive cultural and social overview of Budapest in this period see John Lukacs, Budapest 1900: A Historical Portrait of a City & its Culture (New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1988). The most helpful sources on the Budapest period of both A Tett and Ma are Charles Dautrey and Jean-Claude Guerlain, eds., L'Activisme Hongrois (Paris: Editions Goutal-Darly, 1979) which contains in addition to scholarly articles a number of primary documents in French translation; Júlia Szabó, A magyar aktivizmus művészete 1915-1927 (Budapest: Corvina, 1981) the standard work on the Hungarian avant-garde; and Sylvia D. Bakos, The Emergence of the Hungarian Avant-garde, 1900-1919 (Ann Arbor: UMI Dissertation Services, 1989), which details the development of Hungarian modern art at the beginning of this century, as well as the Ma group.

2 The relationship between Pfemfert's journal and Kassák's Ma is discussed more thoroughly in the following chapter.


4 Bakos, 207-08. She quotes Kassák on this shift as a tactical decision. As Bakos rightly points out, however, both literature and art would both continue to play important, interconnected roles in Ma, as the remainder of this dissertation will make clear.


6 These included Mátyás Győrgy, Aladár Komját, József Lengyel and József Révai. All would go on to have significant careers in the Communist party, especially Révai who in the 1940s-1950s as a high-ranking Communist would exercise significant control over literary and art matters, much to the discomfort of Kassák. For an overview of the political situation in this period, and the role of various literary and art figures in these debates, see the introduction to Lee Congdon, Exile and Social Thought: Hungarian Intellectuals in Germany and Austria 1919-1933 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991), 1-42. Congdon, 26, reports that the Russian Revolution was the immediate event that inspired these dissenters. After leaving Ma, they published the journal Internationale, a theoretical journal of the Hungarian Communist party.

7 These events are detailed in Chapter Six. Interestingly, the same Aladár Komját who split from Ma in 1917 will resurface as the editor of Egyéség [Unity], the journal which the artist Béla Uitz would leave Ma for in 1922.

8 For a complete history of Hungary's Communist party, and events of this period see Rudolf L. Tőkés, Béla Kun and the Hungarian Soviet Republic: The Origins and Role of the Communist Party of Hungary in the Revolutions of 1918-1919, (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, Publishers for The Hoover

For details on these programs, as well as the specific artists involved, see Bakos, 269-71. Additional information can be found in the chronology compiled by Júlia Szabó and Krisztina Passuth in The Hungarian Avant-Garde, 41 and in Nóra Aradi, "A Tanácsköztársaság művészete," in Magyar művészet 1890-1919, ed. Lajos Németh, 2 vols. (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1981), 614-24. Although the literature on the 1919 events is somewhat extensive, these are a good place to start.

For the artistic character of these creations see Bakos, 271-82. Due to the shortness of the Kun regime, much of what was planned never materialized. However, we can get some sense of this material through documentary photographs and plans. In general, it was rather more traditional and conservative than one might expect for a politically revolutionary regime, much as was the case with Lenin and Lunacharsky's Plan for Monumental Propaganda in the Soviet Union in 1918. For information on this Soviet example see Christina Lodder, Russian Constructivism (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1983), 53-55. What has survived from the Hungarian experiment are the posters, which are amply reproduced in the literature on this period. Undoubtedly the production of these posters would have had particular resonance for the Ma artists, given Kassák's advocation of this art form as especially suited for the times in his essay published in Ma in 1916.

For Kassák's version of events at this time see his autobiography Egy ember élete (Budapest: Magvető Kiadó, 1983). The 1919 period is covered in volume two, section eight of this reprint edition. Although this autobiography was written later in the 1920s, it has been generally praised as a fairly objective and accurate account of this period.

The obvious connection to German activism, as expounded by Franz Pfemfert who Kassák cites in this essay, is further elaborated in the following chapter.


These are issues numbered Vol. 4, nos. 5, 6, 7, and 8 of 1919. They are also distinctive due to the printing of the journal title in red ink. See also note 17 below on the financial issue.
Previous to these changes it had been subtitled "Literary and Fine Art Journal". For a complete list of the subtitle changes of Ma see Levinger, 84 note 7.

Sverdlov's text "Az Orosz Szocialista Föderative Szovjetköztársaság Alkotmánya" (sic), appeared in the second supplemental issue. For information on Sverdlov's important role in Hungarian Communist matters, see Tókés, chapters 3-5 passim.

See Ferenc Csaplár, ed., Magam törvénye szerint (Budapest: Petőfi Irodalmi Múzeum és Műszak Közművelődési Kiadó, 1987), 149-59. Csaplár provides a series of letters beginning in March of 1919, with Lukács as one of the government representatives. Csaplár, 150, also suggests that the Kun government may have had in mind making Ma an official organ, hence the improved quality and production of the journal during this period. Particularly revelatory is the final letter published by Csaplár, which indicates that the Ma group contacted the Hungarian Communist representatives for assistance again in Vienna in September of 1920, thus after the fall of the Kun regime and their forced exile to the West. As Oliver A. I. Botar, 'From the Avant-Garde to "Proletarian Art" The Emigré Hungarian Journals Egység and Akaszttott Ember, 1922-23," Art Journal 52, no. 1 (Spring, 1993): 36, 45 note 16, states, this evidence suggests that despite Kassák's claims to the contrary, he did attempt to involve his journal with the party and government. Botar has indicated that he will publish further on this topic, but to my knowledge this has not yet appeared.

See among others Bakos, 284-85 and Szabó, A magyar aktivizmus művészete, 78-82 for the Kun situation. Kun made this pronouncement at the first Congress of the Hungarian Socialist Party, and it was printed in "Vörös Ujság" (a Communist paper) on June 14, 1919.

As Tókés reports, 179, this letter was written in the context of political debates between Kun and Zsigmond Kunfi, the Socialist Minister of Education, over government control of literature and the arts, which Kunfi resisted. Tókés also notes, 179 note 6, that Kassák's text in addition to appearing in Ma, was distributed to the workers of Budapest in the form of 100,000 separately printed pamphlets.

This important document has unfortunately not been translated into English. A partial French translation is available in Dautrey and Guerlain, 143-48.

See Levinger, 84 note 20 for the various sides of this debate.

See Congdon for a full discussion of the complicated and rich life of the community of Hungarian exiles in Vienna at this time.

"An die Künstler aller Länder!," Ma 5, no. 1-2 (May 1, 1920): 2-4. The essay was published side by side in both Hungarian and German. One suspects as well that the May 1 date was not entirely coincidental.

For a complete discussion of this theory see Chapter 6. I thought it best to at least mention it here, as it will crop up periodically throughout this study.

As quoted in Krisztina Passuth, "The Avant-Garde in Hungary and Eastern Europe," in Standing in the Tempest, 184. The quote is from "Válasz sokféle és álláspont" [Reply in Many Directions and Standpoint], published in Ma in August of 1922.
CHAPTER 3

MA'S RECEPTION, ANALYSIS AND SYNTHESIS OF THE EARLY WESTERN AVANT-GARDE: EXPRESSIONISM, FUTURISM, AND CUBISM

When the Hungarian avant-garde set out through their journal Ma to fashion a platform for their group, and to engage with the vital avant-garde culture of Europe of that period, several factors had to be reckoned with. First it was necessary to establish the character and stance of Ma within the active journal culture of early 20th century Europe. Two established German journals would act as particular models and/or foils for the Hungarians—Die Aktion and Der Sturm, the first for political and social reasons, the second as a model of artistic and promotional activity. In addition, Ma from the beginning took it upon itself to somehow account for and respond to the primary Western European avant-garde movements of the young century, Expressionism, Futurism and Cubism. Far from acting as passive receptors, the group and its journal early articulated the goal of an art that focused not on outward stylistic characteristics, but rather was predicated on producing an inward change in the viewer, making him capable of social change and modernization. It is from this ideological position that the Ma group received and analyzed the early triumvirate of the Western European avant-garde. The following chapter traces the development of Ma's character as an European avant-garde
journal, and its theoretical processing of and position toward Western avant-garde art.

**German Expressionism**

The two most important early models for Kassák and his journal *Ma* were the German Expressionist journals *Die Aktion*, (1911-1932) edited by Franz Pfemfert, and *Der Sturm*, (1910-1932) edited by Herwarth Walden. Both were contemporary with *Ma* from its early years in Budapest, and published concurrently with *Ma* into the Vienna period as well. Like the other journals associated with literary and/or artistic avant-garde movements, these German periodicals served as a focus and platform for their artistic and cultural goals, beyond being merely the locus for the publication of the newest examples of literary and artistic work. However, German periodicals, it has been noted, were among the earliest to address political and social issues. These German periodicals were filled with manifestos, programs, editorials, essays and other social commentaries that formed the majority of their contents, rather than mostly poetry and art reproductions. And although *Ma*, particularly in the Budapest years, was heavily filled with poetry, the trend moved toward essays and reviews that were increasingly concerned with analyzing current and topical events. Below I will indicate why these two German periodicals seemed to be so important to the Hungarian avant-garde, and particularly their journal *Ma*. Both *Die Aktion* and *Der Sturm* I believe were attractive to the Hungarians for specific and different reasons, and both were models, and often even foils for the evolving ideology and contents of the journal *Ma*.

*Die Aktion*, as edited by Pfemfert, was a literary and political journal with a radical outlook. From the beginning *Die Aktion* was associated with the activist movement in Germany, since an early and significant contributor
was Kurt Hiller.⁶ Although Hiller split with the journal in 1913, Die Aktion was already shaped by the activist insistence on the importance of political consciousness on the part of writers and artists.⁷ Pfemfurt himself was a tireless critic of German politics, having no sympathy for patriotism and nationalism, and was one of the very few to oppose German involvement in World War I.⁸ After the war he would become increasingly radical, moving toward a revolutionary and anarchist position.⁹ As well as being politically engaged, the journal was noted for its publication and promotion of the young Expressionist poets such as Gottfried Benn, René Schickele and Georg Heym.

So what appeal would this journal have for Kassák, and can we see the results of his interest in Ma itself? Part of the interest I believe was political. Although the name Activism was not coined until 1915 by Kurt Hiller,¹⁰ allying themselves with literary Expressionism a number of journalists and writers began postulating ideas as early as 1910 that would become part of the ideology of Activism.¹¹ Stressing individual will and creativity, balanced with an interest in the communal and spiritual bases of social experience, they hoped to unite these two halves through political commitment.¹² In actuality, German Activism could range from political engagement to complete withdrawal from direct action to a reliance on transcendent moral and spiritual values. The relative successes of the Germans are not at issue here, but rather what Kassák and the Hungarians may have found interesting about this. Their interest in Pfemfurt and his journal demonstrates their bias toward more direct political engagement, and Pfemfurt’s stance against the war and destructive national patriotism. Kassák was, like Pfemfurt, a pacifist and like Pfemfurt, found his first journal A Tett of 1915 censored for its international emphasis in a time of nationalist hysteria.¹³ Both Pfemfurt and Kassák were internationalists in the war years, and published works in their journals by
poets from enemy nations. And although the Hungarians could be critical of certain German Expressionist art, an issue discussed below, many of the themes and concepts expressed in Ma are clearly borrowed from German Expressionist ideology, such as a messianic belief in revolutionary art to drive social change, a distrust of political parties, a desire to view the artist as prophet or guide of the population, and the goal of the creation of the New Man.

However, despite a common attitude towards political involvement and pacifism during World War I, there was not a lot of material shared by the two journals in cross publication. There were no articles by Pfemfert published in Ma, unlike with Herwarth Walden, and there is little evidence of Hungarian artists or writers published by Pfemfert. Ma did publish poets who were pacifists that had previously been published in Die Aktion, and most of the German poets published in Ma were previously collaborators of Pfemfert. There is tangible evidence in the pages of Ma that the Hungarians were aware of, and had access to, books and collections of verse published by Die Aktion. The November 15, 1917 issue of Ma on the final page published a list of books from Die Aktion, including their prices, and announced that Ma was now the commission agent for Der Sturm and Die Aktion publications in Hungary. This notice of November, 1917 is the first of its kind. Previously the last page of the journal had advertised small publications produced by Ma, announced lectures, plays and concerts in Budapest that presumably would have been of interest to their readers, and occasional advertisements for local products. This notice of November, 1917 is also interesting in that along with the listing of Die Aktion books, the other two groups featured are the publications of Ma, and those of Der Sturm, thus indicating the similarity of interests and purpose that the Hungarians must have seen between their journal and these two important German publications. This list would appear on the final page of
every issue throughout the run of Ma in Budapest, with occasional new
additions, disappearing only when the journal moved to Vienna. We can be
sure that Ma continued to be aware of and see Die Aktion into the Vienna years
of the journal. Although Ma ceased to regularly list Die Aktion publications,
Die Aktion does appear in the list of books and journals received that was first
published in the Vienna period of Ma in August of 1921. Die Aktion was also
included among those fellow journals appearing in small squares on the final
page of Ma from the first instance in the October, 1922 issue, and again in
September of 1923 (Figure 1). Interestingly, Die Aktion does not appear in
the listing of books and journals received in 1924, nor is it included in the
format of the squares in 1924.

Thus, obviously, the Hungarians were well aware of what was being
published in Die Aktion, and also considered the German journal in some sense
a fellow organ. There was a shared interest in certain political events and
persons between the two journals. Die Aktion featured material on Karl
Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg in keeping with Pfemfert's political stance
and anti-war sentiments, and Ma featured material on these two as well,
particularly in 1919 after their murders. Die Aktion also covered
revolutionary events in Hungary in 1919 during the short period of
Communist rule. It has been argued elsewhere that, in fact, Die Aktion was
not as clearly anti-war as many have believed, nor did it have particular
resonance abroad, and that can account for the comparatively lax control of
the censors in Germany throughout the war. This study suggests that Die
Aktion was little read abroad, and even when it was not readily understood as a
clearly pacifist publication. Be that as it may, the Hungarians were aware of
it, and were particularly sensitive to the political tenor of that journal and its
geditor. Kassák was clearly a pacifist, and must have been aware that Pfemfert

26
was of the same persuasion, particularly as it was well known that Pfemfert was such in Central Europe. However, after the war the literary and artistic elements in Die Aktion were severely curtailed as Pfemfert turned his journal to propagating the revolutionary cause in Germany, and supporting the Spartacist faction. The Hungarians were on top of this activity of Pfemfert, and recognized him as an important model for the Activists in Hungary. In Kassák's definition of their movement and outline of their goals in 1919, entitled "Activism", Pfemfert was identified as one of the major influences on Hungarian activist artists along with Henri Guilbeaux. Guilbeaux and Pfemfert are praised as being activists of political import, rather than being merely humanists per se, such as Henri Barbusse and Romain Rolland, and it is these men who "the movement of Activist artists was organized around."

Some have also suggested that the Hungarians would have had ready access to the Expressionist art featured in Die Aktion, and that Die Aktion was also an artistic influence. However, the Hungarians allied themselves more clearly in name with the political aspect of this movement, rather than the artistic, by calling themselves Activists, not Expressionists. I think it is also significant that Die Aktion was known as a primary place to read German Expressionist poets, and the Die Aktion books listed by Ma reflect this emphasis. And, concerning those issues most similar to those dealt with by Die Aktion, such as Liebknecht and Luxemburg, Ma also used poetry primarily to address those issues. In other words, the evidence suggests that Die Aktion's interest for the staff of Ma was primarily political and literary, rather than artistic.

The interest in and relationship with Der Sturm was substantially different, and this in part has to be due to the very different person that Walden was, and the purposes and concerns of his journal Der Sturm. Walden
began the journal in March of 1910, and within a few years had turned it into a successful journal promoting a variety of avant-garde movements such as Cubism, Futurism and Expressionism. Walden successfully branched into other means of presenting the modern movements and artists he supported, from staging a large number of exhibitions, to publishing their works through his own printing house. By the end of the war, Walden's activities included not only the gallery and publishing house, but also a Sturm-sponsored school, theater, picture-book series, and sponsorship of evening lectures and programs.

Walden was perceived as being financially and promotionally successful, and was able to show and publish a number of the most progressive artists of this period in Europe. This entrepreneurial skill also earned Walden some criticism from artists and critics who disliked what they saw as his pushy promotional style, or accused the Sturm organization of lessening standards as it expanded commercially.

László Moholy-Nagy, recently arrived in Berlin in 1920, gave this account of Walden's enterprise in the immediate post-war period:

Herwarth Walden has become a millionaire, he has a splendid painting collection, which he got free, and topping all this he is affecting the airs of a prince. If you want to talk to him, you have to make an appointment with his secretary first, and while you are visiting his collection, they announce your name loudly as it would be announced by the lackey, etcetera, etcetera. Just as a Dadaist journal correctly stated: He is enriching and decorating his financial genius with plundered intellectual rags, and art serves him as a disguise in making money. Now that he has money he divorced himself (financially) from the Sturm, and Sturm pays even less than before. The exhibitions become weaker.

Another primary difference between Die Aktion and Der Sturm was the issue of politics, and the relationship between politics and the arts. Pfemfert was clearly anti-war, made copies of Die Aktion available at the front, and even managed to communicate his disgust with the war in the pages of his
journal despite the threat of censorship.\textsuperscript{39} Above we have already discussed how Pfemfert was part of the German Activist way of thinking about the importance of political consciousness on the part of artists. \textit{Die Aktion} reflects this mix of concerns in its publishing of German Expressionist poets and artists, and at the same time, for example, devoting a special issue of the journal to Karl Marx, and selling copies of the \textit{Communist Manifesto} for 80 pfennig.\textsuperscript{40} Herwarth Walden, on the other hand, was apolitical in the war period, and even after 1919 when he became a member of the German Communist Party, his attempts to forge some connection between art and politics were idealistic, tinged with spiritualism and the ideals of Nietzsche, and hardly practical.\textsuperscript{41} Nell Walden, his wife until 1924, recalls that he disavowed any connection between art and politics until after the war, and was disturbed by the war primarily in that it disrupted connections with other European avant-garde movements,\textsuperscript{42} and one might add, caused the death of some of his most important contributors, such as Franz Marc and August Stramm.\textsuperscript{43} The differences were clearly apparent to the two men themselves, and to other artists as well. Pfemfert and Walden split on the issue of those who escaped the war by withdrawing to Switzerland, and Pfemfert turned on \textit{Der Sturm}, particularly attacking the commercialism of Walden's enterprise.\textsuperscript{44} It has been suggested that Walden's unwillingness to take a clear political position in Germany during the war and in the difficult period afterwards played a part in the weakening of \textit{Der Sturm}'s position in post-war avant-garde Germany.\textsuperscript{45} Some of the younger German artists even went so far as to see Walden's position as in support of Wilhelmine Germany:
The tendency of that review [Die Aktion] was not very clear, not very stable, but to our eyes it was preferable to Herwarth Walden's expressly avant-garde review, Der Sturm, because he was a Hohenzollern collaborator and had, for example, published a Prussian Song of Songs which we found odious.46

Clearly there were perceived political and ideological differences between these two journals, not only between their editors, but also understood by artists and writers. By 1918 the journals shared only contributor, who wrote political poems for Die Aktion, and non-political works for Der Sturm.47 And while Pfemfert attacked Walden by calling him a "merchant" and "business dealer", Walden was moved in the pages of Der Sturm to claim that "the revolution is not an art, but art is a revolution."48

By outlining these differences, we can see how and why both journals were of interest to the Hungarians, but also for quite different reasons. Pfemfert's radical political stance, and his strong anti-war sentiment were shared by Kassák and the Hungarians around the journal Ma. For Kassák, and this is apparent in the journal itself as well, art and politics were explicitly linked and the artist was responsible for political commitment as well as his practice of art.49 But for the Hungarians, Der Sturm was an important source of visual information about the avant-garde, not only in Germany, but throughout Europe. It was also a primary example of the type of visual arts journal that Ma was developing into, and as a model for the branch activities that Ma was to institute as well, such as a publishing house, gallery space, sponsorship of a theater, and producer of lectures and poetry readings. And even though the Hungarian's reaction to and analysis of Expressionism was to become occasionally negative, they continued to have publishing and exhibiting ties to Walden and Der Sturm, most likely as has been suggested, for commercial reasons.50 In short, Walden was the most successful example of a
cultural impresario and supporter of the avant-garde that Kassák may have envisioned himself as becoming within Hungary. However, it is important to remember that there were substantial background and political differences between Kassák and Walden.\textsuperscript{51} Kassák's working-class background, and greater interest in revolution brought about substantial differences in what was featured in his journal.

Most simply one can argue that the look of Kassák's \textit{Ma} took several cues from the German publications when it began. Like \textit{Die Aktion} and \textit{Der Sturm}, \textit{Ma} had a prominent black masthead, with a listing of contents directly under the title (Figures 2 and 3).\textsuperscript{52} The covers featured a single reproduction of a work of art under the masthead. But there are actually more similarities between \textit{Der Sturm} and \textit{Ma}. Under the title of these two journals, prominent boxes featured the name of the editor, address, and subscription rate, etc. Within the two journals the reproductions were usually given their own separate pages without text, particularly in the years before 1919/1920. The page layout was likewise quite similar between the two in these years up until 1919. Text was generally run in two vertical columns per page, with individual elements separated by crisp black bars. Images were interspersed throughout the journals, but the pages were not cluttered as the reproductions were allotted their own page, and the text was surrounded by an ample amount of white space. I am not suggesting that \textit{Ma} simply copied \textit{Der Sturm}, but instead that \textit{Der Sturm} provided an important model for Kassák and \textit{Ma} as to what a modernist, literary and art journal should look like (much like his position as promoter and publisher of avant-garde art was a model), and that Kassák was particularly observant of the \textit{look} of such a journal. These format similarities between the journals would end around 1919-20, when \textit{Der Sturm} entered a
new phase either due to changes in Walden's interests or financial situation, and Ma moved to Vienna.

Beyond merely the surface similarities between the two journals, there was a substantial amount of like material published in both, and separate publication of articles from each other. The bulk of this material consisted of reproductions of art works, and I think this again emphasizes that the primary foundation for a relationship between these two journals was artistic, and for the Hungarians, promotional. This relationship was established early in the life of Ma, and at first turned primarily around the works of János Máttyás-Teutsch.53 This is not surprising as Máttyás-Teutsch's work is arguably the nearest in style to the Expressionists promoted by Walden in Der Sturm. Máttyás-Teutsch was an early favorite of the Hungarian journal, as he was the featured artist for Ma's first exhibition in October of 1917.54 And although his style and concerns are not consistent with the other Hungarian artists featured in the journal, nor does he become involved with the political issues that are typical for this group, Kassák apparently recognized his talent and continued to feature him in Ma despite these differences. Máttyás-Teutsch's work first appeared in Der Sturm in June of 1918, third in a series of other Expressionist prints.55 A work by Máttyás-Teutsch was featured on the cover of Der Sturm in August of 1918, and in fact, his works would appear in Der Sturm well into the 1920s.56 Apparently the similarity between Máttyás-Teutsch's and Maria Uhden's work was recognized by both the Germans and the Hungarians around 1918/1919, as a 1919 issue of Der Sturm which featured Uhden on the cover contained two Máttyás-Teutsch works within,57 and Uhden was the only Expressionist of Walden's circle to be given a cover of Ma in June of 1919.58 The Hungarians clearly saw the connection between the German Expressionists and Máttyás-Teutsch, as noted by Iván Hevesy in his article "Tül
az impresszionismuson" [Beyond Impressionism],\textsuperscript{59} where he states that Måttis-Teutsch was the closest of the Hungarian artists to German Expressionism because of his evolution from natural form to abstract form and expression.\textsuperscript{60} His work has been described as a fusion of Nature and Mankind on the cosmic level, with the ethical purpose of creating the New Man.\textsuperscript{61} Of course these are terms and ideals that are typical of German art in this period as we have seen above. Måttis-Teutsch was also one of the very first of the artists in the Ma circle (even if former) to be shown at the Der Sturm gallery, in mid-1921.\textsuperscript{62} Unfortunately, not much is truly known about the details of Måttis-Teutsch's relationship with Walden and the Der Sturm enterprise, as there is a scarcity of documents on Måttis-Teutsch's side.\textsuperscript{63} What is surprising is that of all the reproductions of his work featured in Der Sturm, none are the same as those featured in Ma. This suggests that there was no direct relationship between Kassák and Walden in terms of sharing material, i.e., Kassák did not send to Walden Hungarian work to reproduce. Rather, Walden apparently received his material through another source, most likely the artists themselves. This lack of a direct relationship is also apparent in Kassák's correspondence. There are surviving letters which indicate that Kassák had a direct link with other editors and artistic contacts in terms of sharing material back and forth to be featured in various publications.\textsuperscript{64} There is no such paper trail between Walden and Kassák.\textsuperscript{65} Certainly there was contact between the two, but of a different sort. Kassák visited Berlin in 1922 and met Walden, and as we will see below a number of other Hungarian artists were given shows at the Der Sturm galleries, including Kassák. However, as with Måttis-Teutsch, the Hungarian work featured in the journal Der Sturm never coincided with works by the respective artists featured in Ma. What this suggests is that Walden had relationships with the various
Hungarian artists on a personal level, and featured their work in his gallery and in his journal, but there was not necessarily a strong reciprocal relationship between the journals Der Sturm and Ma themselves.

There is some identical published material between the two journals, but it is primarily not German or Hungarian, and there is little way of knowing how it came into each editor's possession. For example, the poem "Chagall's Studio" by Blaise Cendrars appeared in Der Sturm in January of 1919, and in Ma in May of 1922. A drawing by Fernand Léger appeared in Der Sturm in 1920, and the exact same drawing was featured in Ma in 1922. A number of small drawings by Léger were published in the margins of a text by Cendrars in Der Sturm in 1919, a couple of these same drawings were arranged above an essay by Raoul Hausmann in Ma in 1922. However, the disparity in dates, and the kinds of differing material they are arranged around argues against any single source for the material, any kind of sharing, or even agreed perception of their rightful context. A kind of free exchange of material that came to be seen as in the public domain did occur in this period. In a letter from Ivan Goll to Kassák, he mentions four drawings by Léger that "are already public property, I saw them on American posters," and questions whether Kassák wants to publish them together with a translation of his "Chaplinade". Thus, even though there is sometimes identical material published in Der Sturm and Ma, there is nothing to suggest an exchange between the two, or even a common source for the material.

The most vital link between Walden and Kassák was László Moholy-Nagy. Moholy-Nagy had early been somewhat involved with the Hungarian Activists, but his work was first published in Ma only in March of 1921. In the next issue of the journal (April) Moholy-Nagy is officially announced as MA's Berlin correspondent. The September issue of Ma that year was a Moholy-
Nagy number, devoted largely to reproductions of his work, and with an essay on Moholy-Nagy by Péter Mátyás (the pseudonym of art historian/critic Ernő Kálnai). Moholy-Nagy began appearing in the pages of Der Sturm in this same period, apparently overcoming his distaste for Walden's commercial success. His first work appeared in the journal in August of 1921, and was a Dadaist print very like the first one featured in Ma in March. Reproductions of Moholy-Nagy's work would appear frequently in Der Sturm until 1924, whereas they only appeared in Ma in 1921 and 1922. As was the case with Máttis-Teutsch, none of the works reproduced in Ma and Der Sturm are exactly the same. In the case of Moholy-Nagy, however, it is much easier to understand how this came about, as he was in direct contact with Walden by virtue of living in Berlin, and thus could have easily provided Walden with his work from the beginning.

Moholy-Nagy was certainly not the only Hungarian to be published in Der Sturm. A Kassák linocut was also featured on the cover of Der Sturm in November of 1922. That coincided with a Ma Abend at Der Sturm, which occurred during Kassák's trip to Berlin to see the Russian Show at the Van Diemen Gallery that month. The evening was a literary rather than artistic one, introduced by Källai, with Kassák's wife Jolán Simon reading the poetry of Schwitters, Huelsenbeck, Arp and the Ma poets, as well as Kassák's "A ló meghal és a madarak kirepülnek" [The Horse Dies and the Birds Fly Away]. As an example of how extensive Der Sturm coverage of the Hungarians could be, the second issue of 1924 was largely devoted to Hungarian material, both visual and literary. It featured several Constructivist works by Kassák, one of his advertising kiosks, a number of works by Moholy-Nagy, an excerpt from Kassák's "Book of Purity", the article "Gesellschaft Künstler Kunstwerk" by Robert Reiter (which had appeared in Ma in December of 1922), a linocut by
Máttis-Teutsch, and a number of poems by Hungarian writers, all translated into German. This was the greatest concentration of Hungarians in one issue of Der Sturm, but a number of Hungarians were featured individually throughout the years of the journal’s run. Some of Kassák's poetry was published in the journal, culminating in 1923 with an excerpt from Kassák's epic work "A ló meghal és a madarak kirepülnek" (the work that had been featured at the Ma Abend the year previously), coinciding with the Der Sturm Verlag's publication of a Ma-Buch of Kassák's poetry and linocuts. And although it is beyond the interest of this study to discuss in detail the exhibition schedule of Walden’s Der Sturm gallery, Walden did show a number of the major Hungarian artists of the period, including the Activists such as Kassák and Sándor Bortnyik. Der Sturm also published several manifestoes by Hungarians, but only the one by Róbert Reiter also appeared in Ma. Conversely, Walden was only published twice in Ma and although a number of German artists such as Grosz, Huelsenbeck and Schwitters appeared in the Hungarian journal, nothing leads me to believe that Walden or Der Sturm were necessarily the source of that material. Rather this coincided with Ma's growing interest in Dada in the early 1920s while in Vienna, which will be discussed in greater detail below.

Clearly both Die Aktion and Der Sturm were considered two of the most important Expressionist journals in this period, and finally we need to address the Hungarian reading of Expressionism in the pages of Ma in the late teens and early twenties. Certainly a number of Hungarian artists were intrigued by Expressionist imagery and style; within Ma this is most clearly seen in the work of Mattis-Teutsch among others. By no means, however, was Ma simply a Hungarian version of an Expressionist journal. At the same time that they were publishing Expressionist poets, analyzing the movement, and a number
of the artists were engaging with the Expressionist style and imagery, the journal was also featuring Cubist, Futurist and later Dadaist and Constructivist material. The position of the journal was that the Hungarian avant-garde did not follow one style, but rather distilled and combined elements from all to best suit their purposes and concerns. This is precisely spelled out, for example, in an article by the art historian Iván Hevesy in Mₐ in 1919. Entitled "Túl az impresszionizmuson" [Beyond Impressionism], Hevesy's article is an analysis of the major styles of the period, and the Hungarian reaction to them, including Impressionism, Futurism, Expressionism and Cubism. In the final section where he discusses matters in Hungary, he states that Mₐ is not interested in establishing a new style or school, but rather an entirely new art and new world view. This was to be accomplished not by linking themselves to one movement like Futurism, Cubism or Expressionism, but rather by taking from the accomplishments of all and going further to construct a new, universal art. This method presents problems for modern art history, which wants to codify groups and movements stylistically, by determining either formal similarities or primary stylistic influences. By adapting what they considered most relevant from all three movements, the Hungarians do not fit into one stylistic camp, and it is counterproductive to try to establish one primary influence. The Hungarian process of analysis and synthesis, one could argue, is a primary reason that modern art history has either avoided, or been unable to adequately account for avant-garde activity not only in Hungary, but elsewhere in Eastern Europe. The Hungarian approach to the major movements of the period was not to simply borrow en masse or arbitrarily from one particular movement, but rather to seriously consider what was valuable or helpful to their own conditions and situation from a variety of sources. It is within this context that we should analyze some of the
Hungarian material in Ma on Expressionism. Continuing with Hevesy's article, he presents a broad analysis of the major trends of the style, and even moves beyond Europe to discuss expressionism in general in periods such as ancient Egypt, the Middle Ages and the Baroque. Expressionism is deemed positive when it is the product of societies that in it express the power and energy of belief among the people, especially in folk art, and the art of Africa. In Germany, Expressionism is positive as it communicates strength of feeling and spirit through well-considered form and color, and Hevesy draws the standard analogy with music. Where Expressionism fails is when it becomes overly decorative or ornamental, or too focused on mood or atmosphere to the detriment of strength and decisiveness of expression. On the whole it is a considered analysis of the style in general, and certainly reveals no tendency among the Hungarians to simply abdicate responsibility and adopt Expressionism wholesale. In the Budapest period of the journal, the Hungarians could also be rather critical of the style, and in that criticism display an awareness of its contemporary manifestations and their weaknesses. One of the most striking examples of this is the essay by János Mácza entitled "August Stramm és a német expressionizmus" [August Stramm and German Expressionism]. In this essay, Expressionism is castigated for a number of sins, particularly its tendency to react only against the past and not address the future, its failure to change the inner man and produce a new world view, its transparent attempts to produce power and dynamism by surface manipulation of grammar, and most damning of all, its excessive interest in outward form which becomes merely decorative and makes them unable to affect change. By reading this list one can clearly see how Mácza has zeroed in on those things which were particularly crucial to the Hungarian's sense of their own work and its mission. These German
Expressionists are being faulted for failing to do those very things which the Hungarians in the pages of Ma had set forth as their goals: to focus on creating for the future, to change not just the outward elements of life, but through art to recreate man’s inner self and thus create universal, revolutionary change, and to do so in a rational, active manner. And although August Stramm (a particular favorite of Walden, and often featured in Der Sturm) does come under criticism, it is the followers of Stramm that Mácza singles out for particularly vehement disdain. These include Kurt Heynicke, Mynona, and Lothar Schreyer, all frequent contributors to Der Sturm, and even Herwarth Walden himself. They are described as running after an already departed car, sentimental, impressionistic (a particularly damning term from a Hungarian in this period), overly-affected, and out of control. Thus, clearly in this period the Hungarians were well aware of contemporary German trends in Expressionism, and also had the capability to be quite critical in comparison to their own established goals and ideals. This does not mean, however, that the issue of Expressionism was decided on and closed. Several more positive assessments of the movement continued to appear in the pages of the journal, such as those by Kurt Pinthus and Pál Hatvani, and Kassák spoke positively of people like Pfemfert and Goll who were attached to the Expressionist movement in his defense of Ma against Béla Kun. What this suggests is that the Hungarians had a more dynamic and complex relationship with Expressionism rather than just acceptance or rejection. Rather, the positives and negatives were discussed and explored, and their assessment was founded on the premise that elements could be gained from this movement that would be beneficial to the overall project of the Activists. This in part explains the continued contact between the Hungarians and the Germans such as Pfemfert and Walden, in that the
Hungarians had recognized similarities and like concerns in politics and art, and continued to see benefits in remaining in contact.

Final judgment on Expressionism was passed on paper early in the Vienna years. In his report on art in Berlin dated 1920/1921, and entitled "Új művészet" [New Art], Ernő Kállai announced the death of Expressionism and suggested it was time for the funeral service to be delivered. However, by 1921 this was hardly revolutionary news, as many of the German members were leaving the movement, and had been denouncing it in print as early as 1918. Kállai found value only in the work of Chagall, and it is possible that Walden's turn toward promoting artists such as Chagall and other Russians was what kept many of the Hungarians interested in events at his establishment, above and beyond the sheer commercial advantage of being presented in the Der Sturm galleries and publications. Whether it was one or both of these factors, the Hungarian avant-garde continued to maintain its connections with Walden and Der Sturm, even after Expressionism as a style was no longer a vital issue.

Futurism

The tangible and visible signs of the interaction between the Hungarian avant-garde and Italian Futurism are not as prevalent as those between the Hungarians and Germans. Certainly the Hungarians were early and well aware of Italian Futurism, both in its literary and visual art forms, but there are several reasons why the relationship never developed to the extent that it did with the Germans. I believe primarily it is because the Futurists did not develop a central organization, or consistently maintain a journal that would propagate their ideas and allow them to enter into long-term relationships of sharing material and interacting with other movements
The movement always centered around Marinetti personally, and was tied to the vicissitudes of his actions, opinions and location. Secondly, there were undoubtedly closer cultural ties between the Hungarians and Germans for reasons of geography and culture, many Hungarians also knew the German language, and if educated abroad, were so more often in Germany than in Italy. Third, the effective life span of Futurism was shorter in duration than that of many of the other avant-garde movements, since several of its most creative participants were either killed in the war (such as Boccioni and Sant'Elia), drastically changed style after the war (e.g. Carrà), or following Marinetti, were pulled into Italian Fascism. Certainly all this prevented Futurism as led by Marinetti to be the same kind of long-term and challenging foil to the Hungarians that Walden and the Der Sturm organization often was. Nevertheless, there are elements of Italian Futurism that were interesting to the Hungarians that they dealt with in their journal and their art, and other elements that were found less attractive or even faulty. As one of the most important early avant-garde movements along with Expressionism and Cubism, the Hungarians recognized the necessity to take stock of and learn from this early movement, and incorporate that knowledge into their own work.

The first exposure most Hungarians had to artistic Futurism was in 1913, at the Exhibition of Futurists and Expressionists held at the National Salon in Budapest. Seeing the works of artists like Boccioni, Russolo, Severini and Carrà inspired Kassák to write a rather poetic paean of Carrà's work "Funeral for the Anarchist Galli". By this time the Hungarians were already familiar with Futurist literature, primarily through the articles and reviews by Dezső Kósztolányi and Dezső Szabó published in Nyugat. Certainly Kassák was well aware of this material, as he carried on communication with Szabó even into
the years when he was publishing Ma, and in his literary work Futurism had certain impact. But in terms of visual art, the Hungarian avant-garde around Kassák had specific interests in Futurism, such as the Futurists' experimentation with movement into two-dimensional art, their interest in the machine, and the battle against, and destruction of, the past. Conversely, the Hungarians were less interested in Futurism's apotheosis of war and violence. Given the pacifist orientation of Kassák and his journals, this is understandable. However, actual reproductions of Futurist art work in Ma were few and far between. Boccioni was featured twice, with a sculpture on the cover on the issue of May 1, 1918 and a painting in the issue of May 15, 1919. If we turn to Hevesy's important article of 1919 in which he surveys and analyzes the various movements and their impact on and importance to Hungarian avant-garde art, we find that Futurism has already been quantified and judged in terms of its achievements and lessons. Hevesy is able to differentiate the aspects of Futurism that are prominent in various Italians' works, and praise or criticize where called for. Although Hevesy praised the Italians for their attempts to go further than Impressionism in the sense of instilling an inner spirit or idea, rather than simply recording the outer momentary sensation, in his judgment they fall short of this ideal, and are unable to truly move beyond the outward, physical reality. And while their goal of uniting outward movement and inner spirit simultaneously is admirable, for most this unity is never quite accomplished. This is perceptible visually as well Hevesy notes, as form and space are not brought together into true unity, and the problem is also reflected in titles such as Woman + Bottle + House, which reveals the additive nature of the approach rather than its synthesis. Hevesy by no means condemns all of Futurism or the Futurists. A number are praised, especially for attempting to capture dynamic movement,
analyze form, use abstraction, and trying to imbue the work with a unifying sensation or idea. The primary fault, however, is being tied too closely to mere outward, physical form, and in that sense, overdoing naturalism.\textsuperscript{97} Hevesy's text reflects many of the ideas predominate among the Ma group, including the lessening interest in visual art that attempts to reproduce nature and its forms (a fault that was found with styles as diverse as Impressionism and Cubism), and a greater interest in an abstract art that communicates ideas, which the Ma group will carry forward to Constructivism, as we will see later in this study.

In the Vienna years of \textit{Ma}, the kind of Italian material published changed considerably, reflecting the change of interest of the Futurists from painting to theater.\textsuperscript{98} There is one item by Marinetti, "Taktilizmus," printed in the June of 1921 issue of \textit{Ma}, not on theater but rather tactilism in general, which was given as a lecture by Marinetti in Paris at the L'Ouvre Theater.\textsuperscript{99} Other than this, the Futurist material consists of selections on theater, all featured in \textit{Ma}'s special theater and music issue of September 15, 1924. These include an article by Marinetti "Teatro Antipsicologico Astratto, di Puri Elementi e il Teatro Tattile", which appears to be a condensation of the Futurist manifesto "The Surprise Theatre" by Marinetti and Francesca CangiuUo of 1921.\textsuperscript{100} Also included in this issue is a text by Enrico Prampolini "Scéne Dinamique Futuriste" [sic], which is actually a retitled version of his 1915 manifesto "Futurist Scenography".\textsuperscript{101} And finally, a reproduction of a Prampolini stage set, which is an example of the geometric and innovative stage design that Prampolini was advocating for Futurist theater.\textsuperscript{102} As for personal contact between Marinetti and Kasság, this is best described as brief and strained. There is one letter from Marinetti in the Kassák archive, dated to 1923, which speaks of Marinetti's awareness of the journal \textit{Ma}, and his looking
forward to meeting Kassák in Vienna. They did meet in Vienna in 1924, at the International Exhibition of Stagecraft, and by all accounts the meeting did not go well. Primarily Kassák objected to Marinetti's political involvement with Mussolini, and did not hesitate to express it. This is quite understandable on the part of Kassák, as he had increasingly moved the journal Ma and its circle of artists away from direct political involvement with any particular party or group after the experience of 1919 in Hungary.

As was the case with Expressionism, by the Vienna period of Ma Futurism was largely a moot issue in terms of the visual arts. Certainly the Hungarians had by that time assessed and incorporated what was valuable about that movement, and the results can be seen in their work in the Budapest period. What was different in the case of Futurism is that the Hungarians had no fellow journal to interact with, no agreement on political issues, nor any commercial advantage to be found in maintaining a relationship with the Italian leader Marinetti as they had with Walden. This lack of a tangible and ongoing relationship is reflected in the scarcity and disunity of Italian material that found its way into Ma, which was countered by their different attitude towards Cubism.

Cubism

Unlike the example of Italy, a number of Hungarian artists of this generation did go to France for an education in art, and were in some cases close to certain circles of Cubists in Paris. However, most of the artists who had such direct ties to Cubism were not vital members of the Activist group around Ma, and thus the Activists' contact with Cubism was seldom direct. Several, such as Valéria Dénes, Sándor Galimberti and János Kmetty had spent time in France, and also had dealings with the Ma group, but this contact was
limited and unlikely to have been the major conduit of Cubist theory and practice into the Ma circle. The couple Dénes and Galimberti were given one posthumous exhibition by the Ma gallery in 1918, and Kmetty's Cubist borrowings are actually more after Cézanne. Other Hungarian painters of this period who were in close contact with Cubists never had any relationship to the journal Ma, or the artists around it. However, there were a number of important theoretical texts of Cubism printed in Ma that I would argue shaped the Ma group's understanding of this French movement in certain ways, and actually reveal the biases of the Activists in terms of incorporating only some aspects of Cubism into their larger goals and program.

The earliest appearance of Cubism in the pages of Ma is the article by the French critic and essayist Jacques Rivière entitled "A festészet mai követelményei" [Today's Requirements of Painting] in the issues of April and of May 15, 1917. One of the more conservative critics of Cubism, Rivière takes the Cubists to task for what he sees as their failure to represent things as they are, that is differently than the way we see them. Although he notes the Cubist attempt to do away with traditional means of using light and perspective in painting, he also concludes that the Cubists had reached absurdity and anarchy in their work by taking the negation of these traditional elements too far. Rivière's criticism was couched in a dislike of Impressionism, particularly in its practice of seizing the moment (through its depiction of light, for example), and its vaunting of the individual sensibility. What Rivière advocated was unity, stability, solidity and permanence in the objects represented. These are principles that are reflective of Rivière's interest in classical French art (i.e., Poussin), and his relatively conservative position in French cultural and political debates in pre-World War I France. It is interesting that the first Cubist text that Ma
printed was this. Clearly Rivière was more politically and culturally conservative than the Activists around Kassák and Ma, but perhaps they were not aware of the national context of this essay. And Rivière's text is rather unusual in that he clearly attacks some of the major weaknesses of the Cubists at a relatively early date, and does so while advocating principles of stability, permanence, and essence—in fact the very principles that the Cubists like Picasso and Braque ended up completely questioning and violating. However, I think that the Hungarians did choose this rather unusual text for specific reason, in that it supported a number of their own conceptions about the proper form and purpose of art. Rivière's insistence on the purpose of art to represent the essence, or true form of the object, not its mere appearance, is central to the Ma group's conception of art. Like Rivière, the Activists were anti-Impressionist, and like Rivière they would increasingly concern themselves with construction of space and objects based on the principles of stability and the representation of the essential. By the early 1920s when the Hungarians turned to advocating Constructivism, they would base their evolution to Constructivism in part on this particular reading of Cubism, as we will see below.

The other major text of French Cubism was Apollinaire's "A Kubizmus", published in the issue of February 26, 1919. The beginning of Apollinaire's text must have been attractive to the Hungarians as the author invoked the virtues of art—purity, unity and truth. Although Apollinaire's categories of Cubism, such as Scientific Cubism or Physical Cubism were never widely accepted, his discussion of geometry, the search of the Cubists for the ideal, and his criticism of an art based on man rather than the universal would have appealed to the Hungarian Activists. Thus we see that the Hungarians around Ma were choosing texts that clustered around several conceptions concerning
Cubism, and that these texts discussed Cubism in terms that were relevant to the goals and theories that the Hungarians had about art. Primarily these had to do with understanding light and perspective as arbitrary, a search for the essential or stable despite the world of appearances, and a tendency to categorize and evaluate Cubism based on experiments with geometry, space and abstraction.

In terms of theory we can finally turn to two texts by Kassák that sum up the Hungarian's processing of the three major movements of the early avant-garde—Expressionism, Futurism and Cubism. Clearly the Ma group thought that these three were the most important, and those that future art would be built upon. Kassák's articles are written in terms of describing the evolution of art towards Constructivism (a geometric, abstract art), and thus the discussion of the three movements is geared to understanding how each contributed to, and ultimately failed in, moving forward to the greater goal of constructive art. Kassák here is setting up an argument that will lead to proving that Constructivism, an art of purity, geometry, and generated from within through its own laws, was the superior product of the Hungarian analysis and distillation of the preceding movements. Although we will save the full discussion of Constructivism for below, his texts do provide concise summations of the three preceding art movements. As Kassák saw it, Futurism explored aspects of dynamic representation, Cubism that of the physical world, and Expressionism psychological representation. However, Futurism really only represented moving objects, not movement itself; rather than signifying only itself, Expressionism lapsed into depicting psychological events or telling stories, and Cubism apprehended the world through optical or psychological means, and ended up representing objects outside of itself. The drawback to all of these movements pivots around the idea of re-presenting. Kassák praises
the Futurists for attempting to show movement through the abstract force of
form, but they were depicting objects apprehended in movement, and thus
outside themselves. The Cubists are identified as those searching for
stability of things and facts, giving concrete form to principles, but because
they paint subject matter such as still-lifes, they are still depicting something
outside themselves, not something generated from within. And
Expressionism unfortunately lapsed into representation, according to Kassák,
because it did not paint feelings, but rather expressively painted
representational objects or themes. The faults that he finds with Futurism,
Expressionism and Cubism had their beginnings and reached germination in
the previous years of Ma's coverage and criticism of certain aspects of these
movements. Beginning in the Budapest years, Ma had advocated change not
just in the outward elements of life, but postulated that through art one could
recreate man’s inner self and create universal revolutionary change in a
rational and active manner. It is with these goals in mind that we can
understand their reception and analysis of Expressionism, Futurism and
Cubism, their advocacy of Constructivism, and finally, the inability of an art
history focused on stylistic definition and formal, rather than ideological,
concerns to be inadequate to the task of dealing with this group of the
Hungarian avant-garde.
This position has been argued most completely and convincingly in various publications by Krisztina Passuth and Júlia Szabó.

This is also true of Kassák's first journal A Tett, as discussed in Chapter Two.


The role and importance of Kurt Hiller to German Activism is discussed at length in Wurgaft's article.

This anti-war stance of Pfemfert placed his journal under censorship, and he was limited to publishing literary work during the war.

See S. A. Mansbach, "Revolutionary Engagements: The Hungarian Avant-Garde," in Standing in the Tempest: Painters of the Hungarian Avant-Garde 1908-1930, ed. S. A. Mansbach (Cambridge, Mass.: The MIT Press, for the Santa Barbara Museum of Art, 1991): 86, note 20 discusses the circumstances of A Tett's banning by the Ministry of the Interior. See also note 39 on the debate that has grown up around whether it was actually political censorship or something as prosaic as a paper shortage that forced an end to the publication.


A useful bibliography of four of the journals published by Kassák is, Ilona Illés, A Tett (1915-1916) Ma (1916-1925) 2 x 2 (1922) Repertórium (Budapest: Petőfi Irodalmi Múzeum, 1975). References are based on the facsimile reprint of Ma, published in Budapest in 1971 by Akadémiai Kiadó, as are all of my references. Walden published two items in Ma, which will be discussed below.

For instance, Hugo Ignotus, the editor of Nyugat has a short essay in Die Aktion, January 24, 1914, but this is obviously before the Ma group, and Ignotus was not associated with them.

Levinger, 82. She lists Henri Guilbeaux, Marcel Martinet, Paul-Jean Jouve and René Arcos as pacifists published by both, and Senna Hoy, Carl Einstein, Karl Otten, Ludwig Rubiner and Ivan Goll as the Germans published in Ma.
This list of Die Aktion books appears with a list of Ma books, and a listing of Der Sturm books. Most of the Die Aktion offerings are poetry, along with two novels by Franz Jung.

The first time these squares appear in the journal is in issue of Ma8, no. 1 (October 15, 1922): 12. This format, with some changes in which journals appear, is repeated again in September of 1923, and in the issue of July, 1924 (in which Die Aktion does not appear).

The listings of books and journals received also appeared in Ma9, nos. 6-7 (July 1, 1924) along with the final instance of the squares.

This is mentioned by Júlia Szabó, "L'activisme hongrois et son époque" in L'activisme Hongrois, eds. Charles Dautrey and Jean-Claude Guerlain (Paris: Editions Goutal-Darly, 1979), 60. For example, Luxemburg in 1914 on anti-war sentiments, Spartacist politics, etc., but Szabó gives no specific references.

Ma4, no. 1 (January 26, 1919) issue featured an obituary for Rosa Luxemburg entitled "Merész Játék" (Bold Game), and a poem "Liebknecht Károlynak" (For Karl Liebknecht) by Kassák. The two had been murdered on January 15, 1919. Ma5, no. 4 (April 10, 1919): 62 featured a poem by György Hercz "Liebknecht Halálán" (On Liebknecht's Death), and Ma6, no. 4 (February 15, 1921): 51 "story" by Sándor Barta "Mese a citromsárga tornyokról" (Tale of the Lemon-Yellow Towers), subtitled for Liebknecht and Luxemburg. Kassák also mentioned Liebknecht and Luxemburg in connection with Pfemfert's politics in his defense of Ma's pedigree to Béla Kun in 1919 when under criticism from the Communist regime. See "Levél Kun Bélához a Művészet Nevében", Ma4, no. 7 (June, 1919): 147.

Szabó, 60.


"Activism" was delivered as a lecture by Kassák on February 20, 1919 and published in Ma4, no. 4 (April, 1919). It can be found in English translation in Levinger, 85-86.

Guilbeaux was one of those pacifist poets published by both Die Aktion and Ma.

See translation in Levinger, 86. It is interesting to note that throughout the document one can find those ideas typical of German Expressionist thought, such as the moral and conscious New Man, the mission and efficacy of art, and man's spiritual rebirth.

For example, Szabó considers the possibility that works seen in the journal, particularly of religious subject matter, may have iconographically been important to some of the Hungarian artists. However, as is standard, Die Aktion and Der Sturm are both cited simultaneously as places where this kind of German work could be seen. Júlia Szabó, A Magyar Aktivistmusk Művészete 1915-1927 (Budapest: Corvina, 1981): 49-50.


36 Walden was also instrumental in showing a number of the Eastern European avant-gardes, such as Czech Cubism and Polish Postimpressionism, as well as the more familiar Western groups. Szabó, *A magyar aktivizmus*, 49. This would probably make Walden and *Der Sturm* seem more sympathetic to avant-garde causes in this part of Europe.

37 Dube, 160-61 quotes from Paul Klee twice, where he disparages Walden's commercial skill and lack of caring for the art itself, and again where he accuses Sturm of being "establishment," and no longer of the avant-garde. Elderfield, 30 describes the Sturm group as "soft and permissive" by 1918 when Schwitters joined, and quotes a contemporary critic, Paul Westheim, questioning the quality of contemporary Sturm exhibitions.

38 In letter from Moholy-Nagy to Iván Hevesy, April 5, 1920, available in translation in Krisztina Passuth, *Moholy-Nagy* (New York: Thames and Hudson Inc., 1985): 388. Of course, this did not prevent Moholy-Nagy from becoming involved with Walden and Der Sturm, as we will see below.


40 Ibid., 121. Ma in 1919 also published a series of special issues, including one featuring Lenin's essay "State and Revolution".


42 Ibid.

43 The two major announcements of the deaths of these contributors is practically the only indication that the war was going on, otherwise the journal was disturbingly quiet about this event, even though a number of the artists and writers connected to the journal were involved in the war. The death of Stramm was announced on the cover of September, 1915 number 11/12, that of Marc on March, 1916, number 23/24.

44 Palmier, 120. Unfortunately, Palmier does not give direct references as to where this conflict can be found within the journals. As was Walden's habit, rival journals or individuals were seldom mentioned within *Der Sturm*. For example, *Die Aktion*, the other most important Expressionist journal was mentioned only twice in the entire run of *Der Sturm*, Jones, 15. As to Walden's mercantilism, it is interesting to note that it was primarily Nell Walden's salary, and her purchasing of Sturm artist's works that financially supported the journal during the war, which Walden kept a secret. This would come back to haunt him, as he was later accused of profiteering on these works during the war, and Nell had to reimburse artists such as Kandinsky and Chagall during the 1920's, Jones, 7. We can get some sense of the artists' resentment of Walden's financial position (whether accurate or not) in Moholy-Nagy's quote above.

51
Elderfield, 33. In particular, Elderfield is referring to the younger generation of German avant-garde artists who were to repudiate Expressionism and develop Berlin Dada.

Raoul Hausmann quoted in Elderfield, 33. The quote is dated to 1958. The Prussian reference refers to the article "Das hohe Lied des Preussentums" by Walden, appearing in the January 1916 issue of Der Sturm.

Palmier, 120.

Quoted in Palmier, 122, but without direct references.

This is so ubiquitous throughout the journal that it seems unnecessary to list every political essay and article here.

Mansbach, 88, note 53. Mansbach here outlines some of the benefits to the Hungarians through their maintenance of the connection with Walden. Mansbach seems to suggest in this note that the Hungarian re-evaluation of Expressionism did not begin until the early years in Vienna, but actually one can argue that it began already in the Budapest years, which will be discussed below. However, this does not nullify the basic point that the Hungarians maintained commercial and exhibiting ties with Walden and his organization despite their opinion of Expressionism.

Krisztina Passuth, Magyar művészek az európai avantgarde-ban: a kubizmustól a konstruktivizmusig 1919-1925 (Budapest: Corvina, 1974), 46.

This comparison is based on the design of Der Sturm up until 1919, when it changes and simplifies substantially, and Ma in the Budapest years. Its design also changes substantially after the move to Vienna. This similarity is also noted in Júlia Szabó, "A Cimlap Fontos" : Kassák Lajos Kiadványainak Cimlapjai 1912-1934", in Kassák Lajos 1887-1967 (Budapest: A Magyar Nemzeti Galéria és A Petőfi Irodalmi Múzeum, 1987), 84.

A short biography of the artist can be found in Standing in the Tempest, 233. Mátíts-Teutsch was of Saxon descent, born in Transylvania, and was important in both Hungarian and Romanian art circles. He is discussed at greater length in Chapter Seven, within the section on Romania.

Ma 2, no. 12 (October 15, 1917) reproduces the poster announcing the exhibition, with a short article by Kassák on the artist.

The first appears to be by Franz Marc, although it has no caption. Second is a woodcut by Georg Schrimpff, then the linocut by Mátíts-Teutsch, and finally a woodcut by Maria Uhden. I believe these four are linked because of obvious similarities in style, although one could argue that Mátíts-Teutsch's is the most abstract. It is a landscape, but the curving, sinuous forms can also be seen as verging toward expressivity in abstraction.

Two woodcuts in 1919; 1 linocut in September 1922; 1 linocut October of 1922; 1 linocut in September of 1923; 2 woodcuts in November of 1923; 1 linocut in March of 1924 admir a number of other Hungarian artists; and 2 linocuts in May of 1925. As I am comparing with Ma, I am only listing up until 1925. Interestingly, most of Mátíts-Teutsch's work in Ma appears in the Budapest period. Only 2 works in 1920, and just 1 in 1921 were the only reproductions in the Vienna period, the possible reasons for this change are discussed in Chapter Seven.

Der Sturm 10, no. 8 (1919).

Ma 4, no. 6 (June 1, 1919). This particular work by Uhden had previously appeared in Der Sturm 9, no. 1 (April, 1918).

There seems to be some slight discrepancy about exactly which month Máttais-Teutsch's work was shown there. Botar in his Chronology of Standing in the Tempest, 197 places it in July/August, another source first lists his name in the exhibition roster in September of 1921, Volker Pirsich, Der Sturm: Eine Monographie (Herzberg: Verlag Traugott Bautz, 1985), 681. I was unable to find any indication directly in Der Sturm itself as to when this happened, but it is a minor matter.

A number of these letters can be found in both Hungarian and English in Ferenc Csaplár, Kassák Lajos az európai mozgalmakban 1916-1928 (Budapest: Kassák Múzeum és Archívum, 1994): 18-24. English translations by Eva Polgár. These correspondents include Tristan Tzara, Theo van Doesburg and Ivan Goll.

Csaplár, 11 reproduces a postcard from Walden to Kassák dated 1928, but not only is the date late, it is also quite brief.

Der Sturm 9, no. 10 (January 1919): 130, translated by Rudolf Blümmer, and in Ma 7, nos. 5-6 (May 1, 1922): 16, translated by Sándor Barta.

Der Sturm 11, no. 5: 69. Ma 7, no. 8 (August 30, 1922): 57.


Letter from Ivan Goll to Lajos Kassák, dated August 22, 1922. In Csaplár, 21. Goll mentions that this is to be published in a "special issue", but it does not appear in Ma.

Moholy-Nagy's name appears only once in connection with Ma during the Budapest period, when he signed a revolutionary statement of the group in March 1919. His only show in Hungary took place in Szeged in December of 1919 with the sculptor Sándor Gergely. Directly after this he left for a short stay in Vienna, and then on to Berlin where he settled until joining the Bauhaus staff in April of 1923. See Passuth, Moholy-Nagy, 14-16. This issue of Ma 4, no. 5 (March 15, 1921), features a Dadaist woodcut by Moholy-Nagy in the midst of other material in the issue that suggests Kassák had grouped the contents with Dadaism in mind, such as two short texts by Hans Arp and Richard Huelsenbeck, a poem by Mózes Kahána entitled "Szívárvány [Rainbow] which is reminiscent of Schwitters with its invocation of "Anna", and a Dadaist-inspired drawing by Sándor Bortnyik. As is typical of the journal however, this is not entirely consistent, since the cover features one of Kassák's Constructivist linocuts. The significance of this kind of mix will be discussed fully in Chapter Six.

Kállai was an art historian/critic studying in Germany, who would become a major proponent of Constructivism in Ma. For more on him, see Chapter Six.
Moholy-Nagy in *Der Sturm* August of 1921, January 1922, September 1922, January 1923, October 1923, January 1924, two in March of 1924 (a Hungarian issue), and September 1924. September of 1922, October of 1923 and September of 1924 were covers. The vast majority of Moholy-Nagy's work in *Ma* appeared in the issue of September, 1921. He did have one cover, a glass architecture, in May of 1922. One work by him (from 1922) also appears in a late issue of *Ma* in January of 1925, but it is a special case as it is an anniversary issue.

See Ferenc Csaplárs, "Kassák Lajos Berlinben," in *Kassák Lajos: 1887-1967*, 103-05. Csaplárs suggests that on this trip Kassák may have met not only Walden, but also Hans Arp, El Lissitzky, Archipenko, Georg Grosz, Richard Huelsenbeck, Hans Richter and Raoul Hausmann. For more on Kassák's reaction to the Van Diemen exhibition see Chapter Six.

Ibid., 104.

*Der Sturm*, no. 2, 1924. There seems to be some confusion concerning which month this actually appeared. Botar in his Chronology in *Standing in the Tempest*, 204 identifies the second quarterly issue as July/August. Ilona Illés, *Repertórium*, 63 places it in June. The announcement in *Ma* of the *Der Sturm* issue focusing on Hungarian material also cites it as June. *Ma* 9, nos. 6-7 (July 1, 1924): 155. My examination of the journal places it in June as well.

Because I am focusing on the journal *Ma*, my discussion of *Der Sturm* is targeting only those artists and writers who were regularly featured in *Ma* and who were at one time or another connected to the Activists and/or Kassák. Thus I am not discussing a number of other Hungarian artists who were in *Der Sturm* regularly but were not a part of the circle around Kassák, such as Hugó Scheiber, Béla Kádár, and László Péri to name a few.

Csaplár, 104. Published in February, 1923 it featured a number of Kassák's Dadaist poems, "The Horse Dies and the Birds Away", and four of Kassák's Constructivist linocuts.

Of course Máttyás-Teutsch was exhibited, and Moholy-Nagy a number of times, and a rather impressive list of other Hungarian artists who were not closely allied to Kassák and his journal. For a compact list see Krisztina Passuth, "*Der Sturm* der Ungarn," in *Wechsel Wirkungen: Ungarische Avantgarde in der Weimarer Republik*, ed. Hubertus Gassner (Marburg: Jonas Verlag, 1986), 60. Although it is interesting to note that both Kassák and Bortnyik were shown only once, and even more radically political Hungarians like Béla Uitz were not shown at all. Primarily Walden continued his interest in more Expressionist artists, such as Scheiber and Kádár.

These are "Dynamic-Constructive System of Forces" by Moholy-Nagy and Alfréd Kemény (*Der Sturm*, December 1922); "The Hungarian Activist Movement" by Andreas Gáspar (no. 3, 1924); and "Society, Artist, Art" by Reiter (no. 2, 1924). The last appeared in *Ma* 8, nos. 2-3 (December 25, 1922).

The article by Walden was "Technology and Art" which appeared in *Ma* 9, no. 1 (September 15, 1923): 93. The article originally was published in *Der Sturm* in April of 1921. The second article by Walden, "The Theater as Artistic Phenomenon" appeared in *Ma* in the September 15, 1924 issue.

*Ma* 4, no. 3 (March 20, 1919): 31-40.

Ibid., 39.
Má 4, no. 2 (February 26, 1919): 23-24. Mácza was a frequent contributor to the pages of Ma, writing primarily on theater. He was the director of Ma's theater school, which had been established in 1917 (the same year as Der Sturm's). In the early 1920's he relocated to Kassa, which was then newly a part of Czechoslovakia, and became the cultural editor of Kassai Munkas [Kassa Worker]. Afterwards he moved permanently to the Soviet Union, and wrote extensively on art under the name Ivan Matsa. For more on his activities in Kassa see Chapter Seven. For information on his life and work in the Soviet Union see John E. Bowlt, "Hungarian Activism and the Russian Avant-garde," in Standing in the Tempest, 162-64.

The clearest and most concise distillation of these goals and ideas can be found in Kassák's lecture "Activism", delivered on February 20, 1919 (thus precisely contemporary with Mácza's article). It was printed in Ma in April of 1919. It can be found in English translation in Levinger, 85-86.

By criticizing Stramm, one can say that Mácza was really striking at the heart of German Expressionism, and more particularly, Walden and Der Sturm. Although Stramm had been killed in the war in 1915, Walden continued to publish his material frequently in his journal long after his death. The sheer scope and frequency of his appearance has provoked discussions of the cult of Stramm within the Der Sturm circle. And, of course, Stramm is considered one of the greatest of the German Expressionist poets. On the issue of Stramm and Der Sturm see Malcolm Jones, "The Cult of August Stramm in Der Sturm," Seminar 13, no. 4 (November, 1977).

Pinthus can be found in Ma 4, no. 5 (May 15, 1919); Hatvani in Ma 4, no. 6 (June 1, 1919); Kassák's letter to Kun in Ma 4, no. 7 (June 15, 1919).

Ma 6, no. 7 (June 1, 1921): 99.

Dube, 203-07.


This is not to suggest that the Futurists had no journals, for example, Marinetti's literary journal Poesia was certainly read by the Hungarians, and Kassák's various copies of it are in his collection in the Kassák Museum. Dr. Csapárd, director of the Museum, suggested to me that he believes Poesia was an early and important conduit for Futurism into Hungary. Also in the Museum's collection are a large number of various Futurist pamphlets and flyers, suggesting that the Hungarians were well aware of the various Futurist manifestos and published proclamations. What I am pointing out here is that there was not one Futurist journal, both literary and artistic that consistently and over a long span of time was the centerpiece or concerted voice of the movement. This is in contrast to the Hungarian journal Ma, or the German Der Sturm, for example.

This is clearly expressed in Hevesy's article "Túl az impresszionizmuson", cited above, where Expressionism, Futurism and Cubism are identified as the three trends that the Hungarians wished not to tie themselves to, but rather learn from their results and take further in their own direction.

This is covered thoroughly in Ferenc Csaplá, "Kassák és Szabó Dezső", in ed. Ferenc Csaplá, Magam Tövénye Szerint: Tanulmányok és dokumentumok Kassák Lajos születésének századik évfordulójára (Budapest: Petőfi Irodalmi Múzeum és Múzeum Közművelődési Kiadó, 1987), 47-63. As this primarily deals with issues in literature, and my interest is art, this will not be dealt with in this dissertation. Italian poets were featured relatively rarely in the pages of the journal, in the Budapest period only two in 1918, Libero Alomare and Paolo Buzzi. In 1921, one Luciano Folgore poem.

Szabó, A magyar aktivizmus művészete, 47.


The byline also adds that it was printed in Comédia in January of 1921, suggesting that this is where the staff of Ma had access to it. Ma also reports receiving Marinetti's text in its list of books and journals received in August, 1921.

This article in Ma is in Italian, and does contain some sections of the 1921 Futurist text. An English translation of "The Surprise Theatre" can be found in Taylor, 81-87.

The text is in French in Ma. An English version can be found in Taylor, 57-60.

Taylor, 60 discusses Prampolini's ideas and gives examples, the one in Ma, however, is not one that is presented. This comparison is my own.

The original Hungarian letter and its English translation can be found in Csaplá, Kassák az európai avantgárd mozgalmakban, 24.

This is primarily the result of the failure of the Activists to successfully work with the ruling political party in Hungary's Communist period of 1919. Into the 1920s, Kassák continued to insist on the separation of artists from any political party, which would cause a number of Hungarian artists to leave Ma, an issue that will be discussed in Chapter Six.

Júlia Szabó, "Color, Light, Form & Structure: New Experiences in Hungarian Painting, 1890-1930," Standing in the Tempest, 117-18. Obviously, due to the period strictures of this dissertation I am not discussing the large number of important Hungarian artists of the previous generations who studied in France, such as József Rippl-Rónai and Károly Ferenczy.

Denes and Galimberti had died in 1915, her from illness, him from suicide at her death. Kmetty had designed some covers for the Ma journal and had exhibited there, but any Cubist technique in his work is slight, primarily being more reminiscent of Cézanne.

These include Imre Szobotka and József Csáky.


Ibid., 747.

Ibid., 748-50.

Ma 4, no. 2 (February 26, 1919): 16-21, translated by Zsófia Dénes. Dénes would also be the translator for the book, which was announced as available from the Ma press in the next issue of the journal, March of 1919. The text is Apollinaire’s The Cubist Painters of 1913. Sections available in English translation in Herschel B. Chipp, Theories of Modern Art (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1968): 220-228.

I am at this point not dealing with two late articles loosely concerning Cubism, both published in 1922. One was by Gleizes, "Painting" 1922, in the issue of May 1, 1922 and a programmatic article by Kállai "Cubism and Future Art", in the issue of January 1, 1922. Kállai’s article is a reading of Cubism that is predicated on Constructivism as the art of the future. Because of their late date and other purposes, they are outside this current discussion of the Activist's reading of and reaction to Cubism.

These two are "Jegyzetek az új művészethez" [Notes on the New Art], and "Abrázoló és teremtő festészet" [Representational and Creative Painting], both available in Lajos Kassák, Eljünk a mi időnkben: írások a képzőművészetről (Budapest: Magvető Könyvkiadó, 1978). These two originally appeared in Bécsi magyar újság [Viennese Hungarian Newspaper], the Hungarian expatriate newspaper in Vienna, in 1922.

For a very helpful discussion of these texts and others that made up Kassák's understanding of art history see Esther Levinger, "Kassák's Reading of Art History," Hungarian Studies Review 15, no. 1 (Spring 1988): 25-35.

Ibid., 26-7.

Kassák, "Abrázoló és teremtő festészet", 77.

Ibid.
MA AS INTERNATIONAL PLATFORM: RELATIONSHIP WITH DE STIJL AND
RESPONSE TO THE INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS OF PROGRESSIVE ARTISTS

Ma's relationship with the Dutch journal De Stijl, and through that the
opportunity to respond and contribute to the discussion surrounding the
International Congress of Progressive Artists held in Düsseldorf in 1922, is a
compelling example of Ma's position as an international platform on which
the Hungarians could position themselves in the ideological and artistic
debates surrounding international avant-garde art. Ma played a public role in
representing the Hungarian avant-garde through which they could engage
with the larger international sphere, yet their contribution to the public
debates reveals equally significant differences that were the result of their
political experiences and artistic goals as formed in the Hungarian context.
A primary locus for such contributions and exchange was Van Doesburg's
De Stijl, a journal which in many ways represents an interesting Western
parallel to the journal of the Hungarians. Exploring this parallel, and
identifying the artistic and theoretical variances between the journals and
their editors is the central concern of this chapter.

De Stijl

De Stijl (1917-1932) and its editor, Theo Van Doesburg, came into
significant contact with the Hungarian avant-garde when the Hungarians
moved into a wider European context with the relocation to Vienna in 1920. Much like Kassák's journal *Ma*, *De Stijl* was the product of the convictions and concerns of its editor Van Doesburg. Van Doesburg also was a promoter and ideologue of a plan for modernization, that included the publication of a journal, lecture tours and performances, and an evolving theory of modern art that encompassed literature, painting and architecture. More than just a style or a journal, *De Stijl* was an aesthetic and ideological plan based on universalism over individualism, a geometric, abstract style composed of a limited set of formal elements, and so committed to the universal validity of its methods that it purported international unity in life, art and culture would result from its practice. In order to promote the *De Stijl* vision of modern art, Van Doesburg actively sought international contacts, and involved himself in the major debates and styles of the period, such as Dada, Constructivism and the Bauhaus program. Like Kassák for the Hungarians, Van Doesburg was a tireless promoter and director of Dutch modernism, and did so within a web of international connections and debates. Both men were grounded in a concern for advancing modern art and its involvement in contemporary life, and applied themselves to new poetry, painting and the design of the modern environment. Thus it is not surprising that Kassák and Van Doesburg would interact in the early 1920s, an interaction that is manifest in the contents and concerns of both journals.

Before beginning the analysis of the actual contents of the journals, we need to address the logistics of how information and material was shared between the Hungarian and Dutch groups. Surprisingly, one of the primary members of the *De Stijl* group, Vilmos Huszár, was Hungarian. However, he had moved to Holland in 1905 and remained there, never becoming a member of the *Ma* group. His work was reproduced only once in *Ma*, and he seems
not to have played any role in terms of contact between the two groups, or even translating material. There could be several reasons for this. One is that Huszár was not a political activist, and may have considered himself very remote from this group of Hungarian artists who had, and would continue to involve themselves very much in politics. Additionally, there were far more direct possibilities for communication between the Hungarians and Dutch, such as the 1922 International Congress of Progressive Artists at Düsseldorf, which was attended by both Van Doesburg and possibly Moholy-Nagy. Moreover, the substantial number of Hungarians at the Bauhaus at the same time as Van Doesburg, including the Ma group's Sándor Bortnyik, Moholy-Nagy's presence in Germany in 1921 and 1922 as Ma correspondent during the period of Van Doesburg's heaviest activity there, helped to link the two groups, as did the direct correspondence between Van Doesburg and Kassák, which is preserved in the letters of the Theo Van Doesburg archive. What we will see is that between 1921 and 1923 there was a period of sustained communication and exchange between these two groups and their respective journals, particularly concerning the evolution of the policies and ideologies of the international avant-garde in terms of art's role in contemporary life.

Significantly, the first Dutch avant-garde material published in Ma was one of Van Doesburg's poems in the X-Beelden series, under his pseudonym of I. K. Bonset, in April of 1921. As Kassák was himself primarily a poet and continued to publish his newest poetry in Ma throughout its entire run, it is understandable that his first contact with, and appreciation of the Dutch avant-garde might focus on poetry rather than art. The following year of 1922 was the most active in terms of Dutch material published in Ma. There is a letter from Kassák to Van Doesburg dated to February of 1922 which speaks of Van Doesburg having sent material to Kassák for publication, some of which
was to appear in the Jubilee issue of that year (May/June), and most in the following issue of July 1922.9 Kassák also makes a request for reproductions of "the architectural and technical things" in De Stijl, and promises to send material of his own to Van Doesburg. A number of works by Dutch artists and architects connected to De Stijl do appear in the Jubilee double issue of May/June 1922, amid a wide variety of artists of various nationalities. The Dutch works include a Composition by Van Doesburg, which is most likely the representative work by Van Doesburg that Kassák had promised to publish in this Jubilee issue.10 Van Doesburg is also listed as available in Ma's postcard series in this issue.11 There is also a Composition by Mondrian of 1921, which notes in the caption that it is from "De Stijl". This very work by Mondrian had been published in De Stijl in August of 1921, an issue of De Stijl that Ma had reported receiving in its first list of books and journals received in August of 1921.12 It is possible that Kassák either removed this reproduction from his copy of De Stijl, or it was one of those reproductions sent by Van Doesburg to Kassák early in 1922.13 Also included in this Jubilee issue is the one work by Vilmos Huszár ever reproduced in Ma. Among the Dutch architecture featured in this issue are two works by J. J. P. Oud. There is also a floor plan and exterior photograph of a concrete apartment block by Pamo en Hardeveld [sic], which again credits "De Stijl" as its source.14 This building originally appeared in De Stijl in December of 1921, the very same issue that contains a photograph of an American airplane hangar under construction, which found its way also into this Jubilee issue of Ma in May/June of 1922. The reproduction of the airplane hangar also gives its source as "De Stijl", and the captions in both journals make clear that it is the world's largest, and being constructed in America. Two images that just happen to be in the same issue of De Stijl, and then end up in the same issue of Ma at least suggests to me that it is
a real possibility that Kassák was directly cutting examples of what he found to be interesting and relevant material from the Dutch journal and placing it into the new context of *Ma*. To be frank it was being pulled from the comparatively staid and ordered context of *De Stijl* to be mixed in *Ma* with Kassák's truly striking Dada-inspired poetry and typography experiments, an aerial photograph of New York City, works by Schlemmer, Lipchitz, Picabia, Man Ray, El Lissitzky, Moholy-Nagy and Tatlin, a wide variety of poetry from many sources, and even a translation of a Zulu folktale. Granted this was a special Jubilee issue and Kassák was not holding back, but no issue of *De Stijl*, even the special numbers, ever matched the sheer variety and excitement of the mix that *Ma* would publish in the early 1920s. Even when Van Doesburg experimented with Dada poetry, he did so under the pseudonym of I. K. Bonset, rather than giving space to the variety of international Dada poets that Kassák would in *Ma*. Always when looking at *De Stijl* one senses the filtering process of Van Doesburg and his goal of promoting the De Stijl ideology and style, which did not allow for the variety and mix of material that found its way into the pages of *Ma*.

The next issue of *Ma*, that of July of 1922, was largely devoted to the work of Theo Van Doesburg. This is the material that Kassák spoke of in his letter to Van Doesburg of February, 1922 in which he promised to publish the majority of the reproductions and the article that Van Doesburg had sent in the issue after the Jubilee number. Van Doesburg's work is featured on the cover, and there are reproductions of eleven more works inside. The article by Van Doesburg, "Architecture as the Synthesis of the Plastic Arts", appeared in Hungarian under the title "Az építészet mint szintetikus művészet".15 Certainly Kassák would have been interested in and sympathetic with such material from Van Doesburg, as in 1921 he had developed his ideas on the
importance of architecture to art in his theory of Képarchitektúra [Picture-architecture]. According to Kassák, it was the principles of the universal new order and of the absolute in architecture that were to be the inspiration for the construction of the picture. Of course Van Doesburg and Kassák were far from the only two in this period postulating the importance of architecture to early twentieth century art, but it does underscore the similarities between these two and why they might each have decided that the mutual exchange and publication of material was beneficial and interesting on an international level. De Stijl reciprocated with an issue featuring a variety of Hungarian material also in July of 1922. The cover featured a composition by László Péri, followed by Moholy-Nagy's essay, "Production—Reproduction", and contained one reproduction of a work by Moholy-Nagy, and three Képarchitektúra compositions by Kassák. The back page also featured an advertisement for Ma's Van Doesburg issue, which was listed as available for purchase both in Holland and Weimar. The source for these copies may be found in another letter from Kassák preserved in the Van Doesburg archive. In it, Kassák takes Van Doesburg to task for having sent the wrong amount of money to cover the 100 copies of Ma's special issue that had been sent. I think it likely that this refers to copies of Ma featuring the Van Doesburg material. This letter also reveals another important reason why Kassák was interested in promoting such international exchanges of material beyond the sharing of mutually interesting work, in that this was a way for Kassák to make money for his financially strapped journal, and also reach a wider international audience, in this case both in Holland and in Weimar.

Throughout 1922 and 1923 it appears that each group continued to receive the others' journals. The relationship seems to have cooled off after 1923, as De Stijl was not listed as received in 1924, although this is
understandable as *De Stijl* was only issued twice that year. *Má* first appears in *De Stijl*'s list of received journals in December of 1921, which reports receiving six issues from *Má*'s run of 1921. De Stijl continues to list having received *Má* from 1921 into 1924. There are also several more instances where various reproductions that appeared in *De Stijl* also appear in *Má* at a later date, although it is difficult to determine whether *Má* necessarily borrowed them from *De Stijl*. These reproductions are technical or machine objects, rather than works of art. Perhaps Kassák pulled these images from copies of *De Stijl* he had in his possession, or they were from the collection of "architectural and technical things" that Kassák had requested from Van Doesburg in his letter of February 1922. In any case, they do reveal an interest on the part of *Má* in this kind of mechanical and technical material that the Hungarians recognized as an important facet of what was being featured and promoted in *De Stijl*. We can recall also that this kind of material formed the important context for contemporary art in Moholy-Nagy and Kassák's *Új művészek könyve* that they were preparing in the spring and summer of 1922. Their shared interest in such material is also revealed in the two journals' substantial coverage of the abstract film theory and drawings of Viking Eggeling and Hans Richter. Van Doesburg first visited the two artists in Berlin in December of 1920, and their work was featured in *De Stijl* in the issues of June and July of 1921. The issue of June, produced shortly after Van Doesburg's arrival in Weimar, featured an article on abstract film by the editor, and Eggeling's drawings from his *Horizontal-Vertikalorchester*. The July issue featured a greater number of drawings from this work by Eggeling, a number of Richter drawings from the work *Komposition—schwerleicht* (*Präludium*), and an essay by Hans Richter. *Má*'s coverage of these two occurred simultaneously, appearing in the issue of August, 1921.
featured a few more works by both Eggeling and Richter than did De Stijl, and included an essay by Eggeling rather than Richter. What is striking is that the two journals were covering the same material at the same moment, and that each were aware of the other's interest as they were exchanging copies of their journals at this time.

As Beckett has noted in her study of Van Doesburg, his interest in Eggeling and Richter's work was probably based on their shared foundation on Expressionist and Futurist aesthetics, Cubist practice, and an interest in establishing a universal language of art, founded on the concepts of the absolute and the spiritual. Much of this can be said about Kassák as well. We have already discussed the Ma group's insistence on the importance of Expressionism, Futurism and Cubism as a foundation for the new, future art. What is somewhat different, and what was made very clear in Kassák's Képarchitektúra statement, is that the Hungarian avant-garde surrounding Ma did not share the same belief as Van Doesburg in the absoluteness of one style, hence De Stijl [The Style]. As articulated by Kassák, the Ma group saw art as an evolving, eternally changing process tied to a specific world-view, which at this point in time did favor a geometric art. Van Doesburg promoted De Stijl as an absolute style, that foresaw no change, and allowed for no variances tied to context. Although Van Doesburg cited Ma as a place to see attempts at "elementary means of picturing," he saw these efforts as experimental because they were "still far from uniform with the endeavors of De Stijl." Where we see these two groups primarily intersecting is the interest in machine objects, new technical media such as film, and the theory behind modern architecture. For the Hungarians these were areas that were vital to contemporary society and the working context of human beings in this era, and thus were integral to the new art that was to be produced.
In addition to some meeting on cultural/stylistic bases, De Stijl and Ma also involved themselves in the major ideological debates about the future of new art, its international scope, and the organization of the European avant-garde in the early 1920s. Debate on these issues came to a head at the Congress of International Progressive Artists held in Düsseldorf from May 29-31, 1922. The Congress had been originally organized by the Young Rhineland group, with the support of a number of other small German and French artistic groups and some individuals, and was based on a desire to institute an international and universal group of artists that would pool their activities, exhibitions, create a truly international periodical, and join together to promote international art without national or political bias.\textsuperscript{29} Apparently, the Congress swiftly disintegrated into factional debate, with Van Doesburg, El Lissitzky and Hans Richter leading the opposition under the umbrella name of the International Faction of Constructivists. Deeming themselves the truly progressive artists, they accused the organizers of merely wanting to establish an international artistic union to maximize economic profit, institute bourgeois colonial policy, and continue to promote the subjective in art.\textsuperscript{30} Working separately, the three artists were also responsible for manifestos from their respective groups, criticizing the founding principles of the Congress, and advocating truly progressive and international cooperation based on the objective in art rather than the subjective. They recognized the connection between art and the new society, and saw the artist not as an individual, but rather as a worker in a collective drive to establish a new international community.\textsuperscript{31} Although in most cases they were somewhat vague on exactly how this was to be brought about, there were calls for further congresses, international exhibitions and cross publication across national and linguistic barriers. Van Doesburg followed up the Congress by
publishing a special Congress number of *De Stijl*, which introduced the debates that had occurred in Düsseldorf, and published the statements of those on his side of the question.\textsuperscript{32}

This issue of *De Stijl* was pivotal, as this is where Kassák apparently received most of his information about events at the Congress, and where he could read the statements of groups and artists that were concerned with matters much like himself.\textsuperscript{33} Kassák and the Hungarians connected to his journal produced two responses to events at the Congress and what they read of it in *De Stijl*. One was published in a following number of *De Stijl*, which was designated the International Constructivist number, appearing later in the summer of 1922.\textsuperscript{34} The other statement appeared roughly simultaneously in *Ma*, and is somewhat different than that which was published in *De Stijl*.\textsuperscript{35} It is added on to the end of a series of statements from the Congress, which were taken from those appearing in the *De Stijl* issue and translated into Hungarian for *Ma*'s readers.\textsuperscript{36} What is primarily important about the two statements is how they reveal like concerns shared by the Hungarians connected with *Ma* and some of the most advanced avant-garde artists in Western Europe at this time, and the Hungarians' ability to fully and knowledgably contribute to the issues under dispute. Additionally, however, they reveal how different the Hungarian approach to solving problems and how to proceed with the goal of creating a truly international and united organization of artists was, as opposed to those of the other groups present at the Congress. We will begin with the statement that appeared in *De Stijl*, as it was read by the wider variety of those involved, and was no doubt written with a more international audience in mind.

As the statement was written in part as a response to, and as a way to join their voice with the positions presented in *De Stijl*, a brief survey of those
The statement of the De Stijl group is arguably the least precise in actual methods to make the international unity of artists possible, and most utopic in terms of the goals and projected accomplishments of such an enterprise. It primarily consists of the re-presentation of De Stijl's founding manifesto of 1918, prefaced by nine points which emphasize the importance of the objective pursuit of giving form to unity, and stressing the groundbreaking role that the De Stijl group played in progressive art. This role was recognized internationally, and the Düsseldorf Congress was in part a result of their work, according to Van Doesburg. It was the Dutch recognition that the same "universal problems" were being faced in other artistic fields as well as in science and technology that Van Doesburg writes, prompted the group to publish their first manifesto in 1918, which was so well received that an international organization then seemed necessary and feasible. Obviously much of this is being presented by Van Doesburg in order to make clear what he saw as De Stijl's role in the forefront of international avant-garde art, and the pursuit of the unity of art and the new life and culture. The manifesto itself remains unfortunately naive on how all of this was to be brought about. According to it, a universal consciousness was revealed by the events of the war, was spontaneously shared by new artists the world over, and in recognition of like desires, all would work toward international unity in art, culture and life opposed to "the domination of individual despotism." The journal De Stijl was to play a central role in all of this, Van Doesburg continues, as approval and cooperation consisted of sending your name and/or articles to De Stijl, and translating and disseminating the ideals of De Stijl in your own area. Clearly this position was based on a rather unrealistic vision of internationally diverse artists spontaneously recognizing like goals and agendas, and doing so through De Stijl acting as an international
clearinghouse. More specifically, it illustrates Van Doesburg's perception of the role of himself and the journal as one of identifying and representing the pursuits of the international avant-garde, and gathering and leading the participants toward the De Stijl vision of modern art.

The position of El Lissitzky, writing on behalf of the Russian expatriate journal Veshch (Object) of Berlin was less naive, and more in tune with the logistics of how modern artists could actually interact with modern society. Written with the background of recent Russian political and social events in mind, Lissitzky linked the practice of new art with changes in societal structure and politics, thus to be achieved in tandem with engineers, workers and other scholars. In Lissitzky's statement art was based on the objective rather than the subjective, likened to science in its precision and constructiveness, and its goal was "to create an attitude of universality—clarity—reality." Lissitzky could logically conclude that such new art was international in character, because he had witnessed similarities between activities in the West and Russia, even though they had been unaware of each other at the time. And taking a more militant stand, Lissitzky described the International of Progressive Artists as a group of fighters battling for the new culture, not simply as a union based on professional practice, this clearly being a criticism of the original statement of the Congress's organizers which had dwelt at great length on the economic and organizational details of exhibitions and publications. The statement written by Hans Richter on behalf of the Constructivist groups of Romania, Switzerland, Scandinavia and Germany first noted its general agreement with El Lissitzky's text. Then Richter identified the desire to solve objective problems and to create the new society as the common task that united the artists on an international level. Thus the International could not be based on the tenets of economic and
personal gain, but instead should be a collective work project to change the world of today. Caught between the old society that did not need them and a new society that as yet did not exist, Richter stated, the collective mission was to create that new society which was postulated in the congresses, journals and exhibitions. Finally, the joint statement of these three artists, presented under the name of the International Faction of Constructivists, point by point criticized several of the perceived faults of the original Congress program. Summing up, they reiterated their definition of the new art as an expression of creative energy, a tool to organize progress, in contact with the whole of life like science and technology, and above all, to be universally practiced and understood. The mission of the artists was to organize themselves, and fight to have an impact on reality.

With the understanding of what the Hungarians had available to read and respond to, we can now turn to their proposal as published in a later issue of De Stijl. They begin by stating that it was clear by what they read in De Stijl that their views and ambitions were quite different from those of the originators of the Congress. This primarily turned on what they understood as the subjective and individual emphasis of the Congress's platform, which according to the Hungarians was an impossibility as artists must be recognized as integral elements, or "atoms" in the larger society. They rejected the plan of the Congress, and instead advocated cooperation and the collective power of the communal society of man. The artist's purpose, they reiterated, was to solve today's problems, through new ways and methods fulfilling the objective requirements of the times. And quite unlike the statements of the dissenting participants like Van Doesburg, Lissitzky and Richter, the Hungarians then proceeded to lay out in some detail the specific organization and tasks of their version of the International of Progressive Artists, called (roughly) the
"International Organization of Constructors Who Possess a Revolutionary Weltanschauung."

The structure of the organization is laid out in an outline form of two main points and eleven subpoints, which also makes clear what the Hungarians perceived as the most important activities, goals and tasks of the artist. According to their statement, the main executive committee of the organization would be staffed with two delegates from every separate sphere of work, who would oversee the entire working cooperative, gather every means possible to promote their primary mission, and insure exchanges and cooperation between the units to realize the overriding goal of collective and effective work. In support of this mission, the executive committee would also undertake to create workshops (or separate areas concerned with different tasks/work), and promote congresses, organs and exhibitions. The executive committee was also to act as a conduit between the separate work spheres, and also as a model in terms of overall goals and organization of these separate units. A kind of guiding force was to be provided by representatives from the three journals, *Veshch*, *De Stijl* and *Ma*, acting as a provisional executive committee based in Berlin. These three are chosen because of their largely unified point of view, similar activities, and unyielding dedication to progress.

It was the primary job of the provisional executive committee to set the ground rules for the larger committee and organization, and to make this public in their respective journals. They were also to be responsible for promoting traveling exhibitions, accompanied by a didactic catalogue in several languages, and supporting lectures in every country in which it appeared, delivered in a language relevant to that nation. The Hungarians noted at this point that perhaps Holland, a neutral country, would be best suited for this task.
The committee was also to prepare an anthology of collected writings from the larger membership, again translated into "every cultured language." They were also to determine membership fees to cover expenses and publication costs, and finally were obligated to call the first international congress within one year. Of course, one can accuse the Hungarians of being rather unrealistic and utopian in turn. There is very little to nothing on how such a vast and internationally complicated organization could be feasibly run, nor how such a conglomerate with a multitude of branch activities could be funded. However, they did go much further than any other group in trying to specify the overall structure, goals and activities of such an international art organization, rather than merely suggesting that artists should organize and fight for unified progress. Unrealistic as they might have been, the Hungarians demonstrated their commitment to, and belief in, the real possibility of an international organization of artists by putting themselves on the line with this lengthy and complicated proposal. There are several possible reasons for the difference in their response to the Düsseldorf Congress and the statements contained in De Stijl. Most simply, many of these artists had real experience with trying to integrate the role of the artist into the process of creating a new society in the Communist administration in Hungary in 1919. If nothing else, they no doubt gained experience in establishing committees and generating proposals in true Communist fashion.

Kassák had also already been postulating the idea of a truly international periodical, published in a number of languages, and financially supported by a variety of artists and groups, in 1921. This periodical, as he described it in a letter to Tristan Tzara, would publish works of the "most extreme trends", and would be financed by the respective participants paying for 100 to 150 copies each. Unfortunately, this joint periodical never
materialized. But more importantly, the Hungarians had perhaps a greater need than many of the others in truly instituting this international cooperative. This was a chance to fully integrate their goals and activities with like-minded artists in Western Europe, ease their relative isolation and to perhaps accomplish the change and progress that they were advocating. They had by this period left behind a country which was politically reverting to conservatism under Miklós Horthy, in that part of Europe that was economically and socially less advanced than the West. They were now in a somewhat isolated position in Vienna, on the edge of the primary events occurring in Germany, largely unnoticed in Vienna itself, and further removed from direct access by the Hungarian language of their journal. This, in part, I believe explains their concern with making the ideas and material of the international organization available in a number of languages. The Hungarians had much to gain by becoming involved in such an international organization of artists, perhaps even more so than many of their counterparts at the Düsseldorf Congress.

The second version of the proposal, published in August in Ma, contains a number of interesting differences from that which appeared in De Stijl. It begins by explaining their absence at the Congress, but also their desire to establish their point of view as opposed to the convening principles of the Congress, and instead to join forces with "the constructive manifestations of revolutionary man." They reiterate their citation of De Stijl as where they read this material, and their objection to the possibility of the "individual artist" working outside of his integral position within society. Next they note the transitional nature of the contemporary period, caught between the final collapse of the old hierarchical society, and the difficult beginnings of the new drive to create a truly unified or collective society, which is reminiscent
of Richter's description of the current situation in his text at the Congress. Continuing, the text states that in this project of creation or construction, there are no class differences or ranks, but rather that all are equivalent in their creative power. Thus the international organization must not dissipate energies among a number of individuals, but rather concentrate every active and constructive power, including that of scientists, engineers, artists, etc., within its structure. Therefore, the international organization should not be of simply "Progressive Artists", but rather should be widened to encompass all who would fit under the banner of, in nearest English translation, "The International Organization of Creators Who Possess a Revolutionary Worldview". This mention of class issues, and the specific addition of others such as engineers and scientists is something that was not present in the De Stijl proposal. The Hungarians continue these lines of thought by stating that the common task of the organization is to facilitate the realization of constructive tendencies, either through state commission or private initiative, and that it must be competitive with capitalist production. There were also to be specialized tasks within the organization concerning pedagogy, social science, theory and lab experiments. This is far more economically and technically specific than what was contained in the proposal published in De Stijl, and certainly more so than anything presented by the other groups. Overall these work spheres were to be geared toward the objective requirements of today, developing ways to solve problems, striving for a collective, unified art. Ma cites Veshch, De Stijl, and Hans Richter as kindred spirits, who identify the same goals and problems, and also believe they are solvable by similar means. However, there is no mention in this proposal of these members being on any guiding or provisional committee to oversee the larger organization, nor are they assigned any specific tasks within the
organization. Perhaps it was in order to entice the cooperation of the others in the Hungarian plan, that the proposal which was presented to an international audience in De Stijl contained a specific and guiding role for those they considered their fellow collaborators.

The second section of the proposal published in Ma deals with the committee structure of this international organization. It is far simpler than that presented previously. Here they propose only a kind of initiating managing committee, comprised of two delegates from every sphere of work activity. Their task is to collaborate the necessary means to insure the highest results and most complete collective. Also they are charged with propagandizing for the organization through exhibitions, lectures, congresses and publications. And again the Hungarians urge full cooperation among the separate work spheres, as well as with the central committee, which acts as the model in terms of mission and duties. Finally, they offer to send this proposal to groups who share their artistic and ideological point of view, in translation. All in all, it is a less internationally directed proposal which does not concretely include outside groups, nor does it offer the degree of specificity in terms of organization and structure that appeared in the first statement. The statement published in De Stijl is more insistent on the collaborative nature of international participation necessary for such an organization to function, and is more complete in terms of giving definite structure and purpose to the various elements within such a complex organization. The proposal in Ma, however, seems more inclined to deal with social and class issues, and to enlist other members of society besides artists into this project. It remains far less structurally defined, and also seems like a more broad-based appeal to elements outside of the art world to collaborate in this endeavor. Unfortunately, such an international organization striving for a unified or collective practice of
art to bring about the new society never did materialize. And it seems there was no response to the proposals offered by the Hungarians. Van Doesburg devoted more of his energies to the theory and practice of architecture, while many of the participants who had criticized the platform of the Congress increasingly turned to the discipline of Constructivism, including many of the Hungarians. It is symptomatic of the difficulty in uniting such a number of artists in the stylistically volatile period of the 1920s into one unified group, that at the September congress devoted primarily to Constructivism in Weimar, it was Van Doesburg in his Bonset persona who invited a number of Dadaists to the event, bringing to a stand-off two camps who could not effectively compromise. Such impasses by no means ended the spirit of exchange and engagement within the international avant-garde in this period, but never again was such an all-encompassing organization so seriously proposed and considered. And it is reflective of their international and collective ideology, that the Hungarians attempted to play such a pivotal role in this moment.

The events of 1922 were not the final chapter in the relationship between Van Doesburg's De Stijl and Kassák's Ma. One more of Van Doesburg's essays was published in the Hungarian journal, "The New Aesthetics and its Realization", in September of 1923. Far more oriented toward architecture than his material that had previously appeared in Ma, Kassák was probably attracted to it because of its emphasis on organizing elements into unity, interest in the energy of forms, its desire to introduce a "new civilization," and Van Doesburg's theories on the relationship between painting and architecture, a concern of Kassák's in his own theory of Képarchitektúra. Also appearing in Ma in 1923 was an important essay by Kállai, "Proof: for the attention of De Stijl". Kállai in this long and quite dense essay, takes Constructivism of the kind produced by the De Stijl group to task for creating
works more aesthetic than answering the human and ethical demands of the
day.\textsuperscript{50} They are described as exclusive, pure, utopic, existing in "splendid
isolation," and as such are paraphrases of bourgeois capitalism's technological
objectivity and economic rationalism.\textsuperscript{51} As such, they did not intersect with
the realities of current life, because they did not interact with the dialectical
and complicated social and historical problems of man, a typical Hungarian
criticism. As has been pointed out, this same criticism could conceivably be
leveled at Kassák's kind of Constructivism as well.\textsuperscript{52} Perhaps the point was
taken, as Kállai rarely published in \textit{Ma} after this time, and in 1925 he
described Kassák's painting as at times dilettantish,\textsuperscript{53} a charge that could be
due to Kállai's rigorous standards concerning the tasks and function of
Constructivism as outlined in many of his essays for \textit{Ma}.\textsuperscript{54} Kállai never broke
as cleanly from Kassák and \textit{Ma} as did other Hungarians such as Béla Uitz, but
he perhaps shared their belief that Kassák's art and journal were not the truly
activist forces that they purported to be.\textsuperscript{55} Much of these disagreements would
break over the issue of Constructivism, particularly Russian Constructivism
and the issues it raised in conjunction with politics, but before turning to that,
we need to consider the earlier engagement with the issues and imagery of
Dada in this journal of the Hungarian avant-garde.
Several sources that I have found helpful in appreciating the multi-
faceted activities of the De Stijl movement are; H. L. C. Jaffé, De Stijl 1917-1931:
The Dutch Contribution to Modern Art (Cambridge: The Belknap Press of
Harvard University Press, 1986), and Paul Overy, De Stijl (London: Thames and
Hudson Ltd., 1991) two basic surveys; Joost Baljeu, Theo van Doesburg (New
Doesburg and translations of a number of his significant writings; Hannah L.
Hedrick, Theo Van Doesburg: Propagandist and Practitioner of the Avant-
on Van Doesburg's literary activity; and Jane Beckett, "Dada, Van Doesburg and
focuses on the issue of Dada in connection with the Dutch avant-garde.

Lee Congdon, Exile and Social Thought: Hungarian Intellectuals in
Germany and Austria 1919-1933 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991),
163.

Ma 7, nos. 5-6 (May 1, 1922): 28. This issue contains a number of
other works by various associates of the De Stijl group, and will be discussed
more thoroughly below.

Congdon, 163.

There were substantial exchanges of material and ideas between the
two groups surrounding the events of this Congress, which will be discussed in
deepth below.

The lack of a substantial role for Huszár between these two groups is
reflected in the literature. Szabó's major work on the artists of the Hungarian
avant-garde, A magyar aktivizmus művészete 1915-1927, does not even include
Huszár in the index, and Paul Overy's survey of De Stijl contains some
questionable ideas about the Hungarians. In Overy's description, Kassák is
presented as an artist who was also a typographer and writer (which certainly
undervalues the true range of his accomplishments and importance to
Hungarian avant-garde art and literature in general), and it is suggested that
Kassák's series of Képarchitectúrás were based on one linocut by Huszár that
was reproduced in De Stijl in April of 1918. Of course this kind of simplistic
formal comparison completely disregards the theoretical underpinnings and
significance of Kassák's work, violates the time line, ignores issues of context,
and is based on the formal similarity between geometrically abstract works, a
style more common than not in this period.

Ma 6, no. 6 (April 25, 1921): 70. It was translated into Hungarian by
one László Zilahi. The first X-Beelden had appeared in De Stijl in May of 1920.

The only other work originating from Holland published in Ma in the
year 1921 was a prose poem "Egy harcos életnapjának programja" [Schedule
of a Soldier's Daily Life] by one Johann Meyer, unknown to me. Ma 6, no. 8
(August 1, 1921): 102.

The letter is available in English translation in Ferenc Csaplár,
Kassák az európai avantgárd mozgalmakban (Budapest: Kassák Múzeum és
Archívum, 1994), 20. The original letter is in the Theo Van Doesburg Archive
in the Hague, and the language of the letter was German.
Ibid. The relevant section of the letter reads "on May Day we publish a jubilee issue in which we print a representative work of yours and so we leave the other things for our next issue."

The entire list of the available postcard series are listed on the final page, along with the price list for each set or individual postcards. The other artists available in this format are Kassák himself, Lissitzky, Man Rey (sic), Moholy-Nagy, and Tatlin. Ma 7, nos. 5-6 (May 1, 1922): 32.

This list of journals received appears in Ma 6, no. 8 (August 1, 1921). The Hungarians report receiving two issues of De Stijl 4, nos. 7 and 8, (July and August) 1921. This work by Mondrian appeared in number 8. Interestingly, Ma describes De Stijl as a Dutch Cubist and Futurist journal.

We know that on occasion Kassák did literally cut things out of his own collection of foreign journals to use in his collages, or in his journals. In the Kassák archive there are several such mutilated journals, such as Hausmann's Dada. However, there is only one issue of De Stijl in the archive's collection, that of the special Hungarian number of July, 1922 which is uncut, and most likely preserved by Kassák because of its importance to the Hungarian avant-garde. This does not allow us to know the condition of the other issues of the journal he undoubtedly received and saw, because they do not now survive in his collection.

This Hungarian caption I believe reveals some misunderstanding of the original Dutch caption, which supports the idea that Kassák may have taken some of his material directly out of De Stijl itself. Any photograph of this building that Van Doesburg could have sent Kassák would not have had this caption. The original Dutch caption identifies the architects as "Pauw en Hardeveld", the Hungarians might very well have mistook this for a single name, because ordinarily one would expect them to change such information as "en" [and] into its Hungarian equivalent of "és" to make it clear. They do not identify the kind of structure it is in Hungarian, but this information does not appear in the original Dutch caption.

Ma 7, no. 7 (July 1, 1922): 35. It was Baljeu, Theo Van Doesburg, who noted the English title that the article is known under.

We will more thoroughly discuss this important theory when dealing with Constructivism in Chapter 6. An English translation of Kassák's manifesto is available in Oliver A. I. Botar, "Constructed Reliefs in the Art of the Hungarian Avant-garde: Kassák, Bortnyik, Uitz and Moholy-Nagy 1921-1926," The Structurist no. 25-26 (1985-86): 96-98.

De Stijl 5, no. 7 (July, 1922).

Available in Csaplári, Kassák az európai avantgárd mozgalmakban.

The letter is dated September 30, 1922.

It is on the basis of Ma's "serious material difficulties" that Kassák urged Van Doesburg to send the remainder of the money owed as soon as possible.

Ma featured De Stijl as a fellow journal in its format of the squares on the back cover from the first instance in October of 1922, and again in September of 1923. De Stijl was also identified in the received journals list in the issue of November of 1923.
This is six of the eight issues of Ma that year, missing the first two of January and February. This list also mentions receiving the issue of January 1922, thus Ma was coming out early.

These include a picture of the Antwerp radio station, which first appeared in De Stijl in January of 1920, but not in Ma until November of 1923; a photograph of a Renault race car which was featured in De Stijl in October of 1921 and in Ma in February of 1924; and a line drawing of a motorcycle by Werner Gräff in De Stijl in December of 1922 and in Ma in March of 1923. Overy states that Gräff contributed his drawings of motorbikes and cars to De Stijl, which makes De Stijl the most direct source for this material, but Ma also had the possibility of contact with Gräff through the journal G, so either is a potential source. Gräff also attended Van Doesburg's informal classes at the Bauhaus, as did Peter Röhl, see John Willett, Art & Politics in the Weimar Period: The New Sobriety 1917-1933 (New York: Pantheon Books, 1978), 76. Röhl's work also appeared in Ma several times in 1923, such as the cover of Ma in May of that year. Van Doesburg does seem to be a common thread here. In any case this illustrates the commonalty of interest and material of three journals, a commonalty at least recognized by the Hungarians as we will see below in their statements concerning the Düsseldorf Congress of Progressive Artists.

Beckett, 5. This issue of De Stijl actually was produced in May. De Stijl 4, no. 5 (June, 1921). For information on Viking Eggeling see Louise O'Konor, Viking Eggeling 1880-1925: Artist and Film-maker Life and Work, Stockholm Studies in History of Art No. 23 (Stockholm: Almquist & Wiksell, 1971).

De Stijl 4, no. 7 (July, 1921).

Ma 6, no. 8 (August 1, 1921). Although knowing that Ma was distributed before its official issue date makes it likely that this appeared before August. Moholy-Nagy also praised Eggeling and Richter's work in his essay "Production-Reproduction", published in De Stijl in 1922, for their experiments with kinetic force and formal play. Although he notes they are not entirely successful, they are praised for being in the forefront of this kind of experimentation. This essay available in English translation in Passuth, Moholy-Nagy, 289-90. Kassák and Moholy-Nagy would also prominently feature their work in their collaborative book Új művészek könyve [Book of New Artists] in 1922, which is discussed in greater detail in Chapter 6.

Beckett, 6-8.

The most complete and sophisticated expression of theory of the Hungarian avant-garde surrounding Ma on these matters is found in Kassák's theory of Képarchitektúra, which will be discussed in far greater detail later in this study.


This from the founding proclamation of the Congress, as presented along with many of the other primary documents of the Congress in the special Congress number of De Stijl 5, no. 4 (April, 1922). Most of these documents are available in English translation in Stephen Bann, The Tradition of Constructivism (New York: Da Capo Press, Inc., 1974): 58-69.
These are some of the criticisms found in the statement from the International Faction of Constructivists, signed by Van Doesburg, El Lissitzky and Hans Richter.

Van Doesburg presented a statement from the De Stijl group, El Lissitzky on behalf of his journal Veshch, and Richter for the Constructivist groups of Romania, Germany, Scandinavia and Switzerland. Despite their national and political differences, these same basic principles were apparent in all three statements.

De Stijl 5, no. 4 (April 1922), obviously post-dated, as the Congress took place in late May. The issue contains a review of the proceedings by Van Doesburg, the three statements above, and one from the Synthèse group signed by Ivan Puni, Karl Zalit and Arnold Dzirkal.

Although Moholy-Nagy possibly attended the conference, it would be difficult to determine exactly how much of Kassák's information on the Congress came from Moholy-Nagy, and how much from the issue of De Stijl. Both of the Hungarian statements on the Congress preface their remarks by noting that they had read the relevant essays in De Stijl, and of course, the Ma issue translates almost all of this material as seen in De Stijl. However, Moholy-Nagy is listed as a signatory to the Ma statement published in the later issue of De Stijl, so presumably there must have been some communication between the two men on the subject. A further wrinkle is added to this problem by the fact that it is precisely in this period, late summer of 1922, that Moholy-Nagy split with Kassák and the Ma group, exactly why is still not entirely clear. We cannot know if Moholy-Nagy intended to be a signatory to the second Hungarian statement as published in Ma, because that appeared as signed by the collective members of Ma, without individual names.


Ma 7, no. 8 (August 30, 1922): 64.

These include all those published in the De Stijl Congress number, except for Van Doesburg's introductory report on the proceedings of the Congress. Instead there is a short introduction to the subject, most likely written by Kassák. Here Endre Gáspár is credited with the translations from De Stijl.

Bann, 65.

Ibid., 63.

Lissitzky reasons that despite a seven year isolation from the West (beginning of World War I and through the revolutionary period), Russian artists were thinking about much the same issues such as the objective in art, clarity, and universality that was happening in the West. Although Lissitzky cites no specifics, it is likely he is thinking of abstract, geometric-based art, hence his association with Van Doesburg and Richter.

De Stijl mentioned a 149 paragraph program, which when read aloud eventually provoked vocal disruption. As quoted in Bann, 61.
This is the English translation given by Congdon, 165. In German in De Stijl it is "Der internationalen Organisation revolutionär gesinnter Schaffender". In the version in Ma it appears in original Hungarian as "A forradalmi világszemlététtől alkotók nemzetközi szervezete". I will use Congdon's translation for the sake of consistency, and because it as well as any captures the sense of the original.

I am not sure exactly what all this would include, although it is interesting that the Hungarians are so concerned about translating material, no doubt because of their own situation and language.

See discussion in Chapter 2.

Csaplar, Kassak az európai avantgárd mozgalmakban, 4.

Ibid., 20. The letter to Tzara is dated to December 16, 1921. According to Kassák, it would have been published in Hungarian as well as German, Italian and Russian. As examples of "the most extreme trends" he listed Tzara, Picabia, Arp, Schwitters, Évola, Rodchenko, Rivas, Huidobro and Huelsenbeck.

"Allásfoglalás a 'Halado Mûvészek' düsseldorfi elsô kongresszusához," Ma 7, no. 8 (August 30, 1922): 64. It is interesting to note that they identify themselves as "Hungarian-speaking Activist artists", as opposed to the German branch of Activism?

Congdon, 165. Congdon quotes Moholy-Nagy on the Constructivists feeling that Dadaism at this time was obsolete. Willett, 77-78, seems to intimate that this second Congress may have at least partially been the result of Ma's proposal to establish a provisional executive committee from the staffs of De Stijl, Vesch, and Ma. He also reports the formation of a provisional committee, based in Berlin, including Van Doesburg, El Lissitzky, Hans Richter, Karel Maes, and Max Burchartz, although its function and existence is unclear. This does mirror the proposal of Ma in that it was to be Berlin-based, and include people like Van Doesburg, Lissitzky and Richter. However, it is striking that no Hungarians were included from Ma, not even Moholy-Nagy, even though he was at this time no longer a member of the Ma group, having split sometime in the late summer of 1922.

Theo Van Doesburg, "Az ideális esztétikától a materiális megvalósítás felé," Ma 9, no. 1 (September 15, 1923): 92-3. It is available in English translation in Baljeu, 127-31. I have retained his English title for the essay to maintain clarity.

"Korrekturat (a 'De Styl' figyelmébe)," Ma 8, nos. 9-10 (July 1, 1923): 86-88.

Ibid., 86.

Ibid., 88.

Congdon, 170.

Ibid.

54For relevant texts see Chapter 6 below. Additonaly we know that Kállai would also begin working with Hannes Meyer at the Bauhaus, which reveals his growing interest in making the theory of Constructivism applicable.

Ibid. Besides Uitz, Hungarians who publicly broke with Kassák and Ma include Kemény and Péri. The latter two including Moholy-Nagy and Kállai, wrote a manifesto proposing their own organization for the advancement of Constructive art based on Communist ideology, published in
Ma's rival journal Egység in 1923. It is available in English translation in Passuth, Moholy-Nagy, 288-89. There were also a number of others who left because they felt Kassák was not politically involved enough, particularly in Communist activities. These include Aladár Komját and Béla Úitz, who set up the rival journal Egység, or Sándor Barta, the editor of Akasztott Ember [Hanged Man]. For a detailed discussion of these rival publications and the splinters among the Hungarian émigrés see Oliver A. I. Botar, "From the Avant-Garde to 'Proletarian Art': The Emigré Hungarian Journals Egység and Akasztott Ember, 1922-23," Art Journal 52, no. 1 (Spring 1993): 34-45. I will address these issues in greater detail in the following chapters of this dissertation.
CHAPTER 5

MA'S RECEPTION OF DADA AND THE CONSTRUCTIVIST
SENSIBILITY IN TEXT AND TYPOGRAPHY

It is the Hungarian reception of Dada, and their simultaneous experimentation with the style and tenets of Constructivism as this chapter and the next explore, that mount the most serious challenge to modern art history as it has been primarily written. Too often Dada and Constructivism have been posed as opposites, with the tendency to relate Dada only to Surrealism. Also, the Hungarian mixing and combination of Dada and Constructivism prevents clear-cut divisions in terms of stylistic classification, and thwarts any attempt to fashion a progressive narrative proceeding from one formal style to the next. What does become clear is that it is in those areas geographically and temporally distant from the primary Western European centers of the avant-garde, that such dynamic and interesting experimentation with, and recombination of the various Isms occurs. The following is an attempt to recoup this activity, and reinsert it in a history of modern art.

It is an admittedly artificial exercise then, to extricate and focus on the literary and artistic publications and activities of the Ma group that can be labeled Dadaist, as if these manifestations were always a clear-cut and separate group. Instead, those things that we can identify as Dadaist, or Dada-inspired,
are often mixed in and simultaneous with elements that are clearly more Constructivist in their geometric rigor and stricter structural concerns. Also, in the typography of Ma, it is difficult to completely separate the two trends as they seem to merge in some of the typographical and visual experiments published in the journal, a significant practice in Ma as this chapter and the next will demonstrate. This is not, however, a condition entirely unique to the Hungarian journal in the period of the early 1920s. A number of other journals such as Merz, G, and Veshch as well as collaborations between artists such as Schwitters and Van Doesburg, Schwitters and El Lissitzky, or Richter and Malevich combined elements of both Dadaism and Constructivism in their productions.\(^1\) Hans Richter, who founded the journal G in 1923, described the publication as having traits of both Constructivism and Dadaism, no matter how unrelated the two seemed.\(^2\) Some scholars have even noticed that this combining or simultaneous appearance of both Dadaism and Constructivism is particularly marked in "peripheral" places, such as Ma in Vienna, Zenit in Zagreb, and other Eastern European locales, although they do not offer explanations as to why that might be the case.\(^3\) However, I believe it will still be helpful at this point to try to isolate some aspects of Ma's publishing and activities that draw upon Dadaism, in order to detect when and where it is incorporated by this group of Hungarians into their own work. It may also be important to discover what aspects and types of Dada material they found interesting and significant, and how it was understood and presented to the Hungarian-reading audience of Ma. It will be a simplification on the part of this dissertation to separate out the Dada strain in Hungarian activities, but it will ease our understanding of what did occur, and when read in conjunction with the following chapter on Constructivism, the more complete and complicated picture will emerge.
Much as was the case with Dutch modernism and De Stijl, the Hungarians seemed to have quickly come into significant contact with various Dadaists after their arrival in Vienna in 1920. One of the earliest letters from this period is one thanking Christoph Spengemann for the material sent concerning Kurt Schwitters, including examples of his work; material that would be published in Ma in the January issue of 1921. This letter provides dramatic evidence of the still-vivid political events of Hungary in 1919, that Kassák had just recently escaped to arrive in Vienna in March of 1920. In it, Kassák speaks of the bloody horror and carnage of recent events, and laments the lack of freedom in Hungary to publish his activities. His letter ends on a more positive note, however, when he urges Spengeman to keep in touch for the good of artistic relationships, and emphasizes the Hungarians' unflagging faith in, and continuing drive to practice art. Another early letter of the Vienna period is from Kassák to the Dada group of Zurich, dated to December of 1920. Unlike the previous letter, this one is far more general, seeking to establish a reciprocal relationship for exchanging material. The Spengeman letter appears to be a response to material that was solicited by Kassák in the first place, whereas the letter to the Zurich Dada group speaks of sending Ma material, and hoping that the Zurich group will likewise send material so that Ma could inform their readers about them.

What is interesting about these two early letters in the Vienna period, is that Ma so quickly tries to establish contact with Dada both in Hannover and Zurich. Thus the Hungarians were not attempting to link up with simply one source, or one geographic manifestation of Dada. By contacting Zurich Ma was tapping into the "birthplace" of Dada, and attempting to reach such founding participants as Tristan Tzara, Marcel Janco, Hugo Ball and Hans Arp who had instigated Dada at the Cabaret Voltaire. Dada in Hannover was a different
matter, largely confined to the practices of Kurt Schwitters, and more generally in the German sphere of Dada activity which was different in character if not kind from what had begun in Zurich. Kassák established a correspondence with Tristan Tzara, perhaps as a result of his first letter addressed generally to the Zurich Dada group. Throughout this series of letters, Kassák tried to solicit from Tzara information, reproductions and other works by artists such as Hans Arp, Francis Picabia, Man Ray and, of course, Tzara himself. These letters are also peppered with references to cost sharing (the artists themselves having to subvent the cost of reproductions), reciprocally exchanging material that would be published, and exchanging information on what was being published elsewhere. The poetry of Hans Arp was published in Ma several times in 1921 and 1922, and Ma produced an Arp number in March of 1922 which contained a number of reproductions of his prints and wood sculptures. Picabia's appearances in Ma consisted of a reproduction of his Canibalisme in the large Jubilee issue of May 1, 1922, and one Dada poem which was contained in an "French Anthology" within the 10th anniversary issue of January, 1925. Man Ray was published only once, in that same large Jubilee issue of May 1922, with his composition Dancer/Danger, captioned "New-York-dada". It is difficult to determine how much, if any, of this material reached Ma through the auspices of Tzara. Apparently Arp funded his own reproductions which appeared in Ma, a fact mentioned in passing in a letter from Kassák to Tzara, but it does not suggest that Tzara was instrumental in this exchange. Many of Kassák's requests in his letters to Tzara apparently were not fulfilled, such as more Man Ray reproductions, more Picabia material, and information on young American and English artists that it was difficult for the Hungarians to know about. There is no evidence within the pages of Ma that these requests were ever
honored, as this additional material never appeared in publication. This may well have been a decision on the part of Ma. In the first years of Vienna residence the Hungarians were interested in reaching out internationally to a number of groups and movements, but as the journal continued, we can find few examples of movements and trends that were presumably of less interest to them. For example, their Dada interests quickly focused not on the primitive, ironic and machine-based aesthetic of someone like Picabia, but instead on the poetic and textual experiments of Schwitters, the reasons for which will be discussed below. A few of Tristan Tzara's writings were published in Ma. The first appeared in 1921, the year that Dada became prevalent in the journal, beginning with the January issue. Tzara's first example was published in November of 1921, "Monsieur Antipyrine's Manifesto," a section from the larger work La Première Aventure Céleste de Monsieur Antipyrine of 1916, all of which Ma reproduced in translation. Two poems also appeared later in Ma, one in 1922 and again in 1925, within the "French Anthology" in the tenth anniversary issue mentioned above. Ma also published a short piece of art criticism by Tzara, which was a positive evaluation of the organic quality of Arp's work, featured in the Hungarian journal in August of 1921, thus appearing before the Arp number of 1922. Ma also published separately Tzara's play Le Cœur A Gaz in 1922, under the Hungarian title Gáz-szív with a Dada-inspired typographical design on the cover by Kassák (Figure 4).

Conversely, Tzara did not publish anything by Kassák in his Dada journal, not even his poetry, despite Kassák's request that he do so. In a letter of December, 1922 Kassák put forth the suggestion that Tzara might be interested in having Kassák's "somewhat epic poem" translated into French and published so that Kassák could have some "financial and moral success". I believe that Kassák was referring to his poem, "The Horse Dies and the Birds Fly Away", his only 88
poem of the considerable length mentioned in the letter.\textsuperscript{18} Within the same letter Kassák notes that he is sending Tzara a copy of his single-issue journal \textit{2X2}, the very place where "The Horse Dies and the Birds Fly Away" originally appeared.\textsuperscript{19} However, it was Herwarth Walden, not Tzara who published this poem in a foreign language, a poem that has generally been described as either Futurist/Dadaist in its imagery, use of language and typographical layout. Because of the rarity of the journal \textit{2X2}, and its original language of Hungarian, it was in this period most accessible and familiar in German, as Walden featured the poem in Sturm's \textit{Ma-Buch}, and printed an excerpt in the journal \textit{Der Sturm} in 1923.\textsuperscript{20}

The journal \textit{Ma} also had other German connections, not just within the Expressionist camp, but also with the Berlin Dadaists such as Richard Huelsenbeck, Raoul Hausmann and George Grosz who were by the post-World War I period themselves anti-Expressionist. Huelsenbeck was represented by the essay "Dadaizmus" [Dadaism], which appeared in the March issue of \textit{Ma} in 1922.\textsuperscript{21} This number had a rather pronounced Dada tone, as it was the number that featured Arp, however the issue also contained Kassák's Constructivist manifesto \textit{Képar-chitectúra}, again highlighting the simultaneity of the engagement with these two movements by the Hungarians in their journal.\textsuperscript{22}

The essay by Huelsenbeck is actually his introduction from the \textit{Dada Almanach} of 1920.\textsuperscript{23} \textit{Ma} also published three poems by Huelsenbeck variously in 1921 and 1922, all from Huelsenbeck's larger collection \textit{Phantastische Gebete} published by the Malik Verlag in 1920.\textsuperscript{24} These include "Májusjé" [Maiennacht], "Fa" [Baum], and "Don Loyolái Inigo" [Don Inigo von Loyola].\textsuperscript{25} The Grosz material featured by the Hungarian journal is, of course, primarily visual and centers in the issue of June, 1921. This number features Grosz's Dadaist collage \textit{Portrait Des Dichters Wieland Herfelde} (1920) on the cover,
and includes within it Deutschland, Ein Wintermärchen, and two of Grosz's socially-pointed drawings. All of this material notes in caption that it was received from the Malik Verlag in Berlin. One of the drawings also is identified as being an illustration within the poetry publication of the Hungarian poet, Erzsi Újvári, a collection that was published with illustrations by Grosz separately by Ma.26 And like Tzara, Huelsenbeck and Grosz were projected to be part of the Horizont series first mentioned within Ma in 1921, however it never appeared. The material from Raoul Hausmann is more varied, since it primarily includes his theoretical essays produced after his period of major engagement with Berlin Dada.27 However, one of his visual Dada works did appear in Ma in May of 1922.28 Jelzőállomás [Signal Station] 1919, is part of the series termed "fantastic architecture", which are reminiscent of Moholy-Nagy's Dadaist drawings of the early 1920s (Figures 5 and 6).29 Both are concerned here with creating two-dimensional evocations of functioning machines, complete with indications of scaffolding, pulleys, and other moving parts, however imaginatively they are conceived. Hausmann's and Moholy-Nagy's concerns were further similar in that they were both interested in the capabilities of film to affect modern man's consciousness, and were among the signers of the "Aufruf zur elementaren Kunst" [Manifesto of Elemental Art] which was published in De Stijl in 1921.30 What is held in common is the simultaneous engagement with material as diverse as these Dadaist drawings, an interest in film, and signing a manifesto approved by the De Stijl group all within a period of two years, although this is representative of the mixing of trends in the early 1920s.

We can now begin with a survey of the Hungarian material that seems to in some way engage with the principles and visual language of Dada, which I believe culminates in Kassák's extraordinary examples of Képyersek [Picture
produced in the early 1920s. As we proceed I will also be noting those frequent instances that seem to be an acknowledgment on the part of the Hungarians of a particular awareness of, and interest in, the visual and literary work of Kurt Schwitters, as well as other Dada elements that the Hungarians used to their purposes.

The January 1, 1921 issue of Ma is the first that can be identified as clearly showing an interest in Dada, and which contains examples of Hungarian works that incorporate Dadaist elements, either visually or in words. This is marked on the cover by Kassák's first published art work (Figure 7), which displays its Dadaist inspiration in the jumbled letters, play with words, the suggestion of mechanistic elements such as wheels, belts and train signals, and the ironic tone of the text inserted between the two wheels. Not all of the letters can be resolved into recognizable words, although several can. The composition is dominated by the central pair of fin Te, which are the Hungarian pronouns I and You. There are also several German words mixed into the composition. The most coherent word group is the small text within the space between the two wheels, which asks "But what do they think of this, the family breadwinners and the blonde women?!" An interesting visual play is also added by Kassák, wherein the small signaling poles at the base of the composition begin to transfer into musical notes, and arrange themselves into a score in the horizontal spaces provided by the repetitive lines. This motif is repeated in a small section in the upper right hand corner, where some of the forms are clearly musical notes, but others stand more rigidly like signal poles or antennae. Although this is by no means an outstanding example of Dadaist composition, it does incorporate many elements of the Dadaist approach to making visual works, such as its ironic tone, use of seemingly unconnected bits of text, machine imagery and its state of formal flux.
The first item within this issue is Sándor Barta's manifesto "A zöldfejű ember" [The Green-headed Man], which can perhaps be best described as a mad diatribe against logic, responsibility and reason. What is visually interesting about this essay even if one cannot read Hungarian, is the typography, which varies in size and type, and incorporates oversized exclamation marks, small black squares and varies the spacing of the text (Figure 8). This kind of clean (in the sense of its even printing and clear spacing), but visually interesting and dynamic composition of the text on the page is reminiscent of the typographical work of the German Dadaists, as in the "Dadaisten gegen Weimar" leaflet from 1919 (Figure 9). There is no question that the Hungarians were aware of the typographical and compositional experiments of the Dadaists, particularly in Berlin, since the Hungarians were in Vienna and a number were regularly visiting Berlin in the early 1920s. The Kassák archive today contains copies of various Dada periodicals both German and otherwise, including Tzara's Dada, Schwitters' Merz and Hausmann's Der Dada. Thus some basic awareness of what was being accomplished in Dada typography and composition is to be expected, as is the early similarity between these first Hungarian examples and what they most likely had seen in various Dada publications. What will be significant is in what direction the Hungarians take this typographical experimentation within a year or two.

Coinciding with the visual and verbal announcement of the heightened interest in Dada among the Hungarians in the January issue of 1921, the group also reported on the first public matinee held in Vienna in this issue. As is typical of Ma in this period, the report on the substantially Dadaist program of this matinee follows directly upon a synopsis of the Russian Evening held by Ma on November 13, 1920, which was the Hungarians' first chance to see
proto-Constructivist works being produced in the Soviet Union. This first Vienna matinee was held on November 20 of 1920 and consisted of a variety of material, including works by Hungarian poets, the music of Bartók and Debussy, Jolán Simon's (Kassák's wife) reading of poetry by Huelsenbeck, Schwitters and Apollinaire, and Barta's reading from his Dada work "The Green-Headed Man". And if not at this first matinee, certainly in one of the later, Jolán Simon apparently produced a memorable reading of Schwitters' "An Anna Blume". Clearly as in poetry and the fine arts, Ma was also in its lectures and performances displaying a major interest in Dada material very soon after its arrival in Vienna. The Dada emphasis of these programs in this period is visible in a graphic announcement of another matinee, appearing in Ma in September of 1921 (Figure 10). The substance of the planned matinee is listed as Activism, Expressionism, and Dada, that word being larger in size than the other two, and centered in the design above the clock, marking its thematic emphasis. In the next issue of the journal that evening's program was reported on, and included Simon's reading of poetry by Schwitters, Arp and Huelsenbeck, Kassák reading from his epic poem, "The Horse Dies and the Birds Fly Away," and Andor Németh reading from Tzara's "The First Celestial Adventure of Mr. Antipyrine". The same issue that contained this report, November of 1921, published several Dadaist items, such as Schwitters' poem "Cigarren" and the text of Tzara's Mr. Antipyrine manifesto. By the fourth matinee advertisement in Ma, they were announcing ticket prices of 300 to 1200 Austrian crowns and promising the newest literature, music, dance and singing. Also in 1922 the Ma group took a program on the road, presenting lectures and performances in Prague on March 16, 1922. The program consisted of a lecture on the Ma group, followed by the recitation of poetry from a variety of those connected with the journal and Kassák, and also poetry
by the Italian Dadaist Libero Altomare, Arp, Huelsenbeck, Schwitters and
finally a multi-media performance by Barta.38 Karel Teige, who had been in
the audience, described this Hungarian program as an early example of
Dadaism appearing in Czechoslovakia.39 The tour continued in Czechoslovakia,
including visits to Kassa and Ungvár after Prague.40 This was actually not
Prague's first exposure to Dadaism as presented by visiting foreign artists. In
September of 1921 Hausmann, Hannah Höch and Schwitters had visited the city
on their "Anti-Dada und Merz" tour.41

The matinees of the Ma group continued until 1925, the year of the
demise of the journal, and obviously the programs changed to coincide with
their interests of the time. But the programs of 1921-22 do strongly
demonstrate this period of interest in Dada on the part of the Hungarians.
Their connection to international manifestations of Dada was not limited to
only tours or publication of German and French material. The offices of Ma
received a number of smaller journals sent to them featuring Dada material,
such as the Italian Dada journal Bleu, the Spanish Ultra, the Yugoslavian Zenit
and Dada jazz, the American Little Review, and the Belgian journals Ca Ira and
Het Overzicht, among others. This wide variety of material reflected the
international spirit of Dada in general, and demonstrated a recognition on the
part of these other journals of Ma's interest in the topic.

Along with the early interest in typography within texts (not simply
pure typographical compositions), the Hungarians were also experimenting
with collage that had a Dadaist quality, rather than Cubist. Unfortunately, not
much of this material found its way into the journal, although Kassák's
accomplishments in this medium are hinted at in a short article by Péter
Mátyás (the pseudonym of Ernő Kállai) with the inclusion of one of Kassák's
collages.42 This collage of 1921, Bécsi magyar újság (Figure 11), the name of a

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Hungarian émigré newspaper in Vienna, is composed of cut paper elements which are arranged in a dynamic and scattered composition. Several other collages by Kassák are similar in their formal make-up, composed of cut paper, inked letters, textural passages, snippets from contemporary publications, and often contain key words that tie them to a Dadaist sensibility, such as in Falak of 1920 (Figure 12), or DAD of 1922 (?) (Figure 13). The first contains a reference to Futurist noise with the word "Bruits", as well as numerical groupings that suggest references to the Dada journals 291 and 391. The collage entitled "DAD" clearly links itself to the movement by prominently using the word "Dada". Kassák's collages seem to be most similar to those of Kurt Schwitters, composed of various substances and textures, bits of actual material from the environment, and often suggestive references to the outside world. They do not incorporate photographs or mass publication materials like many of the Berlin Dadaist's collages, instead they try to compose and balance their varied materials into a cohesive composition, different than the anarchic cacophony of images that is typical of Berlin Dada collages. As Krisztina Passuth has noted, what probably made Schwitters' work interesting to Kassák was his ability to compose varied surfaces, materials and motifs into a unity rather like poetry. I believe this quality is also apparent in Kassák's collages, and is probably rooted in his greater skill as an avant-garde poet in terms of combining a number of disparate elements into a poetic composition. Likewise Richard Sheppard has noted a shift in Schwitters' Merz collages in the period from 1919 to the early 1920s, wherein Schwitters increasingly moved from typical Dadaist flux and fluidity to a greater imposition of construction and geometrical form, culminating in his move to Constructivist sensibility in 1923-24. Thus both men moved in this period from an engagement with Dadaist principles to those of Constructivism. What is
central here is a similarity between Schwitters and Kassák as creators who worked both with words on a page, and their ability to evoke associations and images, as well as being artists who composed visual elements on a plane. We can see the melding of these two components most successfully both in Schwitters' Merz pictures, and in Kassák's Képversek.

The Hungarians featured not only the Berlin Dadaists, but as mentioned above, established early and substantial contacts with Kurt Schwitters and Merz activity in Hannover. The material sent by Spengemann to Kassák was published in the issue of January, 1921, the issue that is the first Ma number to fully show the Hungarian engagement with Dada. This was marked on the cover by the featuring of one of Kassák's first published works of art, a print dated to 1920 which is clearly Dadaist in its word play, simplistic linear style, and the suggestion of gears and a pulley in the center (Figure 7). The typography and poetry within produced by the Hungarians were clearly inspired by Dada experimentation, as described above. Inside the issue, the first article by Christoph Spengemann is a discussion of Merz painting, which appears to be similar to, if not a condensation of a review that Spengemann wrote in 1919 on Schwitters work.46 Entitled "Kurt Schwitters, a merzfestő" [Kurt Schwitters, the Merz Painter], it features the work Körben [In the Circle], which appears to be the same work known under the German title Das Kreisen.47 As John Elderfield points out, this work and others of that period by Schwitters became the focus of several reviewers, particularly concerning the issues of expression and cosmic themes.48 This short essay by Spengemann in Ma reflects those concerns in its discussion of spirit, God and the cosmic, and short assessments of these aspects in the works of artists such as van Gogh, Delaunay, Chagall and Kandinsky. One might at this point be tempted to see Schwitters' work of this period as a manifestation of Expressionism, and

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certainly invoking themes such as the cosmic and spirituality suggest this. However, as Elderfield has points out, there are important differences between Expressionism proper and Schwitters' interest in these themes. Unlike the Expressionist endeavor to outwardly communicate or express the inner spiritual state, and often its turmoil, Schwitters' work focused on self-absorption and self-engrossment. Schwitters' art was produced through a process of taking external reality and remolding and containing it within the art, creating in a sense his own universe. On the other hand, some of the similarities between his interests and those of the Expressionists were apparently recognized, as Schwitters became a member of the Sturm group in 1918, and the Berlin Dadaist Huelsenbeck, who was virulently anti-Sturm and its brand of Expressionism, took a particular dislike to Schwitters and tried to excise him from the history and activities of German Dada. The next Schwitters text in Ma is a section of his "Merz-Bühne," under the Hungarian title "A merzszipad". This is the first statement published by Schwitters on Merz theater, which originally appeared in Sturmbühne no. 8. In it Schwitters gives his description of what he envisions Merz theater to be, which is primarily a very abstract form of theater that is composed of movable sets, varying tones of music, changing colored lights, and moving objects which when performed simultaneously create a Gesamtkunstwerk. The next piece by Schwitters in Ma is perhaps the most unique and interesting. Apparently commissioned by Ma, the text is a short essay by Schwitters entitled "Miképen vagyok elégedetlen az olajfestészettel" [In What Way I Am Dissatisfied with Oil Painting]. In his essay Schwitters first makes clear that he does not inherently deny the potentiality or validity of painting, nor does he believe that oil on canvas cannot make art, because it is too set in preconditions. After all, he himself paints Merz pictures. However, he writes,
Merz painting has demonstrated in its use of different materials that, from the point of view of the work, medium is not the key factor. The artist should not either prescribe or forbid material or subject. Thus innovatory oil painting is possible if the artists creates something that he feels. The forming of the work is the central issue. And if that is the kind of oil painting being produced, than Schwitters is satisfied with it. However, he states further, oil painting is too widely used, and there is a lifelessness in it. Because there are so many differences among people, continues his logical reasoning, it unlikely that one method, i.e., oil on canvas, can equally be the successful formative material for all of them. This merely establishes a restrictive situation. Why restrict ourselves, he asks, if in front of our feelings the whole world is at our disposal? The only valid restriction that he sees is in the will of the artist, and that of his permitted inner compulsion. This is a rather dense little essay, which in a shortened form presents some of the ideas that are found in Schwitters' longer writings. For example, his assertion that the material used is unimportant, instead only the forming is essential is found in the text entitled Merz of the same year, 1920.55 What is interesting about the Ma text is how Schwitters sets up a logical argument to discuss the positives and negatives of oil painting, and tries to argue the freedom possible for the artist who breaks away from the restrictions of limiting himself to a single, standard medium. Directly following this essay is a Hungarian translation of Schwitters' best known poem "An Anna Blume," which had originally been published in Der Sturm in August, 1919. The translation into another language modified the line structure of the poem, and the Hungarian version also changed the layout of the dashes within the poem. A couple of months later, Ma published Schwitters' poem "Világ" [World],56 and in November of the year presented his typographically experimental "Cigarren".57 Finally, in terms of
poetry, in the following year the Hungarian journal published one of Schwitters' number poems, "25". A more complex text by Schwitters appears in the issues of September and November of 1923, his "Causes and Outbreak of the Great and Glorious Revolution in Revon". As Elderfield describes this varied text, it is based on the simple premise that a man standing and doing nothing causes a revolution, and in fact reflects Schwitters' theory that the environment is to be material subjected to the artist's imagination, and its objects and happenings to be formally manipulated.

I have led up to this discussion of Schwitters' contributions to Ma before turning to the strictly Hungarian material because it strikes me as being perhaps the most important to the Hungarians. As we discuss some of the poetry produced by the Ma group, and then turn to typography, I believe we will see an important transition in Dada experimentation that is rooted in poetry and essays, and then branches out into the more purely visual material. Thus Schwitters, who himself created material both as a poet and as a visual artist quite likely was an important example for the Hungarian artists, particularly Kassák himself.

An important key to unlocking the connection between the work of Schwitters and the Hungarian Dadaist material featured in Ma I believe is the literary work that is arguably Schwitters' most famous and influential, "An Anna Blume." Printed in Der Sturm in 1919, and reproduced in translation in Ma, it was Schwitters' placing of the word "Dada" on the cover of the volume containing this poem published in 1919 that had also so irritated Huelsenbeck. The Hungarian translation of this poem is in the same January of 1921 issue that is considered the first prime example of the incorporation of Dada material into the publishing activities of the Ma circle, thus establishing an early and important link between Schwitters and the Hungarian Dadaist material featured in Ma.
growing Hungarian interest in Dada. As noted above as well, Kassák had established contact with Spengemann in Hannover shortly after arriving in Vienna in order to solicit material on Schwitters' activities in Hannover. I think it likely that Kassák's initial interest in Schwitters may have come through his awareness of Schwitters via Der Sturm, the circle of which Schwitters had joined in 1918. Whatever the case, Ma certainly continued to take an interest in the work of Schwitters, particularly the literary side of his activities. Only a few of Schwitters' visual productions, his Merz paintings, were featured in the Hungarian journal. However, a variety of his poems and other essays were published, and Schwitters interest in theater was reflected in the material Ma published as well. The greater weight attached to the literary work of Schwitters is not surprising in this case, as Kassák himself was first and foremost a poet. And significantly, Schwitters was equally adept at Dada experimentation in both literary and visual forms, whereas Tzara for example was more concerned with literary production, and most of the Berlin Dadaists are better known for their artistic works than any sustained accomplishments in poetry.

One small example of a recognition on the part of the Germans of some kind of connection between their concerns and activities, and those of the Hungarians, can perhaps be detected in a poem by Christoph Spengemann entitled "A művész" [The Artist], which was published in Ma in the issue of September, 1921. Spengemann's poem seems to be an evocation of the horror, carnage and revulsion associated with violent events, quite likely the political events in Germany in 1918-1919. A clue to this is provided in the second line "Ma --- 1919!", which can translate to 'Today——1919!', but also is the title of the journal in which this appears, and is a very significant date for these Hungarians. 1919 was the year of the short period of Communist rule in
Hungary that they were so much a part of, and its repressive policies and its violent overthrow had made a significant impact on their lives. This single word, "Mai", again appears in a line in the poem near the end. Of course this can simply be read as "Today", but it also must have been read by Hungarians as both that and the title of the journal. What is also significant is that Spengemann inserts small references to Schwitters' "An Anna Blume" into his poem; thus the Hungarians may well have read this work as both reminiscent of their own recent past, and as making reference to contemporary Dada aesthetics in a provocative and interesting way. Anna Blume in German, which is Anna Blossom (as in flower) in English, is Virág Anna in Hungarian. Spengemann's poem contains a line from Schwitters original work: "Virág Annának van egy madara - -" [Anna Blume hat ein Vogel], and later a line by Spengemann "Kicsoda egyáltalában Virág Anna?" [roughly: Whoever at all is Anna Virág?], which I find reminiscent of a line of Schwitters' "Wer bist Du, ungezähltes Frauenzimmer, Du bist, bist Du?" [Who art thou, uncounted woman, Thou art, art thou?]. Although Spengemann's ultimate intent in this work is difficult to completely determine, I find his simultaneous evocations of Schwitters' poem and recent history, thus mixing current events with Dadaist poetry, a lesson that I do not believe the Hungarians missed. To continue this discussion of the importance of Schwitters' work to Hungarian engagements with Dada, we must now turn to Kassák's Képversek [Picture poems].

The most well-known Képvers created by Kassák is "Este a fák alatt" [Evening Under the Trees], which was published in Ma January 1, 1922 (Figures 14 and 15). As noted by Janos Brendel, this work is actually composed of four self-contained poems that coincide with the four columns of the layout. Although the four poetic units vary in internal length and word
number, Kassák balances them on the page through varying the weight and size of the typography, and their spatial disposition. Brendel has suggested that the cycle is Kassák’s take on Hungarian events in 1919, and the despair of the émigrés who were involved in that failed political experiment and forced to flee. The first two units most easily hold up to that kind of reading, with their references to Vienna, a priest gazing into the well (perhaps a reference to Kassák as prophet), the 19 days, birds flying off and fish swimming away (emigration) and the uselessness of the star on their brows. However, the last two units do not so clearly support such a specific reading, being more general expressions of loss and grief. This is typical of Kassák’s very abstract form of poetry in terms of linguistic sense. Many of his poems of this period are composed of seemingly discontinuous elements, which vividly evoke feelings, or certain images, but do not lend themselves to linear reading for cohesive sense. I believe this quality of his poetry is here underpinned and strengthened by the variations in the typography and spacing of these compositions. Therefore, rather than trying, and ultimately being frustrated by attempts to make a complete and cohesive reading of these poems which account for the specific meaning of every sense unit, instead Kassák’s real accomplishment is to be found in how he attempts to combine the verbal and the visual into a symbiotic relationship which strengthens the overall expression of the work. Again, it is his attempts to create both with words and visual elements on an equally high level that is the unique accomplishment here, and which is visually more advanced than the poetic work of a Dadaist such as Tristan Tzara, far more composed and meaningful than Marinetti’s Futurist verse, and instead is evocative, expressive and formally structured on a level that is most similar to the various productions of Kurt Schwitters.
We can begin with the idea mentioned briefly above that the typography and spacing of these poetic units is an integral part of creating or completing their expression. The first column, which begins with "Este a fák alatt," emphasizes several of the words of the poem through the manipulation of typography, such as with the word világoság [daylight, brightness] which dominates the entire composition of the poem due to its size and weight of lettering. This word in the poem seems to be a key turning point, a marker of time among several in the poem which refer to time or a time of day which communicates the passage of events in the poem. The poem begins with the large, spatially separated word "Este" [Evening], which introduces one block of text, a unit, which ends by petering down to "és azt mondta/én/te/6" [and she said/I/you/he] before the sudden appearance of the much larger and darker lettering of világoság. This word is clearly a transition, as the next word of the poem "aztán" [then, afterwards] introduces the events of the next section of text until we reach the next typographically manipulated word "Bécsben" [In Vienna], which relocates us by site rather than only by time. Again, like with világoság, Bécsben is followed by aztán, which introduces another series of events in its tight little block of text. This small section of text ends with the numbers 1234, as if someone were counting, and then the command "énekeljetek/lányok/énekeljetek" [Sing/girls/sing]. The action of these words is underpinned by the typography, in that the word lányok [girls] stands off to the side at an angle, and the word énekeljetek [sing] flows with an undulating rhythm on the page as if the letters were mimicking musical notes, or the word was flowing through space as if it were sound as it issued from the girls. The same size of lettering is used until introducing the final separated block of text, which is marked by yet another word denoting time, "ekkor" [then], which describes the final events of this first poetic unit of column one.
I agree in principle with Brendel's reading of this poem, in that it describes the escape of the Hungarians to Vienna and their beginning of a life of exile. If that reading is accurate, then the size and weight of the word világoság might indicate the most important transition in both the poem and the life of the author writing it, i.e., the escape to Vienna. The first block of text leading up to this word is the most negative in its imagery, culminating in the warning: "ne nyúlj a virághoz/mert kihullanak/a fogaid" [Don't touch the flower because (if you do) your teeth will fall out]. Then the woman appears who speaks, and the word világoság begins a series of events such as sleeping, events happening in Vienna, the singing girls, and the most symbolic section at the end of looking into the well.

The second column of the work seems to continue the description of feelings and events after 1919, when these Hungarians are displaced into exile. It begins by making clear the end of one phase of their lives with the lines: "le hát a háló sipkákkal/elmult a 19 nap" [off then with the nightcaps/the 19 days have passed], most likely a reference to the events of 1919, and perhaps a salute to those days by removing the hats. The following lines express the sadness and futility of Kassák with the failure of 1919, and subsequent events that had led him away from Hungary: "mária átőlte fiát/és könnyeket virágzott/de ez sem ért már semmit/elröpültek/a mardarak/elusztak/a halak" [Mary embraced her son/and tears bloomed/but this already was worth nothing/the birds flew away/the fish swam away]. Much of the rest of this poetic unit continues this theme of sadness, waste and painful memories, ending with the line: "én éhes /vagyok/ te éhes /vagy/ ő szin/tén/ éhes" [I am hungry, you are hungry, he too is hungry]. As in the first column, here as well typography plays an important role in marking transitions in the poem, emphasizing certain words and images, and serving as a framework which
shapes the poem visually and controls the eye's reading of it, therefore how it is understood. The poem begins with the words "le hát" [off then] on an incline as if mirroring the angle of removing a hat. The next change in typographical weight is the heaviness given to the number nineteen in the line "a 19 nap" [the 19 days]. The next two blocks of text are bounded on the left side by a vertical line of words "a sőveny mellett" [next to the hedgerow], wherein the words duplicate the separating and bounding action of a row of hedges in their function in the textual layout of this poetic unit. An equal white border of space if maintained on both sides of this "hedgerow", and the left margin of the two blocks of text to its right are determined spatially in relation to this line of words. This second block of text, that bordering the word "mellett" evokes a poignant image: "s a harangozó/brőkre/elaludt a kötélen/elaludt/szegénye/kivilágított/városok fölött/de ez is csak két fabatkát/és három gombok ért" [and the bellringer/for ever fallen asleep on the rope/fallen asleep/poor thing/above the illuminated towns/but this too is worth just two pins and three buttons]. Kassák has placed the bellringer, the harangozó, off to the far right of the poem and emphasized his loneliness and separation by disconnecting him from the flow of the rest of the text of the poem. Here he is separated and physically above the text that describes his actions, much as he is described within the text as acting in solitude above the illuminated towns below. The bottom third of the poem is divided into two separate blocks of text by varying the size of typography and the use of black lines. One part of the text describes an action performed by the narrator, prefaced by the word "én" [I], whereas the other section of text to the left describes the inner state of the narrator related in third voice. Thus the weight of the lettering, as well as the black lines visually work to reinforce the different voices relating the poetic text, and also function to physically
separate the two states of the human being, the one actively speaking, the other whose interior suffering is being described. To the right the text reads: "én/az öregasszony/batyuját átvit/tem a patakot" [I carried the old woman’s bundle across the stream], while the text to the left reads: "de az em/ber tenge/reket és le/roskadt hadakat cepel a szemeiben/a hiába hogy valaki homlokunkra kente/a csillagot [but the man heavily carried seas and collapsed bridges in his eyes and in vain somebody smeared the star on our brows]. Thus on one hand the text may refer to exile through the image of carrying the bundle across the stream, whereas the alternate text describes the inner sadness and futility felt by the Hungarians who were forced to flee after the collapse of the communist government of 1919. Clearly Kassák emphasizes the star [a csillagot] in the poem, by the heaviness of the lettering and the two lines tipped by arrows that point to it. Perhaps the star is meant to be understood here as the symbol of communism.

The second page of the composition contains the two poetic units that are less easy to interpret as directly reflecting upon the situation of the Hungarians as they left Hungary to begin a life of exile in Vienna. They are both more general expressions of sadness, reflecting on passage and change, and both ending with exclamations of despair. Kassák continues to use typography and graphics to emphasize, underpin and shape how the poems are read and understood. The column to the left reads like a lament, with the poet decrying his situation and the loss of a future he had counted upon. Many of the words emphasized by the typography refer to people, such as "gyerekek" [children], "testvér/sógor", [sister/brother-in-law] "ó mindenki/ó mindenki" [everybody, everybody], as if the poet were addressing his lament to the people. Parts of the text typographically mirror the sense of the words, such as with "sárga kutak forognak" [yellow wells revolve], and "kövér ludak
ülnek a hold alatt" [fat geese sit under the moon]. Within the poem the word revolve [forognak] turns on the page as if revolving, and the word under [alatt] sits directly in the middle under the line about the fat geese and the moon. Partly this is a result of the grammar of the Hungarian language, in that a preposition like "under" must be placed after the object involved (here the moon), but it was Kassák's choice to separate it on its own line and center it under the sentence it modifies. This poem ends with the large letters of the sad lament "JAJ/JAJ" [Oh! Oh!],72 and a bit of text running upwards on the left side counter to the flow of the rest of the poem "mert mindekinék egy a vége" [because everybody has the same (one) end]. Clearly this poem is meant to communicate the despair of the poet, as it ends on this final and rather hopeless note.

This sentiment is mirrored in the short poem constituting the right-hand column of the page. In this text consisting of only eleven words, Kassák is able to balance the size and weight of the two poetic units on the page through the manipulation of typography and graphic elements. The poem reads: "Anna, Anna dear the Man appeared above the water and bitterly cries". Clearly this poem is dominated by the heavy lettering of the words the Man [az Úr]73 and cries [sír]. The two halves of the page also interconnect as both are anchored across the bottom with the equally despairing words "jaj jaj" and "sír" in large, heavy lettering. The upper and lower half of the poem on the right is connected by the long, extended placement of the word bitterly (keservesen), and the slightly diagonal line that leads the eye down the slope of the word and suddenly stops allowing the reader's eye to drop with the rest of the word to stop at sír. The meaning of the word sír is in an interesting way emphasized by the large black circle above it, which on one hand can be likened to a bitter black tear spot, but also visually functions to give weight
and presence to this poem that is composed of relatively so few words. And if we can argue that the experimental typography used by Kassák in this entire work is in some way the result of Kassák working with principles of dynamic placement and size of lettering, spatially interesting arrangements on the plane of the page, and manipulation of these elements to undergird the vitality and force of the words that could be seen in the work of the Dadaists, this black circle also leads us in another direction. Unquestionably, Kassák's work is far more composed and carefully constructed than earlier experiments with words and visual elements such as in the work of Apollinaire and Marinetti, and unlike the work of many Dadaists, this cycle of poems is a sustained and obviously crafted work that attempts to merge together the dynamism of the visual elements with the sense and spirit of the words to a degree and length never achieved in most Dadaist literary work. I want to suggest that it is likely the basic principles of Constructivism being grafted into the spirit of Dadaism that Kassák achieves here. We know that, by this time, the Hungarians had already seen the work of Russian artists such as Malevich, Rodchenko and Tatlin at their "Russian Evening" held in November of 1920. Of course the black circle in Kassák's work clearly has its source in Malevich's primary forms of the Black Circle and the Black Square, first appearing in print in 1916, appearing together again on a book cover design by El Lissitzky in 1919, and appearing regularly in various journals throughout the early 1920s from De Stijl to Veshch to G. The form of the square would also be the centerpiece of El Lissitzky's famous work The Story of 2 Squares, created in 1920 and published in Germany in 1922, a copy of which Lissitzky signed and sent to Kassák in 1922. In the hand-drawn copy of Kassák's poetry cycle that was published as a Ma picture book in 1922, the final poem does not end with the black circle, but rather a geometric form composed of a circle, square and
several rectangles (Figure 16). And the cover of the issue of Ma which featured "Este a fák alatt" also contains a black circle under a triangular cap (Figure 17). Exactly where or when Kassák may have first seen these forms is less important than the fact that they were by this time generally recognized as Ur-forms connoting current absence and future creation and construction. Including the black circle in the work as published in Ma would have denoted such. On the other hand, I do not think that at this relatively early date (the poems would have been written in 1921 to be published in the January, 1922 issue) that Kassák, or any other European for that matter, had a complete and firm grasp of the principles of Soviet Constructivism or Malevich's Suprematism. Rather, these geometric forms carried with them general concepts of new construction, creation, and thoughtful composing and balance of forms, which I believe are the principles underlying these poems by Kassák. Kassák's unique accomplishment here is combining these elements with some of the personality, vitality and expressive spirit of Dadaism.

However, the experimental spirit of Dada was not ended in the work of the Hungarians simply by this early appearance of what we can now identify as elements of constructivist sensibility; rather the Hungarians experimented even further with the dynamic and liberating possibilities first provided by Dadaism, and we can follow this in the evolving nature of the typography featured in the journal.

Before moving on to some of the other typographically interesting works in Ma, we do need to return briefly to the words used by Kassák in his cycle of poetry, and how they act as well to tie the four sections together, and compose a complete work. For it is important to remember that Kassák was already an accomplished poet by this period, and it is significant that much of the innovative work done in the Dada spirit in Ma was first and foremost done
in literary work with words and typography, such as in these Képversek. And although we know that Kassák, for example, did compose Dadaist collages, it is really in the poetry and other typographical compositions using letters that Dada was most visible in Má. Thus the considered use of words, and how words were chosen, crafted and arranged is a significant element in bear in mind. For many of these works were first literary, combined with a high degree of visual experimentation that had Dada as its impetus.

I have already analyzed in depth how Kassák used typography and graphic elements in these poetic units to frame and shape how the words are read and understood. We have also noted how, despite their varying lengths and content, these four columns of verse are balanced on the plane of the page in an equal fashion through arrangement, typographic size and weight, and graphic elements such as the black circle which gives needed weight and presence to the fourth column. Obviously, as well, Kassák meant these four columns to be read in relation to each other, in that they are provided here in a cycle of poems gathered together on two facing pages. I would argue as well that Kassák used not only typography and placement to weave these columns of verse together, but also that certain key words and images appear throughout the cycle that on another level act to interconnect them, and also hint at their Dadaist inspiration, which is echoed by their visual style. These poems are unquestionably difficult to interpret, being written in what has generally been termed an avant-garde style. The narrative flow in each is discontinuous, certain words and phrases seem to be nonsensical, or at the very least completely unrelated to what precedes or follows them, and despite their vivid images and intensity of expression, they resist complete or holistic interpretation. Certainly these problems are only compounded when working with poems in translation. However, I have detected certain continuities
between these poetic units that work to tie them together, and reveal in a subtle way that Kassák was also attempting to play on a well-known piece of Dadaist verse that he was familiar with, Kurt Schwitters "An Anna Blume," thus knitting together contemporary events with a Dadaist sensibility.

As has been noted, the first column ends with a seemingly prophetic image of all gathering together, the priest removing his clothing and declaring that only in the evening will he be prepared to look into the well. On one hand, this mention of evening, [este], ties the end of the column back to the beginning, where the first word is Este, thus creating a cohesive unit. Additionally wells and water are featured prominently throughout this cycle of verse. In the second column, the references primarily refer to crossing, or the inability to cross water. These cluster at the end of the column, where the author discusses crossing the stream with the old woman's bundle, and where he is described as bearing oceans and collapsed bridges in his eyes. Finally, below the star is a reference to a folk saying: "szamarak nem mernek vízbe/ereszkedni a sószsákokkal" [the donkeys do not dare to descend into water with the bags of salt], which has been interpreted as Kassák's chiding of those who did not have the courage to shoulder the burden and follow the path into exile.81 Clearly these several references to the failure to cross, crossing, and the collapsed bridges in one's past relate to exile, the leaving of one's homeland to arrive at another place, and the difficulty of that choice. The third unit seems to reflect on the passage of some time after this choice, and the consequences. First we have the image of the revolving yellow wells, followed by children on the hills, and the question: "kinél tehát máma/kinél pedig a holnap" [who has then today/and who has tomorrow]. This is followed by several lamenting lines, and the poignant statement: "nekünk nem marad más/csak egy kis/sziget" [for us nothing else remains/just a small island].

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Finally in the last unit we have the appearance of the Man above the water, and his bitter tears. Thus this whole Képyers can be understood as an evocation of the experience of the Hungarians in exile in Vienna. First we have the looking into the well for prophetic seeing, the crossing over into exile, the loss that results from that, and finally the sadness and despair of such a situation. Into this complicated series of poetic images, I also detect another level of references on the part of Kassák, which I suspect are sophisticated plays on Schwitters' famous poem "An Anna Blume." In no way is Kassák's poetry simply modeled after that of Schwitters' one example. This cycle of poems is far more tragic and related to personal events than that of Schwitters'. And although there are some nonsensical, and at times even amusing images, there is not the overall air of whimsy and light irony that mark Schwitters' "An Anna Blume." I think it likely that Kassák admired Schwitters' accomplishments both in literary and artistic work, and saw in him a creator much like himself interested in careful composition, the combination of mediums and materials, and construction, instead of the elements of ironic destruction and production of ephemera that characterized other Dadaist creators. And all of these small references in Kassák's verse play on the name Anna Virág, thus evoking a famous contemporary Dada poem, but weaving them into the structure of his own work. In column one of his Képyers, there are two very odd lines that do not relate at all to what comes before them, or after: "Do not touch the flower, because if you do your teeth will fall out". In the original Hungarian, this first phrase reads: "ne nyulj a virághoz", which reminds one of Anna Blume, or Ann Virág in the Hungarian translation. This is not the only example; instead what makes these references noticeable is the consistent oddity of their inclusion within Kassák's columns. Additionally, in column two of this work, when Mary embraces her son, the
tears *bloom*, or "virágzott", which is a strange verb to use with the action of tears since it primarily refers to plants, much as it does in English. In column three there is another odd reference to things blooming, this time in the palm of the hand: "tenyerében kinyiltak a/liliomok"[in his palm bloomed the/lilies]. Although Kassák does not use the verb *virágzott* in this example, *kinyilták* has the same meaning in terms of blooming plants, and is yet another unusual flower reference. Finally the fourth column begins by evoking a first name—Anna, Anna dear, thus including the first name for Anna Virág. By no means are these slight references major elements within the verse, in fact they strike the reader as rather odd, but if anything they are Kassák's nod to a contemporary work of Dadaist poetry that had received much attention and acclaim. Thus these references to Schwitters can be seen as Kassák's recognition of a fellow creator, and a playful inclusion of a contemporary Dada reference into his own accomplished manner of verse.

After this the Hungarians branched further into the dynamic and visual possibilities of Dadaist typography, often in combination with literary formats such as verse, but not necessarily to the highly complex literary level here achieved by Kassák. Apparently the visual possibilities of this style interested them, and further experimentation with those qualities was to be pursued for awhile. In the very next issue of *Ma* following the appearance of "Este a fák alatt", the journal featured two small poems by Kassák which had originally appeared in the same volume of verse as "Este a fák alatt" (Figure 18). These poems are obviously much shorter in terms of word length, and also are more shaped in their final form by visual experimentation than the previous example. With a shorter length of text, Kassák could further explore the possibilities of visually shaping both the words and form itself of these poems on the page. They are exercises in
working with the visual possibilities, without carrying the additional burden of a complex and fully-intentioned text. The one on the left, number seventeen, takes a relatively simple text and repeats it with minor changes. However, Kassák gradually varies the spacing between words, rendering the lines if read separately, meaningless. We begin with the line at the upper left above the small portrait, which reads: "Este várlak a kapúban" (In the evening I wait for you at the gate), which is then spun around the upper left with slight variations and changes in the word breaks. Two words are included that stand slightly alone; the word "Teremtés" [creation] whose large "I" is placed above the portrait, and "virágok" [flowers] which is in the center of the composition. Laced in among the words is an abstract geometric series of forms, which are reminiscent of the kind of compositions being produced and published in Ma by artists such as Bortnyik and Moholy-Nagy; compositions which are often identified as Dadaist in inspiration (Figures 19 and 20). This poem has been interpreted as a visual rendering of the line "in the evening I wait for you at the gate with flowers," with the portrait, word "flowers", and the geometric forms representing the three main components of the idea. That may be, however, the work itself is not a particularly well integrated or successful combination of words and visual elements. The drawn portrait seems rather cartoonish and out of place with the geometric elements, and the spin of the text on the upper left is too free form to meld with the sharp lines of the visual framework. It does work nicely as a contrast to the other poem on the page, which instead of being characterized by linear geometric forms and lighter typography, is a rounded, curving and more weighty work featuring heavy, black typeset. It in fact looks quite similar to the original hand-drawn version of "Este a fák alatt" (Figures 21 and 22), with its heavier typography and rounded forms. Both are
clearly small-scale experiments with the idea of combining words with visual elements, which are accomplished more successfully elsewhere in Ma. There is one other composition which I find similar to these two, and that is the title design for Kassák’s epic poem, "A ló meghal és a madarak kirőpülnek" [The Horse Dies and the Birds Fly Away], which was published in Kassák’s other journal 2 x 2 in 1922 (Figure 23). The design topped this major poem which is generally considered mostly Dadaist in style and inspiration. One could almost argue that in its greater emphasis on strict geometric forms, this design verges on being more clearly Constructivist than anything else, although the hand-drawn quality of the typography and the text that follows are more Dadaist. The illustrations included within the poem are also more strictly geometric than what one would necessarily expect with such a personal and wonderfully inventive poem (Figure 24). However, it is important to remember that already in 1921 Kassák’s Constructivist text Képarchitektúra had appeared in Ma. Again, I believe this illustrates the combination of Dada and Constructivism that the Hungarians practiced, as did many other artists in Central and Eastern Europe. Below we will discuss why this was the case, and particularly what value the Hungarians may have found in combining, or simultaneously working with these two major trends in early 20th century art at the same time.

The following issue of Ma, that of March, 1922 was the Arp number, and included Huelsenbeck’s text "Dadaism". Ma was clearly sampling a variety of Dadaist material in this period. The next issue is Ma’s large Jubilee number of May, 1922 which contains elements pulled from a number of sources, featuring material as varied as poetry by Arp, Tzara, Huelsenbeck, Blaise Cendrars and Gorham B. Munson, visual works by El Lissitzky, Man Ray, Picabia, Van Doesburg, Oskar Schlemmer, Raoul Hausmann, and architectural
examples such as De Stijl architecture, American airplane hangars and Tatlin's Tower for the Third International. Included in this issue as well are some of the most visually interesting Hungarian examples of poetry which use Dadaist-inspired typography. One is authored by Adám Csont, entitled "Kivégeznek" (Figure 25). Although the poem does contain some recognizable words and phrases, through repetition, shifts in word breaks, and using made-up words, much of it is rendered nonsensical. Instead the poet seems more interested in the auditory and visual effect of the poem, emphasized through the repetition of sounds and manipulation of the letters. This can be seen in examples such as the letter ő, where clearly the letter is manipulated in size and its layout on the page in order to maximize its auditory qualities, and be strikingly interesting visually. The poem completely disintegrates into pure experimentation with letter patterning and sound effects at the end, taking such letter combinations as paku, pipi, and hi and varying their combinations in a nonsensical but rhythmically patterned manner that emphasizes alliteration and the musicality of voicing such sounds. This kind of auditory experimentation is much like that practiced by Schwitters in his major poem "Ursonate" begun in 1922.

Moving further from the sophisticated combination of typography and fully integrated text that Kassák produced in "Este a fák alatt", these examples published a few months later in Ma increasingly emphasize the experimentation with typography at the expense of the text. This was evident in the poem discussed above, and also in another example from the same issue of May, 1922, number "33", designated as a letter poem (Figures 26 and 27). Rather like "Este a fák alatt", this poem as well is arranged on two facing pages, and consists of four columns. However, this work is not a poem in the sense of that former example. Although there are a number of recognizable
words and phrases, in no way are they arranged in lines formally, nor do they follow one another in terms of sensical poetic arrangement. The words are also interspersed with pure letters, that do not function at all in terms of producing meaning. For example, on the top of the third column the alphabet is written, beginning with A and continuing to T, where the author discontinues this recitation with the letters STB, which is the Hungarian equivalent to etc. However, what is striking about this work is the advanced typographical design, so varied and intensive that it even distracts from the words as bearers of meaning. Even if one cannot read the Hungarian language, one is pulled into the work by the dynamic strength of the design, which leads one's eyes through the composition through changes in weight and density of the lettering, lines used to emphasize, bracket or underpin the shapes of the layout, the use of exclamation points, and the contrast between rectilinear and curved forms. Here the visual focus produced by the typography completely overwhells the meaning of the words, making what the words mean entirely secondary in interest to how the text looks. The textual meaning is even further made subsidiary by making it largely impenetrable. Thus even if one insisted on trying to read the progression of words and phrases for meaning, such access is largely denied, blocked by superfluous letters, and finally frustrated by the final lack of constructable sense. This is unlike Kassák's "Este a fák alatt", where text and typography were highly integrated together, and the typography helped to shape the reading and even understanding of the text. Here the visual aspect of the work created by the typography can stand alone in terms of provoking and maintaining interest, and the process of reading and comprehending of text is largely blocked. It was mentioned above that the Hungarians, particularly Kassák, in their experiments based in the Dada spirit, focused their most
interesting efforts in the area of poetry and other texts. These texts were increasingly presented in formats engaged with the typographic experiments of Dada. However, Kassák in his "Este a fák alatt" was able to combine both the literary and visual in a highly sophisticated and productive way, that in the final analysis is not quite like anything produced by the Dadaists in various parts of Western Europe. Also, this work "33" demonstrates advanced skill at visual arrangement and design of typography, here increasingly freed from the text. There are important comparisons (and contrasts) to be made with other works produced in the Dadaist vein in this period, but first we need to look at one more typographical work reproduced in this issue of May, 1922.

This final work by Kassák (Figure 28), has completely dispensed with meaningful text and is identified as simply "Tipogràfia" [Typography]. Although there are recognizable words within the design, clearly the overall placement and typographical style of the words is what is central here. The composition also includes "pointers", the hands with pointing fingers, that are part of the repertoire of commercial typography. Also new in such works by Kassák is the use of color: here red is used along with black. One can see the same basic design principles at work in the contemporary (1922) cover design by Kassák for Tristan Tzara's Gas-Heart (Figure 4). And in a slightly later example, although not published in Ma, one can see again the jumbled letters combined with a stricter geometric framework, which underpins the message of this composition "Előre" [Go Forward] (Figure 29), with its directional movement emphasized by the curving black triangular form and straight black line through the center of the composition.

Clearly there are similarities in the Hungarian material inspired by Dadaist experimentation with poetry, typography and art with other works produced in the Dada spirit, particularly in Germany. As cited above, Raoul
Hausmann's publication Der Dada was familiar to Kassák and the other Hungarians, and certain similarities particularly in terms of typography can be found between the two. I find Krisztina Passuth convincing in pointing out the similarities between the cover of issue number one of Der Dada (Figure 30), for example, and some of the work produced by the Hungarians, particularly Kassák. Much like in "Este a fák alatt" letters and/or numbers are arranged vertically and diagonally, as well as horizontally, and large amounts of blank space are left on the page which are important to the overall spatial composition of the design. Another example cited by Passuth as similar is the text "Dadaisten gegen Weimar" [Dadaists against Weimar], that appeared as a pamphlet in Berlin in February of 1919 (Figure 9). In terms of a prose text with variations in spacing, changed weight and size of certain words for emphasis and the use of oversized punctuation marks, this is most reminiscent of Sándor Barta's "The Green-Headed Man", mentioned above (Figure 8). They are similar in that both are proclamations, or manifestos communicating a Dadaist position, and both are neither poetry nor pure typography, but visual prose that has been shaped and made proclamatory by the manipulation of typography. I cite this particular German example not to suggest that Barta was modeling his text after it, but rather as a typical example of Berlin Dadaist publications that were no doubt produced in number in Germany and were rather familiar to the Hungarians. We know that Kassák owned a copy of Der Dada number 2 of December, 1919, since it is housed in the Kassák archive today. Its cover (Figure 31) contains a Dadaist collage that is similar to Kassák's collage Bécsi magyar újság (Figure 11) in its use of printed text clippings and geometric shapes of colored paper. I believe this illustrates the Dadaist impetus for Kassák's collage work, rather than a source in Picasso's Cubist collages, for example. The Hungarian works are also much like Schwitters'
Merz collages in their use of blocks of printed text, various scraps of paper, and a composed and balanced compositions (Figure 32). Thus, German Dada both in Berlin and Hannover was an important source for the Hungarians when beginning their own production of Dadaist collages and texts in the years immediately after their arrival in Vienna. This is demonstrated as well in the letter trail between Kassák and people such as Spengemann, and in the large amount of German material that was published and presented in Ma.

However, this is not to suggest that Hungarian Dada material is merely a belated version of the German style. Because of the one to two year lag between the production of the German material and the beginning of the strong Hungarian interest in it, as well as the Hungarians' geographic position slightly further East, the Hungarians were incorporating Dada into their work at roughly the same time as they were learning more about the developing geometric-based approach of Constructivism. We have already noted the simultaneous appearance of these two approaches in the Hungarian examples discussed above, and the immediate juxtaposition of Dada and Constructivist material within the pages of the journal itself. This alone makes it at heart different than much of the German Dada production, as the Hungarians were thinking about issues such as geometry, composition and construction at the same time as they were creating nonsensical texts or playing with the auditory qualities of letters within a poem. This gives their work an inherently different quality than that produced in Germany, in that it appears more carefully composed, more dynamic and geometrically shaped, yet still more fully unified. Perhaps this can be better demonstrated in comparison with the typographical work of another artist who was balanced between East and West, Ilya Zdanevich, whose work in many ways is most visually similar to that produced by the Hungarians in these years.
Ilya Zdanevich (1894-1975) had an interesting and varied career within the context of the Russian avant-garde. In 1913, under the pseudonym Eli Eganbyuri, he had written the first monograph on the artists Mikhail Larionov and Natalia Goncharova, and had co-authored the manifesto "Why We Paint Ourselves" with Larionov in the same year. Zdanevich was keenly interested in Futurism, both the Italian and Russian variants, having met Marinetti when he visited Moscow in 1914. While studying law in Petrograd, he founded the group University of 41° with Nikolai Lapshin, Mikhail Le-Dantiu, Vera Ermolaeva and Olga Liashkova, which published a journal and conducted seminars on modern poetry. Between 1917 and 1920 Zdanevich lived in his hometown of Tiflis, Georgia taking with him the concept of the University of 41°. In Tiflis, he collaborated with his brother Kiril Zdanevich, the writer Igor Terentev, and the Futurist book designer and producer Aleksei Kruchenikh, in organizing the Fantastic Tavern, a night-club where lectures and poetry readings were given, and in producing a number of texts and books under the imprint of 41°. In 1920 with Georgian independence threatened by the Bolshevik advance, the group dispersed. Kruchenikh took the 41° imprint to Moscow, designating Terentev as its representative in Georgia, and Ilya Zdanevich as so in Paris, where Zdanevich had fled in 1920. We will be looking at some of the typographical designs produced by Zdanevich in both Tiflis and Paris.

Zdanevich is recognized as one of the most innovative and talented figures in the development of commercial typographic design in this period. The background as to how he developed his style is not fully clear, although there is basic agreement on the likely course of his training, and the elements that influenced his stylistic development. We know that Zdanevich received hands-on training as a typographer while serving as an apprentice
in printing houses in Tiflis in 1917. Apparently he tired of the physicality of this work, and later produced his designs through the close supervision and instruction of hired printers. Scholars have cited both Italian Futurist typographic design and a knowledge of Zurich Dada as important factors in Zdanevich's likely awareness of Western production in this field. Zdanevich had access as early as 1911 to Italian Futurist works through correspondence and examples sent through the mail by a friend in Paris. This interest would have continued as Zdanevich involved himself in Russian Futurist activities, including the visit of Marinetti to Moscow in 1914. Such tangible connections are not as easily established with Zurich Dada. It is surmised that the Zdanevich family had closer than average ties with Western Europe because their father taught French, and that elements in Ilya Zdanevich's work suggest some knowledge of personalities and events in Zurich. In support of this possibility, a Dadaist spirit was later recognized in Zdanevich's work by the French writer Georges Ribemont-Dessaignes, who identified material produced under the imprint of 41° as literary Dada in Russian form.

But what connection might any of this have with the Hungarian avant-garde? Certainly no direct link existed between Zdanevich and the Hungarians, and the Hungarians were not well-versed in the activities and production of Russian Futurism in general. Thus in the following discussion of formal and compositional similarities between the two, I will not be establishing influences one may have had on the other. No such relationship existed. Rather, I would suggest that the similarities that can be detected in their work are the result of the geographical and temporal distance from Western centers of the European avant-garde that they shared. Both Zdanevich and the Hungarians were interested in Italian Futurism, were
familiar with its works, and had seen examples of the experimentation in typography that the Italians were conducting. This does not mean that either produced works that looked simply like Italian Futurism. This will be visually obvious in the examples from the early 1920s to be discussed below. Additionally, both were more or less aware of the typographical style of Dadaist works; the Hungarians had a greater familiarity with German examples, Zdanevich more likely Zurich/French material such as produced by Tzara. These Western sources played a part in both their evolutions, yet both received them from a distance, often with a time lag, and in conjunction with other elements that were a part of their indigenous contexts. The relative distance from the centers of the Western avant-garde allowed these Eastern artists a certain freedom to incorporate such material at their leisure, to do so more on their own terms, and to make it uniquely their own by combining it with other elements at their disposal. I think it was this entire alternate process that produced the similarities in the typographical work of Zdanevich and the Hungarians, not simply a series of like formal influences.

We can begin with the simplest of compositions, and compare Kassák's cover design for Tzara's *Gas Heart*, 1922 (Figure 4) with a cover design by Zdanevich for a work by Terentev, *Fact*, of 1919 (Figure 33). Both are striking because they rely on the basic element of four over-sized letters, and yet still compose a dynamic and varied design with a minimum of other additions. Both also allow the empty space to play a role. Not merely negative background, the space here works positively with the letters by interlocking with them and constructing the over-all design. Zdanevich also uses the pointers in his composition that were a part of the repertoire of professional typographers and typesetters. Of course these were used in typographical compositions by others as well, including the Dadaists, and in several of 123
Kassák's designs, such as his typographical example reproduced in Ma in 1922 (Figure 28). Zdanevich also produced a design connected with Tzara's Gas Heart in Paris in 1923 (Figure 34). This program cover advertised an evening of performances and music, including Tzara's Gas Heart, to be held in Paris in July of 1923. Here the composition is far more complex, with various sized letters, pointers, exclamation points, lines and curved strings of words. This compares favorably with the number 33 letter-poem which appeared in Ma in 1922 (Figures 26 and 27). It also is a very complex and dense design, yet both seem to be very tightly and carefully composed and constructed. There are none of the variables inevitably produced through hand-lettering, nor much of the spontaneity, freedom or chaos of many Dadaist and Futurist works. For example, compared to designs produced by Van Doesburg and Schwitters for their own Dada performances also in 1923 (Figures 35 and 36),¹⁰⁷ the Zdanevich and Hungarian works are clearly more carefully planned and spaced, the letters uniformly printed, and the over-all shape and layout of the design more carefully considered and controlled. This does not diminish their dynamism, instead it makes it more accomplished and polished. These are very powerful and striking works, whereas those by Schwitters and Van Doesburg can too easily slip into mere chaos and superfluous packing of the composition. This constructive quality in Zdanevich's work was achieved prior to 1923. We can look back on an example from 1919 that clearly belongs in this same group, namely a typographical composition "Zokhna and her suitors" contained in the Melnikova anthology (Figure 37).¹⁰⁸ Like the Hungarian letter poem "33," this work relies upon powerful black lettering, repetition and varied placement of letters, changes in letter weights and styles, geometric shapes such as lines and curves, yet all carefully arranged within space, no matter how varied and dense the parts. What we see is that
both are using many of the typographical elements used by the Dadaists, but doing so in a more composed and carefully planned way.

A better understanding of why this compositional method was similar can be gained by looking at one more comparison, especially since Zdanevich, like Kassák, was also a writer. A comparison of two of their poetic texts, one a 1923 zaum poem by Zdanevich (Figure 38), and Kassák's "Este a fák alatt" (Figures 14 and 15) is instructive, because here we can get at the root of their similar approach to the visual composition of words on a page. Zdanevich was one of the first to try to bring precision to the transcription of zaum into the Russian alphabet through the manipulation of typography. He also carefully crafted the texts of plays that were to be performed by varying size, weight and position of lettering to indicate timing, tempo, pitch, and even simultaneous reading. Scholars have also noted that after his move to Paris, these texts often become increasingly visual, therefore losing some of their effectiveness as performance texts. I detect many similarities in this description with the work of Kassák. Certainly Kassák was not attempting to transliterate a different language like zaum, nor create texts for performance, but as I discussed above, he clearly was manipulating typography in order to shape how the poetic text was read and understood, to mark changes in time and narrative voice, and inserting visual elements to reinforce the meaning of the text, as was Zdanevich. These shared practices which shaped their reception of Futurist and Dadaist typographical experimentation, were the similar elements that led both to a heightened consideration of the composition and construction of words and visual items on a page. Thus despite their differences in terms of language used, Eastern European versus Russian contexts, and purposes of the texts produced, there was likely a shared approach towards the careful placement and layout of elements on the page. I
have also been indicating that there is a greater sensitivity toward construction, and an accomplished use of geometric features in their works, that is not quite like Western examples of Futurist or Dadaist typography. In part this can be explained by the practices of creating texts that were to be read and understood in prescribed ways, and indicating this through carefully planned typography and layout. Certainly Constructivism proper was not the major factor this early in the 1920s for these artists. After his move to Paris, Zdanevich became involved in French art circles, primarily Dadaist, and was not then in the mainstream of developments within Russian art. However, quite apart from Constructivism, I cannot help but think that Vasili Kamensky's ferroconcrete poetry may have inspired a greater awareness of spatial and constructional issues concerning texts in Zdanevich. Kamensky developed his poetic style around 1913-14 within Russian Futurist circles; a style which emphasized structuring texts based on the spatial relationships established through the placement and disposition of the elements on the page, in method similar to how one would arrange the iron-reinforced cement blocks of a structure. In looking at an example from the 1914 work Tango with Cows, specifically the one-page composition "Cabaret" (Figure 39), such a thoroughly composed and carefully arranged text, uniformly printed, and contained within delineated geometric shapes, could have been an important example for Zdanevich when he turned to structuring texts. Clearly Zdanevich must have been aware of his work, as both were involved in Russian Futurism. Also, Kamensky would a few years later collaborate with Kirill Zdanevich and Kruchenykh in producing a book of poems while in Tiflis. Although these works were quite different from those produced in 1914, surely Zdanevich would have been aware of the earlier ferroconcrete poems as well.
As further evidence of similar constructive thinking about poetry among the Russian Futurists and Kassák, besides the visual examples discussed above, Kassák would later describe his poetic method in these terms: "I now want to give expression in my poems to materiality. I experience words like bricks, like rough-hewn blocks of stones, to be placed side by side, one on top of another, as if I were building a house." Although this sounds similar to Kamensky's description of ferroconcrete poetry, it does not mean that Kassák knew his work or was familiar with Russian Futurism in such detail. What it does reveal is a similar conception in terms of arranging elements on the page. Additionally, there was likely little common background to how this conception was reached. The Hungarian interest in construction, revealed in the use of architecture as an analogy for literary or visual works, was progressing in the midst of a greater involvement in the issues surrounding Constructivism, and Kassák's development of his Képarchitektúra manifesto. However, this discussion more properly belongs in the following section on Constructivism, so I will delay this until then. We now finally need to turn to the ideological and theoretical position of Ma on the subject of Dadaism, to analyze and evaluate what finally the Hungarians saw of value in Dada. This will lead us more fully into the issue of the rising importance of Constructivism in this journal of the Hungarian avant-garde.

Most clearly in the words of Kassák do we get a sense of the primary importance of Dada to the Hungarians in this period, and so valuable did he consider its methods that Kassák was willing to engage in public debate on the topic, and lose members of his group to rival journals. In the pivotal Jubilee issue of 1922, Ma issued a statement that was a summing up of their history to that point, and a position statement on the future plans of the journal and the group. In it, Kassák makes clear that for those who want to
move forward, not only is it necessary to make changes in the current environment, but also to make a "tabula rasa" within oneself. He more strikingly connected this process to Dadaism in his series of letters of debate with Béla Balázs in the émigré newspaper in Vienna, Bécsi Magyar Újság [Viennese Hungarian Newspaper] in 1920. At the heart of the debate was their different assessment of Dadaism and even modernism in general. Balázs saw Dadaism as pure nihilism, a negative and unproductive movement that gave "voice to the rage of frustration and the self-hatred of a bourgeois world that has reached senility." Kassák, on the other hand, saw this destructive quality in a far more positive light. According to him, the Dadaists' purpose was to "tear the individual away from yesterday and to free art... from the grasp of the aesthetes. They want to destroy root and branch all 'modern' art because they firmly believe that only after its destruction can the new culture be rebuilt." This destructive quality, a process of wiping clean in order to build anew, I believe is what the Hungarians involved with the journal, and particularly Kassák, saw as valuable in the Dadaist method. This is not to be understood as the blind and enraged destruction for its own sake that Dada is too often accused of propagating. As other scholars have pointed out, also important in the Dadaist enterprise beyond destruction was an attempt to renew, revitalize or even recreate form. Instead of seeing Dadaism as the opposite of the sobriety, seriousness and geometric rigidity of Constructivism, it should be understood as an important and sometimes simultaneous part of the entire process to create the world anew in the 1920s. Often their spheres of activity would overlap, as in the interest in the machine, in collage, photomontage and typography, and the creation of objects. The new creative potential in these mediums we have seen utilized by the Hungarians in their collage works, and especially the intersection of typography and texts, such as
in essays and poetry. And, as mentioned above, it was quite often in the art
journals of Eastern Europe, such as in *Ma* or *Zenit* that one could see these two
trends of Dadaism and Constructivism appearing at the same time side by
side.\footnote{123} I believe the explanation for why this is the case is much like that
proffered for some of the similarities noted between the work of Kassák and
Zdanevich. First, the Eastern Europeans may have been peripheral to the
West, however at the same time, adjacent to both West and East in their
geographical position on the European continent. Thus although there might
have been a short time lag in terms of what reached the Eastern Europeans
from the West, they were at the same time often among the first to have some
understanding of what was occurring in the Soviet Union. This was certainly
the case with the Hungarians, for example, who held their first Russian
Evening in November of 1920.\footnote{124} This situation certainly narrowed the time
frame for them between Dadaism and Constructivism, and I would argue
provided an advantage in that they could dialectically receive and process
these two movements much more readily than many Western European artists,
and do so within their own unique context. Thus the transition from the
principles and practices of Dadaism to those of Constructivism which the
Hungarians involved with *Ma* in this period underwent, would have been a far
more cohesive, seamless and logical transition than it was for others, as the
next chapter will demonstrate. At the very least, that the process was such for
the Hungarians in the Ma group they seem to suggest in their statements, in
the juxtaposition of material in their journal, and in the range of their
activities. Perhaps this is best given visual expression in another graphic by
Kassák (Figure 40): *Romboljatok hogy épithessetek és építsettek hogy
győzhesse* [Destroy so that you can build and build so that you can win].\footnote{125}

2Cited by Dawn Ades, "Dada—Constructivism," in *Dada—Constructivism: The Janus Face of the Twenties*, 34-35. This catalogue is extremely helpful in understanding the relationship and shared concerns between Dadaism and Constructivism, trends that are too often considered somehow opposites.

3Nakov, 13 and Ades, 35. Nakov also mentions Cracow as a place where this occurred. And Moholy-Nagy is cited by both as one of the most successful artists at combining these two within his own work. However, neither really takes notice or account of the fact that the primary examples they mention are East European, other than Nakov's tag of "peripheral" centers. We will address this issue as the study progresses.

4Reproduced in Ferenc Csaplár, *Kassák az európai avantgárd mozgalmakban* (Budapest: Kassák Múzeum és Archívum, 1994), 18. The letter is dated to July 25, 1920, and is in the Schwitters Archive in Hannover. Christoph Spengemann was an art critic in Hannover who wrote often on Schwitters' art.

5Ibid.

6Ibid. Letter of December 6, 1920. This is a far more general letter, soliciting exchanges of material, and signed by Kassák as representing the Ma editorial board.

7A number of these letters are available in Csaplár, 18-23.

8Ma 7, no. 4 (March 15, 1922). This includes a cover by Arp. Ma also reported receiving Arp's 1921 work *Der Vogel Selbdritt*, including poetry and linocuts, in August of 1921: Ma 6, no. 8 (August 1, 1921): 116.

9This "Anthology" contained a wide variety of French poetry, including works by Arthur Rimbaud, Pierre Reverdy, Paul Eluard, Guillaume Apollinaire, Jean Cocteau, Marcel Sauvage, and Philippe Soupault.

10To demonstrate the complexity and variety of Ma, the source for this reproduction is given as *Mecano*, which was Theo van Doesburg's Dada journal, as distinct from *De Stijl*. However, it appeared on the same page with a Van Doesburg *De Stijl* composition, and a Proun by El Lissitzky.

11Csaplár, 20. This is mentioned in a letter from Kassák to Tzara, dated December 16, 1921. The relevant section reads: "With us the custom is that in the case of illustrations the costs are covered by collaborators. On the same basis we are going to print an Arp issue with 5-6 clichés. The cost of one sized 12 x 17 cm. amounts app. to 18-20,000 Austrian crowns or 36-50 francs."

12It does appear that Tzara did provide material for Kassák and Moholy-Nagy's *Book of New Artists* of 1922, which is mentioned several times in the letters of Kassák to Tzara, and Kassák did send six copies of the finished anthology in December of 1922. The Ma group also proposed the Horizont series in Ma in April of 1921, and Tzara was to be included in a future edition, but it never appeared. The issue on Archipenko was apparently the only one ever published. Tzara did send Kassák some manuscripts and other material, but requested their return in mid 1922, as Kassák did not have the budget to print the material. Csaplár, 22 letter dated to August 25, 1922. Perhaps this was material Tzara sent to be included in the Horizont series.
This January issue, 6, no. 3 featured a Dadaist cover by Kassák, material on and by Schwitters, Sándor Barta's Dada manifesto "A zöldfejű ember", and announcement of the first Vienna matinee which had featured the poetry of Schwitters and Huelsenbeck, among others. We will discuss this issue more fully below.

Ma 7, no. 1 (November 15, 1921): 140, 142. The Hungarian title is "Antipirin úr első menyebeli kalandja" (sic), which translates into "The First Celestial Adventure of Mr. Antipyrine". The entire text in French can be found in Henri Béhar, Tristan Tzara Œuvres Complètes: Tome I (1912-1924) (Paris: Flammarion, 1975), 77-84. The small section "Monsieur Antipyrine's Manifesto" is available in English in Tristan Tzara, Seven Dada Manifestos and Lampisteries, trans. Barbara Wright (London: John Calder, 1977), 1-2. Again, to emphasize the concurrent interest in both Dada and Constructivism, Tzara's text is interspersed with Constructivist linocuts by Kassák.

These are "Kis falu szibériában" [Little Village in Siberia], Ma 8, nos. 5-6 (May 1, 1922), 6 and "Tavasz" [Spring], Ma X. Évfolyam Jubéliumi Szám (January 15, 1925), 183.

Jegyzet a művészetről", Ma 6, no. 8 (August 1, 1921): 102. It is available in the original French under the title "Note sur l'art H. Arp" in Béhar, 395-396. A partial English translation, along with discussion can be found in Alastair Grieve, "Arp in Zurich," in Dada Spectrum: The Dialectics of Revolt, ed., Stephen C. Foster and Rudolf E. Kuenzli (Madison, WI: Coda Press, Inc. for the University of Iowa, 1979), 186. Grieve notes that the short essay originally appeared in Dada2 in December of 1917.

Csaplár, 23. Letter from Kassák to Tzara, dated December 10, 1922.

Ibid. Kassák describes it as approximately 500 lines.

This journal was edited by Kassák and Andor Németh, and appeared in only one number dated to October of 1922. Németh in this period was on staff at the Hungarian émigré newspaper Bécsi Magyar Újság, which funded the journal 2X2. Lee Congdon, Exile and Social Thought: Hungarian Intellectuals in Germany and Austria 1919-1933 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991), 143-44. Congdon describes this journal as Dada-inspired, as the two editors agreed to each edit exactly half of the journal, unaware of what the other was preparing, and then to connect these halves to form the journal, with the possibility of happy accident due to unusual combinations. For a list of the actual contents of the journal see Ilona Illés, A Tett (1915-1916) Ma (1916-1925) 2 x 2 (1922) repertórium (Budapest: Petőfi Irodalmi Muzeum, 1975), 195-98. All subsequent reproductions of this poem broke the poem down into verse lines, and deleted the original striking typography and illustrations. The original layout and illustrations are reprinted in György Somlyó, Arion 16: Nemzetközi Költői (Budapest: Corvina, 1988), 59-68.

Both are dated to February, 1923.

Ma 7, no. 4 (March 15, 1922): 54-56.

The full implications of the inclusion of this Constructivist manifesto in this Dada-heavy issue will be discussed in the following chapter.

Congdon, 142. The inclusion of this essay in Ma garnered criticism among the Hungarians from Béla Balázs, the dramatist, film theorist and
colleague of György Lukács, as Congdon notes. We will discuss the reactions and responses of the Hungarians, both for and against Dada, below.

It is quite probable that the Hungarians had the 1920 version of the work, rather than the first version of 1916 which was published in Zurich and featured woodcuts by Arp. The 1920 version of Berlin featured the work of George Grosz. First, the 1916 date of the earlier version makes it unlikely that the Hungarians had ready access to it, as this was during the war years, and unlikely to have reached Budapest. Secondly, the Kassák archive today contains a copy of the 1920 version of the work, suggesting that it was this version that the Hungarians were familiar with.

These appeared in Ma respectively: Ma 6, no. 5 (March 15, 1921): 55; Ma 6, no. 7 (June 1, 1921): 98; Ma 7, nos. 5-6 (May 1, 1922): 30.

This drawing appears in Ma 6, no. 7 (June 1, 1921): 97. Within the same issue, Ujvári's book with the Grosz drawings is advertised on page 100. Ujvári, coincidentally, was the sister of Kassák and married to Sándor Barta, another contributor to Ma whose work engages with Dada.

Here I mean particularly his "Présentismus" and "Optofonetika".

Ma 7, nos. 5-6 (May 1, 1922): 5. This is the same double issue mentioned frequently throughout this chapter.

"Fantastic architecture" is the term used by Benson in his Raoul Hausmann and Berlin Dada, 148. Benson suggests a similarity of these drawings to the works of Jefim Golyscheff which had been featured in the first Dada exhibition.

The other signers were Hans Arp and Ivan Puni. An English translation of this manifesto is available in Krisztina Passuth, Moholy-Nagy (New York, Thames and Hudson Inc., 1985), 286.

Ma 6, no. 3 (January 1, 1921): 22-23.

Ibid., 36.

This is cited in Congdon, 143.

Ma 6, no. 9 (September 15, 1921): 136.

Ma 7, no. 1 (November 15, 1921): 151.

Ma 7, nos. 5-6 (May 1, 1922): 32.

This is described in Csaplár, Kassák az európai avantgárd mozgalmában, 12.

Ibid. A Dadaist poem with interesting typography by Altomare had appeared previously in Ma in November of 1921. Csaplár's description of Barta's performance "Demonstration" includes music, puppets, choruses, projections and posters.

Ibid.

Ibid.

John Elderfield, Kurt Schwitters (London: Thames and Hudson, Ltd., 1985), 123, 175. Although Hausmann and Schwitters were already by this time distancing themselves from German Dada, Hausmann with his idea of Presentism and Schwitters with his own Merz, they were reciting poetry like Hausmann's 1918 phonetic poem which began with the line "fmsbwtőzău". This surely must have sounded like Dada to the Czechs.

Ma 7, no. 1 (November 15, 1921): 139.

132
A reproduction of this as well as the other collages to be mentioned can be found in Kassák Lajos 1887-1967 (Budapest: A Magyar Nemzeti Galéria és A Petőfi Irodalmi Múzeum, 1987), 154, 156, 160, 166.


Ma 4, no. 3 (January 1, 1921): 28-9. Spengemann's original review appeared in Der Cicerone 11, no. 18 (1919): 573-81 under the title "Kurt Schwitters".

I was helped in this identification by John Elderfield's discussion of this work and Spengemann's review in Kurt Schwitters, 52-54. Unfortunately Elderfield's book does not contain a reproduction of the work alone, but it is part of a later collage work reproduced as number 86. If this is the same work as that featured in Ma, it is reproduced upside down in the Hungarian journal. If it is not Das Kreisen, it certainly is very similar with its composition consisting of several circles and what looks to be linear elements composed of rope. This issue of Ma also contains two other Merz works, Merzbild 9 B, Das grosse Ichbild of 1919, and another work entitled Franz Müller Drôtavasza in the Hungarian, which would translate to Franz Müller's Wirespring.

Elderfield, 52-53.

Ibid., 117.

See Elderfield, 39-41 for a discussion of the differences between these two. Huelsenbeck was apparently most offended by Schwitters' inclusion of the word "Dada" on the cover of the publication of poetry featuring "Anna Blume" in 1919, and set about trying to exclude him from Dada activities and remove his name from any Dada publications or records. From Huelsenbeck's quotes about Schwitters one gets the sense that he was most resistant to the middle-class and in comparison, conservative tenor of Schwitters' life. A sense of Huelsenbeck's disdain for his lifestyle, and the Expressionist-tinged aspects of Schwitters' art philosophy, I believe are apparent in this damning description of Schwitters by Huelsenbeck: "the Kaspar David Friedrich of the Dadaist revolution." It proved impossible for Huelsenbeck to exclude Schwitters, as he was on good terms with Tzara and Arp already, and even by 1921 Huelsenbeck had lost control of the German group, and Schwitters was able to collaborate with Berlin Dadaists such as Raoul Hausmann.

Ma 4, no. 3 (January 1, 1921): 29.

This information on where the essay originally appeared, and an English translation of this text is available within a larger essay written by Schwitters in 1920, which itself appeared in Der Ararat in 1921. This is reprinted in The Dada Painters and Poets: an Anthology, ed. Robert Motherwell (Boston: G.K. Hall & Co., 1981 republisher, originally published by Wittenborn, Schultz, Inc., 1951), 57-65.

Ma 4, no. 3 (January 1, 1921): 29-30. The first line of Schwitters text notes that the journal Ma wrote to him asking why he was dissatisfied with art up to now. Schwitters apparently took this question to refer particularly to painting, and answered in that vein.

133
This is the same text that was published in *Der Ararat* in 1921, which contained the Merzbühne excerpt cited above.

Ma 6, no. 6 (April 25, 1921): 82.

Ma 7, no. 1 (November 15, 1921): 138.

Ma 8, no. 1 (October 15, 1922): 5.

Ma 9, no. 1 (September 15, 1923): 95-96 and Ma 9, no. 2 (November 15, 1923): 108. I am using Elderfield's English title, the original German is "Ursachen und Beginn der grossen glorreichen Revolution in Revon".

Elderfield, 102-104. Elderfield gives a substantial description of the various parts of the text, and discusses Schwitters' performances of it at the Der Sturm gallery and in Hannover. It was originally published in *Der Sturm* in 1922, but perhaps written as early as 1918-19, therefore likely in part alluding to the German Revolution of 1918. Also according to Sheppard, "Kurt Schwitters and Dada", 47 the Revon text and "An Anna Blume" were read by Schwitters in performance in Prague in September of 1921.

Elderfield, 39. The book of poems was published by Paul Steegemann, Schwitters' Hannover publisher. Apparently Kassák attached no small importance to this book featuring "An Anna Blume" himself. As Dr. Csaplar related to me, it was probably originally in Kassák's collection in this period, but had later gone missing. A copy, perhaps the same one, was at a later date bought by Kassák's wife at an auction for a considerable amount of money, and is now contained in the Kassák archive collection at the Kassák Museum in Budapest.

In fact, Kassák would criticize Merz visual art, as will be discussed in the following chapter.

Ma 6, no. 9 (September 15, 1921): 131.

Both the German text of Schwitters' poem, and his own English translation of it (different from the German text), are available in Elderfield, 37-38.

Ma 7, no. 2 (January 1, 1922): 18-19.

János Brendel, "The Bildgedichte of Lajos Kassák: Constructivism in Hungarian Avant Garde Poetry", in *The Hungarian Avant Garde: The Fight and the Activists*. Arts Council of Great Britain (London: Hayward Gallery, 1980), 33. The author notes that this cycle of poems was first published in the book entitled *Világanyám*, where it covered seven pages and was not so clearly divided into these four parts.

Ibid., 34-36.

These are some of the poetic images that Brendel suggests refer to recent Hungarian events and the situation of those who had to flee Hungary.

Several scholars have discussed the typographical features of this work, although the following observations are mine, some may or may not coincide with previous analyses of this work. Among these are Brendel, noted above and Esther Levinger, "Hungarian Avant-garde Typography and Posters," in *The Hungarian Avant-garde 1914-1933*. John Kish (University of Connecticut, Storrs: The William Benton Museum of Art, 1987), 115. A more far-ranging and general discussion of Hungarian experiments with typography in various mediums is provided in Heidrun Schröder-Kehler, "Künstler erobern die Warenwelt: Neue Typographie in der Werbegestaltung,"

70Brendel, 34.

71Brendel suggests that this refers to Kassák himself in the role of prophet, a reading supported by Sándor Bortnyik's casting of Kassák in that role in his painting Kassák as Prophet of 1922, as well as the reference to gazing into a well as a reflection of old folk customs, 34.

72Krisztina Passuth notes a similarity here in Kassák's use of this word and his typographical experimentation with that of Hausmann's typography for Der Dada, and his use of the German word "Ach" (roughly equivalent to Jaj) on the cover of the first issue of that journal, June of 1919. As she goes on to discuss, certainly the typographical experiments of the German Dadaists were an important source for Kassák to see this kind of material, but Kassák also developed it further and in different ways in combination with elements of Constructivism. Passuth, Magyar művészek, 112-113. Several of the German examples of typography she cites in comparison can be found in John Elderfield, "Dissenting Ideologies and the German Revolution," Studio International 180, n. 927 (Nov. 1970): 180-187.

73Ur is a tricky word to translate in this poem, since in Hungarian it is most commonly used to indicate sir or gentleman, but also can refer to the Lord when written az űr. Brendel translates it as the Lord. It is rendered as der Herr in a Ma Buch of Kassák's poetry in German translation, however, it can be translated both ways in German as well. I have decided on the non-religious translation, however, the references to Mary elsewhere in this cycle certainly leave open the possibility that it carries religious connotations as well. Perhaps Kassák intended for it to suggest both possibilities.

74Passuth, 111.

75This consisted of a slide presentation of works by a number of Soviet artists, and discussion by Konstantin Umansky, a TASS correspondent and author of the book Neue Kunst in Russland, which had been published in Germany in 1920. This event will be discussed more thoroughly in the following chapter.


77Ibid., 113. The text was by Malevich, entitled On New Systems in Art. Compton provides a reproduction of the cover design by El Lissitzky.

78Ades has also pointed out that the Black Square, for example, although a Suprematist form closely related to Constructivism, often appears within the context of Dadaism, thus perhaps connoting a kind of Ur-form that indicates both destruction and construction, 35. This form is then symbolic of the dialectical nature of the relationship between these two trends. I will further discuss the importance of Malevich's work to Kassák in the following chapter.

79This copy remains in the Kassák Archive today, and a reproduction of the dedication page is provided in Csaplár, Kassák az európai avantgárd mozgalmakban, 25.

80For a complete discussion of when they gained this knowledge, and the development of Soviet Constructivism in this period see the following chapter.
The name Anna would also play a large part in another Dadaist type text in *Ma*, the composition "Szivárvány" [Rainbow] by Mózes Kahána, which appeared in the journal in March of 1921, with a Dadaist inspired drawing by Bortnyik (see Figure 14) within the text. Much like in the case of Kassák, I do not know if this without question a reference to Anna Blume, but the contemporary popularity of that poetic character was known to the Hungarians, and may be more than mere coincidence.

*Ma* 7, no. 3 (February 1, 1922): 34. The volume was entitled *Világanvám*, and was published in Vienna in 1921. These two small works are poems number seventeen and fifteen (seventeen was numbered differently in the book), "Este a fák alatt" had been number eighteen. The poems published in *Ma* written by Kassák were henceforth numbered.

*Levinger, Hungarian Avant-garde Typography and Posters,"* 115.

The best source for this work is *Arion* 16: Nemzeti Költői Almanach, published by Corvina in 1988. Here one can find the poem in its original format, including inserted illustrations, translations into several foreign languages, and scholarly essays.

These illustrations remind me slightly of the contemporary work of Ivan Puni, whose linocuts were published in *Ma* in the February, 1922 issue. Kassák's works, however, do not deal with texture or "faktura" like Puni's.

*Ma* 7, no. 4 (March 15, 1922). Only to again illustrate the simultaneous engagement with two trends, this issue also features Kassák's manifesto "Képarchitektúra", which is among other things Kassák's advocacy for greater geometric construction in contemporary art. This manifesto will be discussed in depth in the following chapter.

I will only be discussing three examples from this issue, but one could also include in such an analysis of Dadaist elements poems by Erwin Enders "Tavaszi Ünnepély" and Kassák's "23".

*Ma* 7, nos. 5-6 (May 1, 1922): 17. Adám Csont was a pseudonym of Antal Hidas.

This poem was most likely inspired during the 1921 Prague trip, when Hausmann recited his 1918 phonetic poem "fmsbwtózáu", Elderfield, 175-76. Benson also notes the inherent differences in the poetic work of Hausmann and Schwitters, in that Hausmann tended toward asymmetry and chance, while Schwitters work is more balanced and statically ordered, 158-59. I would argue that this is exactly the quality that Kassák particularly found attractive in Schwitters' work.

*Ma* 7, nos. 5-6 (May 1, 1922): 26-27. The poem is signed Andor Sugár. There was an Andor Sugár (1903-1944), a young painter who would have been approximately nineteen years old at this time. If this is the same person, it is an amazingly sophisticated example of typographic composition from a young artist.

*Ma* 7, nos. 5-6 (May 1, 1922): 29. This one is identified as being by Kassák.

*Passuth, Magyar művészek*, 112.

This pamphlet was produced in Berlin, February 6, 1919 and signed by the Dadaist Central Committee for World Revolution: Johannes Baader,


There unfortunately is even less known about Kassák's education and development in terms of typography. I have found little information about how or when he received training in typographical design.

Gerald Janecek, 165.

Compton, 72 and Janecek, 165-66.

Compton, 72.

As Compton notes, it is Janecek's observation that a character in one of Zdanevich's plays, lanko krul' alban skai, seems to refer to Marcel Janco, one of the founders of Zurich Dada. Janecek has gone so far as to surmise that Zdanevich may have visited Zurich in 1916, but Compton is less convinced.

Compton, 72. Her source for this information is Marzio Marzaduri's article "Futurismo Menscevico" in a larger study on the avant-garde in Tiflis. See note 15, 156.

It is interesting to note that later in the 1920s, there is an indication that Kassák, Schwitters and Jan Tschichold (an influential figure in modern typography) formed a group called "Ring neuer Werbegestalter", although I have found little information on this in Hungarian sources. This is indicated in a short biographical sketch of Kassák in Dada: L'arte della Negazione (Rome: Edizioni de Luca, 1994): 353-54. Also, this rather large catalogue of Dada art uses a modified version of Kassák's design for Tzara's Gas-Sziv for its cover, but gives no indication for the source of this typography.

Janecek, 183-84 discusses this anthology, which Zdanevich largely composed and edited with contributions from other participants under the 41° imprint, and dedicated to an actress named Melnikova, with whom he was apparently in love.

See Janecek, 164-183 for an extensive discussion of this issue in Zdanevich's work.

Janecek, 164-183.

Janecek, 124-147.

For a helpful discussion of Kamensky and ferroconcrete poetry, along with a number of visual examples, see Janecek, 124-147.

See Janecek, 164-183 for an extensive discussion of this issue in Zdanevich's work.

Ibid.

Ibid., 176.

Ibid., 139-40.
As quoted by Mary Gluck, "Toward a Historical Definition of Modernism: Georg Lukács and the Avant-Garde," *The Journal of Modern History* 58, no. 4 (December, 1986): 871. Her source is Kassák's autobiography which was begun after his return to Hungary in 1926. Here he is reminiscing about a change in his work that he pinpoints to after the beginning of World War I.

The splits that occurred in the Ma group, particularly over the issue of the relationship between politics and art, are chronicled in Botar, see note 124 below.

"Mérleg és tovább", *Ma* 7, nos. 5-6 (May 1, 1922): 2-4. The article was signed by Kassák, but no doubt meant to be understood as a statement from the journal and its contributing Hungarian members.

This argument is synopsized in Gluck, 874-878. Balázs was an early colleague of Lukács', an important critic and theorist, and today best known for his pioneering work in the aesthetics of film.

Cited in Gluck, 877.

As quoted in Gluck, 876. It is interesting to note that within this same article, Kassák is careful to defend against the tag of bourgeois by calling the Dadaists "in politics the most radical communists." Of course that point is entirely arguable.


One should at this point also mention the pioneering role of other Hungarian artists such as Béla Uitz and Alfréd Kemény, who were among the first foreign artists to have knowledge of events at the Soviet VKhUTEMAS and INKhUk, by virtue of their being there in 1921. Their observations, however, were not printed in *Ma* but rather in another Hungarian journal *Egység* [Unity]. This does not mitigate the fact that all Hungarians in Vienna had access to this material by mid-1922. For a helpful discussion of the differences between the Vienna-based Hungarian journals, and why certain members split with Kassák and *Ma* in this period see Oliver A. I. Botar, "From the Avant-Garde to 'Proletarian Art': The Emigré Hungarian Journals *Egység* and *Akasztott Ember*, 1922-23," *Art Journal* 52, no. 1 (Spring, 1993): 34-45. See also the following chapter.

*Ma* 8, no. 1 (October 15, 1922): 9. Congdon, 145 notes the importance of this graphic, as does Passuth in *Magyar művészek*, 113 where she also describes it as illustrative of the fusion, or simultaneity of Dada and Constructivism in *Ma*.
CHAPTER 6

THE HUNGARIAN ANALYSIS OF INTERNATIONAL AND RUSSIAN
CONSTRUCTIVISM AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF KÉPARCHITEKTURA

In part, this section continues the exploration of the combination of Dada and Constructivism that characterized the Ma group in the early 1920s. However, the Hungarians as they moved further into a full engagement with Constructivism, also were in a unique position to differentiate between International Constructivism and Russian Constructivism, poised as they were between West and East. These two poles of Constructivist activity brought back to the fore the difficult issue of the relationship between politics and art for the Hungarians, an issue that would have implications for which manifestation of Constructivism would be favored by various members of the Ma group. This highly charged ideological and artistic debate would be the context for Kassák's development of his major Constructivist theory Képarchitektúra [Picture-architecture].

If it was a somewhat artificial exercise to separate out the interest in Dada as manifested in Ma in the early 1920s, it is also simplistic to identify Constructivism as a separate and unified force that had an impact on these Hungarians in the first years in Vienna. As this chapter progresses what will be pointed out is the simultaneous and cooperative interest in both Dada and Constructivism in this period, the nature of that interaction particularly in
the journal itself, and the results both in the art works and activities of the core group of artists associated with Ma. Secondly, the term Constructivism itself requires definition and refinement here, as well as some explanation as to why it warrants a large and ambitious part of this study. To begin with some background and definition for Constructivism first. Certainly as Ma became an increasingly active and knowledgeable player in the arena of international avant-garde art from 1920 to 1925, Constructivism was the major new movement of that period to be reckoned with, either positively or negatively, particularly because of Russian developments in the style, tied in the European mind with that nation's recent massive social and political revolution. In addition, unlike other movements such as Expressionism or Dadaism, the scholarship on Hungarian avant-garde art has identified a body of work as Hungarian Constructivism, i.e., a variant of Constructivism presumably consistent enough in style and supporting theory to warrant its own label. The literature on Hungarian avant-garde art has also focused much of its attention on the contact with and influence of Russian Constructivism in this period at times to the detriment of understanding Hungarian activity in its more proper European context. Certainly Russian Constructivism was an important source of ideas and forms for many of the Hungarians, and the Hungarians were by comparison with other Europeans early and well informed of events in Soviet art circles; however as this study will demonstrate, their reaction to Russian art was neither consistently unified or even positive. In fact, Russian art, especially its connection with politics, would be major point of contention for the Ma circle in 1921-22. The emphasis on Russian matters has also tended to limit discussion of the various manifestations of Constructivist activity in Europe, and their importance to notions involving Constructivism within the pages of Ma. The journal
demonstrates an interest in Russian Constructivism clearly, but also and often simultaneously in International Constructivism, therefore to assess the Soviet impact separately or chronologically is to miss the truly complicated nature of the Hungarian reaction to Constructivism in its varied forms, both within the journal and in its immediate context in the circle of Hungarian émigrés in Vienna.5

To turn to the term Constructivism itself. It will be noted that above I have used the terms Russian Constructivism and International Constructivism, to distinguish between what was happening in the Soviet Union as opposed to the European context. I use the term International Constructivism here to distinguish a European-based, yet international manifestation of Constructivism as opposed to Russian Constructivism.6 In general Russian Constructivism is defined for the purposes of this study as a style which produced materials for Soviet society, with political and social purpose within the Soviet nation, as practiced for example by Rodchenko, Stepanova, or Klutsis. International Constructivism was more aesthetically based rather than production based in origin, not tied to any one political ideology, and its primary activity was the creation of art works that stood as blueprints or projections for a future society based on geometric form and its attendant principles. These works were not product-based objects to the degree that the works of Russian Constructivism were. Artists practicing this kind of Constructivism could include Hans Richter, Van Doesburg, or even El Lissitzky (while in Germany).

As was the case with Dada, Hungarian interest in Soviet art was demonstrated quite early in the pages of Ma soon after the move to Vienna in 1920.7 The November 1, 1920 issue of Ma published a series of questions posed by the Moscow International Provisional Office of Creative Artists, including
the Hungarian responses and follow-up questions of their own.\textsuperscript{8} This is apparently the same International Office whose first purpose had been to make artistic contacts with Germany through their representative Ludwig Bähr, and establish international cooperation in the arts between Russia and Germany in late 1918.\textsuperscript{9} No doubt encouraged by recent revolutionary events in Germany, the Soviet Union clearly expected and hoped that Germany would be the first European nation to become Communist, and artists were considered important participants in that enterprise. Encouraged by the German response to the first contact, including answers from the Arebeitsrat für Kunst and the Novembergruppe, in 1919 the International Office announced plans for a new journal and dispatched two new emissaries; one to Italy and one comrade Krainy [sic] [Konstantin Umansky] to Germany and Austria-Hungary.\textsuperscript{10} Since this is the same Umansky who later in November of 1920 would present a slide lecture on Russian art at a Ma evening, it is likely that this International Office had first established contact with the Hungarians through their questionnaire. It is also interesting to note that unlike the sometimes laudatory and always cooperative responses of the German groups who replied to the International Office, the Hungarian response in Ma adopted a more challenging tone to the questions they received. They refused to answer the first question of the survey requesting a synopsis of their group's place in Hungarian artistic and social life and their history, theory and goals. According to Ma their works provided those answers. Throughout the text, the Hungarians also challenged many of the principles that would become part and parcel of the Soviet system of artistic control, denying the existence of such a thing as proletarian art, unwilling to support any organization of artists that was focused on economic and professional management at the expense of self-responsibility, and quite forcefully insisting on the separation
of art and the state. For these Hungarians art was rebellious, disruptive and ever opposed to stasis and control, exactly the opposite of the state which sought order, consolidation of power and the status quo. One idea that the Hungarians were willing to support was the importance of international cooperation among artists, and they advocated international congresses and publication of journals by respective members, the same principles they would support again in the wake of the 1922 Düsseldorf Congress. One clear message in their response to the questionnaire, was their profound questioning of the ability of only economic/political reform to solve contemporary problems, and instead their support of the idea of the permanently revolutionary and eternally creative force of art. The Hungarians did recognize that at this particular moment in time the strongest revolutionary force resided in the proletarian class, however their responsibility was to use that power to transform and change life, to lead upward to universal human art, and the next stage of human history. The questions the Hungarians in turn posed to the International Office reflect their concern with the practicalities of how this transition might be proceeding in Soviet Russia and its implications for the future: What are the practical results after three years of proletarian dictatorship?; What role do artists have in the schools?; What is the significance of the fact that art has been left out of Communist propaganda up to this point? As far as we know, they received no answers to these questions.

It is important to carefully analyze this response because it contains many of the fundamental principles that will be the grounds for discussion and dispute among the Hungarians concerning abstract geometric art in the next several years. Primarily the disputes will break over the relationship between politics and art, with the major division coming between Kassák and
It is also clearly reflects the political distrust of the Hungarians in the Ma circle so shortly after the failed Communist experiment in Hungary in 1919. They had recently lived through attempts to coordinate the activity of artists with a Communist state, suffered its difficulties, and were now exiled to Vienna as a result of the failure of that political experiment and their involvement in it. Thus in contrast to the excitement and optimism reflected in the German responses to the International Office's attempts at contact, produced during those heady days of German revolution in 1918-19, the Hungarians responded in a spirit of experienced doubt, questioning the nature of the relationship between art and politics and requesting tangible results of the Soviet experiment so far. This, however, did not mitigate their fundamental interest in the art of Russia, an art that they would be among the first Europeans to have direct and substantial information about.

The January 1, 1921 issue of Ma reported that "comrade K. Humanskij" had on November 13, 1920 given a lecture on the newest Russian art at a Russian evening organized by the journal. We have encountered this January, 1921 issue before, since it contained the wealth of information on Schwitters, and Kassák's Dadaist composition on the cover (Figure 7). Clearly with such an issue we can see that the Hungarians were at the same time being exposed to contemporary Dada experiments and some of the newest geometric and purely abstract art being produced in Russia, processing these two trends not as chronologically distinct but rather simultaneously. From Uitz's review of Umansky's presentation we have some sense of what the Hungarians actually saw in November, and at least what Uitz thought of it. Uitz's review is unquestionably pro-Russian, and he criticizes European artists who assert that there are no politics in art. For Uitz politics and art are not to be separated in that they are means by which to bring about the more complete, full life, to
assert otherwise is to be anti-revolutionary. This close conjunction between art and politics is a first small hint of the difference that would continue to grow between Kassák (whose philosophy was more clearly expressed in the above questionnaire) and Uitz. Within his review Uitz singles out Kandinsky for particular criticism, accusing him of being the greatest representative of the bourgeois world view (German Expressionist connections) and failing to understand the contemporary revolution. What is remarkably prescient about Uitz's review, especially as it was probably written in late 1920, is his distinction between Malevich's Suprematism and the proto-Constructivism of Tatlin and Rodchenko. Uitz is able to make this distinction based on the issue of material; Malevich's work is the purest representative of the denial of material, whereas Tatlin and Rodchenko take this a step further to issues of the combination of materials and, particularly in Rodchenko's work, a progression from Suprematism's movement on the plane to three-dimensional movement of material into space (reality). Clearly this is the most advanced work according to Uitz, as he concludes in the final paragraph of his review that progress in Russia is parallel in both the spiritual revolution and material revolution. As mentioned, in January of 1921 Uitz was sent to Moscow to attend the Third Comintern Congress to be held that summer, and when he returned from his Moscow trip he would irrevocably break with Kassák and Ma, becoming co-editor of the Communist journal Egység [Unity]. But before turning to the experiences of the Hungarian artists in Moscow and their relationship with Russian Constructivism proper, we need to backtrack and clarify the more indigenous interest in geometric art evidenced in the work of Sándor Bortnyik and Kassák in 1920-21.

In the same November, 1920 issue of Ma in which the Hungarians published their response to the questionnaire of the Provisional Committee in
Moscow, at the bottom of the page we read a small announcement of the impending availability of an album of six color linoleum cuts by Sándor Bortnyik (Figure 41). This album of linocuts, when finally published in March of 1921, included an introductory essay by Kassák in which he used the term Képarchitektúra [Picture-architecture] to designate Bortnyik's work. The March, 1921 cover of Ma featured Kassák's first published geometric composition (Figure 42) that is representative of the largely black and white compositions consisting of geometric elements that he produced under the rubric of Képarchitektúra. Thus, although the manifesto of the theory of Képarchitektúra was not published until September of 1921, the ideas and visual works had clearly been in existence for some months prior to the official announcement of the theory. Secondly, it should be noted that Bortnyik's linocuts if nearing completion in November of 1920, had to be produced separately from any substantial knowledge of Russian works, as Umansky's lecture did not occur until mid-November, 1920. As we will see below as well, the text of Kassák's manifesto and the critical reaction to Bortnyik's and Kassák's works were couched in terms current in the European debates about new art and its purpose, with little or no reference to art in Russia. It is important to point out these dates and facts to make clear that this version of Hungarian Constructivism, tied to Kassák's theory of Képarchitektúra, was developed and first received firmly in the context of European ideas concerning geometric abstract art, not Russian Constructivism. But before turning to an examination of this European context, it is necessary to give definition to the term Képarchitektúra.

One of the most ambitious and often-discussed theoretical texts produced by Kassák, Képarchitektúra is a lengthy statement on what Kassák considered art to be, its purpose, its relationship to contemporary society, and its
differences from other current European styles. The statement is grounded in a critique of both capitalism and "Marxian socialism", and their failure to provide a world-view that can uplift humanity and help man solve the problems of contemporary life. According to Kassák, the artist could accomplish this through his creations, which as creations are materializations of a world-view, and are therefore in a sense the creation of new life. The crucial second part of this definition is that contemporary artists, as members of a specific historical and social period, can only produce creations born of that specific context, thus as time proceeds, art necessarily will change as well. For Kassák, his period was one of Communism, which meant that the art produced should express the essence of that world-view, including notions of totality and synthesis based on the principles of architecture. Such works could produce change and revolution on the level of the psyche, in man's feelings and thoughts rather than on a material or political level, thus making him truly capable of transforming himself and his surrounding environment. Without such preparation on a mental and emotional level, Kassák thought, mere political or economic change was doomed to fail. In contrast to his conception of Képarchitektúra, Kassák used as a foil three contemporary styles which he thought attempted such a transformative role but failed for various reasons: those being French Cubism, Kandinsky's Expressionism and Schwitters' Merz works. Crucial to note is that all are European comparisons, not Russian. According to Kassák, Cubism failed because it was not creation according to its own laws for its own sake, but rather an illustration of objects as seen or known, further removed from the planar reality of the picture through the addition of color for perspective. Kandinsky is faulted for not creating on a primary level, instead, according to Kassák, his paintings are secondary creations, based on narratives and abstracted from the real world.

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Schwitters is faulted for much the same reason, in that his pictures are illusions, transfers of his emotions, memories or inventions and thus not creations. Kassák at several points in his manifesto is very careful to make clear that Képarchitektúra works are not abstractions, they are creations. Abstraction implies a two-step process, wherein the artist takes an object or emotion from the real world and transforms it into something else on the picture plane. This is not creation in the primary, Biblical sense of the word that Kassák has in mind. Képarchitektúra works are a priori creations, generated from the world-view of the artist shaped by a faith in Communist collectivity and totality.

Integral to Kassák's theory also is his concept of architecture's role in contemporary art, and in "picture-architecture." As has been pointed out by a number of scholars, an interest in architecture and its attendant concepts of order, rationality, stability, etc., have a long history both in European art and more particularly Hungarian art, prior to Kassák's statement of 1921. So certainly there was nothing original about Kassák's pulling architecture into his discussion. As Brendel has noted, we also should not overlook the publication in Ma in February of 1921 of a sizable excerpt from Adolf Behne's Wiederkehr der Kunst [Return of Art], particularly its inclusion of the glass architecture theory of Paul Scheerbart. Scheerbart's theory concerning the transformative possibilities of glass architecture on the spirit and psyche of human beings, thus preparing the way for a new culture, must have been attractive to Kassák who was postulating much the same abilities for his Képarchitektúra works. Within his manifesto, Kassák draws a number of parallels between Képarchitektúra pictures and architecture. Like architecture, these pictures were constituted by the realities of gravity and chemistry, i.e., they consisted of actually existing planar forms and colors, and
thus were living (not representations) and produced a natural perspective through their layered forms and colors which stepped out into space. This was different from traditional perspective in that it was not illusory, and did not attempt to create perspective inward into the plane of the canvas. Like architecture, Képarchitektúra began on a ground or foundation and worked out into space. Thus they were living forms and colors, true creations, and Kassák was quick also to point out that this was different from decoration, which was filling in the plane of the picture.

Readers of the journal Ma got their first good look at examples of Kassák's Képarchitektúra works in the November, 1921 issue, which was designated the Kassák number. Along with the cover illustration (Figure 43) and three full-page examples in the journal (Figures 44, 45 and 49), Kállai under the pseudonym Péter Mátyás wrote an essay on Kassák's constructive theory and works. As would be typical of Kállai's essays on Constructivism that would become regular features in Ma in the following years, Kállai here focuses more on the social and political implications of Kassák's works rather than their formal analysis. True to Kassák's vision of what these works could accomplish, Kállai's essay discusses their revelation of collective civilization, their vision of a new humanity and society. Although Kállai concedes that these works may not be easy to understand, such constructions were necessary for change. The negative comparison made by Kállai is with George Grosz's more Dadaist or even illustrative works, thus again the terms and comparisons for the discussion of Képarchitektúra are based solidly in the European context.

Other contemporary reactions to Képarchitektúra works were not so favorable. Iván Hevesy, who we encountered earlier in our discussion of German Expressionism, wrote a review of Bortnyik's album of linocuts which
appeared in the Budapest journal Nyugat [West] in 1921.²⁷ Hevesy's article is particularly interesting because it comes to very different conclusions about these geometric works than those Kassák and Kállai had postulated. Hevesy immediately separates Bortnyik's work from what he describes as the new or revolutionary forms of art, and instead describes them as representative of something quite old, namely, decoration. Of course this is exactly the criticism that Kassák anticipated in his manifesto and took some pains to thwart. Hevesy goes on to describe Bortnyik's works as not even a positive form of decoration, rather they are merely free, flat decoration, torn from any useful object and living for themselves, thus passive and individualistic. This reading allows him to make the most devastating of charges: they are "l'art pour l'art", without ethics, prospects or meaning. Hevesy attributes some of this to the negative influence of "the anarchy of today's German spirit" which he suspects Bortnyik encountered in Vienna. It is obvious from Hevesy's review that he had also read Kassák's introduction to the linocuts, as he addresses himself to the claim that such works promote collective man. Based on his reading of these works as the absolute in individualism and expressionism, he concludes that certainly Bortnyik has never been further from collective man than now.²⁸

Bortnyik's reply to Hevesy's review was also featured in Nyugat in 1921.²⁹ It is obvious from the text that Bortnyik considered his works in line with the ideas presented in Kassák's theory of Képarchitektúra. After strongly denying any Germanic influence, he stressed the primary, original creative force behind such works. Bortnyik insisted that certainly they do not resemble anything because they are not representations, they are not abstract because they are creations like creations of nature, nor are they decorative because they are (like nature) organic wholes. Additionally, according to the
artist, they do not express personal feelings, and do not recall outward appearances but rather communicate the harmony of the cosmos, in which every thing and idea exists together. From such an exchange between the artist and a critic, we can see that the two halves of this debate come down to an irresolvable difference, either one understood and accepted the premise that geometric art on the picture plane was creation on a primary level, or one saw it as a decorative (purely aesthetic) arrangement of colors and forms on a flat surface. Bortnyik and Hevesy did not resolve the dispute here, and debates about the nature and abilities of such constructive, geometric art would occupy the Hungarians for the next several years.

How then are we to account for Kassák's development of Képarchitektúra, perhaps the most original Hungarian contribution to constructive, geometric art in the 1920s, if not through Russian Constructivism? I think one answer lies in Kassák's interest in Dada and image verse, an interest that was to large degree simultaneous with his development of Képarchitektúra. The pages of Ma provide crucial visual evidence of Kassák's engagement with both Dada and ordered, structured geometric art in 1921-22. We have already established that by November of 1920, Bortnyik was developing an album of new works that Kassák would designate as Képarchitektúra, and that the Hungarians had visual access to the new Russian art via Umansky's slide lecture. However, as was demonstrated in the previous chapter, the following year of 1921 marked the height of the publication of Dada material in the journal. A survey of the covers of the journal in this year are indicative of this combination. The January cover contained Kassák's first published work, a Dadaist composition (Figure 7), but March signaled Kassák's development of Képarchitektúra with one of his own geometric works (Figure 42). March was also the month that Kassák first used
the term Képarchitektúra in print, in the introduction to Bortnyik's album of linocuts. Inside the March issue, Kassák among other things published Dadaist poetry by Cendrars, Arp and Huelsenbeck and two works by Moholy-Nagy and Bortnyik that are an instructive comparison. Moholy-Nagy's woodcut (Figure 20) is clearly in the Dadaist camp, with its suggestion of wheels, moving parts and yet the jumbled and chaotic criss-crossing of visual elements. Bortnyik's work (Figure 19), is composed of similar circular and linear elements, but is more crisply and rigidly drawn, all elements are connected to one another, and the entire composition is more carefully structured. Now on one hand these two works reflect the differences between what Moholy-Nagy and Bortnyik were each doing in their own work in this period, but Kassák's choice to publish them merely pages apart is indicative of his interest in both modes. The June cover featured a Grosz collage (Figure 46), August provided a real contrast with Viking Eggeling (Figure 47), and September's issue featuring Moholy-Nagy's primarily Dadaist works (Figure 6), was followed by November's Kassák number (Figure 43), showcasing three full-page Képarchitektúras (Figures 44, 45 and 49). The contents of this November issue would seem to offer a real contrast, even clash of sensibilities, but I believe instead are an important clue to Kassák's thinking in this period. On the first page of this November issue is Kurt Schwitters typographically-inventive poem "Cigarren" (Figure 48), and mixed in amongst Kállai's essay on Kassák and Kassák's geometric works is Tristan Tzara's "The First Celestial Adventure of Mr. Antipirin." Taking this one step further, we can now return to Kassák's most important image verse "Este a fák alatt," which appeared in the following journal issue of January, 1922, and pull some threads together. In this context we can now see "Este a fák alatt" as a transitional combination of Dada poetry and Képarchitektúra, as if Kassák melded the Dada text with the structure and
geometric elements of his Képarchitektúra compositions, or even submitted the passion of what was being expressed in the words to the discipline of the ordered structure of the arrangement on the page. This was touched upon previously, when the reading and comprehension of the text was discussed as being visually controlled and shaped by the arrangement of the words on the page. Now we can see the source of that order and structure as coming from Kassák's contemporaneous experiments with creating geometric compositions in the Képarchitektúra mode. For example, in comparing one of the Képarchitektúras from the November issue (Figure 49) to a page from "Este a fák alatt" (Figure 15) the visual similarities are striking: the directional element provided by diagonal lines or lines of text, curved lines and curved text, the black circle in each, and blocks of text acting like composing elements on the page much as the geometric shapes do in the Képarchitektúra composition. Many of the same comparisons could be made with the cover of the January, 1922 issue also (Figure 17). Of course "Este a fák alatt" was produced in several different formats, and they are revealing as well. The hand-drawn version produced as a separate Ma picture book in 1922, breaks the text down differently on the page and intersperses the text with separate illustrations, some clearly geometric in character, others more Dadaist, both modes strikingly used in the same work (Figures 16, 21 and 22). The major poem "A ló meghal és a madarak kiröpülnek" of 1922 submits the Dada text to the rigid structure of a continuous block paragraph with lines of the poem indicated by an asterisk, the title encased in a geometric composition, and the poem interspersed with geometric illustrations (Figures 23, and 24). One could also cite many of Kassák's collages of this period as experimenting with words or bits of text as compositional elements within an art work (Figure 12), although I agree with Brendel that in these instances the words lose much of
their communicative purpose. The foregoing examples indicate a period of experimentation in Kassák's work in 1921-22, in which the artist was negotiating a transition between Dada poetry and Constructivist art. What is truly significant is that Kassák seems to have worked through this process by developing and mixing two modes that would seem to be contradictory—Dada text and Constructivist art. What was the connection for Kassák? At this point it is important to acknowledge previous suggestions that Dada was a way to produce a tabula rasa, a sweeping clean and a new start for art to communicate the new future, as the composition Romboljatok hogy építhessetek és építssettek hogy győzhessetek made clear (Figure 40). Dada also advocated the breakup of traditional form, used new, modern materials and pushed the limits of what could be considered a work of art. Certainly all of these were important lessons for Kassák and the other Hungarians in this period. Perhaps even some knowledge of Russian Constructivism pushed Kassák to continue experiments in the geometric vein. But all of these elements primarily address the material, formal connections between Dada and Constructivist visual works of art. What is missing here is that Kassák's major engagement with Dada was in the sphere of texts, primarily poetry, not purely visual works of art. At the center of Kassák's experiments with Dada poetry, Képarchitektúra, and the mixing of these two, was a concern with how these varying modes produce meaning primarily through visual arrangement. Kassák was first and foremost a poet, a man of words, who would continue to write poetry throughout his life. Also, separately, he created works of visual art. In this period of 1921-22 he combined these two halves of his creative production, because he saw a united purpose—to express his feeling of the interior state of man, and to communicate his vision of the future. Both Kassák's poetry and Képarchitektúras are exhortations, lessons, things that communicate a
message and attempt to reach and uplift the reader/viewer. Kassák brought his concern with communicating a message to the visual sphere, thus the insistence that Képarchitekturas were not aesthetic, not paintings in the traditional sense, but rather primary creations that were to have a psychic, moral and motivating effect on the viewer. Only Kassák as poet could have believed that visual works of art could communicate the dense ideology that was elsewhere contained in the text of the Képarchitektúra manifesto. This is not to say that only Kassák believed that geometric, constructive art could communicate so much about the hoped-for future, actually most Constructivists both European and Russian, artists and theoreticians, believed likewise. What is being suggested is that Kassák reached this conclusion in an unique way—as a poet who saw a vital connection between poetic text, visual arrangement and how they contain and produce meaning. What Kassák communicated in the words of poetic texts he attempted to transfer to visual works of art, where the arrangement of geometric elements on a plane would carry the same communicative weight. Can the art object do this however? Kassák clearly hoped that it could, as one reads the Képarchitektúra manifesto and understands that Kassák intended these works to reach out to the viewer, transfer a vision of the new utopia, change his way of thinking, and move him to action. These are powers usually ascribed to great literature, but Kassák clearly believed that the art object could do all this as well, as did Kállai. The crucial problem here is that it is only the text of the Képarchitektúra manifesto that does communicate the specifics of Kassák's ideology, not the works of art. And it was primarily Kállai's numerous essays on Constructivism in Ma that continued to outline and define all that was hoped for in terms of the political and social implications of the style. What was different about the Constructivism practiced by Kassák and described by Kállai—its sense of
permanent revolution, the notion that art would eternally change to reflect
the circumstances of the society it was produced for, the belief that
Constructivism was not the final style—and differentiated it substantially from
Russian Constructivism, for example, was not constituted in the visual object.
One could look at a Suprematist work by Malevich next to a Képarchitektúra by
Kassák, and they look very similar in terms of their geometric simplicity and
planarity. The difference lies in the ideology produced in conjunction with
them, and that is found in the manifestos and other texts. This disjuncture
between the geometric work of art and the complex theories that were
produced with it may explain the ultimate failure of the style to produce the
change it hoped for, or even to communicate with the majority of the
population as it intended. Instead such geometric work came to be seen
largely as an alienating aesthetic object, exactly the sin that Hevesy accused it
of in 1921 when reviewing Bortnyik's works.32

What is very clear from the preceding discussion is that for most of
1921, when these Hungarians had already begun producing geometric
compositions on a flat plane, and ventured into discussions on the spatial,
kinetic and even social implications of such activity, they were doing so
firmly in a European context, based on precedents set in the earlier
generation of the Hungarian avant-garde, and in comparison or
contradistinction to fellow European artists such as the Cubists, Schwitters,
Grosz or Kandinsky's Expressionist works produced in Germany. This context
set the guidelines and terms of the activity, not Russian Constructivism. Real
and specific knowledge of what was occurring in the Soviet Union would not
become widely available to the Hungarians until late 1921 and 1922 with the
return of some of the Hungarian artists from Moscow. When artists such as
Uitz returned to Vienna with Soviet art texts and a first-hand knowledge of the
Constructivist works being produced there, then the Hungarians could knoedgably relate their contemporary art to what was being created in the Soviet Union under the rubric of Constructivism. But before exploring the nature of that knowledge and its effect on the Hungarians working in Vienna, we need to pick up another important center of activity and information that was feeding into *Ma* in 1921/22—Moholy-Nagy in Berlin.33

Although while still in Hungary in 1918-19 Moholy-Nagy had some contact with Kassák's group of Activists, and as has been argued was profoundly influenced by their ethical and social attitudes about art, he was by no means in the forefront of artistic activity in Budapest.34 As had many others, he left Hungary after the fall of the Republic of Councils, and eventually made his way to Vienna. After a short period there, he quickly moved on to Berlin, where he would mature into an independent and highly significant artist between 1920 when he arrived in Berlin and 1923 when he would be invited to join the staff at the Bauhaus. It is precisely in this period that he would have his most significant contact with Kassák and the journal Ma. There is no doubt that as Berlin was in this period the center of international avant-garde activity, that Moholy-Nagy was a vital pipeline of information for Kassák, as well as a source for numerous reproductions of the latest in avant-garde art that would be consequently published in Ma.35 Moholy-Nagy was officially named as the Berlin representative of *Ma* in April of 1921.36 His first reproduction, a Dadaist-inspired woodcut, had appeared in *Ma* the month previous. In September of 1921 *Ma* published a Moholy-Nagy number, with one reproduction of his work on the cover, ten more inside, and an introductory essay on his work by Kállai, much as Kassák would do for himself in November of 1921. It seems also that Moholy-Nagy may have been privy to the first news from the Hungarian artists just returning from Moscow.
in late 1921/early 1922, and met El Lissitzky early in 1922, two of the most important sources for information on what was currently happening in Soviet Russia. This information in the summer of 1922 would have a considerable impact on the Hungarian scene, both in Berlin and Vienna. Through 1921 and until mid-1922 the Russian material published in Ma had been about Russian artists already in the West, many who were no longer in contact with the current Constructivist activity in Moscow. The April 1921 issue of Ma featured the work of Ukrainian artist Alexander Archipenko, but he had been living in Europe since 1909. In February of 1922 Ma published an Ivan Puni number. Although Puni was well familiar with Malevich's Suprematism and had been producing his own works in that vein, by the period of consolidation of the Russian Constructivist ideas and program Puni was already on his way West, settling in Berlin in 1921. Thus Ma would not exhibit any advanced knowledge of Russian Constructivism until May-December of 1922, when a series of outside circumstances had fallen into place. One was that by this time Uitz had returned to the West and begun publishing in the rival journal Egység in the summer of 1922, which contained a number of primary documents and works of Russian Constructivism, making them easily available to the Hungarians. Also Moholy-Nagy may have had contact with both Uitz and Kemény (the other Hungarian who had been in Moscow) as early as fall of 1921, and thus had had significant time to process this knowledge, part of which can be detected in his and Kassák's major compilation of contemporary art they would publish in the fall of 1922. Additionally Kassák's Ma and El Lissitzky's Veshch would begin a reciprocal relationship of sharing material for publication in the summer of 1922. All of these factors combined to result in a groundswell of information about current Russian art that would have its impact on the
journal Ma, Kassák's theory of art, and the relationships among the various members of the Hungarian avant-garde living abroad.

As mentioned above, Uitz early in 1921 had been sent to Moscow by the Hungarian Communist Party to attend the Third Comintern Congress scheduled for that summer. There Uitz met up with Alfréd Kemény, who also had been sent to Moscow by the Party, and another Hungarian, Jolán Szilágyi, who was a student at the new VKhUTEMAS [Higher State Artistic and Technical Workshops]. Through Szilágyi Uitz probably met El Lissitzky, Malevich, and Rodchenko and the other Constructivists at INKhUK [Institute of Artistic Culture]. Kemény, who was to be in the Soviet Union longer than Uitz, apparently met Naum Gabo through David Shterenberg as head of IZO [Department of Fine Arts of the People's Commissariat of Education], and subsequently was introduced by Gabo to most of the major figures in Russian art circles in this period. Kemény was to become an ardent supporter of OBMOKhU [Society of Young Artists], and even gave two papers at INKhUK in December of 1921. According to Uitz's recollection, he returned to Berlin in the fall of 1921, and discussed Russian Constructivism with Moholy-Nagy and Kállai. Kemény also returned late in 1921 or early 1922 and established a relationship with Moholy-Nagy, the most important result of this contact apparently being his sharing of Pevsner and Gabo's "Realistic Manifesto" of 1920 with the artist. It is believed that a primary effect of Moholy-Nagy's familiarity with this document and other Russian Constructivist ideas can be seen in his turn toward kinetic and constructive projects such as his Nickel Sculpture of late 1921 (Figure 50) and the film script "The Dynamics of the Metropolis" of 1922 (Figure 51). This shift in interest toward the kinetic and real space/real time activity that is called for in Gabo's manifesto, is also reflected in the Moholy-Nagy's and Kassák's great project of the spring and
summer of 1922, their book Új művészek könyve [The Book of New Artists], which, as indicated earlier, is no less than their presentation of the history of modern art up to the contemporary period. The introduction written by Kassák sets up the arrangement of the illustrations that follow moving through Futurism and Expressionism to Cubism, Dadaism, Constructivism and stopping with Hans Richter and Viking Eggeling's compositions for abstract film. The text of the introduction varies little from the primary ideas contained in his Képarchitektúra manifesto of the previous year. But clearly the primary emphasis of the book was not to be the text, but rather the reproductions, which make up the majority of its content. Most likely primarily chosen and arranged by Moholy-Nagy, the reproductions are placed on the pages without any text or bounding typography, and the viewer was clearly intended to make visual comparisons across the facing pages (Figure 52). Included with the reproductions of the art works are a number of photographs of buildings, machines and other technological material, often directly interspersed with the art. These reproductions emphasize the elements of constructivity, science and engineering that Kassák draws together in his introduction. The issue of movement is also mentioned by Kassák, as movement equals creation (life). Clearly such ideas could be readily linked to Russian manifestos such as Gabo's, but Moholy-Nagy and Kassák's book does not culminate with the Russian Constructivists and their work, but rather with Richter and Eggeling and the art of film. It is significant to note as well that in their progression of artistic examples, Russian artists such as Rodchenko, Malevich, and Lissitzky are followed by Moholy-Nagy and Kassák, then the book stops with Richter and Eggeling. I find this important because I believe it indicates quite clearly Kassák and Moholy-Nagy's positioning of themselves and their work in the camp of International Constructivism, and
distinguishing themselves from Russian Constructivism. As mentioned above, the literature on the Hungarian avant-garde of this period tends to overly-focus on the importance of the Russians and their impact on Hungarian variants of Constructivism, that in essence contact with the Russians moved the Hungarians toward Constructivism and primarily shaped the Hungarians' understanding and adoption of its principles. There is no question that Russian Constructivism was an important factor in this period, but so too, and already, was International Constructivism as practiced in Europe. These two poles (Russian and European) were a contemporaneous choice for the Hungarians, and some veered East and others West. For Kassák and Moholy-Nagy it was clearly West, and this is even more apparent if one considers the specific details of their book's assemblage and publication.

The spring/summer of 1922 was a critical period for Kassák, his journal and the other Hungarians in Vienna. May of 1922 saw the publication of the outstanding double issue of Ma, which we can now see as reflecting the quality and variety of material that was finding its way into Új művészek könyve, in fact, many of the reproductions are the same. The issue begins with a major position statement by Kassák, "Mérleg és tovább" [Reckoning and Onward], that is a summation of the Ma group's activity to that point, and a clear shift toward International Constructivism. Next would be the issue featuring the work of Van Doesburg, and then the August, 1922 issue which included the statements from the Düsseldorf Congress and the Hungarians' own reaction. Now we can also understand Új művészek könyve as being produced within this context, a decidedly European one, by two artists who had chosen their alignment. Richter, whose film studies the book had featured, was one of the major players at the Düsseldorf Congress. Moholy-Nagy would in September of 1922, the month the book appeared, attend the Dada—Constructivist meeting at
Weimar, involving himself in European Constructivist issues. In December he and Kemény would publish a manifesto in Der Sturm entitled "Dynamic-Constructive System of Forces", which if inspired by Kemény's reading of the "Realistic Manifesto," is surprisingly devoid of anything that would indicate that author's firsthand knowledge of Russian Constructivism. Additionally, Moholy-Nagy would contribute an essay "Produktion-Reproduktion" in De Stijl in 1922 arguing for production as new creation over reproduction, and again identifying Eggeling and Richter's work as the present culmination in efforts toward kinetic formation with absolutely no mention of Russian work involving movement, space, etc.

Necessary to add into the mix of this period in 1922 is the arrival of El Lissitzky to Berlin. El Lissitzky left Moscow for Berlin late in 1921, and by the beginning of 1922 was regularly visiting Moholy-Nagy's studio and interacting with fellow visitors such as Raoul Hausmann. Kassák in Vienna was also aware of El Lissitzky's work, as the August, 1921 issue of Ma reports receiving a 1920 publication on Lissitzky's Prouns, including ten lithographs. While in Berlin Lissitzky and Ilya Ehrenburg published two issues of their journal Veshch/Gegenstand/Objet, which was to act as a conduit of information between the European and Russian avant-gardes. However, it primarily worked in only one direction (West to East), as the majority of the text was in Russian, it borrowed rather substantially from Western journals such as L'Esprit nouveau, and carried no information on Russian Constructivism. As Christina Lodder points out as well, the journal's expansion of the category of art (as opposed to abandoning the notion of art as a finite category) and its apolitical stance made it far more similar to European groups such as De Stijl rather than the Russian Constructivists. Veshch also focused some attention on the abstract film compositions of Richter and
Eggeling in its May, 1922 issue, including an article by Ludwig Hilbersheimer on kinetic painting and film illustrated by their work. However, Ma had already prominently featured these film compositions nearly a year previously in its August, 1921 issue, including an essay by Viking Eggeling. Veshch did carry some information on Ma and the Hungarians in its March-April, 1922 issue, primarily on Moholy-Nagy, but El Lissitzky's condescending (and inaccurate) assessment of the Hungarians made nearly impossible any objective information. Ma published several examples of El Lissitzky's work in this period, including a Proun composition in May of 1922, the cover of the August, 1922 issue (Figure 53), and his Proun text of 1920 with accompanying illustration in October of 1922. I think it fair to say that both Moholy-Nagy and Kassák were well acquainted with El Lissitzky's work, and probably looked on it favorably, for many of the same reasons that Lodder points out made El Lissitzky's journal and activity in Berlin something closer to International Constructivism rather than pure Russian. And we cannot argue that these Hungarians did so out of ignorance, i.e., that they did not know what real Russian Constructivism was about and therefore confused El Lissitzky and his journal with it. Lodder maintains that that is largely what occurred in Europe in 1922, and therefore when the exhibition the "First Russian Show" did open in October of that year in Berlin, most Europeans, unprepared and ill-informed about Russian Constructivism, approached the works from a purely artistic point of view. Kassák, Moholy-Nagy and the other Hungarians could claim no such ignorance, and that is crucial to appreciating the fact that whose work they were interested in and who they aligned with in this period of 1922 was an informed choice, not a misunderstanding. Throughout the summer of 1922 the Hungarians had direct access, in Hungarian, to some of the primary documents and works of the Russian Constructivists in the journal.
Egység, material which Uitz had brought back with him from the Soviet Union. How the Hungarians reacted to the central issue of the connection between politics and art irrevocably changed their relationships with another and how they would practice art.

We can see directly after Uitz’s return to Vienna from Moscow the importance of what he had witnessed firsthand in the Soviet Union, not only in the journal Egység, but immediately in his own art. Early in 1922 the artist began a group of linocuts numbering thirty seven called the Analysis series (Figures 55 and 56). The series investigates principles of line, texture, geometric shape and compositional rhythm in black and white, and reflect the artist's interest in the work he had seen in Moscow, most particularly that of Rodchenko. It is in Uitz's work, among all the Hungarians, that one can argue the clear influence of Russian Constructivism on Hungarian art. This influence was manifested not only visually but also ideologically in his work, two halves of the equation that must be present to prove an influence of Russian Constructivism, since it was a political program as well as a visual one. The integral importance of the ideas and theory behind Russian Constructivism are most likely what prompted Uitz to break with Kassák and Ma and venture into publishing in another journal in May of 1922. Kassák apparently had no interest in publishing the documents that Uitz brought back with him from Moscow, and certainly they would not have fit into the much more eclectic and international mix of artists and trends that Kassák was publishing in this period, particularly given his increasing tilt toward European-based Constructivism. So in early 1922, when Aladár Komját (a founder of the Hungarian Communist Party) began planning a Communist cultural journal, Uitz joined on as co-editor. The art work published in Egység, with the exception of works by Uitz, was all Russian including
Stenberg, Gabo, Ivan Kliun, Malevich and a photograph from the OBMOKhU "Second Spring Exhibition" showing the work of Rodchenko, Medunetsky and the Stenberg brothers (Figures 57 and 58). The June, 1922 issue which contained many of these reproductions, also published Gabo and Pevsner's "Realistic Manifesto" and Alexei Gan's "Program of the First Working Group of Constructivists" from 1921. The third issue of Egység of September, 1922 included Malevich's introduction from his 1920 album of 34 Suprematist lithographs and five of the lithographs transferred into linocuts by Uitz, in the process reversing their direction and black/white coloration (Figures 59-62). This is not to say that the Hungarians published these items in Egység as representative of their beliefs, or without comment or even criticism. Instead they presented the materials even though they did not entirely agree with them, in order to "hasten the awakening of consciousness and to contribute to finding the way to collective art under collective control," i.e., for political purpose, not just visual. Uitz included a similar explanation in conjunction with Malevich's art, listing Suprematism as a provisional step in the process toward collective art, in that it limited or destroyed elements such as anarchical individualism. Uitz also added his own commentary to the Malevich illustrations (his versions), taking the opportunity to present his own theory on "uni-color" for example: "White on white or black on black is the clearest demonstration of uni-color, as white and black are the same color. Black is the darkest shade of white. White is the lightest shade of black." With Uitz's theory in mind, this Hungarian artist could have without much compunction reversed the black/white relationship in Malevich's works, because for him they were merely degrees of the same color. This is, however, in great distinction to the color theory presented in Malevich's Suprematist
If the Hungarians publishing in Egység did not wholeheartedly agree with Russian Constructivism, determining exactly what art theory/practice they did support is still no easy matter. There was much talk of collective art, the proletarian, and Proletkult, and the journal and its writers were clearly tied to the Communist Party, however exactly what art for the party would be was a major cause for discussion (and disagreement) among the participants. These disagreements led to changes in editors and location of publication. Uitz no longer participated in the journal after the third issue, and Egység moved to Berlin, reviving publication in February of 1923. This first Berlin issue was unique in that it included Kemény, Kállai and Moholy-Nagy (all in Berlin) joining with Egység in a manifesto calling for a new Proletkult organization that would establish cooperation between the artist and the proletariat in terms of constructing a new communist society. Although the Hungarians were not exactly clear on what kind of art this meant, they were clear in that they could castigate both De Stijl (mechanized aestheticism) and Russian Constructivists such as the OBMOKhU group (technical Naturalism) for not producing the "kind of constructive art that springs from our communist ideology." However, the next issue of Egység turned to a figurative, propagandistic art completely in service to the Party under the artistic direction of Bortnyik, and Hungarian artists and theorists practicing any form of Constructivism participated with it no longer.

If there was dissension within Egység on a number of matters, one rallying point was the criticism of Kassák and his journal Ma. Given what we know about the two journals this is not at all surprising, since there were broad and serious ideological differences between the two. First and foremost
was the issue of the relationship between politics and art. Although those regularly participating in Egység could not necessarily agree on what form art would take in communist society, there was little question that it would be for the proletarian and closely tied to the needs and dictates of the Party. This is in direct contrast to what Kassák had been advocating since 1920, in that Ma spoke of universal art, clearly separate from any specific political party, even though Kassák maintained the belief that Communism was the political reality of the current period in history. We can also recall Ma's response to the Moscow Provisional Committee's questionnaire in November of 1920, in which the very existence of proletarian art was denied. For Egység, Ma was too international and anarchical, even counter-revolutionary, and Kassák was accused of deriving Képarchitektúra from the work of other artists such as Puni, Braque and the Suprematists. Kassák took the opportunity to defend himself and his journal in the article "Válasz sokfelé és álláspont" [Reply in Many Directions and a Standpoint] in the August, 1922 issue of Ma. In it Kassák reviewed the revolutionary pedigree of Ma, but insisted on the journal's correct course in removing itself from dictatorial and factional Party control. Ma was still Communist, but it had in a sense a higher goal—a universal, humanitarian ethic to improve the lives and opportunities of people beyond the mere economic improvement promised by Marxist historical materialism. Kassák also attacked the artistic policies of Egység, singling out for particular scorn Uitz's fresco composition entitled Humanity of 1919, which had been featured in the first issue of Egység with a complete formal analysis delineating its "socialist constructive design" (Figure 54); and Egység's support of "tendenc művészet" [Tendenzkunst], i.e., figurative propagandistic art. When Kassák failed to respond to further attacks from Egység after this statement, the dialogue was effectively ended.
With this background in mind, there is no question that the Hungarians went to the first large-scale exhibition of Russian art in the West in the autumn of 1922 with a far better understanding of what they were looking at, as well as the ideas behind it, than most of their European counterparts. As Lodder posited, most of the Europeans who visited the Van Diemen exhibition in Berlin that autumn saw the material only in aesthetic terms, ignorant of the social and political implications of particularly the Constructivist art. This was not possible for the Hungarians, having seen Russian avant-garde art as early as November, 1920, being in Moscow and meeting many of Russia's leading artistic figures, reading some key Constructivist and Suprematist documents in their native language, and vociferously debating among themselves the nature of the relationship between politics and art. The Hungarians also had their own experience with Communist control, which had failed miserably, and their own ideas and criticisms concerning the Russian material they had access to. So, although many may have visited the exhibition out of sympathy and even expectation, they did not leave in awe, but instead with some disappointment.

Kassák went to Berlin that autumn not only to see the exhibition, but also to establish and renew contacts with avant-garde activity in Germany, most particularly with Herwarth Walden and Der Sturm. His review of the exhibition was published in the December, 1922 issue of Ma, including a number of reproductions of Russian works (Figures 63 and 64). The exhibition itself encompassed a wide and eclectic variety of Russian art beyond Suprematism and Constructivism, but given Kassák's own interests it is not surprising that the majority of his review would focus on these two trends. He began his review by trying to place these latest artistic movements in the context of Russia and her culture, what he described as the "somber and pure
Asia", i.e. East, that the Hungarians had first appreciated in the literature of Tolstoy and Dostoevsky. Such qualities Kassák believed, could now be seen in the purity and clarity of Russia's geometric painting. Kassák's highest praise was reserved for Malevich and Suprematism because of its essential, geometric form, its limitation to the primary colors of black and white, and its search for absolute reduction that opened the way for progress and inspiration for those who followed. It is not difficult to understand why Kassák favored Malevich and Suprematism, since what he praises in Malevich are qualities very similar to those called for in his Képarchitektúra manifesto. Kassák was decidedly less impressed with the sculptural works on view, which he saw as attempting to apply utilitarian methods to construct 3-D works. They are faulted for being frameworks, incomplete, without materiality of their own, and finally useless. Again, Kassák's own theories concerning art are at work in this estimation. The Russian Constructivists' call for the production of useful objects for modern society was completely at odds with Kassák's desire to create an art that was an essential object in and of itself and that would alter man's psyche and inspire his actions. Kassák chides the Russians for being so naive as to believe that such constructions of plastic and wire could be useful in a modern society with speeding locomotives, suspension bridges and heavyweight cranes. The review ends with renewed praise for the purity and clarity of Russian painting, and a call to further pursue the human ideal to be attained in Constructivism—an echo of what Kassák had been advocating in terms of geometric painting for now well over a year.

Other Hungarian reviewers were more sharp in their criticism, particularly concerning that crucial issue of politics. Kemény faulted the show for its eclecticism and its "refusing to defend a point of view". Kállai was especially scathing:
It was not evident that this exhibition had arrived in the luxury of the Unter den Linden from a country fighting and suffering from communism... What the Russian exhibition showed in determination was merely tactics. It seems that Lunacharsky and the others do not want to frighten away the bourgeois visitors of the exhibition, this is why they refrained from stressing the revolutionary aspect.

Kállai was also critical of the sculptural works, branding them "technical pseudo-naturalism", and although Gabo's works contained some promise, Kállai suggested instead that "future development must lie in the direction of the kinetic energy defined by Kemény and Moholy-Nagy." Kállai's disappointment with the exhibition's failure to communicate the social and political context of the Russian works was to be expected. In his own theoretical writings on Constructivism, central to his analysis was not only the character of their form, but how that form reflected and articulated the social and ethical goals of Constructivism. Many of the titles of his essays make this central concern clear, such as "The Social and Intellectual Perspectives of Constructive Art", "Constructive Form and Social Content" and "Ethics." To see those aspects of the Russian Constructivist works seemingly muted in the exhibition would have been especially disappointing for Kállai.

I have spent considerable time discussing the various Hungarians' reactions to what they read and saw of Russian Constructivism in order to gauge exactly their level of knowledge and interest in this movement. As mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, much of the literature on Hungarian avant-garde art is quick to credit Russian Constructivism with having a major and defining impact on the Hungarians, that in a sense the early experience with Russian art led them to favor and develop Constructivism in their own work thereafter. I am not convinced that the experience of Russian art was such a singular and defining moment for the
Hungarians, but instead was among a host of other ideas and movements that the Hungarians were simultaneously exploring in the beginning of the 1920s. As established above, concerns with order, structure, architectonics and the attendant ideological implications for society were part of the program of the earlier generation of Hungarian avant-garde artists, most particularly The Eight, before they cropped up in Kassák's Képarchitektúra, for example. We know that when Konstantin Umansky showed his Russian slides at the Ma evening in November of 1920, Bortnyik's album of linocuts were already near completion, thus not produced under any Russian influence. Kassák's theory of Képarchitektúra also being developed at just this time, displays no knowledge or interest in Russian art, but instead can firmly be placed in the context of European ideas and concerns. When Kállai set out in late 1921 to articulate the formal precedents of Képarchitektúra, for example, French Cubism received pride of place and the bulk of his attention. As this chapter and those previous have amply demonstrated, the preponderance of contacts with other individuals and groups, and the material featured in the journal Ma in this period were overwhelmingly European, not Russian. In comparison to Germany, for example, Russia's representation in the journal is negligible. A substantial number of the contacts that the Hungarians did have with Russians prior to the spring/summer of 1922 were with Russians absent from the country for some time, or with those not well connected with Russian Constructivism proper. Looking at several pivotal issues of the journal in the year 1922, the visual evidence of the pages also indicates a clear alignment with and interest in European art and even European-based Constructivism, at the same time that Egység was publishing its Russian Constructivist materials. For example, the May double issue featured a wide variety of European artists and poets, but Russia was represented only by an El Lissitzky Proun
composition and Punin's article on Tatlin's tower for the 111r3d International, an article actually written in 1919.\textsuperscript{92} The next (July) issue featured Theo van Doesburg, including his article "Architecture as Synthetic Art", reflecting Kassák's current interest in the Dutch De Stijl group. The following August issue was critical. It began with Kassák's repudiation of Egység and its platform in his essay "Reply in Many Directions and a Standpoint". Following was Kállai's "The Social and Intellectual Perspectives of Constructive Art", a dense theoretical statement presenting the ethical and social implications of Constructivist form and practice for Communist, collective society. The issue ended with the presentation of the documents from the Düsseldorf Congress and Ma's own statement aligning itself with the burgeoning International Constructivist movement.\textsuperscript{93} This material was being published in Ma simultaneously with the Russian Constructivist material appearing in Evség, and previous to the fall, 1922 Russian exhibition in Berlin. This commitment to International Constructivism seems to be announced visually with the next issue of October, 1922 when Ma underwent a change in design and format (Figure 65). Instead of featuring an artist's work on the cover, from now on the journal's cover would consist of the title Ma in various typographical designs, sometimes including a geometric, Constructivist composition in color. The journal was also re-oriented from a vertical to a wider, more perfectly square page layout. Kassák and Moholy-Nagy's Új művészek könyve we recall followed the Russian Constructivists with examples of their own work, and culminated with Richter and Eggeling's film compositions.\textsuperscript{94} And although the December, 1922 issue of Ma would feature a substantial number of Russian works illustrating Kassák's review of the Berlin exhibition, from then on the majority of the work featured in the journal from 1923 to 1925 was European, especially German. Ma published a special German issue in March of 1923
entirely in the German language, saw the 1923 journal G as an ally and published Hans Richter's Constructivist compositions and his essay on Constructivism, and featured a number of works from the Bauhaus, most likely gained through Hungarians there such as Farkas Molnár. Ma continued throughout its run to 1925 to feature a variety of European material also, but did not evidence any particular interest in Russia.

Of the Hungarians at one time associated with Kassák and Ma, clearly it was Uitz who was most profoundly affected by his experiences in Moscow and what he learned of Russian Constructivism, evidenced both in his artistic work and what he published in Egység. Uitz moved to the Soviet Union in 1926, and produced propagandistic works in the socialist realist style as dictated by the Party, only returning to Hungary shortly before his death in 1970. Kemény underwent the same transformation when he immigrated to the Soviet Union in 1933. Barta, the editor of Aszkatott Ember, joined the Party in 1924 and moved to the Soviet Union as well, but did not survive the Gulag. Bortnyik worked in the Tendenzkunst style for Egység in 1923 (Figure 66), then moved on to the Bauhaus. Dissatisfied with what he perceived as a lack of ideological commitment to social improvement at the Bauhaus, Bortnyik returned to Hungary in 1925 and eventually instituted the Műhely [Workshop], his own attempt to improve on the Bauhaus model. Moholy-Nagy incorporated from Russian art what was relevant for his own work, and took his interests in material/form and social improvement to the Bauhaus, becoming a professor there in 1924. Kállai, sharing this long-standing Hungarian interest in artistic form and its social impact, also eventually found himself at the Bauhaus working closely with Hannes Meyer. The significant number of Hungarians at the Bauhaus is indicative of their traditional interest in tying
artistic work to social/political improvement, not only within the Ma group, but in general.

The process of incorporating what was valuable in Russian art into ongoing artistic work was seen by Kassák as the likely outcome of the meeting of Russian and European art. In his review of the 1922 Russian exhibition in Berlin, Kassák cast the review in terms of what "we" [the Europeans] could gain from this powerful influx of geometric art from the Asiatic East. As Kassák noted, what could be seen at the show was in ways parallel to what had already been developing in Europe, but Russian art in its purity and strength was an inspiration for "us" to proceed. The dichotomy that Kassák establishes between we, the Europeans, the West and them, the Russians, the Asiatic East is clear. That they could be helpful was acknowledged, that they were fundamentally different was a given. I find it more helpful, finally, to register the Russian impact on the level of the politics, and not so much in the art work of the Hungarians in this period. For many of these Hungarians to follow the Russian example was a political and cultural commitment before it was a choice of artistic style. The Hungarian whose work most reflects the impact of Russian art was Uitz. But Uitz also joined the Party, visited Moscow and moved to the Soviet Union, as did Kemény. Of the other artists/critics associated with Ma and who were familiar with Russian Constructivism, such as Kassák, Bortnyik, Kállai and Moholy-Nagy, none made that politically-committed move to the Soviet Union, but instead integrated what degree they chose of Russian Constructivism into the style they were already developing in the European context, often attempting to apply it at the Bauhaus. By and large what characterizes the various Hungarian responses to Constructivism is this process of synthesis, which in their case also included important elements of Dada. Some of the Hungarians, such as Uitz, were more
willing to integrate into the political Soviet program and adapt their style as necessary; most however, chose to position themselves in some fashion in the European West. The Hungarians as East Europeans with a Communist background were better prepared to perceive and understand crucial differences between the Constructivism as developed in the Soviet Union and Western Europe, and their serious engagement with both reflects their position between East and West.
For example see Esther Levinger, "The Theory of Hungarian Constructivism," Art Bulletin 69 no. 3 (September, 1987): 455-66. I agree with Oliver Botar in his questioning of whether we can speak of anything consistent and unified enough to be called Hungarian Constructivism, especially if we consider the diversity of the interactions with Constructivism among artists such as Kassák, Uitz or Moholy-Nagy. See Oliver Botar, "Constructivism, International Constructivism and the Hungarian Emigration," in The Hungarian Avant-Garde, 1914-1933, ed. John Kish (Storrs, Conn.: The William Benton Museum of Art, 1987), 92. Granted that Levinger focuses her attention only on Kassák and Kállai and therefore can identify a cohesive body of art and thought, but that does leave out many other Hungarians who were responding to Constructivism in other ways. The variety of these responses will form a major portion of this chapter.

This has also been noted in János Brendel, "From Material to Architecture: On the Hungarian Avant-garde of the 1920s," Polish Art Studies no. 4 (1983): 57.

Kassák's refusal to tie Ma's artistic and editorial policies to Communist party politics became a major source of contention between him and several of the former Ma group throughout the 1920s, most notably with Béla Uitz, who left Ma and began publishing in the Communist journal Egyeség [Unity] in 1922.

For example, discussions involving Hungarian knowledge concerning Constructivism invariably mention Konstantin Umansky's lecture on Russian art at a Ma evening in November of 1920 (which, as this chapter will elaborate probably had little to do with Russian Constructivism), but seldom mention the Hungarian interest in and reaction to the issues surrounding European-based Constructivism that were the subject of the debates at the Düsseldorf Congress, and prominently featured in De Stijl and Ma.

For example, Levinger as in note 1, page 466 suggests that it was only after disappointment with the Russians that Kassák turned to various representatives of International Constructivism, a claim that this study will question.


Although there have been rumors of earlier Hungarian artistic contact with Soviet Russia, particularly during the 1919 Commune period, there is very little material evidence to entirely prove or disprove this. See Botar, "Constructivism", 92.


For more on this International Office see Lodder, 233-34. This Office had been set up in late 1918 and was led by a committee composed of Lunarcharksy, Shterenberg, Punin, Tatlin and Kandinsky.
According to Kandinsky, through the first efforts of Bähr the Russians received responses from the following German groups: Arbeitsrat für Kunst, the Novembergruppe, the Organization for Fine Arts in Baden and West-Ost. The texts of their replies as presented by Kandinsky can be found in Kandinsky: Complete Writings on Art Volume I (1901-1921), eds. Kenneth C. Lindsay and Peter Vergo (Boston: G. K. Hall & Co., 1982), 448-454.

It is interesting to note at this juncture that it might have been Kassák and Uitz together who formulated the answers to the International Office questionnaire. This dual authorship has been suggested by Krisztina Passuth, "Contacts between the Hungarian and Russian Avant-Garde in the 1920s," in The 1st Russian Show: A Commemoration of the Van Diemen Exhibition Berlin 1922 (London: Annely Juda Fine Art, 1983), 52. As will become clear when I analyze Uitz’s review of Umansky’s presentation below, this text seems to more clearly reflect the philosophy of Kassák rather than Uitz.

The most forceful expression of the dissatisfaction of the Ma artists with their role in Béla Kun’s government of 1919 can be found in Kassák’s "Level Kun Bélához a művészet nevében [Letter to Béla Kun in the name of Art]," Ma 4, no. 7 (June 15, 1919): 146-48.

Although Uitz claimed in his review (see note 15 below) that this was the only presentation on Russian art given in Europe that year, we do not know at this point if that is entirely correct. Umansky did have several publications in Germany that year, including Neue Kunst in Russland 1914-1919. (Potsdam: Kiepenhauer Verlag, 1920), "Neue Richtungen in Russland. Der Tatlinisimus oder die Maschinenkunst", Der Ararat, no. 4 (January 1920): 12-13 and "Die neue Monumentalskulptur in Russland", Der Ararat, no. 5/6 (Feb.-March, 1920): 29-33. This at least makes it conceivable that he could have given lectures in Germany as well, and that at the very least the German reading public would have had access to Russian material.

I am avoiding calling this art Russian Constructivist because as Lodder points out, Constructivism was not used to officially designate such Russian art until the winter of 1920-21, thus it would be anachronistic to call what Umansky could have shown the Hungarians in November Russian Constructivism.

Béla Uitz, "Jegyzetek a Ma orosz estélyéhez" [Notes on Ma’s Russian Evening], Ma 6, no. 4 (February 15, 1921): 52. The artists mentioned in Uitz’s review include Robert Falk, Natan Altman, Alexander Shevchenko, Malevich, Rodchenko, Tatlin, and Aleksandr Matveev. Passuth, "Contacts", 54 note 6 mentions that there has been some question as to whether Uitz was the sole author of this review, with Kassák claiming authorship many years later. One basis for the claim is that by February of 1921 Uitz was already in Moscow, having been sent there by the Communist party in January of 1921, however when it may have been written and when it was published are two different things. Passuth tends to believe that if it was published under Uitz’s name, it must be at least mostly his work. I would agree, and add that due to its pro-Russian tone and political comments much more likely to have come from Uitz rather than Kassák.

This has also been pointed out by Botar, "Constructivism", 94.

Ma 6, no. 1-2 (November 1, 1920): 19.
The text of Kassák's introduction is reprinted in Lajos Kassák, Éljünk a mi időnkben (Budapest: Magvető Könyvvkiadó, 1978): 48-49.

Largely black and white because many appeared in Ma and other contemporary journals, and thus for printing reasons primarily in these colors. The separate paintings by Kassák, however, are usually bright and colorful, as were Bortnyik's linocuts, using yellows, reds, and bright blues. This use of bright color in Dadaist and Constructivist works by Hungarian artists has been identified as an element the Hungarians brought forward from their Expressionist phase. See Júlia Szabó, A magyar aktivizmus művészete 1915-1927 (Budapest: Corvina, 1981), 94.

This manifesto was published separately from the journal with eight linocuts by Kassák in September of 1921. It did not appear in Ma until March of 1922, and appeared again in German translation in Ma in October of 1922.

This was first suggested in Botar, "Constructivism", 93.

Such comparisons would be made in the literature in 1922-23, but criticism in 1921 would be conducted in a strictly European context.


For example see Botar, "Constructivism", 93, Brendel, 52-58, and for such concerns in the first decade and a half of the 20th century in Hungarian art see Sylvia D. Bakos, The Emergence of the Hungarian Avant-garde, 1900-1919 (Ann Arbor, UMI Dissertation Services: 1989), 129-145.

Brendel, 56. The excerpt appears in Ma 6, no. 4 (February 15, 1921): 43-49, and was translated into Hungarian by Sándor Bortnyik. Brendel describes Behne as a German theoretician of architecture and a friend of Moholy-Nagy's, who actually introduced Moholy-Nagy to Walter Gropius in Berlin. Brendel's article rightly focuses on the importance of Scheerbart's theory particularly to Moholy-Nagy's Glass Architecture works, but I detect some ideological similarities in Kassák's theory as well. Here we can recall as well that Ma published Theo Van Doesburg's article on architecture and art in July of 1922.

Kállai actually uses words such as constructive and constructions in his essay, as well as Képarchitektúra. See Ma 7, no. 1 (November 15, 1921): 139. As Kállai would in the next several years write a number of essays on Constructivism which appeared in Ma, his positive reaction to Kassák's work from the beginning is not surprising.

Iván Hevesy's review originally appeared in Nyugat (1921): 1048. A reprint can be found in Iván Hevesy, Az új művészettért: válogatott írások, ed. Katalin Krén (Budapest: Gondolat, 1978), 151-52. What is also interesting about this review in Nyugat is that it reflects Hungarian awareness of what was happening among the artists in Vienna, even among those who remained in Budapest.
Hevesy had obviously been following Bortnyik's work for some time, as part of his essay reviews Bortnyik's recent career and outlines where he felt Bortnyik had strayed from the correct path. This he largely attributed to the negative German influence, something Bortnyik would react strongly against.

Nyugat (1921): 1286-87. Hevesy's reply to Bortnyik's reaction was published directly following. Although I will not go into all the details of their debate here, Hevesy does with some care and thoroughness present a strong and valid criticism of the ability of Képarchitektúra to mean or do all that it postulated.

A number of scholars have noted an important connection between Dada and Constructivism in Hungarian avant-garde art of this period, particularly in the work of Kassák. See in particular Passuth, "Képarchitektúra (dada és abstrakció)" in Magyar művészek, 93-126; Szabó, "A nagy kerék" in A magyar aktivizmus művészete, 93-101; Loránd Hegyi, "Adalékok Kassák képarchitektúrájának értelmezéséhez," in Kassák Lajos 1887-1967, 51-63; and Brendel, "From Material to Architecture", 49-52. The first two stay primarily on a formal, material level of analysis wherein the material and visual possibilities of Dada lead to the following level of abstraction. Brendel begins to indicate a possible connection between Kassák's poems and collages and a "sovereign language of the visual arts", or the objectless (Constructivist) image, as words stop bearing content and become the material of collage, but again this primarily remains a formal, material reading. Hegyi takes a different tack, through the art/anti-art dichotomy of Dada. In essence, Hegyi's take on Dada's anti-art practice is that it provided entirely new tools to develop a different kind of art that did not symbolize something, but rather demonstrated a conception. Its destructive attack on traditional art and its methods (the creation of a tabula rasa), freed the artist to forge new ways to communicate or express one's vision of a different world—precisely what Kassák was attempting in his Képarchitektúra. In Kassák's case this was through non-objective geometric painting. All of these analyses make valuable contributions, and I believe this complex mixing of both formal and conceptual experiments were carried by Kassák from Dada to the Constructivist stage. The following analysis adds to this the role Kassák's poetry and image verse may have played in the transition.

See note above. Kassák also mentioned this as an important function of Dada in several essays, and in the Képarchitektúra manifesto where Dada is mentioned as something that Képarchitektúra has "stepped over".

For an interesting extension in terms of how the social/political project of this generation of the avant-garde was co-opted and translated by Stalin into the Socialist Realist style in Russia see Boris Groys, The Total Art of Stalinism: Avant-Garde, Aesthetic Dictatorship and Beyond (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992).

I would like to stress at this juncture that Moholy-Nagy is being treated in this study only insofar as he directly becomes involved with Kassák and the journal Ma. In no way will this be an exhaustive treatment of his activities and work in Germany. Since in comparison to all the other Hungarians Moholy-Nagy has been much more thoroughly studied in the Western scholarship, readers seeking more information on Moholy-Nagy have
an ample bibliography to consult. A good place to begin is with Krisztina

34Passuth, Moholy-Nagy, 13-16. More information on these early
years of Moholy-Nagy is available in László Moholy-Nagy: From Budapest to
Berlin 1914-1923 (University of Delaware: The University Gallery, 1995).

35Some indication of the volume and variety of material being
exchanged is contained in a letter from Moholy-Nagy to Kassák of February
1922 translated and reprinted in Ferenc Csaplar, Kassák az euópai avantgárd

36Ma 6, no. 6 (April 25, 1921): 84.

37Oliver A. I. Botar, "From the Avant-Garde to 'Proletarian Art': The
Emigré Hungarian Journals Egység and Akasztott Ember, 1922-23," Art Journal
52, no. 1 (Spring, 1993): 34. Botar reports that Uitz joined the Communist Party
partly as a result of his being impressed by Umansky's lecture in November of
1920. Another important source for information on Uitz is Éva Bajkay, Uitz
Béla (Budapest: Képzőművészeti Kiadó, 1987).

38Botar, "From the Avant-Garde", 34.

39 Ibid.

40Todder, 236.

41Ibid., 236, 93. The two papers: 'The Latest Trends in Modern German
and Russian Art' and 'Concerning the Constructive Work of the OBMOKhU'. For
more on his lectures see John E. Bowlt, 'Hungarian Activism and the Russian
Avant-Garde,' in Standing in the Tempest Painters of the Hungarian Avant-
Garde 1908-1930, ed. S. A. Mansbach (Cambridge: MIT Press for the Santa

42Botar, "Constructivism", 95.

43Ibid., and Passuth, Moholy-Nagy, 28. Botar reports that Gabo
specifically remembers giving Kemény a copy of the "Realistic Manifesto"
while he was in Moscow. An English translation of this important document
can be found in John E. Bowlt, Russian Art of the Avant Garde: Theory and


45Although the book was not published until September of 1922 in
both Hungarian and German versions, given the number and variety of
illustrations included it would have taken some time to organize and compile.
Additionally, Kassák's introduction to the book is dated May 31, 1922, and a
number of the reproductions included in the book also appeared in issues of
Ma throughout the spring and summer of 1922. The book is today available in
a reprint edition Buch Neuer Künstler, with an Introduction by Kai-Uwe
Hemken (Baden, Switzerland: Verlag Lars Müller, 1991).

46Botar, "From the Avant-Garde", 35. As Botar notes, Kassák later
considered this essay crucial in that several former Ma members did not agree
with it, splitting from him. Basically this will be the division between Kassák
and Uitz, who will choose Russian Constructivism as his orientation, and begin
publishing in the rival journal Egység in May/June of 1922.

47See Chapter 4.

48The Congress and the Hungarian responses are discussed
thoroughly in Chapter 4.
Hemken in the introduction to the reprint edition of this book even suggests that Kassák back-dated his introduction to May 31, 1922 to coincide with the ending of the Düsseldorf Congress on May 30th, thus intentionally aligning the publication with the cause of International Constructivism. This is conceivable, but I am less persuaded as Hemken asserts that this book was conceived in reaction to the Congress, it was likely already under production by then. The Hungarians produced two statements, one published in Ma and one in De Stijl, to state their case concerning the Congress in quite clear terms.

Translation in Passuth, Moholy-Nagy, 290.

Botar, "Constructivism", 95-6. As Botar notes, this is somewhat surprising given Kemeny's activity in Moscow, including his support of OBMOKhU.


Botar, "Constructivism", 96. It is entirely presumable that Kállai would have met him there as well, as Kállai lived in Berlin, and would contribute an article on Lissitzky (specifically his Prouns) to Das Kunstblatt early in 1922. A translation of Kállai's article is available in Sophie Lissitzky-Küppers, El Lissitzky Life Letters Texts (London: Thames and Hudson Ltd., 1968), 375-76.

Translation in Passuth, Moholy-Nagy. 289-90.

Botar, "Constructivism", 96. It is entirely presumable that Kállai would have met him there as well, as Kállai lived in Berlin, and would contribute an article on Lissitzky (specifically his Prouns) to Das Kunstblatt early in 1922. A translation of Kállai's article is available in Sophie Lissitzky-Küppers, El Lissitzky Life Letters Texts (London: Thames and Hudson Ltd., 1968), 375-76.


Lodder, 227-28 and Zygas, 115-16.

Lodder, 228-29.

Zygas, 120.

Zygas, 118.

Passuth, Moholy-Nagy, 390-91 presents a number of small quotes from El Lissitzky, particularly on Moholy-Nagy. His hostility toward Moholy-Nagy is increasingly apparent throughout the early 1920s. The quote from Vesch: "Due to the impact of the Russian Revolution, their [the Hungarians] art developed through our influence..." This quote also reveals Veshch's obvious slant toward informing Russia, rather than a equal exchange between East and West.

It is interesting to note that the October, 1922 issue is where Kassák published his Képarchitektúra statement (in German) with accompanying examples of his own work, and placed them directly before the El Lissitzky material, perhaps inviting comparison.

Lodder, 229. As Veshch was one of the very few sources available to most Europeans on Russian art in the West, its lack of information on Russian Constructivism led to the failure on the part of the Europeans to see these works in the correct context.
Bajkay, Uitz, 55-56 and Passuth, "Contacts", 56-57. These works are most similar to Rodchenko's line and compass studies and black on black paintings of 1918.

Botar, "From the Avant-Garde," 35. This article is the most complete source for information on the rival journals published by former associates of Ma in Vienna in 1922-23. For more on Egység, particularly its ideological content and differences with Ma on that score see György Szabó, "Az Egység elméleti platformja," [The Theoretical Platform of Egység] in Tanulmányok a magyar szocialista irodalom történetéből, ed. Miklós Szabolcsi and László Illes (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1962): 115-42. Like Uitz, Komját was a former associate of Kassák's, having published extensively in Ma in the Budapest period. His split from the Ma group is discussed in Chapter 2.

Botar, "From Avant-Garde," 37.

Passuth, "Contacts," 58-9. Uitz, Passuth mentions, did apologize for having to do this to Malevich's work in the journal, but was forced to reproduce the works in linocut format for economic reasons. Passuth also notes that this was probably the first time that Malevich's text, as well as the "Realistic Manifesto" and Gan's manifesto were published in a foreign language.

Quote from Passuth, "Contacts", 58. She is quoting from the editors' note accompanying the Russian texts in Egység 2 (1922): 5.

Paraphrase from Uitz's comments as quoted in full in György Szabó, 124, from Egység 3 (1922).

As quoted in Passuth, "Contacts", 59.

Black, colored and white were the three stages that Suprematism had passed through, and additionally white took on connotations of pure action, black the sign of economy and red the signal for revolution, according to Malevich in the introduction to his 1920 album of lithographs. This text is available in K. S. Malevich, Essays on Art 1915-1933, ed. Troels Andersen (New York: George Wittenborn, Inc., 1968), 123-28.

Botar's article cited above on the other journals in Vienna is the best source for the fine points of the ideological differences among the Hungarians involved with Egység.

This manifesto, "Nyilatkozat" is translated in Passuth, Moholy-Nagy, 288-89. Also signing was László Péri. To emphasize the continuing presence of many of the themes and players in Hungarian debates about art, politics and future society, Ma in 1923 published Hausmann and Eggeling's second PRÉsentismus manifesto, which was at least in part a response and refutation of the ideas in the "Nyilatkozat" statement, primarily rejecting the intrusion of politics into art, according to Louise O'Konor, Viking Eggeling 1880-1925 Artist and Film-maker Life and Work, Stockholm Studies in the History of Art No. 23 (Stockholm: Almquist & Wiksell, 1971), 76-77. Hausmann had been featured in Ma a number of times before, and of course, Eggeling's work had been central to Kassák and Moholy-Nagy's Új művészek könyve. As O'Konor relates, Hausmann recalled attending a congress of Constructivists in Berlin in the spring of 1923, at which Kemény and Moholy-Nagy reportedly read a manifesto entitled "Hungarian Man", which Hausmann found too "rigid". Unfortunately, this manifesto has not yet come to light. According to
Hausmann, attending this congress were Richter, Gabo, Pevsner, Eggeling, himself, Moholy-Nagy, Kemény and Erich Bucholz.

Passuth, Moholy-Nagy, 288.

Botar, "From the Avant-Garde," 43-44. Bortnyik had early in 1923, in the journal Akasztott Ember [Hanged Man], announced his break with the Constructivist style, feeling that to practice that style in a capitalist society was to serve capitalist society.

Ibid., 45 note 16 indicates that this may not have been Kassák's policy during his involvement with Hungary's 1919 government, but this was certainly the case after its failure and the move to Vienna in 1920.

A variety of criticisms are reported by Passuth, "Contacts", Szabó and Botar "From the Avant-Garde". As Botar, 37, indicates, Hevesy also again attacked Képmarchítektúra, denouncing it as decorative and l'art pour l'art. These are, in fact, the same charges he had made a year earlier in his review of Bortnyik's album of linocuts.

Ma 7, no. 8 (August 30, 1922): 50-54.

Botar, "From the Avant-Garde," 37. In addition to these attacks from Egység, Sándor Barta's journal Akasztott Ember also regularly criticized Kassák, sometimes in a very cartoonish and crude way. For more on this journal see Botar. This must have been a very difficult time for Kassák, because not only could all this be perceived as a professional betrayal (both Uitz and Barta had been closely involved with Ma), but also personal, as both men were Kassák's brothers-in-law. Kassák would respond one more time to these varied attacks, again on the political level in "Egy generáció tragédiája" [Tragedy of a Generation], Ma 8, no. 7-8 (May 1, 1923).


Ma 8, no. 2-3 (December 25, 1922). All told these include Lissitzky, Rozanova, Shterenberg, Drevin, Medunetsky, Altman, Malevich, Gabo, Tatlin and Rodchenko. The lengthiest source on the Hungarian reaction to the show is Júlia Szabó, "Az 1922-es Berlini szovjetorosz kiállítás és a magyar avantgarde [The 1922 Berlin Soviet Russian Exhibition and the Hungarian Avant-garde]." Ars Hungarica (1973): 127-167. This includes reproductions of some of the works shown, and excerpts from the original exhibition catalogue.

On the organization, variety and content of this exhibition see the essays in The Ist Russian Show (London: Annely Juda Fine Art, 1983) by various authors.

The similarities between the two were not lost on the critics, either. Iván Hevesy wrote an article "Szuprematizmus és képmarchítektúra" in which he compared and condemned the two for similar gaps between their ideology and the actual work. The article appeared in Kékmadár in 1923, and is reprinted in Az új művészetért, 107-13.

Quoted in Andrei B. Nakov, "This Last Exhibition which was the 'First,' in The Ist Russian Show, 18.

Quoted in Passuth, "Contacts," 65.
Kállai is most likely referring to Kemény and Moholy-Nagy's manifesto "Dynamic-Constructive System of Forces" which was published in Der Sturm at this time. Kállai would also join with these two artists in 1923 in signing the "Nylatkozat" statement in Egység discussed above.


Such fundamental ethical and social concerns allowed Kállai to be published both in Ma and Egység in 1923, despite the journals' differences in terms of Party politics.

See Bakos, The Emergence of the Hungarian Avant-Garde, 129-37.


Lodder, 304 note 40.

As discussed in Chapter 4.

Passuth, "Contacts", 63 reports that Moholy-Nagy had actually sent some photographs of Russian works, and promised an article by Ilya Ehrenburg to Kassák in February of 1922, which is mentioned in a February letter from Moholy-Nagy to Kassák. Even if Kassák did receive this material, it is interesting that he published little or none of it. Passuth says that he published two of the photographs in Ma, but does not cite specifically when and where.

This is the only time Ma published a substantial amount of material in a language other than Hungarian.

I am suggesting Molnár here as a likely source because several examples of his own work were featured in Ma, but there were a significant number of Hungarians at the Bauhaus, so many sources are possible. I am not addressing in detail the Bauhaus and the Hungarians here as it is outside the scope of my focus on Ma and Kassák, and there are a substantial number of sources elsewhere on this topic.

For more on connections between Russian and Hungarian art, and especially the Hungarians who lived and worked in the Soviet Union see Bowlt, "Hungarian Activism and the Russian Avant-Garde," 143-167. Bowlt also adds an important caution that the Russian connection should be well mixed with French and German elements to fully appreciate the synthesis achieved by the Hungarians in this period.

Botar, "From the Avant-Garde", 38, 44.
100 For more on Kállai's experiences in the Bauhaus from 1928-30, and his association with Meyer, see Forgács, "New Perspectives", 31-32.
If a major factor in understanding the Hungarian relationship to European and Russian Constructivism was to appreciate their orientation between East and West, it is now time to more carefully examine these Hungarians in terms of their actual position and activities in Eastern Europe. Clearly their Eastern European background is pivotal to understanding why and with whom the Hungarians chose to engage on the larger international avant-garde scene in the 1920s, as the previous chapter has outlined. Secondly, it has helped us to recognize the process by which the Hungarians assimilated and synthesized a number of varying stylistic and ideological trends (such as Expressionism, Dadaism and Constructivism) by virtue of their being both geographically, and at times chronologically, removed from the primary artistic centers and their activities. From this peripheral site, it has been argued, the Hungarians were in a better position to pick and choose what was significant for them, and recombine these elements to make them uniquely relevant to their own goals. Up to this point this study has focused on these matters in terms of the Hungarians' relationship to Western European and Russian art, but another important branch of Kassák and Ma's activity
were the relationships fostered with Eastern European artists and art journals. Far from leaving Eastern Europe behind when Ma relocated slightly to the West in Vienna in 1920, this year marked the beginning of significant attempts on the part of Ma to connect with leading avant-garde figures in Eastern Europe. Determining what Kassák's reasons for encouraging such connections were, and making clear how this activity figured into the larger ideological and cultural goals of Ma will form the basis of this chapter.

There are a number of criteria which I have identified as being instrumental in determining with which Eastern European artists and journals Ma would cultivate a relationship. Understanding which factors and variables were at play on the part of the Hungarians in fostering contacts in this area help us to pinpoint why certain groups and some nations were important, and others not. By no means did the Hungarians blanket the entire area, or attempt to engage with every avant-garde group active in Eastern Europe. Additionally, some relationships were much more successful and mutually advantageous than others. First, it was best if the opposing partner in the relationship published a journal so as to have a point of contact and a platform for the mutual exchange and publication of material. Kassák, as editor of Ma and self-styled leader of the Hungarian avant-garde, was on a mission to promote his vision of the capabilities and duties of avant-garde art in modern society. As was clear from the many policy statements and manifestos published in Ma in conjunction with the works of art, art in this context was not an aesthetic object but rather a model or blueprint for larger social and intellectual change. Kassák would not likely be interested in fostering contacts that did not offer the possibility of spreading Ma's message, and the conduit for that would primarily be through written and visual form in publications. Another important factor which ties in with the first is the
network of personal contacts that Kassák could draw upon throughout the Eastern European sphere of the avant-garde. Most of these contacts were Hungarian-based. Kassák relied upon Hungarians involved in the Bauhaus or those now in Romania, Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia after the Trianon Treaty border revisions had left them outside of the nation of Hungary proper, for information and points of contact with other groups. This network was crucial, since without the entrée provided by a Hungarian contact, a relationship was unlikely to develop. One very important reason for this was the need for a Hungarian-speaking person on the other end. Kassák never mastered a foreign language, and Ma published almost exclusively in Hungarian. Therefore we will see the most successful relationships were often predicated on there being someone who knew Hungarian in the other Eastern European group. Often this would mean an ethnic Hungarian now finding himself living in Czechoslovakia (particularly Slovakia), or a Serbian or Transylvanian who knew Hungarian because these areas had been under Hungarian control during the period of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Additionally, Ma could rely on a number of Hungarian-language publications in many of the border areas around Hungary. These small avant-garde journals in places like Transylvania (now part of Romania) and Yugoslavia were quite anxious to retain their ties to Hungarian culture and were a willing platform for publication of material from Ma. What is crucial to recall in conjunction with this issue of language, and what it makes clear, is that Kassák's primary concern always remained the nation of Hungary. His forays onto the larger international scene in this period of the early 1920s were largely attempts on his part to discover and gather those elements which would be most conducive to fostering change in his native land. Thus one important reason for publishing his journal almost entirely in Hungarian was
that he was always targeting primarily a Hungarian-reading audience. On one hand then we can see his relationship to the West as a kind of mission of discovery and appropriation, along with a heavy dose of critical appraisal. As this chapter will demonstrate, the relationship with Eastern Europe was not quite on the same terms nor cultivated for the same reasons.

There were other variables at play that are of a different nature, and that have to do more with preferences rather than necessities. As has been established throughout this study, poetry was a vital component of Ma's fabric and a locus for Kassák's experiments with the capabilities of words and images. Among Eastern Europeans, Kassák had a number of fellow poets/artists to establish contacts with, which was not the case among Western Europeans. Kurt Schwitters and Theo van Doesburg were two such relatively rare dual creators in the West, and as we have seen, had the greatest affinity to Kassák and Ma, at least as far as the Hungarians saw it. Among Eastern Europeans Kassák would successfully find a number of figures who considered poetry an integrated and simultaneous part of avant-garde art production, and that link will prove vital in determining the pattern of contacts in this region. That this terrain was so rich in Eastern Europe has much to do with the traditional and historical importance of the poet in Eastern European cultures. Far more than a creative individual, he was often charged with being the voice, soul and prophet of the people, and a vital figure in calling for social and political change. Another factor that will narrow the pool of successful contacts among these poet/artists is their stylistic background and composition. Ma was particularly interested in those groups developing a Constructivist idiom, and as we will see, they often had reached this style by a similar route to Ma's through Expressionism and Dadaism to Constructivism. All of these factors were constituted in differing combinations when Ma reached out to Eastern
Europe, and varied considerably from country to country. For although in the West Kassák and the other Hungarians found themselves in a context rather successfully propagating an international atmosphere, in the East there were definite nationalist issues still strongly in play so soon after World War I and the massive changes it had wrought on the very existence of these nations. Therefore, although previous chapters of this study have divided and presented the material in terms of stylistic movements, the following text will be subdivided in terms of nations rather than styles, reflecting the division that was most pertinent to the participants involved. Additionally, as was characteristic of the Hungarian avant-garde, many of the other Eastern European groups significantly mixed and combined styles in their efforts towards synthesis, and/or the attempt to create an indigenous and relevant stylistic idiom. In sum, singular stylistic divisions are not even possible, much less a fruitful way to approach the following material, which in part may explain their absence in many narratives of modern art history.

Czechoslovakia

Ma's most successful forays into this new nation occurred in the Slovakian areas rather than the Czech lands. Although Ma's very first cover in November of 1916 featured a linocut by the Czech artist Vincenč Beneš (Figure 67), no other Czech art would appear in the journal throughout its run to 1925. Additionally, when Kassák first began planning an anthology of modern art, literature and music in 1921 (which would eventually become the Új művészek könyve project), he planned to include one work by Beneš and two by Emil Filla, another Czech artist. However, when the anthology did appear in 1922 after many changes from Kassák's original proposal, no Czech art was included. Likewise there was a distinct poverty of Czech poetry in Ma.
The only Czech poem published in the journal was by Otakar Brézina, which appeared in 1919. The reason for his inclusion becomes clear in Kassák's famous "Letter to Béla Kun in the Name of Art" also dating from the 1919 period. Kassák, as he states in his text, considered Brézina an ally of the Czech Communist movement. However, as has been pointed out, this is a serious misjudgment of Brézina's work on the part of Kassák, since Brézina was a highly spiritual, even mystical Symbolist poet. By 1920-21 there certainly seemed to be a possibility of the Hungarians connecting more successfully with contemporary artistic events in the Czech capital of Prague, however very little seems to have come from this contact. Imre Forbáth, a Hungarian poet frequently published in Ma in 1921-22, lived in Prague and reportedly was close to some of Prague's avant-garde poets such as S. K. Neumann and Vítěslav Nezval, however nothing tangible from this contact resulted in the pages of Ma. The Ma group in March of 1922 toured to Prague to give one of their performance/lectures as mentioned above, and judging from the reaction of Karel Teige were largely dismissed. Teige described the lectures as unorthodox and Dadaist/Communist gatherings, Dadaism being something still largely unfamiliar to the Czechs in this period. Teige also noted that these lectures often took place among Communist circles in Prague, presumably as one might expect of Hungarian emigrants coming after the fall of the Communist government of 1919. It is clear from Teige's few words on the subject that he saw the Ma group in this period as Dadaist, and still heavily politicized. Although Kassák would later take pains to deny that Ma had anything to do with Dadaism, judging from the program Teige was fairly accurate in that assessment, since it included readings from Arp, Huelsenbeck, and Schwitters among others. The program would have been conducted in Hungarian, but the presence of one František Spitzer suggests that at least
parts of it could have been translated into Czech. Not until late 1923 did the Czechs evidence any serious interest in Dada, and it was Dada of a different nature than what was practiced by the Hungarians. The Czech exhibition "The Bazaar of Modern Arts" is often identified as one of the first manifestations of Dadaist sensibility in Prague. In this exhibition, the Devětsil group showed alongside their art such seemingly unrelated objects as ball bearings, a hairdresser's dummy and a mirror entitled "Your Portrait, Visitor". Such inclusions have prompted comparisons to Duchamp's ready-mades, in that these objects were presented in the midst of an otherwise traditional exhibition, as if to question notions concerning what constitutes a work of art, and/or they suggest Devětsil's interest in the beauty of the machine aesthetic which was underpinned by their knowledge of the French Purist style. In either case, this was Dada of a Parisian sort that was not like that practiced by the Hungarians.

One question that remains is why Teige and Kassák did not establish any sort of successful connection between the primary movements of the Hungarian and Czech avant-gardes when there was much that argued for some level of mutual interest. Like Kassák, Teige was the central personality organizing and leading the avant-garde group of his nation in the 1920s and early 1930s, called Devětsil. Additionally, Devětsil appeared to share many of the same interests and concerns as the Ma group, such as architecture, typography and modern machine design, a growing interest in Constructivism, and real achievement in a kind of poetry that combined the pictorial and verbal arts, the so-called Pictorial Poems. Devětsil even advocated political and social aims that were tied to Communism, largely the result of their rather naive and unrealistic expectations of the Russian Revolution. Despite these many similarities, however, the two groups
largely ignored each other. And when considered, the reasons why are rather compelling. First, from the beginning of the 20th century if looking for artistic models in Western Europe, the Czechs primarily turned to France and the Hungarians to Germany. Thus from the beginning they based their respective avant-garde movements on very different foundations. One can sense this difference remaining well into the 1920s in the various emphases of the Ma and Devétsil groups. In comparison to the Hungarians, the Czechs were more concerned with notions of beauty and aesthetics, as is evidenced in this quote from Teige of 1922: "The beauty of the new art is of this world. The function of art is to create beauty and to praise with soaring images and unexpected poetic rhythms all the beauty of the world." And despite Devétsil's growing interest in Constructivism throughout the 1920s, the words most often used to describe Devétsil's visual productions are poetic, rhythmic and lyrical. The Ma group never tarried over questions about beauty or lyricism, instead focusing their energies on political and social issues and how best to achieve their goals in that arena through visual art. There were practical reasons on the part of Kassák, too, for not believing that the Devétsil group would be a particularly successful partner. One of Kassák's primary reasons for reaching outside of the Viennese milieu of Ma was to awaken interest in the Hungarian movement and most importantly, garner additional subscribers for his journal. There were very few Viennese subscribers and the journal was banned in Hungary, so Kassák was constantly faced with financial pressures to keep the publication afloat. No doubt this in part lay behind the Ma group's efforts to connect with groups throughout Eastern Europe, hoping to ever widen the pool of potential subscribers. This concern is made tangible in the fabric of the journal itself, in that from 1920-21 the price of the journal is gradually added in a number of foreign currencies,
including the Czech crown, the Yugoslav dinar, the Romanian lei and even the American dollar. It is not difficult to imagine that Kassák would anticipate little financial hope in Prague among the Devětsil group, considering their varying artistic emphases and the lukewarm reception the Ma tour received in the Czech capital. Additionally, one can see little benefit in all of this for Devětsil itself. They certainly did not need the Hungarians in order to broaden their circle of international contacts, and had their own burgeoning movement to attend to. Ma and Devětsil were also in differing stages of their developmental arc, with Devětsil not being founded until 1920 and continuing on into the early 1930s, whereas the Ma group had begun before World War I and was now reaching maturity and splintering before the final end in 1925. Therefore, despite what looks to us in hindsight like a number of intriguing similarities that could have been jointly explored, there were a number of compelling reasons on both sides in the early 1920s that argued against such an approachement.

The situation in the Slovakian area of the new nation was quite a bit different, particularly since there were a number of ethnic Hungarians in this region, and a network of contacts that Ma could rely on to support its activities and spread its message. One of the first explanations often cited for Kassák's relative success in this area is the fact that he himself had a Slovakian background, being born and raised in Ľubovňa (Nové Zámky), a small town in this region. This is not to say that Kassák was anything but Hungarian, but he certainly would have found a more sympathetic environment here among the Slovak and ethnic Hungarian population than in the Czech capital of Prague. Kassák through Ma also had a number of strong contacts he could rely on in this region, in those towns which traditionally had a Slovak/Hungarian mix such as Lucenec (Losonc),
Bratislava (Pozsony) and Košice (Kassa). Lajos Kudláč, who was a poet, artist and mechanical engineer, became Ma's official representative in Lucenec in June of 1921. Kudláč was published fairly frequently in Ma between 1918 and 1922, including a book in 1920, and also translated the poetry of Dadaists such as Huelsenbeck, Arp and Schwitters into Hungarian for the journal. A similar role was filled by Ődön Mihályi in Košice, who was also published in Ma from 1919 to 1921, and prepared translations. However, any tangible results from these two men's promotion of Ma in these areas are difficult to assess.

Near the end of Ma's run in 1924-25, Kassák also had a link to the Slovak avant-garde in Bratislava through one Vojtech Tilkovsky, who left Vienna and became involved in Bratislava with the Slovak journal DAV. DAV apparently published Kassák's poetry, and Kassák occasionally visited Bratislava for poetry readings. Since this was very near the end of Ma, however, such activity with the Slovakian group was short-lived.

Ma also had a contact of a different sort in Košice in János Mácza. Mácza had been heavily involved in Ma in the Budapest years, primarily writing articles on avant-garde theater, and running Ma's theater group. He had also become more convinced in his Communist political beliefs, and after the fall of the Republic of Councils in 1919, had gone to Košice and become the cultural editor of its Communist paper, Kassai Munkás [Kassa Worker]. Mácza, like Kassák, was a Hungarian originally from the Slovakian area, which had become now part of the country of Czechoslovakia. Among other things, he arranged an exhibition of Bortnyik's Képarchitektúra works under the auspices of Kassai Munkás in Košice. More in line with his political and artistic beliefs, however, were projects like his mass oratorio in Košice in 1922. Mácza apparently also kept up with contemporary Czech literature, and may have been the source for Kassák's plans to publish an issue on that
topic in his Horizont series. In addition, he reviewed Ma's lecture series when it came to Košice, and in view of his Communist political beliefs, was slightly critical of the Dadaist tone of the event. It is this Ma tour through several towns in Slovakia, which was reviewed by a variety of newspapers (not just Máčza's Communist one), that we can gauge what Kassák and the Ma group hoped to accomplish in this region of Eastern Europe, and how it was communicated to and received by the audience.

The tour through the Slovakian region took place after the trip to Prague, and was apparently similar in program, that is, heavy on readings from Dada poetry both foreign and from among Ma members. The tour began in Košice, and also visited Ungvár. In general the program began with a presentation by Kassák on the accomplishments and goals of the Ma movement, and was followed by various readings from poetry and some music. Among those listed in reviews as taking part are Máčza and his wife, Ődön Mihályi and Lajos Kudlák. The reviews range widely, depending on the political slant of the newspaper involved, from a fairly balanced report from a liberal publication, to a rather nasty review from a more conservative paper that lamented the fact that the police did not stop the proceedings. The presentations were apparently well attended by a mixed audience of students and regular citizens, primarily if not entirely Hungarian. Reading the reviews in total, the audience reaction ranged from quiet befuddlement to more vocal hostility. The one positive spot in the performances, which the audience reacted well to despite the content, were the readings by Kassák's wife Jolán Simon, who apparently had an extraordinarily beautiful voice. Nearly all the reviewers remarked on the strange physical appearance of the group, especially their very pale and serious faces, and tried to describe what must have seemed to most of them very odd performances indeed. That Kassák
was using these performances to introduce and promote the Ma group is evident in at least one article, where the writer takes some pains to define and describe what activist art is, in distinction to Dada. Reading the text, one is struck by how similar many of the statements are to Kassák's own, and most likely reflect the reviewer's careful attention to and transcription of Kassák's words in interview.\textsuperscript{37} However, such focus on Kassák's theory of art was the exception in the print reaction to his visit; the bulk of the reviews instead focused on describing the various oddities of the program, such as Mácza's wife holding a flaming red candle and reciting lines in her child-like voice before an audience bursting into laughter, and Kassák gamely trying to present his ideas in an atmosphere of disbelief and/or barely suppressed merriment. Judging from the descriptions of the largely dismayed reaction of the audiences, this tour was likely not all Kassák had hoped for in terms of promoting his movement, spreading his ideas, and gaining support for his journal. Kassák had likely hoped for a more positive reaction among the ethnic Hungarians in this region, since it was the only place targeted with such a lecture series outside of Vienna, and one place where he could play to a substantially Hungarian audience outside of Hungary itself. The failure to successfully connect with the Hungarian audience, which was always his primary target, was a missed opportunity for Kassák and Ma, both financially and ideologically.

Yugoslavia

The connections with the Yugoslavian avant-garde in this period were largely confined to one site, that of Ljubomir Micić's journal \textit{Zenit} which was published in Zagreb from 1921 to 1923, and in Belgrade from 1923 to 1926. There were a number of professional parallels and mutual artistic interests
between Kassák and Micić that no doubt facilitated a connection between the Yugoslavians and Hungarians in this period. Micić, like Kassák, was a poet who had roots in Expressionism, and who had throughout the 1920s became more involved in Dadaist and especially Constructivist idioms, a shift manifested both in his poetry/typography and the art featured in the journal. Zenit, like Ma, moved in its first year from a fairly Expressionist emphasis both in its design/layout and featured material, to one progressively more Constructivist. The experiences and interests of Micić, as editor of the journal and self-styled promoter of the Zenit movement, determined to a great deal the course the journal would take, as was much the case with Kassák and Ma. The change to Constructivism for Micić has been tied to two events in particular; his visit to Germany in the summer of 1922, and the resulting collaboration with Lissitzky and Ilya Ehrenburg that produced a special issue of Zenit in that year featuring a number of Russian avant-garde writers and artists. After this introduction to the international contemporary scene, Micić's contacts widened to include among others, an especially successful relationship with the Dutch and Belgian avant-garde movements and their journals De Stijl and Het Overzicht, two which we already know were close to Ma as well. Micić also politically leaned toward Marxism, a stance that would in part bring about the banning of his journal in Yugoslavia in 1926. In sum, Micić had much the same concerns and was moving in similar circles to Kassák, making their interest in one another quite logical.

Besides Micić, there were other figures involved in this group of the Yugoslavian avant-garde that would have piqued Hungarian interest. The two other signatories to the Zenit manifesto of 1921 besides Micić, were Yvan Goll and Boško Tokin, the latter of who would have an important role in the relationship between Zenit and Ma. Goll was already well familiar to the
Hungarians, and had been frequently published in Ma. Tokin, whose particular interest was literature, was fluent in Hungarian and would serve as official Ma correspondent in 1921-22. In the summer of 1921 Tokin wrote an article for Ma on Zenit, which focused on its literary activities more so than the visual arts. Tokin was also planning to publish a Serbian translation of Kassák's "A máglyák énekelnek" [The Bonfires are Singing], but this never appeared as Tokin ceased representing Ma's interests in 1922. Obviously Tokin's literary emphasis would have appealed to Kassák, whose own interest in literature never weakened despite his forays into visual art production. This interest in literature seemed to work both ways, as Zenit's feature article on the Ma group also emphasized the literary character of the Hungarian avant-garde, beginning with praise for the poet Endre Ady, and focusing on Kassák as the center of the Hungarian avant-garde movement. Only Uitz and Bortnyik are listed as artists, all the other Ma adherents mentioned were primarily poets. Besides Tokin's article on Zenit, the only material Ma published of the Yugoslavians were poems—two by Micić in the summer of 1922, and one by Dragan Aleksić, the primary Dada artist/poet in Yugoslavia. Zenit was a little more inclusive, publishing not only poetry but also artists, and publishing the works of Hungarians that were not connected with the Ma group as well. Zenit published poetry by Kassák, his Képarchitektúra manifesto, and featured one of his linocuts as a journal cover in June of 1922 (Figure 68). Micić also published Hungarian artists like Józef Csáky, who was completely unconnected with Ma, and artists such as Moholy-Nagy and Lajos Tihanyi who were no longer by 1922 associated with Kassák and Ma. Micić also organized an international exhibition in Belgrade in 1924, including with a number of artists from various countries the works of Moholy-Nagy and Ladislas Megyes as Hungarian representatives.
not participate, either by his choice or that of Micić's is not certain. In general, it seems that Micić, particularly through Zenit, was far more inclusive and democratic in terms of who he would interact with than was Kassák in Ma. This in part can be attributed to the more broadly targeted ideology of pan-balkanism espoused by Micić, as opposed to Kassák's difficult balancing of international involvement with the obligation to Hungary and the effort to keep his journal financially afloat, not to mention Kassák's reputation of being rather austere and single-minded in purpose. Surely too Kassák would have quickly realized that Zenit had its own ideology and agenda in the context of Yugoslavia, and although willing to cooperate with Ma certainly was not going to become its mouthpiece nor offer much opportunity for financial expansion into new areas. Some sense of the insistence on the separation between the two movements by Micić is evident in his reaction to Út's attempt to link Ma and Zenit. Út was a Hungarian-language publication begun in 1922 in the Novi Sad region of northern Yugoslavia. As in the case of Czechoslovakia, when the nation of Yugoslavia was created in 1919/20, a number of Hungarians suddenly found themselves a minority in a different country. One important way to maintain a link to Hungarian culture was to produce such Hungarian-language publications. Út, under the editorship of Zoltán Csuka, attempted some kind of mediating role between the Yugoslavs and the Hungarians by linking their respective avant-garde movements. Út was recognized by Ma as a sister publication, and Kassák was named an Út correspondent, yet Csuka also published the Zenit manifesto. Zenit published a poem by the Hungarian János Mester which read in part: "We threw our sorrows under the shadow of Lajos Kassák and Ljubomir Micić, our eye wrapped in one bunch with them/We are an infinite plus:/MA + UT + ZENIT = WE ARE THE NEW ARTISTS!" This declaration apparently prompted
Micic to disavow any connection between Zenit and Út in Novi Sad. Micic through Zenit was striving to establish an international platform for the Serbian movement, one from which to spread the ideas of the barbarogenous and pan-Balkanism to a war-fatigued bourgeois Europe which he felt was in need of a fresh, radical and somewhat mystical Eastern influx from the Balkans. This broad international orientation led Micic to publish a number of Hungarian artists not part of the current Ma circle, and to resist being linked to simply one manifestation of the Hungarian avant-garde. He was certainly willing to engage with Kassák and Ma where their interests coincided, such as in poetry and Constructivism, and most likely saw Kassák as a fellow ally in Eastern Europe’s potential to contribute significantly to the international avant-garde. It was on these terms that a relationship was fostered between Ma and this branch of the Yugoslavian avant-garde, terms that were significantly different than those operative in Czechoslovakia.

Poland

Of all the East European nations, the relationship with Poland was the least active. There were several serious impediments to developing any significant exchange between Kassák and the Hungarians and this area. The first problem was simply chronological. The Polish avant-garde, gathered primarily around the journal Blok (1924-25) led by Mieczysław Szczuka and Teresa Żarnower, did not begin publishing their journal until 1924, only a year before Ma was to end. Although clearly oriented toward Constructivism, as was the other major publication of the Poles, Praesens (1926-1930) under the editorship of Henryk Stażewski, thus both seemingly of interest to the Hungarians, their relatively late start prevented any substantive exchange. Another significant problem was likely the lack of any
shared contacts, or the availability of anyone involved in either group to translate from Hungarian to Polish and vice versa. As has been demonstrated throughout this chapter, such go-betweens who were willing to move between the Hungarians and the targeted group were vital to the success of the relationship. Only two works by Polish artists appeared in Ma, one by Stażewski and one by Żarnower, in the special Jubilee number of January, 1925 which celebrated Ma's tenth anniversary. They were included as reproductions on the margins of text, mixed in with works by Marcel Janco and M. H. Maxy (two Romanians), and shown without comment or special acknowledgment that they were Polish. Blok on the other hand, did congratulate Kassák on his tenth anniversary, and published one of his poems in German translation. Passuth reports that Blok also carried Endre Gáspár's essay "Die Bewegung der ungarischen Aktivisten," including reproductions of works by Moholy-Nagy, most likely taken from Der Sturm rather than as a result of direct contact between the Poles and Hungarians. Passuth also mentions Günther Hirschel-Protsch and some of his work published by Kassák, and she faults Ma for not presenting him as Polish. Hirschel-Protsch was associated with the group "The Young Silesians," who were featured prominently in Ma in a special issue devoted to them in June of 1925. However, reading Hirschel-Protsch's introduction to the group in Ma and looking at the names of the artists involved, it is clear that they were connected to the German culture of Silesia, not the Polish. This is unfortunately all one can cite in terms of the connections between these two groups of the avant-garde. Although there certainly would have been much potential in terms of a relationship based on a mutual interest in Constructivism and advocating social and political change, circumstances of time and linguistic barriers prevented such from developing.

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Romania

It is the relationship with Romania that was likely the most unique and complex of all those cultivated by the group of Hungarians connected with Ma. There was much that on the face of it argued against successful connections in this area. Even more than Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia, Romania had made significant territorial gains after World War I, directly, the Hungarians felt, at their expense. With the partition of the former Austro-Hungarian Empire, Romania added the province of Transylvania to its territory, an area that for centuries had been a major point of contention between the two ethnic groups. Transylvania itself was an ethnically mixed region, containing significant numbers of Hungarians, Romanians and Saxon Germans that had at various times been an autonomous province within the Empire, but after the Compromise of 1867 had been returned to Hungary proper.\textsuperscript{58} At the end of World War I, with Romania being granted this territory by the Entente, and in addition having made serious military incursions into Hungary all the way to Budapest jockeying for more Hungarian territory, ethnic and national tensions between the two countries were extremely high. It is a testament to the international spirit of the avant-garde in this period that these Hungarians and Romanians nevertheless found grounds on which to interact.

In addition, the Romanians like the Czechs had a tradition of looking to Paris for the newest in modern culture, a habit that continued into the 20th century and is evidenced by the importance of Cubism in the Romanian avant-garde, to cite one example. However, there were a number of shared interests that facilitated a dialogue between some of the major figures of the Romanian avant-garde and the Hungarians around Ma in this period as well. First the
Romanians published several journals that represented the concerns of the avant-garde, the most noteworthy being *Contimporanul* [Contemporary Man] (1922-1932), *Integral* (1925-1927), *Punct* [Point] (1924-25) and *75 H.P.* (1924). *Contimporanul* and *Integral* especially, had an international outlook and a long enough run to publish a cross-section of the newest trends in modern art, define their own program and goals in published manifestos, and interact in meaningful ways with other members of the international avant-garde. A significant portion of their creative activity (a fact which should no longer be surprising in this Eastern European context) was in the realm of poetry, again likely one of the grounds for shared interest between them and Kassák. Additionally, among the Romanians associated with these journals, Dada and Constructivism were two important trends shaping both their verbal and visual production. As was the case with Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia, in Romania one Aladár Tamás was available for translation between Hungarian and Romanian. And there were a number of Hungarian-language journals in Transylvania, chief among them *Periszkóp* (1925), which were willing to interact with the Ma circle. Finally, and unique to the Romanian relationship, the Hungarian and Romanian avant-gardes had a shared figure in Hans (János) Máttis-Teutsch. Máttis-Teutsch was a Saxon German artist from Brașov in Transylvania, trained in Munich and Budapest, and featured prominently in Herwarth Walden's gallery and journal *Der Sturm*. From 1917 to 1920 he played an important role in Kassák's *Ma*, and after World War I in the Romanian avant-garde. His importance to both groups, his role in their respective movements, and the subsequent historical claims on him by both Hungary and Romania will provide a particularly compelling example of an artist operating both in Western and Eastern Europe, and fully caught up in the ethnic and historical flux of Eastern Europe in the first quarter of this century.
The most tangible results of material exchange between Ma and the Romanians are to be found in Contimporanul. Edited by Ion Vinea, the journal through its relatively long run published an eclectic mix of modernist trends, gradually becoming more focused on Constructivism. Vinea was primarily a poet and prose writer, who in 1912 had founded the journal Simbolul [The Symbol] with Tristan Tzara and Marcel Janco, the two Romanians who would play such a formative role in the development of Dada in Zurich in 1916. In the course of corresponding with the two in Zurich while remaining in Bucharest, Vinea is said to have become disillusioned with Dada, and instead began to guide his publication Contimporanul eventually toward Constructivism.59 By 1922 Janco as well had made this transition, and with his return to Bucharest in that year began collaborating with Vinea on Contimporanul. We should recall in this context that Janco had also in 1922 been present at the Düsseldorf Congress of Progressive Artists, and was a signatory to the "Statement by the Constructivist Groups of Rumania, Switzerland, Scandinavia, and Germany" with Hans Richter and Viking Eggeling. With this background in mind, it is not surprising that the Romanians connected with Contimporanul and Kassák would find grounds for a relationship. The Romanians also were working through a period of serious engagement with Dada to a greater involvement with International Constructivism symbolized by Janco's presence at Düsseldorf, and the artists that Janco allied himself with at the Congress, namely Richter and Eggeling, were two that Kassák was to publish in Ma, and feature prominently in 1922 in his and Moholy-Nagy's Új művészek könyve [The Book of New Artists].60 Obviously their concerns were coinciding at several points, and thus a perception of mutual grounds would be logical. Looking through Contimporanul one can also see that their literary interests were running
along parallel lines. For example, Contimporanul would publish Schwitters' "Anna Blume" in 1923, as well as report receiving the Ma Buch of poems by Kassák. It is clear as well that the Romanians, just as much as the Ma group and other active avant-garde associations in Eastern Europe, were very well aware of what was happening in the larger international arena, and were discerning like-minded activity. Even 75 H.P., a Romanian journal of only one issue in 1924, listed Ma, Zenit, and the Czech Stayba [Architecture], as well as Schwitters' Merz, Van Doesburg's Mecano and Richter's G in its publication, revealing not only their knowledge of contemporary art, but also selecting primarily those journals that like them were interested in the vital mix of Dada and Constructivism in this period.

The peak year of interchange between the Hungarians and Romanians was 1924, perhaps not coincidentally also the year that the Romanian avant-garde would stage their ambitious international exhibition of avant-garde art, much like Micic and Zenit would present in Yugoslavia. In May of 1924 Contimporanul published a Kassák poem and a short introduction to the Hungarian avant-garde by Aladár Tamás. The July, 1924 issue of Ma featured two poems by Ion Vinea, a reproduction of a work by Marcel Janco, and a short article on the Romanian avant-garde again by Tamás. In September of the same year, Contimporanul would reproduce a work by Kassák on its cover (Figure 69), and feature another of his linocuts in its December 30th issue. And unlike the Zenit-sponsored international exhibition in Yugoslavia in 1924, Kassák did take part in that held by Contimporanul in the same year. According to the exhibition checklist published in Contimporanul in January of 1925, Kassák was represented by three works—a "Diagonal Construction", a "Spatial Construction" and an "Architectonic Tableau". The January, 1925 issue of Ma contained works by Janco and M. H. Maxy, and Contimporanul in
1925 would continue to feature Hungarian material, including a linocut by Moholy-Nagy and a short feature on new art in Hungary by Kassák in May, later Hungarian poets such as Robert Reiter and Józef Nádass, and Kassák's well-known Képarchitektúra advertising Kiosk. The pattern of cross publication outlined above would indicate that contact between Kassák and the Romanian avant-garde likely developed around the preparation and production of the international exhibition from mid to late 1924, and continued until Ma's demise in 1925.

There are other aspects of the activity and ideas of the Romanian avant-garde in this period that argue for the continuing interest between them and the Hungarians that go beyond Contemporanul and the exhibition of 1924. Much as has been identified in the background of Micic in Yugoslavia, there were a number of experiences and shared interests that linked the Romanians and Hungarians, kept them moving in the same artistic circles, and led them to explore similar ideas. M. H. Maxy, the editor of the other substantial avant-garde journal in Bucharest, Integral, is a case in point. Although Integral did not begin publication until 1925, the year Ma ended, it did evidence a continuing Hungarian interest by advertising such publications as Periszkóp, a Hungarian-language art journal in Transylvania, and Kassák's Dokumentum (1926-27), the journal he began after his return to Hungary in 1926. Maxy doubtlessly would have had a fairly good knowledge of contemporary Hungarian art, because between 1922 and 1924 he lived in Germany, showed at the Der Sturm Gallery and spent some time at the Bauhaus, all places where contact with Hungarians would have been unavoidable. More importantly, it reveals that Maxy's interests and experiences were running parallel to many of the Hungarians that were in the Ma circle. Maxy was given a show and reproduced in the journal Der Sturm in 1923, exactly the period (1922-24)
when Walden was also featuring Hungarian artists such as Moholy-Nagy, Sándor Bortnyik and Kassák. Moholy-Nagy and Bortnyik were also at the Bauhaus by 1924. This German experience had a formative effect on Maxy's art; particularly his visit to the Bauhaus has been credited with instilling a geometric rigor and structural interest in his work that now infused the somewhat austere, realistic-based style he was taught in Romania. After returning to Romania in 1925, he began Integral, finding Contimporanul perhaps too eclectic and conservative. Integral was based on a program of synthesis, an attempt to synthesize the major European avant-garde movements such as Cubism, Dadaism, Futurism, and Constructivism, and develop an art of primary expression, inner necessity and a manifestation in Romania of what was perceived to be a pan-European spirit. Reading the manifestos and other texts in Integral, one is struck that even in their language they offer a synthesis or combination of styles that are reminiscent of Dada and Futurism, and their primary goal outlined above is clearly Expressionist in origin in its evocation of primary expression and inner necessity. Their continuing interest in Futurism, for example, is demonstrated in the last issue of Integral, which features many of the Italian Futurists and includes a personal note from Marinetti greeting his "dear friends [the] Integralists of Bucharest" (Figure 70). Perhaps one of the most revelatory texts by Maxy was "Cronometraj-Pictural", which in a format reminiscent of an outline credits Cubism with the revision of light, color and shape; Dada with "general cauterization" leading toward abstraction; and Constructivism as a synthesis of the two resulting in architectonics and the end of easel art (Figure 71). This then is the contemporary point where the Romanians are "waiting, we are working, we are transforming." My point in spending some time describing this Romanian group is to make clear that
like the Hungarians, many of these Eastern European groups were taking a very dynamic and active stance toward the major movements first developed in Western Europe, combining them in often unique and interesting ways, and actively working to make them applicable and vital in their own milieu. This was not a passive pattern of adoption, but an active one of adaptation. And like the Hungarians of the Ma group, for the Romanians Expressionism, Cubism, and Dadaism were seen as constituent parts leading to Constructivism. Granted, the Romanians ascribed a greater role to Cubism than did the Hungarians, but this likely has much to do with their differing past emphasis on France versus Germany. This will toward combination and synthesis described above I believe also underlies Kassák's practice of creating simultaneously and often in tandem in both the verbal and visual spheres. The Romanians did this as well, most notably in the one-issue journal 75 H.P (1924), principally under the direction of Ilarie Voronca. Here Voronca and Victor Brauner experimented with a poetry which attempted to defy rules of logic and grammar, as well as mimesis, and instead used words as material, constructive elements separate from any symbolizing function. There was certainly a Constructivist attitude underlying the conception of "Pictopoezie" [Pictopoetry], which emphasized the poem's abstract, objective construction in a collage format, quite separate from concerns with aesthetics or theme. Additionally, when one reads texts from this journal, such as the list of what personal qualities are necessary to collaborate with 75 H.P., including being a good dancer, having a certificate of good conduct, respecting your parents, and being able to urinate "sur tout", the Dada nature of the journal is quite clear as well. Even Pictopoezie's "manifesto" (Figure 72) reveals its combination of a Dada spirit, and a Constructivist drive to create an objective construct in its maxim: Pictopoetry is not a picture/Pictopoetry is not a
poem/Pictopoetry is Pictopoetry. What I find significant here is the combination of Constructivism and Dadaism in terms of a method to create new poetry, which was to be "nonsensical" in a literary sense, and constructed in a visual sense, precisely the two modes that Kassák combined in some of his own poetic work, such as "Este a fák alatt". In Kassák's work as well, the result of this process was the construction of an object that simply was what it was, and not a referent to something else, as he expressed in the Képarchitektúra manifesto: "Képarchitektúra does not resemble anything, tells no story, has no beginning and no end. It just is."

This is not to suggest that one influenced the other, or even that they were aware of one another, but instead that both arrived at a point in a similar fashion and along similar paths. What this does reveal is that Dada and the Constructivist spirit were being combined and utilized in interesting and different ways in Eastern Europe, and that among the Hungarians and Romanians given a number of similar interests and concerns they were developing like methods and practices.

Another possible point of exchange between the Hungarians and Romanians, that existed after the demise of Ma in 1925, were the numerous Hungarian-language journals that were produced in the area of Transylvania including Napkelet in Kolozsvár (Cluj-Napoca), Új Géniusz in Arad, and most comprehensive, Periszkóp, also in Arad. Published between 1925 and 1926 under the editorship of György Szántó, Periszkóp is noted for its number of quality reproductions, and managed within its short run to publish important articles from a variety of avant-garde artists and writers from throughout Europe. Its connections to the Hungarian avant-garde are clear, as its Paris editor was Lajos Tihanyi, it featured a large number of Hungarian poets and writers, and published Kassák's important article on Marinetti. Periszkóp, however, also published the poetry of Ion Vinea, carried Tamás'
essay on the Romanian avant-garde, and was advertised in Maxy's *Integral*, indicating that the Romanians were also aware of this Hungarian journal in Transylvania, and that interest between the two groups was continuing even after the end of *Ma*. However, by 1926 such instances of exchange were beginning to wane, as journals such as *Periszkóp* ceased publishing, and Kassák returned to Hungary for good. The Romanians were going through changes of their own as well. Although *Integral* would continue until 1928, Maxy was becoming increasingly involved with stage design and interior decoration, becoming first a professor then the director of the Academy of Decorative Arts in Bucharest. Marcel Janco's interests were focusing on architecture, and by the mid-1920s his influence on *Contemporanul* was manifested in several issues devoted to architecture and matters of interior space and design, and he is credited with building some of the first modern structures in Romania in this period. Many of the other writers and artists of the Romanian avant-garde were turning to Surrealism, which would dominate the Romanian art scene for the next couple of decades. Its first impetus was the journal *unu* [One], begun in 1928 by Sașa Pană. As Passuth rightly notes, this marks the point where the Hungarian and Romanian avant-gardes were to part company for some time to come, since Surrealism never became an important movement for the Hungarian avant-garde of this generation. Thus for a relatively brief period in time in the mid-1920s the Romanian and Hungarian avant-gardes did find considerable bases on which to interact, most notably clustering around a combined interest in Dada and Constructivism. With the end of the international outreach of the Hungarian journals, Kassák's return to Hungary and the Romanian shift of activity to other areas, mutual interest and opportunities for exchange ceased. But before
ending this section on Romania, we need to examine one other object of shared concern, the artist Máttis-Teutsch.

As mentioned above Hans (János) Máttis-Teutsch in his activities and art is a compelling case in point example of the intersection of the Hungarian and Romanian avant-gardes, and in his background and artistic philosophy reflective of the geographic and ethnic fluidity of Transylvania. Máttis-Teutsch was born of at least partial Saxon parentage in the Transylvanian city of Kronstadt (Braşov, Brassó) in 1884. In terms of his education, he apparently spent 1901-02 at the Budapest School of Applied Arts, and then from 1902-05 was a student at Munich's Academy of Fine Arts. From 1906 to 1908 he lived in Paris, and returned to Brasov in 1908 to take a teaching position. From this point on he resided mainly in Brasov, although he frequently traveled to Munich, Berlin, Budapest and Vienna. Between 1917 and 1920 he was associated with Ma, being the first artist featured by the Ma group with an exhibition in 1917 in Budapest (Figure 73). It is clear from Kassák's exhibition catalogue introduction, reproduced in Ma in October, 1917 which speaks of Máttis-Teutsch's distilled purity of color and line which is rhythmically combined in the cosmos, that his art fit into the Expressionist emphasis of Ma in this period. Iván Hevesy, writing an essay on the artist in the November, 1918 issue of Ma, reinforced this understanding of Máttis-Teutsch's work, discussing it primarily in terms of its feeling and expression, finally comparing his works to music. Throughout the Budapest period of Ma, reproductions of mostly his black and white linocuts appeared frequently. The number of reproductions lessened considerably with Ma's move to Vienna in 1920, with the last appearing in March of 1921. There are a number of reasons for this. Máttis-Teutsch was not as politically oriented as most of the Ma circle was, and his art did not lend itself to the concrete political and social goals that
Ma increasingly advocated. As we know, too, Ma’s emphasis was shifting away from Expressionism, and turning more toward Dada and Constructivism in the early 1920s. Additionally, with the move to Vienna, Ma chose to more often feature non-Hungarian artists in its attempts to connect more fully with the international avant-garde. In the Budapest period, Ma was largely constrained to publish indigenous artists, in Vienna the pool of participants expanded considerably. Mátóis-Teutsch’s opportunities and activities were expanding in different directions as well. As discussed in Chapter Three, Mátóis-Teutsch was the first “Hungarian” artist to be featured in Der Sturm in June, 1918, his work was on the cover of the German journal in August, 1918 and he continued to be featured frequently into the 1920s. In 1921, the last year he appeared in Ma, Mátóis-Teutsch was included in his first exhibition at the Der Sturm gallery.® The artist was also in this period becoming more integrated into the Romanian avant-garde. Although he had been exhibiting in Braşov since 1918, he exhibited for the first time in Bucharest in 1920. He became a frequent contributor to both Contimporanul and Integral, and was a Paris editor for the latter while in the city in 1925 to exhibit at the Visconti Gallery.® A large number of his works were included in Contimporanul's international exhibition in 1924, where he was listed as Romanian. Throughout the 1920s he also retained some contact with exhibitions in the Hungarian capital and Hungarian journals in Budapest and Transylvania, although not with Kassák and his current circle.® The next major event in his artistic career was the 1931 publication of his book Kunstideologie: Stabilität und Aktivität im Kunstwerk.® With a large number of black and white illustrations demonstrating the properties of lines, planes, the vertical and horizontal explained in simple captions (Figures 74, 75 and 76), the book is an expression of Mátóis-Teutsch's art theory and philosophy. The text is spare, but is
essentially his prescription for art and the New Man, demonstrating quite clearly his continued allegiance to the goals of Expressionism. The comparison to Expressionism is not limited to this book, but is ubiquitous throughout the literature on Máttis-Teutsch. Despite his involvement with both the Hungarian and Romanian avant-gardes, the artists most frequently invoked in discussions of his work are Kandinsky and Franz Marc. This of course makes sense, as his training in Munich would have brought him into contact with Kandinsky's work at an early date. His series of paintings called Seelenblumen [Spiritual Flowers](Figure 77) from the early 1920s are often cited in this context, and philosophic connections are drawn in terms of Theosophy and other mystical thought that was of interest to Kandinsky perhaps being so to Máttis-Teutsch as well. Likewise his involvement with Der Sturm and Walden's continued interest in his work into the 1920s indicates his connection to Expressionism, the cornerstone of Walden's program. Rather than compare his work to this early generation of Expressionists such as Kandinsky and Marc, however, it may be more to the point to look at Máttis-Teutsch in connection with his contemporaries at Der Sturm. In the late teens and early twenties, at the height of his involvement with the journal and its exhibitions, Kandinsky was in the the Soviet Union and Marc deceased. Visually Máttis-Teutsch's work holds up to comparison more clearly to someone like William Wauer, primarily known for his work in theater and film, but also a practicing artist featured by Walden in both Der Sturm and in exhibition in the same period as Máttis-Teutsch. Wauer's works such as Maskenball (Narrenzug) of 1924 (Figure 78) and Steintoshser of 1925 (Figure 79) are very similar to works by Máttis-Teutsch such as the last linocut featured by Ma in 1921 (Figure 80) and the illustrations in Kunstideologie. Wauer's Tanz of 1916 (Figure 81) displays the same kind of experimentation with line, shape and
verticality to express movement that is a staple of the demonstrations in Máttis-Teutsch's *Kunstileologie* (Figure 74). We know that Máttis-Teutsch and Wauer knew each other, and were involved together in an exhibition in Berlin of the "Abstrakten" in 1928. Mátts-Teutsch mentioned the Cologne group A to Z as what his work was perhaps most similar to. I am not suggesting that Wauer, or any of the other Germans were simply an influence on Máttis-Teutsch, but rather that his work more completely fits into the German context of *Der Sturm* and many of the second generation Expressionists who were incorporating a greater geometric rigor into their work, than it does into the context of either Hungary or Romania. His stylistic, theoretical and philosophic artistic roots are in Germany, as his works and his writings attest. This is not to say that he was hostile towards or uninterested in the activities of the Hungarian and Romanian avant-gardes, because he certainly was not. He participated in exhibitions and published in their journals frequently, most profitably at those moments when his goals and style meshed with theirs. In effect he is profoundly a product of his Transylvanian environment, able to move between the Hungarian and Romanian context as perhaps only a native of this region could. As a Transylvanian of Saxon descent understandably his educational, intellectual and artistic heritage was shaped by German culture, but as a native of one of the most ethnically and geographically in-between areas of Eastern Europe, his activity and art could and did at times seem relevant in all these contexts.

As the above text has demonstrated, Kassák and Ma's relationship to the various avant-gardes of Eastern Europe was substantially different than the pattern of intersection and appropriation that characterized the majority of their dealings with Western Europe. Most often the Hungarians were meeting their Eastern European counterparts as fully independent and equal units,
with their individual ideas and programs, willing or not to cultivate a relationship based on mutual interests and activities. Although in some cases Kassák was clearly more concerned with tapping into an available Hungarian audience, such as in Slovakia and Transylvania, by and large it was mutual interest and a desire to participate in and contribute to the international spirit of the avant-garde in the early 1920s that motivated these relationships among the Eastern Europeans. In most cases, too, Kassák was meeting in his Eastern European counterparts artists/poets/writers who like him were fully involved in shaping a style and ideology to suit their contemporary situation, experimenting with a variety of ideas and artistic idioms, and actively desiring to contribute to the larger international arena. In this context, the Hungarians certainly could feel less on the periphery of major events in Western Europe, and more in the center of some very unique and dynamic activity that characterized Eastern Europe in these years.
Although it is likely that Kassák knew some German, by virtue of living in Vienna for five years if for no other reason, and a number of the other Hungarian artists did know German quite well, that does not appear to be a language used by the Hungarians in the East European sphere. Instead they consistently relied upon finding someone who knew Hungarian.

This role had been noted for the poet by Brendel in his discussion of "Este fák alatt", and can be seen in the painting of Kassák as The Prophet, as discussed in Chapter 5.

Information on this original anthology, including the list of proposed contents is available in Ferenc Csaplár, "A "Karavân"-tól az "Új művészek könyve"-ig," article in Kassák körei (Budapest: Szépirodalmi könyvkiadó, 1987), 7-13. As has also been pointed out, by 1921-22 to be focusing on Filla, a member of Osma and Skupina before World War I, suggests a lack of knowledge of contemporary artistic events in Czechoslovakia. See Lilla Szabó, "Kassák Lajos és a cseh avantgárd," in Magam törvénye szerint, ed. Ferenc Csaplár (Budapest: Petőfi Irodalmi Múzeum és Múzsák Közművelődési Köiadó, 1987), 76. This is a primary source of information on the relationship between the Hungarian and Czech avant-gardes.

I characterize this as a lack in comparison to the other Eastern European countries, as will become clear as the chapter proceeds.


7 See Chapter 5. The Slovakian leg of this lecture tour was far more notable, as will be discussed below.

8 Quoted in Passuth, 177 from Lilla Szabó, 76.

9 Teige recalled the tour in these words: "There had never been much talk about dadaism in Czechoslovakia, I remember an article about it in a university paper, "Ruch", in 1920, and some already forgotten dadaist primitive verses, and some lost pictures. Hungarian emigrants, members of the group "Ma", after the fall of the Republic of Councils, held unusual performances on dadaist evenings in the communist circles in Prague." As quoted in Ferenc Csaplár, Kassák az europai avantvárd mozgalmakban (Budapest: Kassák Múzeum és Archívum, 1994), 12.

10 Passuth, 177. Kassák apparently reacted against this in 1922, after the Prague tour. He resisted this label because Dada was "an already established conservative school...", as quoted in Passuth. But by this time, we should note, Kassák was fully developing his Constructivist Képarchitektúra ideology, and would increasingly see Dada as something he had moved beyond.

11 Lilla Szabó, 76. When in Slovakia this would not be a concern, as the Ma group was playing almost exclusively to a Hungarian audience.

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The Devětsil group would also be responsible for publishing a number of journals, including Disk (1923), Pásma (1924-26), and Stavba (1922-31), an organ of the Architectural Club.


Karel Srp, "Devětsil: An Epilogue," in Devětsil: Czech Avant-Garde Art Architecture and Design of the 1920s and 30s, 81-82. I cannot help but think that the Hungarians would have been less than sympathetic with the Devětsil group's lack of political practicality in this period as well. The Czechs were living in a democracy and had no practical experience with Communism, instead they were extrapolating from bits of information from the East and a rather romantic, even naive, understanding of the Russian Revolution. This attitude would increasingly come into conflict with reality and cause problems within the group as time proceeded, as Srp describes. The Hungarian understanding of Communism and their expectations of it, however divergent they might have been, were forged in a very different context.

As quoted in František Šmejkal, "Devětsil: An Introduction," in Devětsil: Czech Avant-Garde Art Architecture and Design of the 1920s and 30s, 12. The continuing influence of France on the Czechs is clear in that Teige in this period was visiting Paris, and is thought to have modeled some of the Devětsil publications of this year on L’Esprit Nouveau.

Lilla Szabó, 77.

As quoted in František Šmejkal, "Devětsil: An Introduction," in Devětsil: Czech Avant-Garde Art Architecture and Design of the 1920s and 30s, 12. The continuing influence of France on the Czechs is clear in that Teige in this period was visiting Paris, and is thought to have modeled some of the Devětsil publications of this year on L’Esprit Nouveau.

Lilla Szabó, 77.

Passuth, 174.

Ibid.

As Ferenc Csaplar "Kassák és mozgalmainak osztrák kapcsolatai (1920-1933)," in Kassák körei, 23 describes, as Ma was subsequently banned in Czechoslovakia and Romania Kassák was forced to rely more heavily on Viennese connections to keep the journal going. These financial problems are no doubt one of the major reasons Ma ceased publication in 1925.

This will be the motivation for some of the other Eastern European groups, and in Slovakia, but the Devětsil group was already well connected, particularly with Paris.

Passuth, 175. Passuth, 175 states that Mihályi was the more significant, as he had contact with the Yugoslavian Zenit movement as well, but no source I consulted has given any detailed information on exactly what these men might have done on the ground for Ma in these towns, or pointed to any practical results of their activity on behalf of the journal.

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We encountered him earlier in the discussion of the Hungarian critique of German Expressionism in Chapter 3.

Oliver Botar reports in "Chronology" in *Standing in the Tempest*, 196 that Mácza took this job on the advice of György Lukács, and that he officially joined the Communist Party early in 1920.

Passuth, 176.

See John Bowlt, "Hungarian Activism and the Russian Avant-Garde," in *Standing in the Tempest*, 163, especially for more on Mácza's activities after his emigration to the Soviet Union in 1923.

Passuth, 176. Mácza would in 1926 write on both Czech and Yugoslavian literature in his book on contemporary European art, after his move to the Soviet Union. As is the case with all the proposed topics for the Horizont series, many were planned, but how many actually appeared is another story. I have no knowledge of such a Czech anthology ever being published.

As quoted in László Sándor, "Kassak Lajos csehszlovákiai előadókörútjai," in *Magam törvénye szerint*, 86. This is the primary source on the Ma tour in Slovakia.

The review in *Kassai Napló* described the scene as "A room jam-packed with students and the bourgeois public, naturally all Hungarian." Translation from the Hungarian by the author. Sándor's article contains reviews only from Hungarian-language newspapers in the region. It is likely that Slovakian reviews would be rare if at all existent, as the program was undoubtedly entirely in Hungarian and was aimed at primarily a Hungarian audience.

I am speaking here of a text published in *Kassai Napló*, excerpted in Sándor, 85-86.


Subotić, "Avant-Garde Tendencies", 22.

Subotić, "Die Zeitschrift 'Zenit'", 14. The connections between *Ma* and *De Stijl* were thoroughly discussed in Chapter 4. *Het Overzicht*, one of the journals of the Belgian avant-garde, was also a frequent collaborator with *Ma*. It should be mentioned here as well that the Belgians, through journals such as *Het Overzicht*, *7 Arts* and *Ca Ira*, were involved with a number of the Eastern European groups including the Yugoslavians, Hungarians and Romanians. There as yet exists no study on the specifically Eastern European connections of the Belgian avant-garde, although such a study is in process concerning the Romanians by Nathalie Toussaint. For information on the Belgian avant-
garde see L'Avant-garde en Belgique, eds. Frederik Leen and Anne Adriaens-Pannier (Bruxelles: Crédit Communal, 1992).

41This primary manifesto of Zenitism is available in German translation in Europa, Europa: Das Jahrhundert der Avantgarde in Mittel-und Osteuropa, Vol. 3 (Bonn: Kunst-und Ausstellungshalle der Bundesrepublik Deutschland und Autoren, 1994), 273-276. Here Goll and Tokin's names are not included.

42Passuth, 179.

43Ibid. Passuth does not mention why Tokin broke from the Ma circle.

44This text appeared in Zenit in July of 1921. It is available in German translation in Europa, Europa Vol. 3, 276.

45For more on Aleksic, see Subotic, "Avant-Garde Tendencies", 22-23. Aleksic contributed often to Zenit, but also practiced his own Dada activities outside of the context of the journal as well. In addition, he produced two Dada publications Dada-Jazz and Dada-Tank in 1922.

46Irina Subotic, "A Zenit és kôre" in Az avantgárd Jugosláviában A Zenit-kör 1921-1926, ed. Irina Subotic (Budapest: A Magyar Nemzeti Galéria, 1986), n.p. What was also very different from Ma's practice is that Micic published a number of poets and writers, including Kassak, in their native language as well as in translation. Micic's claims to an international interest in this case seem more genuine than Kassak's.

47Passuth, 179.

48Ibid.

49It was Micic's belief, and strongly drove his activities, that what the Yugoslavs had to offer the world was his concept of the barbarogenius, a new man that could bring to an war-exhausted and depleted Europe a fresh, vigorous and new power emanating from the Balkans, hence pan-Balkanism, or the Balkanization of Europe. For more on this notion see Irina Subotic, "Zenit and Zenitism," The Journal of Decorative and Propaganda Arts 17 (Fall 1990), 15. This is an essentially outward-focused strategy, that was predicated on bringing something to Europe, and making an international contribution that was inherently unlike Kassak's strategy of gathering and developing material that was then to be applied in Hungary.

50Passuth, 180.

51Ibid.

52Quoted in Passuth, 180. Passuth suggests that this may have been written by Kassak under a pseudonym.

53Ibid.


55Csaplar, 6, 10. The Kassak archive also contains a copy of Praesens and a catalogue from the first exhibition of the Polish Constructivists, likely that from the 1923 show in Vilnius.

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Caspar's original essay appeared only in Der Sturm in German, and significantly was primarily about literature, not art.

The ethnic breakdown of the population in Transylvania in 1910 is reported as Romanian: 2,830,040; Hungarian: 1,664,296; German: 565,116 and Jewish: 182,724. In terms of percentage of population: Romanian 53.8%, Hungarian 31.6%, German 10.7% and Jewish 3.5%. As quoted from Sabin Manuila, Aspects démographiques de la Transylvanie in Irina Livzeanu, Cultural Politics in Greater Romania: Regionalism, Nation Building & Ethnic Struggle, 1918-1930 (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1995), 135.

see Ion Pop, "Moments in the Romanian Literary Avant-garde" and Andrei Pintilie, "Considérations sur le Mouvement Roumain D'Avant-garde" in Bucharest in the 1920s-1940s Between Avant-garde and Modernism (Bucharest: Simetria Publishing House of Union of Romanian Architects, 1993). This exhibition catalogue is the most complete current source on the Romanian avant-garde, including scholarly essays in English and French translation, as well as a helpful chronology and biographical information on many of the key figures.

We know the Romanians were aware of this publication, since Contimporanul reports receiving it issue No. 35, March 1923.

This Ma Buch among other things contained the German version of "Evening Under the Trees" in yet another version of graphic layout.

Ion Vinea was also involved with this journal, and most likely it is representative of the general level of knowledge and engagement of the Romanian avant-garde in this period with what was happening elsewhere in Europe.

Contimporanul no. 46 (Mai, 1924): 12. Information on Tamás is sketchy in the sources I have been able to locate. He was primarily a poet and editor, the two journals cited as being edited by him are Uj Fold and 100%.

Botar, "Chronology", in Standing in the Tempest, 206-08 links him more specifically to 365, a 1925 attempt to continue Ma in Budapest, and 100%, the 1927 journal of the Hungarian Communist Party. Apparently he was primarily associated with the Kassák circle. In 1924 he reportedly spent a couple months in Bucharest, and his articles in Contimporanul and Ma are the results of this visit. Primary source for the above information is János Kovács, Periszkóp 1925-1926 Antológia (Bukarest: Kriterion Könyvkiadó, 1979), 488. It would seem most likely that he was Transylvanian in view of his knowledge of both Hungarian and Romanian. His significant level of involvement with, and knowledge of the Ma group is also suggested by the inclusion of his name on the program of one of the Ma Evenings held in Vienna in 1925. It is reproduced in Kassák Lajos 1887-1967, 216, no. 276. It apparently served as a cover for an issue of Ma in March of 1925.

Ma 9, no. 6-7 (July 1, 1924): 151. The article was entitled "Az új román művészeti lehetőségek" [The New Romanian Artistic Possibilities].

This list published in Contimporanul 52 (January, 1925) is apparently the most complete record we have of the exhibition, as no separate catalogue was produced. Unfortunately there are no photographs or other reproductions of the works, so we are unable to identify with certainty which compositions by Kassák these titles refer to. Csapár in Kassák az európai...
avanígárd mozgalmakban. 8 has only identified them as one being in the Kassák Múzeum collection, one in the collection of Vienna's Museum des 20. Jahrhunderts and the one that was featured in Contimporanul. Kassák was the only artist representing Hungary. Included in the exhibition besides Kassák were Teresa Zarnower and Mieczysław Szczuka of Poland, Karel Teige of Czechoslovakia, Jo Klee of the Zenit group in Yugoslavia, Schwitters, Arp, Artur Segal, Klee and Richter among others representing Germany, Eggeling from Sweden, a couple of the Belgian artists, and M. H. Maxy, Janco, Mátíss-Teutsch, Victor Brauner, Milita Petracscu and Constantin Brancusi from Romania. The pages from Contimporanul regarding this exhibition are reproduced in Petre Raileanu, Le Rameau D'Or: L'Avant-Garde Roumaine, No. 2 (3) (1995): 44-45.

66 This work was also shown in Kassák's exhibition at the Der Sturm Gallery in 1924.


68 Ibid.

69 Ibid., 97 and Pop, 21. Collaborating with Maxy on this journal were Brunea-Fox, Ion Calugaru, Ilarie Voronca, and Barbu Fundoianu and Mátíss-Teutsch in Paris.

70 This is admittedly vague, but at least gives a sense of what the Romanians were talking about. Although there were a number of manifestos and programmatic texts published in Integral, none are so clear as to give a simple definition of this synthetic program.

71 My understanding of the nature of this group and their texts is based on reading such works as the opening manifesto in the first issue of Integral, "Interpretari" by Ion Calugaru, "Politica Plasda" and "Cronometraj-Pictural" by Maxy. My thanks to Adrian Barbu, who translated these difficult texts from the Romanian into English for me.

72 This appeared in Contimporanul 50-51, November, 1924.

73 From translation of the original Romanian text by Adrian Barbu.

74 See especially Iloana Vlasiu, "La Fortune des Idées Constructivistes dans L'Art Roumain des Années '20: L'Intégralisme," in Bucharest in the 1920s-1940s, 38-46 for a more complete discussion of the foundation of Constructivism within the Romanian avant-garde. Vlasiu credits Cubism and Dadaism with being the most important to the Romanian avant-garde, and discusses in some detail their understanding and appreciation of these two movements. However, we can recall in this context that Kallai ascribed an important role to Cubism in the development of Hungarian notions concerning Constructivism in his essay "Cubism and the Future Art."

75 Pop, 20.

76 Ibid., 21 and Raileanu, 35.

77 This text is supplied in French in Raileanu, Le Rameau d'Or, 34.


79 Kovács, Periszkóp 1925-1926 Antológia, 521-25 contains an index of what was featured in the journal, which makes clear the variety of material it published. Notable among this list is a substantial number of French poets, such as Cocteau and Apollinaire, Theo van Doesburg's essay "The End of Art", Arthur Korn on architecture, and even an article by Jack Dempsey.
For more on Surrealism in Romania see Marina Vanci-Perahim, "Surrealism and the Renewal of the Visual Image (1928-1948)" in Bucharest in the 1920s-1940s, 47-55. It is important to note here as well that Romanian Surrealism was not a wholly imported movement from the West, but rather had considerable indigenous roots, such as Urmuz's (Demetru Demetrescu-Buzău) "Pagini Bizare" [Bizarre Pages] of 1907.


Kronstadt is the German name for the city, Brașov the Romanian and Brassó the Hungarian. One can find all three used in written sources, and this reflects the ethnic/linguistic mix of the area. Determining the exact ethnic heritage of Mâttis-Teutsch is complicated. Júlia Szabó, Mâttis Teutsch János (Budapest: Corvina Kiadó, 1983), 6 notes that his father (János Mâttis) who died before Mâttis-Teutsch was born was Székely, that is a Hungarian of eastern Transylvania. Mircea Deac, Mâttis-Teutsch si realismul constructiv (Cluj-Napoca: Editura Dacia, 1985), 58 tells us that his mother, Josefine Schneider, was of Saxon heritage. The artist's step-father, Friedrich Teutsch, gave him the Teutsch name, thus the double last name of Mâttis-Teutsch. The name Friedrich Teutsch certainly suggests German heritage, and Mâttis-Teutsch's use of German as his first language upholds as well the notion that his was primarily of Saxon German background and upbringing.

I say apparently in Budapest for this year, because although Hungarian sources mention this, many Romanian sources do not.

See Pirsich, Der Sturm Fine Monographie, 681-82 for a list of all those participating in this exhibition in September. It was a rather substantial show, as it was tied to the tenth anniversary of Der Sturm. Both Szabó, Mâttis-Teutsch János, 23 and Gheorghe Vida, "Hans Mâttis-Teutsch and the European Dialogue of Forms," Romanian Review no. 12 (1984): 99 both mention an earlier show in 1921 in conjunction with Klee that Mâttis-Teutsch was included in, however Pirsich's list does not detail his participation, although Pirsich's designation "Klee + Gesamtschau" leaves the matter open.

Vida, 100 and Szabó, 23.

Szabó, 23-24 lists some examples. Although Bortnyik, for example, was apparently still in contact with Mâttis-Teutsch, he was by this time no longer in the Ma group.

Originally published in Potsdam in 1931. The language of the publication was German. Available in a reprint edition Hans Mâttis-Teutsch, Kunstideologie: Stabilität und Aktivität im Kunstwerk, with a Foreword by Mihai Nadin and Afterword by Elisabeth Axmann (Bukarest: Kriterion Verlag, 1977).

For example see Anca Scheire-Pop, "L'avant-garde roumaine dans le contexte européen," in La peinture roumaine 1800-1940 (Hessenhuis, Anvers: Pandora, 1995), 56 and more thoroughly on the spiritual issue, Júlia Szabó, "The Spiritualism of the Work of János Mâttis-Teutsch (1992/3?)" TM [photocopy], 1-5, formerly in the collection of the library of the Central European University, Prague, Czech Republic. Current whereabouts unknown.
93 Deac, 67.
94 Ibid.
CONCLUSION

Only a few issues of Ma appeared in 1925, the final year of the journal's existence. Increasingly challenged by financial problems, Kassák had attempted to reach out and broaden his audience, cultivating contacts with the Austrians in Vienna for example, but to little avail. In 1926, like a fair number of his Hungarian colleagues, Kassák took the opportunity to return home to his native land. It may be difficult to understand why Kassák would choose to leave the international sphere that he had been cultivating for five years, and return to a Hungary under the conservative regime of Miklós Horthy, but years later, when asked, he was quite clear on what he thought the function of Ma had been, and where he felt his primary responsibility was then located: "Why, after all, did I wish to create Ma... This again I wanted to do for Hungary. I wanted to hold open the gate that led toward life beyond the Hungarian border. Through that magazine, modernism entered Hungary... It was my view, as someone active in the socialist movement, that as soon as possible I would return home. As a socialist that was my place, and there I had to carry out educational work." True to this spirit, Kassák on his return continued publishing journals, including Dokumentum [Document] (1926-27), and Munka [Work] (1928-1939). Another major area of work for Kassák, as well as a number of the other artists who had been involved with Ma such as Bortnyik and Moholy-Nagy, was advertising and graphic design. Given Kassák's interest in both the verbal and visual fields, as well as the willingness
to combine and experiment simultaneously, in the mixing of Dada and Constructivism, advertising was very much a continuation of his interests from the beginning of the 1920s. Also, by the mid-1920s he was not alone in this regard. A number of other European avant-garde artists, some of whom we have encountered within this study, were successfully practicing in the field of typography and advertising design, such as M. H. Maxy and Kurt Schwitters. Two factors seem to be especially relevant in the background of many of the artists who turned to advertising design in this period. The majority of them lived and were educated in Germany, or had a high degree of familiarity with what was happening in German art circles in the early 1920s. Additionally, all had practiced in the style of International Constructivism, and wanted to transfer some of the social and pedagogical goals of that style to advertising design. Kassák himself made this connection strikingly clear: "the advertisement is applied art, the advertisement artist a socially-relevant constructor."

I believe there is a different point to be raised in conjunction with Kassák's as well as many other avant-garde artists' move in this period from the practice of Constructivism to advertising design, a move that at root may be indicative of their larger concern with the relationship between images and words. At numerous junctures in this study mention has been made of the complicated relationship between words and images in the work of Kassák, and indeed, on the pages of the journal Ma itself. This issue came to a particular head in the sections on Dada and Constructivism, culminating in the discussion of Kassák's theory of Képarchitektúra. One recent study on the avant-garde has posited that avant-garde art is intimately concerned with its own theoretical formulation, and Constructivism, in particular, was predicated on structuring a work of art that was the embodiment of its vision of the future,
in other words, its theory.\textsuperscript{9} Going further, Constructivism is described as the movement which generated more words than any other, in terms of its producers also writing explanations, manifestos, articulating its purposes, and arguing the features of Constructivism back and forth.\textsuperscript{10} The crucial question then becomes, what is the nature of the relationship between the theory, as articulated in words, and the art object itself in Constructivism? This question brings us back to a point made in conjunction with Kassák's theory of Képarchitektúra and the visual constructions of that theory, namely that they do not ultimately in some ways work together. There is much that is said in Kassák's manifesto in words that is not articulated in the visual object itself. This gives rise to a number of further questions: why was such a densely articulated theory as contained in the manifesto of Képarchitektúra embodied in such a spare, rigorously simple and geometric formal language, in other words, did such an explicit theory engender such an implicit art?, and, was the formal composition of the works found to be mute to the degree that further wordy articulation of the theory in critical articles in Ma was considered necessary? Since the proposition of Képarchitektúra, as well as other variants of Constructivism, was that the works are clear visual embodiments of their theory, can it be considered a failure when theory and art work do not completely coincide? And if so, is the nature of the failure that of the visual work connoting more, or something other than is in the written text, or, the words saying things the visual work cannot or is not meant to express—things only possible in the verbal realm? Finally, can we put Képarchitektúra's inability to change man's perception of the world around him, and thus give him the ability to change his material and social surroundings down to the disjunction between the words and images of Képarchitektúra? Fundamental for me has become the question why Kassák turned to creating visual art when
he did. At root, it may have been an attempt to move from the meaning he could communicate in a text (via words and typographical manipulation) to trying to embody that meaning in a spatial, physical way in visual art. Perhaps then the viewer could receive the message through sight, thus physically, spatially and experientially, more like architecture. Could this then explain why Kassák's negotiation from Dada to Constructivism was first textually based, and then proceeded to pure geometric visual composition? I do not have the answer to all these questions, but this study has pinpointed several critical moments in Kassák's practice as poet and painter when words and images intersected in a complicated fashion, and having provoked such questions may afford another way of thinking about Constructivism and what we might ask of it. Significant, too, is the fact that this central avant-garde issue of the relationship between the art work and its theory is critical to the enterprise of Kassák and the journal Ma.

When Kassák identified the importance of Ma, Hungary was always at the forefront of his concern. However, this should not prevent us from seeing the international role and presence of this Hungarian journal. Hungarians have long cultivated a historical role for themselves as the bridge between East and West, situated as they are in the midst of the European continent. The great modern Hungarian poet Endre Ady likened their role to a ferry boat, trolling back and forth between East and West, a continuous presence of in-betweeness. Others, such as Béla Kun, were more apt to see Hungary as a bridge, in his case a uni-directional one, that would bring ideas from the East such as Communism, to the West. However conceived in the details, the notion had a certain resonance for the Hungarians in this period, and is an apt analogy for the journal Ma itself. Existing on the fringe of Western Europe in Vienna, and particularly knowledgeable about the Soviet East, Hungarian
artists and writers within the pages of Ma were able to synthesize and combine the dominant styles coming from both directions in a manner uniquely their own. Not content to remain in the background, from 1920-1925 the Hungarians developed their platform Ma into an international springboard, actively engaging with every major avant-garde artist and/or journal that was willing to reciprocate. The position of these Hungarians was not a passive one. Instead, they considered themselves fully qualified as equals to comment, critique, adapt and add to the major artistic and political debates of the period. Rightly they believed that they had something to contribute in the form of a point of view and manner of working forged in a social and political context that was unlike that of both their Western and Soviet counterparts. Significantly, their colleagues recognized the importance and relevance of their voice in the international arena as well, as this study has amply demonstrated. For these Hungarians Ma acted as that voice, sometimes verbal, sometimes visual, but nevertheless a voice fully engaged in and responding to its environment, actively shaping its role in the international avant-garde. The journal Ma remains the most important document and trace of this Hungarian presence in the international avant-garde, a presence that has been unfortunately lost in the art history of the West. To recoup and reinvigorate that active presence is to both more accurately comprehend the ideological complexity of the avant-garde at the beginning of this century, and moreover to challenge the methods and assumptions of an art history that is unable or unwilling to fully incorporate Eastern Europe into its story of modern art.
For information on Kassák and Ma’s relationship with the Austrians see Ferenc Csaplár, “Kassák és mozgalmainak osztrák kapcsolatai (1920-1933),” in Kassák körei (Budapest: Szépirodalmi Könyvkiadó, 1987): 19-29.


For the contents of this later journals see László Kálmán (Mrs. László Kálmán), A Dokumentum (1926-1927) és a Munka (1928-1939) repertóriumja (Budapest: Petőfi Irodalmi Múzeum, 1972). Although Dokumentum continued many of the avant-garde interests that had characterized Ma, it was not particularly successful in the conservative context of the Hungary of its time. Munka shifted its focus to social issues and current events, rather than being a literary and art journal.

Several visual examples of advertising designs are available in Mansbach, 79-83.

The literature on this subject is considerable, but a helpful place to begin with the Hungarians is Heidrun Schroder-Kehler, "Künstler erobern die Warenwelt: Neue Typographie in der Werbegestaltung," in Wechsel Wirkungen: Ungarische Avantgarde in der Weimarer Republik, ed. Hubertus Gaßner (Marburg: Jonas Verlag, 1986). For a useful summary on Schwitters’ typography and advertising work, particularly in the context of International Constructivism, see Maud Lavin, "Advertising Utopia: Schwitters as Commercial Designer," Art in America 73, no. 10 (October, 1985): 135-39, 169. Additionally, one can consult "Typographie kann unter Umständen Kunst sein": Kurt Schwitters Typographie und Werbegestaltung, hrsgs. Volker Rattermeyer, Dietrich Helms and Konrad Matschke (Spangenberg: Werbedruck GmbH Horst Schreckhase für das Museum Wiesbaden und die Autoren, 1990). I am only hinting at the wealth of material that could be covered concerning this issue, which is properly outside the scope of this dissertation.

Critical to point out in this context as well, is the importance and influence of Jan Tschichold’s work on typography in Central Europe, such as his Die Neue Typographie. Ein Handbuch für zeitgemäss Schaffende of 1928.

As quoted in Congdon, 175. Many of these artists also wrote articles and essays on advertising design and its principles, including Kassák, Moholy-Nagy, Schwitters, Walter Dexel, and Willi Baumeister, to name a few.

See Daniel Herwitz, Making Theory/Constructing Art: On the Authority of the Avant-Garde (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1993), especially the Introduction and Chapter Two. There is much more under discussion in Herwitz’s book, such as the relationship between contemporary art and its theory, as well as the art object’s resistance to theory, that is beyond my scope here. However, the sections on Constructivism were helpful in framing the following discussion.

Ibid., 38.
SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

The following bibliography is divided into two sections. The first section lists the primary literature, in this case, the contemporary journals consulted for this study. Full bibliographic information on the many essays and articles cited from this primary literature are available in the relevant endnotes. The number of such citations, particularly from the journal Ma itself, prohibits their inclusion here in order to keep this bibliography of a manageable and useful length. The subsequent section of the bibliography lists the secondary literature.

PRIMARY LITERATURE


Periskóp. Arad, 1925. Editor: György Szantó.


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SECONDARY LITERATURE


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APPENDIX A: FIGURES
Figure 1. List of books/journals received, back pages of Ma. Reproduced in Julia Szabó, A magyar aktivizmus művészete. Figs. 200 & 201.
Figure 2. Cover of Der Sturm, Vol. 3, no. 140/141 (December, 1912).
Figure 3. Cover of Ma. Vol. 2, no. 4 (February, 1917).
Figure 4. Lajos Kassák, Cover for Gáz szív, 1922. Reproduced from György Somlyó, Arlon 16: Kassák 1887-1967, n. p.
Figure 5. Raoul Hausmann, Jeffzalomás, 1919. Ma, Vol. 7, no. 5-6.
Figure 6. László Moholy-Nagy, Cover of *Ma*, Vol. 6, no. 9 (September, 1921). Special Moholy-Nagy number of *Ma*.
Figure 7. Lajos Kassák, Cover of *Ma*, Vol. 6, no. 3 (January, 1921).
Figure 8. Sándor Barta, page from "A zöldfejű ember," Ma Vol. 6, no. 3 (January, 1921), p. 22.
Figure 10. Matinee announcement, *Ma*, Vol. 6, no. 9 (September, 1921), p. 136.
Figure 14. Lajos Kassák, first page of "Este a fák alatt", Ma Vol. 7, no. 2 (January, 1922), p. 18.
Figure 15. Lajos Kassák, second page of "Este a fák alatt", Ma Vol. 7, no. 2 (January, 1922), p. 19.
Figure 16. Lajos Kassák, hand-drawn version of "Este a fák alatt", from Maképeskőnyv, 1922. Reproduced from Kassák Lajos 1887-1967, p. 181.
Figure 17. Lajos Kassák, Karácsony cover of Ma, Vol. 7, no. 2 (January, 1922).
Figure 18. Lajos Kassák, Two picture poems. *Ma*, Vol. 7, no. 3 (February, 1922), p. 34.
Figure 21. Lajos Kassák, hand-drawn version of "Este a fák alatt", from Ma képeskönyv, 1922. Reproduced from Kassák Lajos 1887-1967, p. 179.
Az idő nyeri lettl akkor azaz papagályosan kinyilotta a szárnyait mondom széttárt vörös kapu * szeretőmmel kinek fekete gyémántok voltak befalazva az arcába s 3 gyereket cepelt a kétségbeesésében * a gyárkémények alatt ültünk * tudtuk holnap a görbe vonalak * ho zsupp ho zsupp * azt mondta elmész KASIKÁM és én elszáradok a pódiumokon s nádler ur mázolmányaiban * nyilván * nyilván * az uristen megleledkezik a szépasszonyokról * már jött is a féltókész faszobrász * fiatal volt és gyalázatosan igazságszagu * holnap tul leszünk a magyar határon * hát igen hm igen * nyilván nyilván * a város rohant mellettünk * ide- oda forgott és néha főgaskodott * láttam az apám kajla szalmakalapját amint uszkál a hőüveg fölétt a patikától a szentháromság-szoborig és vissza * valami- kor azt hitte az öreg 21 éves koromban káplán leszek az érsekujvári plébánián * de épen 10 esztendővel előbb sporni ur lakatosmühelyében ettem a füstöt * az öreg már csak nagyon ritkán járt közénk liaza * később az én szépen elgondolt jövőmet is beitta és kipisálta a sörrel * szerelmes lett egy öreg takarítónőbe *

Figure 23. Lajos Kassák, "A ló meghal és a madarak kiröpülnek", 2 x 2, p. 40.
Figure 24. Lajos Kassák, illustration for "A ló meghal és a madarak kiröpülnek", 2x2, p. 44.
Figure 25. Adám Csont, "Kivégeznek", Ma Vol. 7, no. 5-6 (May, 1922), p. 17.
Figure 26. Andor Sugár, first page of "33 Betűvers", Ma vol. 7, no. 5-6 (May, 1922), p. 26.
Figure 27. Andor Sugár, second page of "33 Betűvers", Ma vol. 7, no. 5-6 (May, 1922, p. 27).
Figure 28. Lajos Kassák, *Tipográfia*. Ma Vol. 7, no. 5-6 (May, 1922), p. 29.
Die neue Zeit beginnt mit dem Todesjahr des Oberdada

Ad

Figure 30. Cover of Der Dada, no. 1 (June, 1919). Reproduced from Meyer, et al., Dada global, p. 151.
Figure 31. Cover of Der Dada, no. 2 (December, 1919). Reproduced from Meyer et al., Dada global, p. 151.
Figure 32. Kurt Schwitters, *Merz 458*, c. 1922. Collage, 17.8 x 14.3 cm. Collection of Museum of Modern Art, New York. Reproduced from John Elderfield, *Kurt Schwitters*, Figure 145.
Figure 33. Ilya Zdanevich, *Fact*, 1919. Reproduced from Susan Compton, *Russian Avant-Garde Books*, p. 73.
Figure 34. Ilya Zdanevich, Soirée du Cœur à Barbe. 1923. Reproduced from Meyer et al., Dada global, p. 257.
Figure 35. Theo Van Doesburg and Kurt Schwitters, Kleine Dada Soirée, 1923. Reproduced from Meyer, et al., Dada global, p. 183.
Figure 36. Theo Van Doesburg and Kurt Schwitters, Dada-Matinée, 1923. Reproduced from Meyer et al., Dada global, p. 183.
Figure 37. Ilya Zdanevich, "zokhna and her suitors", from S. G. Melnikovoy, 1919. Reproduced from Gerald Janecek, The Look of Russian Literature, p. 184.
Figure 38. Ilya Zdanevich, "Ledentu le Phare: poème dramatique en zaoun", 1923. Reproduced from Meyer et al., Dada global, p. 235.
Figure 39. Vasili Kamensky, "Cabaret" from Tango with Cows, 1914. Reproduced from Janecek, The Look of Russian Literature, p. 134.
Figure 40. Lajos Kassák, "Romboljatok hogy építessetek és építssetek hogy győzhessetek". Ma Vol. 8, no. 1 (October, 1922), p. 9.
Figure 41. Sándor Bortnyik, Képarchitektúra I, II and III, 1921. All three color pochoir print on paper, 30.5 x 24 cm. Collection of Janus Pannonius Museum, Pécs. Reproduced from S. A. Mansbach, ed., Standing in the Tempest, p. 136.
Figure 42. Lajos Kassák. Cover of Ma Vol. 6, no. 5 (March, 1921).
Figure 43. Lajos Kassák, Cover of *Ma* Vol. 7, No. 1 (November, 1921). Special Kassák number.
Figure 44. Lajos Kassák, Képarchitektúra, Ma vol. 7, no. 1 (November, 1921), p. 149.
Figure 45. Lajos Kassák, Képarchitektúra, Ma vol. 7, no. 1 (November, 1921), p. 145.
Figure 46. Cover of Ma Vol. 6, no. 7 (June, 1921) featuring work of Georg Grosz.
Figure 47. Cover of *Ma* Vol. 6, no. 8 (August, 1921) featuring work of Viking Eggeling.
Figure 49. Lajos Kassák, Ké parchitectúra, Ma Vol. 7, no. 1 (November, 1921), p. 141.
Figure 50. László Moholy-Nagy, Nickel Sculpture, 1921. Reproduced from Szabó, A magyar aktivizmus művészete, Figure 121.
Figure 51. László Moholy-Nagy, The Dynamics of the Metropolis, 1922. Reproduced from Szabó, A magyar aktivizmus művészete, Figure 190.
Figure 52. Új művészek könyve, 1922, pages 30-31.
Figure 53. Cover of Ma Vol. 7, no. 8 (August, 1922) featuring work of El Lissitzky.
Figure 54. Béla Uitz, Az emberiség, 1919. Egyéves 1. (1922), p. 11.
Figure 55. Béla Uitz, *Analysis*, 1922. Reproduced from Szabó, *A magyar aktivizmus művészete*. Figure 175.
Figure 56. Béla Uitz, *Analysis* 21, 1922. Reproduced from Szabó, *A magyar aktivizmus művészete*, Figure 176.
Figure 57. Photograph of 1921 OBMOKhU and Constructivist Exhibition, as published in Egység, no. 2 (June, 1922). Reproduced from The 1st Russian Show, photograph courtesy of Krisztina Passuth, p. 38.
Figure 58. Photograph of Stenberg, *Bridge Construction*, 1921, as published in *Egység*, no. 2 (June, 1922). Reproduced from *The 1st Russian Show*, photograph courtesy of Krisztina Passuth, p. 42.
Figure 59. Béla Uitz, composition after Malevich, as published in Egység, no. 3 (September, 1922). Reproduced from The 1st Russian Show, photograph courtesy of Krisztina Passuth, p. 55.
Figure 60. Béla Uitz, compositions after Malevich, as published in Egység, no. 3 (September, 1922). Reproduced from The 1st Russian Show, photograph courtesy of Krisztina Passuth, p. 54.
Figure 61. Kazimir Malevich, Suprematist Composition, n.d. Reproduced from K. S. Malevich, Essays on Art 1915-1933, p. 160.
A berlini orosz kiállításhoz

1914-ben délebbre Szentpétervárra a kifejezett követelés után került kiállításba a berlini orosz kiállítás. Az orosz kormány ezt a kiállítást úgy hirdettek, hogy a kormány és a város között való kapcsolatot helyezze el, és úgy gondolták, hogy ez segítene a berlini orosz emberek kulturális és társadalmi intézményeinek népszerűsítésében. Az orosz kultúra a berlini népességnek is ismert volt, és ezért a kiállításnak kedvencnek tekinthetett a berlini népesség.

Az orosz kultúra mellett úgy tűnt, hogy a kiállításnak is nagy fontosságú volt a politikai helyzet. A berlini orosz emberek többnyire nem voltak a rendelkezésre álló egyenlőtlenségekkel, mint például a magyarok, a németek vagy a franciaok. Ezért a kiállítás nagyobb részét a politikai helyzettel kapcsolatban tartotta.

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A kiállítás mellett kihívások és kihívások voltak a magyarok számára, de ezek a kihívások mindig segítettek a berlini orosz emberek kulturális és társadalmi intézményeinek népszerűsítésében. Az orosz kultúra mellett úgy tűnt, hogy a kiállításnak is nagy fontosságú volt a politikai helyzet. A berlini orosz emberek többnyire nem voltak a rendelkezésre álló egyenlőtlenségekkel, mint például a magyarok, a németek vagy a franciaok. Ezért a kiállítás nagyobb részét a politikai helyzettel kapcsolatban tartotta.

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A kulturális és politikai kapcsolatok az orosz kultúra számára szolgáltak a népszerűsítéshez, és ezáltal segítettek a berlini orosz emberek kulturális és társadalmi intézményeinek népszerűsítésében.

Figure 63. Ma Vol. 8, no. 2-3 (December, 1922), n.p.
Figure 64. *Ma* Vol. 8, no. 2-3 (December, 1922), n.p.
Figure 65. Cover of *Ma* Vol. 8, no. 7-8 (May, 1923).
Figure 66. Sándor Bortnyik, Cover of *Egység*, no. 5 (May, 1923).
Figure 67. Cover of *Ma* Vol. 1, no. 1 (November, 1916), featuring work of Vincenc Beneš.
Figure 68. Cover of Zenit (June, 1922) featuring work of Lajos Kassák. Reproduced from Szabó, A magyar aktivizmus művészete, Figure 208.
Figure 69. Cover of Contimporanul Vol. 3, no. 47 (September, 1924) featuring work of Lajos Kassák. Reproduced from Szabó, A magyar aktivizmus művészete, Figure 214.
Figure 70. Cover of Integral (April, 1927).
**CRONOMETRAJ—PICTURAL**

Geneza sentimentalismului

1) Pictură murală, vasa arhitecturii
dele seva, de asemenea, independentă în așa de
decorațione

2) Narățiunea în comă

**CUBISMUL**

Laborator-școlastic

- muzică de cameră; solda-baghetă universală
- concepție de tablou
- lumină
- compoziție
- echilibru
- structură
- economică
- masă
- sinteză

Trăneas, șefi, venin, lăsă, proșă, reclama, coji, ona, (ele) artificios...

**DADAISMUL**

Filosofia economico-politică-științifico-artisticoreligiosă

Cautezări generale

Dumă deschisă spre abstractizare

Frearea de arme

— Cubismul salvat —

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reprezentare plastică</th>
<th>pictură murală</th>
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<tr>
<td>impresionism</td>
<td>figeal:</td>
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<td>mister, polițion</td>
<td>egal:</td>
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<td>sentimentism</td>
<td>represetare plactică</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>emot, glorie, romantism</td>
<td>pictură murală</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>urbane, individualism</td>
<td>linie</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

CONSTRUCTIVISMUL

| Report estetic între forme și culori |
| spirituality conceptual, mechanic dinamic static, musical geometria simelor |
| Standard: pictură geometria plană |
| Constructivismul funcția arhitectonică |
| Moartea tabloului |

- șaseză —

- Văitorul, văitorul, văitorul
- Na întrebați pe Picasso,
- Na ne întrebați pe noi
- Na întrebați pe nimeni
- Picasso din când, în când jonglază,
- (destindere sensuală, nervoză)

- Așeptare, muncă, așeptare

Lupta ținută de precizare a cubismului constructiv?

Europeană de patimi economice?

Vadul ță castă stilul

în toate domeniile

Așeptăm, muncim, prelucram.

M. H. MAXY.

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Figure 71. M. H. Maxy, "Cronometraj—Pictural", *Contimporanul* no. 50-51 (November, 1924).
Figure 72. Cover of Pictopoezie, 1924. Reproduced from Bucharest in the 1920s-1940s, p. 113.
Figure 73. Invitation to Máttis-Teutsch's first exhibition with Ma, 1917. Reproduced from Szabó, Máttis Teutsch János, p. 14.
Figure 74. Page from Måttis-Teutsch's *Kunstideologie*, 1931 (reprint 1977).
Figure 75. Page from Mátis-Teutsch's *Kunstideologie*, 1931 (reprint 1977).
Figure 76. Page from Müttis-Teutsch's *Kunstideologie*, 1931 (reprint 1977).
Figure 77. János Máttis-Teutsch, *Seelenblumen*, c. 1920. Oil on board, 34 x 30 cm. Collection of Dezső Kelemen, Arad. Reproduced from Szabó, *Máttis-Teutsch János*, Figure 36.
Figure 80. János Máttis-Teutsch, Alak, c. 1920s. Reproduced from Szabó, Máttis Teutsch János, Figure 26.