

László Moholy-Nagy's Photoplastics and Homogeneous Photomontage

MAGDA DRAGU

Abstract: I trace the emergence and evolution of László Moholy-Nagy's photoplastics and their connection to the artist's movies and movie scripts. By closely reading Moholy-Nagy's statements concerning the nature of his photoplastics, I show that their homogeneity and their clarity of meaning is derived from his similar experiments with film montage. Moholy-Nagy's experiments from his film script *Dynamic of the Metropolis* (1925) exhibit similar characteristics to Eisenstein's intellectual montage. In the evolution of avant-garde photomontage during the second decade of the past century, Moholy-Nagy's photoplastics are an important achievement in the transformation of heterogeneous photomontage, which consisted of abrupt juxtaposition of the most disparate elements – a technique closely related to visual collage –, into homogeneous photomontage which is defined by the articulation of clear meaning.

The emergence of photomontage around the years 1919–20, in the works of Dada artists (Raoul Hausmann, George Grosz and Hannah Höch) and the Russian constructivists Gustav Klutsis and Alexander Rodcheko, was a crucial moment in the history of the visual arts of the past century. Shortly after the discovery of the new technique, Moholy-Nagy started using photomontage and made his first photomontages or photoplastics, as he called them, around 1924. Artists who invented the technique, especially Hausmann and Höch, emphasized its innovative character and claimed that it allowed them to cre-

ate a new type of artistic meaning by manipulating photographs.¹

In this article I distinguish between visual collage and photomontage based on their artistic meanings and the type of reference they create, and not on the actual acts of cutting and pasting which both techniques employ.² Moholy-Nagy made Constructivist collages in 1920–1922 and was familiar with Schwitters's collage technique³ but his pho-

¹ Raoul HAUSMANN, *Am Anfang war Dada*, Hg. Karl RIHA and Günter KÄMPF (Giessen: G. Kämpf, 1972); Hannah HÖCH, "Erinnerungen and Dada", in *Hannah Höch 1889–1978: Ihr Werk, Ihr Leben, Ihre Freunde*, Hg. Elisabeth MOORTGAT et al., 207–208 (Berlin: Argon, Die Galerie, 1989).

² This is one of the claims I make in my PhD thesis (*Intermediality in the Early Avant-Garde 1900–1930: Collage and Montage*, dissertation director Professor Jacob Emery) I am currently finishing at Indiana U Bloomington, so I explore this full argument in this other text. For the purposes of this essay, it is enough to specify that meaning formation and the nature of the media used (papers, newspaper for collages versus photography for photomontages) is at the basis at my distinction between the techniques of visual collage and photomontage, and by extension montage. As a whole I relate collage with principles of heterogeneity and photomontage as homogeneity, both in terms of form and meaning.

³ In a letter addressed to Iván Hevesy from April 5, 1920, Moholy-Nagy wrote about Schwitters's collages: "In the latest exhibition of the Sturm, a man called Kurt Schwitters is exhibiting pictures made from news-

toplastics are a response to Dada photomontages. Moholy-Nagy distinguished his photomontages from Dada heterogeneous photomontages and intended to create in his photoplastics "clarity", "presentation of ideas", and a form of reduced simultaneity.⁴

The word "Photoplastik" Moholy-Nagy chose for his photomontages suggests a rigorous organization of photographs in vertical and horizontal spaces, similar to De Stijl pictures. As Lucia Moholy-Nagy indicated, Moholy-Nagy chose the German word "plastik," translated as "sculpture," to refer to the plasticism, or neoplasticism of *De Stijl*.⁵ For Eleanor Hight this reference to *De Stijl* neoplasti-

paper articles, luggage labels, hairs and hoops. What's the point? Are these painterly problems? Aside from this, it is not even new." (Moholy-Nagy's Letter to Iván Hevesy, Berlin, 5 April 1920, in *Moholy-Nagy*, ed. Krisztina PASSUTH, 388 [London: Thames and Hudson, 1985.]) This letter proves that Moholy-Nagy was familiar with the technique of collage and he started using it in a couple of years in his own collages, but instead of the chaos of Schwitters's Dada collages, Moholy-Nagy opted instead for the Constructivist order and simplicity. For Moholy-Nagy's connections with the Constructivism of El Lissitzky and Alexandr Rodchenko see Victor MARGOLIN, *The Struggle for Utopia: Rodchenko, Lissitzky, Moholy-Nagy 1917–1946* (Chicago–London: University of Chicago Press, 1997).

⁴ László MOHOLY-NAGY, "Fotographie ist Lichtgestaltung", *Bauhaus* 2 (1928): 2–9. In English: "Photography is Manipulation of Light", trans. Frederic SAMSON, in *Bauhaus Photography*, 126–129 (Cambridge, Mass.–London England: MIT Press, 1985), 128. The page numbering I am using for the quotes belongs to the English version of Moholy-Nagy's 1928 article.

⁵ Lucia MOHOLY-NAGY, *Marginalien zu Moholy-Nagy: Moholy-Nagy, Marginal Notes* (Krefeld: Scherpe, 1972), 70.

cism translated into the "organizing of different parts into a synthetic image with an independent meaning".⁶ Although Hight's interpretation supports my own reading of Moholy-Nagy's photoplastics, i.e. the emergence of a unique meaning, I would argue that the emphasis on geometrical and repetitive spatial organization of form which characterizes De Stijl pictures resurfaces in Moholy-Nagy's photoplastics. *De Stijl* pictures were abstract and they couldn't trigger the same type of meaning as that of a photoplastic.

In my view, and relying on the artists' own interpretations of it, photomontage differs from collages (including photocollages) through its particular use of photographs. A photomontage generates artistic meaning by manipulating photographs. A photograph, unlike a hand-made picture such as a collage, is an indexical sign which is "transparent" and directly points to reality. The effect of a photograph on the viewer is much stronger than that of a drawn or a painted scene of the same event, philosophers of the analytical tradition, such as Kendal Walton (1984), Gregory Currie (1999), Mikael Pettersson (2011) and Dan Cavedon-Taylor (2015) claimed in their theories of the photographic image.⁷ According to Cavedon-Taylor,

⁶ Eleanor HIGHT, *Picturing Modernism: Moholy-Nagy and Photography in Weimar Germany* (Cambridge, Mass. – London: The MIT Press, 1995), 150.

⁷ See Kendall WALTON, "Transparent Pictures: On the Nature of Photographic Realism", *Critical Inquiry* 11 (1984): 246–277; Gregory CURRIE, "Visible Traces: Documentary and the Contents of Photographs", *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 57 (1999): 285–297; Mikael PETERSSON, "Depictive Traces: On the Phenomenology of Photography", *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 69 (2011): 185–196 and Dan CAVEDON-TAYLOR, "Photographic Phenomenology as

the viewer “endorses the contents of such [photographic] experiences in a psychologically-immediate, non-inferential manner”.⁸ In other words, we “assent” to the content of the photographic experience just as we assent to real life perceptual experiences.⁹

A photomontage distinguishes itself from collage, a hand-made picture, because it constructs pictorial space around a photographic image which points to a concrete reality. According to this definition I do not view Moholy-Nagy’s *25 Bankrupcy Vultures* (25 Pleitegeiter 1922–1923, Fig. 1. on Plate VII.) as a photomontage or a photoplastic, as Elizabeth Otto did in her 2009 article on Moholy-Nagy’s photoplastics,¹⁰ because it consists exclusively of cut and pasted papers and does not contain any photographic images. Photography and cinema share a “transparent” nature and Moholy-Nagy commented on the indexical nature of cinema in *Painting Photography Film*: “The camera as a technical instrument and the most important productive factor in film-making copies the object in the world around us in a manner that is “true to nature”.¹¹ In 1928 Moholy-Nagy described the effects of the photographs contained in photoplastics along similar lines: “One has confidence in the ob-

Cognitive Phenomenology”, *British Journal of Aesthetics* 55, No. 1 (2015): 71–89.

⁸ CAVEDON-TAYLOR, “Photographic Phenomenology...”, 76.

⁹ *Ibid.* 78.

¹⁰ Elizabeth OTTO, “A »Schooling of the Senses«: Post-Dada Visual Experiments in the Bauhaus Photomontages of László Moholy-Nagy and Marianne Brandt”, *New German Critique* 107 (2009): 89–131, 95. [Dada and Photomontage across Borders.]

¹¹ László MOHOLY-NAGY, *Malerei, Photographie, Film*, Bauhausbücher 8 (Munich: Albert Langen Verlag, 1925). In English: *Painting, Photography, Film*, trans. Janet SELIGMAN (Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 1969), 34. The page numbering I use belongs to the English edition.

jectivity of photography of a type that does not seem to permit the subjective interpretation of an event”.¹²

Critics and avant-garde artists alike have agreed that there are two main stages in the development of photomontage in the second decade of the past century. The first stage, associated with Dada photomontage was described as heterogeneous, using “contradictory structures”,¹³ highlighting an “increased degree of simultaneity and unruliness”.¹⁴ Although these Dada photomontage exhibited “biting sarcasm”¹⁵ in attacking the political events of the day, their message was not very clear. In this first type of heterogeneous photomontage I identify the manifestation of the principles of collage which imply heterogeneous forms. In the second type of photomontage, which emerged around 1926–1927 or even earlier, in 1925, illustrated by “political and commercial propaganda” meaning had to emerge with clarity and thus earlier Dada photomontages had to release their “playfulness” claimed Hausmann in his influential article “Photomontage” from 1931.¹⁶

Although artists and critics (mainly Benjamin Buchloh) agreed that there were two types of photomontage in the 1920s, there are very few attempts at explaining what triggered the transition from one type of photomontage to the other. Buchloh, in his analysis of Gerhard Richter’s *Atlas* (1962),

¹² MOHOLY-NAGY, “Photography is Manipulation of Light”, 128.

¹³ Raoul HAUSMANN, “Fotomontage”, *a bis z* (Cologne), May (1931): 61–62. In English: “Photomontage”, trans. Joel AGEE, in *Photography in the Modern Era: European Documents and Critical Writings, 1913–1940*, ed. Christopher PHILLIPS, 178–181 (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1989), 179.

¹⁴ MOHOLY-NAGY, “Photography is Manipulation of Light”.

¹⁵ HAUSMANN, “Photomontage”, 178.

¹⁶ *Ibid.* 179–180.

claimed that the new perception of the photograph as "archive" around 1925 and New Objectivity photography were responsible for the shift towards homogeneous photomontage in the works of both Constructivist artists, Gustav Klutizis, El Lissitzky, Alexander Rodchenko as well as John Heartfield.¹⁷ I do not agree with his claim, mainly because photomontage developed in parallel with film montage and not photography. Photomontage emerged from visual collage whose principles are also manifest in film montage. Instead the emergence of homogeneous political photomontage in the visual works of Rodchenko and Lissitzky after 1926–1927 is related to Vertov's and Eisenstein's film montages, as I prove somewhere else.¹⁸

As far as Moholy-Nagy's homogeneous photomontages or photoplastics are concerned, I claim that they emerged under the influence of his film experiments. Movement and clear development of ideas which are characteristic of film and film montage are also suggested or expressed through Moholy-Nagy's homogenous photoplastics. Unlike the Russian homogenous photomontages, which are mainly political posters and advertisement panels, photoplastics could be used for many artistic purposes claimed Moholy-Nagy: "for the scenic intensification of whole sequences in theatre and film, plays and film scripts can be condensed into a single picture. Another kind of use: the illustration of a concept or a feeling. As illustration for propaganda, advertisements, posters, as topical satire".¹⁹

By closely analyzing the connections between Moholy-Nagy's photoplastics and movies, I will show that his homogeneous photoplastics emerged under the influence of his

movie experiments, especially those contained in the film script *Dynamic of the Metropolis* included in his volume *Painting, Photography, Film* (1925) which employs a form of film montage anticipating Eisenstein's intellectual montage. Furthermore Moholy-Nagy's definition of the photoplastics from his article "Photographie ist Lichtgestaltung" (Photography is Manipulation of Light) further echoes Eisenstein's montage. By 1928 when Moholy-Nagy wrote "Photographie," all Eisenstein's movies using montage had been released in Germany: *Strike* (1925), *The Battleship Potemkin* (1925) and *October* (1927), so Eisenstein's influence on Moholy-Nagy cannot be excluded.

Within several years, Moholy-Nagy's artistic style rapidly evolved from figurative painting to abstract Constructivist pictures. During 1919–1920, Moholy-Nagy made his first abstract Constructivist pictures, *Perpe* (Fig. 2. on Plate VII.) and *The Big Railroad Picture* (Fig. 3. on Plate VII.). Around 1920–1921, he made his first collages which outlined constructivist principles, as well *Red Cross and White Balls* (1921; Fig. 4. on Plate VII.) and *F in Field* (1920; Fig. 5. on Plate VIII.). He also made assemblages, such as *h Construction* (1921; Fig. 6. on Plate VII.) which, he claimed in his late essay *Abstract of an Artist*, allowed him to consider the effect of "light falling on objects".²⁰ Around 1922 he started working with photograms either under the direct influence of Man Ray or of other photograms he had seen.²¹

Moholy-Nagy's first photoplastics date from the year 1924. In his 1925 volume *Painting, Photography, Film* he reproduced four of his photoplastics: *Circus and Variety Poster* (Fig. 7. on Plate VII.), *Militarism* (Fig. 8. on Plate VII.), *Pneumatik* (Fig. 9. on Plate IX.),

¹⁷ Benjamin BUCHLOH, "Gerhard Richter's *Atlas: The Anomic Archive*", *October* 88 (1999): 117–145.

¹⁸ My PhD dissertation. See note 3.

¹⁹ MOHOLY-NAGY, "Photography is Manipulation of Light", 128.

²⁰ László MOHOLY-NAGY, "Abstract of an Artist", in László MOHOLY-NAGY, *The New Vision and Abstract of an Artist*, 65–77 (New York: George Wittenborn, Schultz, 1946), 72.

²¹ HIGHT, *Picturig Modernism...*, 56–90.

Leda and the Swan (Fig. 10. on Plate IX.) as well as a photoplastic called "Boxing" (Fig. 11. on Plate IX.), included in the typophoto *Sketch for a Film: Dynamic of the Metropolis*.

Despite the fact that the film *Dynamic of the Metropolis* was never realized, the succession of the photographs contained in this script suggests a form of montage between the city and the animals which play an important part in the film; from the very beginning the script opposes images of tall buildings and industrial machines with savage animals, such as a lion, an angry lynx, while the final scenes take place at the Zoo (Fig. 12–13. on Plate X.). The city versus animal/zoo montage may suggest either opposition (nature opposes technology) or analogy (new technological devices may be as savage as the animals themselves and they may elicit the same awe and admiration). Surprisingly, in his first film *Berlin Stilleben* (1931–1932)²² there are no animals and the movie consists exclusively of scenes showing architecture, people on the streets, filmed from abrupt constructivist angles. Just like in Vertov's movie *The Man with the Movie Camera* (1929), in *Dynamic of the Metropolis* there is a section on sports and people's entertainment but less extended than in Vertov's movie.

In *Painting, Photography, Film* (1925), Moholy Nagy briefly commented on the nature of photoplastics, and connected them to the technique of the movies. He claimed that photoplastics illustrate "simultaneous representation," "compressed interpenetration of visual and verbal wit, weird combinations of the most realistic, imitative means which

²² Many of Moholy-Nagy's movies became available on DVD through the Moholy-Nagy Foundation in 2008. See www.moholy-nagy.org. For a review of these DVDs see Oliver BOTAR, "Films by László Moholy-Nagy", *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 67, No. 3 (2008): 460–462.

pass into imaginary spheres",²³ pointing thus to art's productive values, a central concept to his artistic thinking. But they may also "tell a story" (and become thus reproductive), illustrating thus the other concept central to Moholy-Nagy's artistic theories.²⁴ Moholy-Nagy then pointed out that such innovative techniques were already used in film practices and mentions cinematic techniques such as "transillumination; one scene carried into the other; superimposition of different scenes".²⁵

In 1928 Moholy-Nagy defined the photoplastics as "organized apparition" with a "well-defined meaning and a central idea," having "unity" (which may have various effects such as "amusing, moving, despairing satirical").²⁶ They have "clear meaning" and display "moderate simultaneity," different from Dada simultaneity overlapping too many events. In a photoplastic, vision is accompanied by "intellectual association of ideas" and the connections between ideas and images become "accessible in a moment if the effect is to be achieved." A photoplastic "points to a given end, that of presentation of ideas".²⁷ His definition of photoplastic bears resemblances to Eisenstein's film montage, because Moholy-Nagy claimed that the meaning of the photoplastic resides only in the whole and not in the separate units: "As a result of this confidence and by the combi-

²³ MOHOLY-NAGY, *Painting, Photography, Film*, 36.

²⁴ For the terms productive-reproductive see Moholy-Nagy's article "Produktion-Reproduction", *De Stijl*, 1922. For a critical interpretation of the two concepts see Oliver I. A. BOTAR, *Sensing the Future: Moholy-Nagy, Media and the Arts* (Baden: Lars Müller Publishers, 2014), 41–58.

²⁵ MOHOLY-NAGY, *Painting, Photography, Film*, 36.

²⁶ MOHOLY-NAGY, "Photography is Manipulation of Light", 128.

²⁷ *Ibid.*

nation of photographic elements with lines and other supplements, one obtains unexpected tensions which reach far beyond the significance of the single parts".²⁸

Moholy-Nagy's photoplastics relate to movies in many other ways throughout his career, going from explicit references and intermedial transpositions to the cinematic organization of the photoplastics.

One of his earliest photoplastics directly evokes the world of the movies. The *Farewell* photoplastic (1924, Fig. 14. on Plate IX.) relates to the "melodramatic farewell scenes [...] seen in popular postcards and the movies of the 1920s".²⁹ But unlike the traditional farewell scenes from postcards of the time (Fig. 15. on Plate XI.),³⁰ Moholy-Nagy introduced two abrupt diagonals, seen in the intersecting bridge and the train, which suggest the rhythm and the movement of the filmic image. The *raccourci* diagonal is a typical element of Moholy-Nagy's photoplastics and he will use it to suggest temporality in many of his photoplastics from this time. The angle of vision is elevated, as if the film camera records the scene from above. The industrial landscape at the back as well as the two dogs flanking the couple balance the composition. The silhouettes of the man and the woman come from different visual sources and it is apparent that they do not form a unity, the woman looks away while the man looks down. Thus Moholy-Nagy subverts the traditional image of the parting couple and turns this early photoplastic into an experiment with cinematic vision. The homogeneity Moholy-Nagy theorized in connection to his photoplastics is apparent in this early photomontage: it tells the obvious story of a

departure, but at the same time it contains a cinematic reference represented thematically (the farewell) as well as structurally (the temporal diagonal).

Painting, Photography, Film contains several film stills from the actual movies, such as *Zalamort* (1924), *Dr Mabuse* (1922) or photos taken during the actual filming of the movies, from behind the stage, such as a photograph taken during from the filming of *The Marriage Circle* (1924) and a photograph Gloria Swanson taken for the advertisement of her movie *Zaza* (1923). By placing the photoplastics in a photo book made of photographs and film reels as well as containing a film script, Moholy-Nagy implicitly commented on the nature of the photoplastics, placed at the intersection between photography and film. The photograms complete the picture, engaging with the technical nature of vision. The volume *Painting, Photography, Film* constantly opposes static and moving images by reproducing film stills and film reels; movement is triggered by the spatial repetition of the static image, a principle Moholy-Nagy later used in the photomontage he created for the prospectus of the 1929 *Film and Foto* exhibition, by repeating the same photograph taken in a convex mirror four times (Fig. 16. on Plate XI.).

Although Moholy-Nagy pointed out that the meaning of these photoplastics is clear, deciphering them may be a complex process. *Jealousy* (*Eifersucht*, 1925, Fig. 17. on Plate XI.) is one of these intricate photoplastics. Elizabeth Otto interpreted this photomontage in cinematic terms, claiming that the two rectangular forms repeated at regular intervals suggest two "upended film screens." She added that the repetition of the figures and the diagonal line tying the two screens together are other elements with suggest both the "melodramatic narrative" characteristic of films as well as the very medium of film. The photoplastic represents three male figures, shown as a photographic negative, a black and a white silhou-

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ *László Moholy-Nagy* (Malibu, California: Paul Getty Museum, 1995), 14.

³⁰ The postcard is reproduced from Irene-Charlotte Lusk's volume of Moholy-Nagy's photomontages, *Montagen ins Blaue* (Fulda: Anabas, 1980), 96.

ette with the legs cut and replaced with those of a woman. As Otto claimed, they are all based on a photograph of Moholy Nagy.³¹ The woman in the white man silhouette's heart is connected through a line to the New Woman in bathing suit, which may be the cause of the jealousy suggested in the title. Eleanor Hight went even further and read this photomontage as a comment on Moholy-Nagy's ending marriage with Lucia.³² Compared to Dada and Russian photomontages of the time, this photomontage is homogenous both as far as form is concerned, because it cuts out several silhouettes against a white background and as well as content, since it tells a clear story of jealousy between the characters involved. True to his program from 1928, when he claimed that a photoplastic may condense the subject of a movie, "plays and filmscripts can be condensed into a single picture (i.e. a photoplastics), Moholy Nagy made the *Jealousy* photoplastic the topic of his *Do Not Disturb* movie from 1945 which tells the story of two couples and the jealousy it ensues.

Eleanor Hight identified the word "Filmplakát" or film poster written on the back of some of Moholy-Nagy photoplastics, such as *A Chick Remains a Chick* (1925), *Rape of the Sabines* (1927) or *Love Your Neighbor. Murder on the Railway Line* (1925) and rightfully claimed that the artist wanted to make movies based on their subjects (1995, 165). In one instance, Moholy-Nagy wrote a film script for the photoplastic *A Chick Remains a Chick* (1925), dated 1925–1930, which develops a Surrealist narrative around the woman turned into a hen at the end of the movie, as Hight pointed out. Still, as my analysis showed, the photoplastic encapsulated the main idea of the movie plot, but the movie developed techniques and elements characteristic to the movie alone. For example, Moholy-Nagy talked of poly-cinema, which

consists of the "simultaneous projection of films on different subjects".³³ The effects of such a projection would be quite disorienting for the viewer and it reminds one of the verbal collages of the Dada artists who read three poems simultaneously, *L'amiral cherche une maison à louer. Poème simultan par R. Huelsenbeck, M. Janko, Tr. Tzara*.³⁴ Such simultaneity is reduced in the photoplastic, claimed Moholy-Nagy, so that its meaning may emerge with clarity. But Eleanor Hight, who analyzed the connections between Moholy-Nagy's photoplastics and his films, claimed that both the movies and the photoplastics display the same qualities of increased simultaneity. She based her claim on the analogy between the circular shape of the photoplastic *Love Your Neighbor* (Fig. 18, left side, on Plate XII.) which probably accidentally resembles the schema Moholy-Nagy used to illustrate poly-cinema in *Painting, Photography, Film* (Fig. 18, right side, on Plate XII.). But Hight's interpretation ignores the definition of photoplastics which according to Moholy-Nagy reduced the excessive simultaneity of the Dada photomontage to allow for the idea to manifest itself with clarity: "photoplastics try to remain moderate in its presentation of simultaneity. It is clear, arranged lucidly, and uses photographic elements in a concentrated way, having di-

³³ MOHOLY-NAGY, *Painting, Photography, Film*, 41.

³⁴ *L'amiral cherche une maison à louer. Poème simultan par R. Huelsenbeck, M. Janko, Tr. Tzara* (*The Admiral seeks a house to rent. Simultaneous poem by R. Huelsenbeck, M. Janko, Tr. Tzara*, fig. 28; Tristan TZARA, *Œuvres complètes 1: 1912–1924* [Paris: Flammarion, 1975], 492–493), first performed by Richard Huelsenbeck, Marcel Janko, and Tristan Tzara in March 1916, the verbal collage manifests itself in various ways.

The text consists of three different poems recited at the same time by the three poets and printed as a musical score

³¹ OTTO, "A »Schooling of the Senses«...", 110.

³² HIGHT, *Picturig Modernism...*, 169.

vested itself of all disturbing accessories. It shows situations in a compressed state which can be unwound very quickly by the process of association".³⁵

From the analyses of the two photoplastics, *Farewell* and the *Jealousy*, the homogeneity of Moholy-Nagy's photomontages and their connections to film techniques became apparent. The photographs used in photoplastics enter in complex relations with each other to bring forward clear meaning, a central idea. The photoplastics are condensed plots which may be used in movies. Some photoplastics, such as *Farewell* and *Jealousy*, bear direct references to the movies, while others, such as *Militarism*, *Pneumatik* and *Circus and Variety Poster* develop a "filmic temporality" as our eyes move on the picture surface.³⁶ Moholy-Nagy's experiments with the filmic medium led to the emergence of homogenous photomontage or photoplastics well before the 1927–1928 shift to homogeneous political photomontage. The emergence of homogeneous photomontage in Moholy-Nagy's photoplastics marks the departure from the heterogeneity characteristic of visual collage and turns montage into a technique whose inherent purpose is to articulate clear meaning in a way similar to language, both in film montage and photomontage.

Bibliography

BOTAR, Oliver I. A. *Sensing the Future: Moholy-Nagy, Media and the Arts*. Baden: Lars Müller Publishers, 2014.

BOTAR, Oliver. "Films by László Moholy-Nagy". *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 67, No. 3 (2008): 460–462.

³⁵ MOHOLY-NAGY, "Photography is Manipulation of Light", 128.

³⁶ OTTO, "A »Schooling of the Senses«...", 104.

BUCHLOH, Benjamin. "Gerhard Richter's *Atlas: The Anomic Archive*". *October* 88 (1999): 117–145.

CAVEDON-TAYLOR, Dan. "Photographic Phenomenology as Cognitive Phenomenology". *British Journal of Aesthetics* 55, No. 1 (2015): 71–89.

CURRIE, Gregory. "Visible Traces: Documentary and the Contents of Photographs". *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 57 (1999): 285–297.

HAUSMANN, Raoul. "Fotomontage". *a bis z* (Cologne) 2, No. 16 (1931): 61–62. In English: "Photomontage". Translated by Joel AGEE. In *Photography in the Modern Era: European Documents and Critical Writings, 1913–1940*, ed. Christopher PHILLIPS, 178–181. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1989.

HAUSMANN, Raoul. *Am Anfang war Dada*. Herausgegeben von Karl RIHA and Günter KÄMPF. Giessen: G. Kämpf, 1972.

HIGHT, Eleanor. *Picturing Modernism: Moholy-Nagy and Photography in Weimar Germany*. Cambridge, Mass.–London: The MIT Press, 1995.

HÖCH, Hannah. "Erinnerungen and Dada". In *Hannah Höch 1889–1978: Ihr Werk, Ihr Leben, Ihre Freunde*, Hg. Elisabeth MOORTGAT et al., 207–208. Berlin: Argon, Die Galerie, 1989.

László Moholy-Nagy. Malibu, California: Paul Getty Museum, 1995.

LUSK, Irene-Charlotte. *Montagen ins Blaue*. Fulda: Anabas, 1980.

MARGOLIN, Victor. *The Struggle for Utopia: Rodchenko, Lissitzky, Moholy-Nagy 1917–1946*. Chicago–London: University of Chicago Press, 1997.

Mikael PETERSSON, "Depictive Traces: On the Phenomenology of Photography". *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 69 (2011): 185–196.

MOHOLY-NAGY, László. "Abstract of an Artist". In László MOHOLY-NAGY, *The New Vision and Abstract of an Artist*, 65–77. New York: George Wittenborn, Schultz, 1946.

MOHOLY-NAGY, László. "Fotographie ist Lichtgestaltung", *Bauhaus* 2 (1928): 2–9. In English: "Photography is Manipulation of Light". Translated by Frederic SAMSON. In *Bauhaus Photography*, 126–129. Cambridge, Mass.–London England: MIT Press, 1985.

MOHOLY-NAGY, László. *Malerei, Photographie, Film*. Bauhausbücher 8. Munich: Albert Langen Verlag, 1925. In English: *Painting, Photography, Film*. Translated by Janet SELIGMAN. Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 1969.

MOHOLY-NAGY, Lucia. *Marginalien zu Moholy-Nagy: Moholy-Nagy, Marginal Notes*. Krefeld: Scherpe, 1972.

MOHOLY-NAGY's Letter to Iván HEVESY, Berlin, 5 April 1920. In *Moholy-Nagy*, ed. Krisztina PASSUTH, 388. London: Thames and Hudson, 1985.

OTTO, Elizabeth. "A »Schooling of the Senses«: Post-Dada Visual Experiments in the Bauhaus Photomontages of László Moholy-Nagy and Marianne Brandt". *New German Critique* 107 (2009): 89–131. [Dada and Photomontage across Borders.]

TZARA, Tristan. *Œuvres complètes 1: 1912–1924*. Paris: Flammarion, 1975.

WALTON, Kendall. "Transparent Pictures: On the Nature of Photographic Realism". *Critical Inquiry* 11 (1984): 246–277.

List of illustrations

Fig. 1. MOHOLY-NAGY László: *25 Bankrupcy Vultures* (25 Pleitegeiter, 1922–1923)

Fig. 2. MOHOLY-NAGY László: *Perpe* (1919–1920)

Fig. 3. MOHOLY-NAGY László: *The Big Railroad Picture* (1919–1920)

Fig. 4. MOHOLY-NAGY László: *Red Cross and White Balls* (1921)

Fig. 5. MOHOLY-NAGY László: *F in Field* (1920)

Fig. 6. MOHOLY-NAGY László: *h Construction* (1921)

Fig. 7. MOHOLY-NAGY László: *Circus and Variety Poster* from *Painting, Photography, Film*, (1925)

Fig. 8. MOHOLY-NAGY László: *Militarism* from *Painting, Photography, Film*, (1925)

Fig. 9. MOHOLY-NAGY László: *Pneumatik* from *Painting, Photography, Film*, (1925)

Fig. 10. MOHOLY-NAGY László: *Leda and the Swan* from *Painting, Photography, Film*, (1925)

Fig. 11. MOHOLY-NAGY László: "Boxing" detail from *Dynamic of the Metropolis*, (1925)

Fig. 12. MOHOLY-NAGY László: Samples from *Sketch for a Film: Dynamic of the Metropolis*

Fig. 13. MOHOLY-NAGY László: Samples from *Sketch for a Film: Dynamic of the Metropolis*

Fig. 14. MOHOLY-NAGY László: *Farewell*, photoplastic (1924)

Fig. 15. Traditional "farewell" postcards from the twenties

Fig. 16. MOHOLY-NAGY László: Cover for the prospectus of the 1929 *Film and Foto* exhibition

Fig. 17. MOHOLY-NAGY László: *Jealousy* (Eifersucht, 1925)

Fig. 18. Left: MOHOLY-NAGY László: *Love Your Neighbor*; right: MOHOLY-NAGY László: illustration from *Painting, Photography, Film* (1925)

PLATE VII



Fig. 1. Moholy-Nagy László:
25 Bankruptcy Vultures
(25 Pleitegeiter, 1922–1923)



Fig. 3. Moholy-Nagy László:
The Big Railroad Picture (1919–1920)

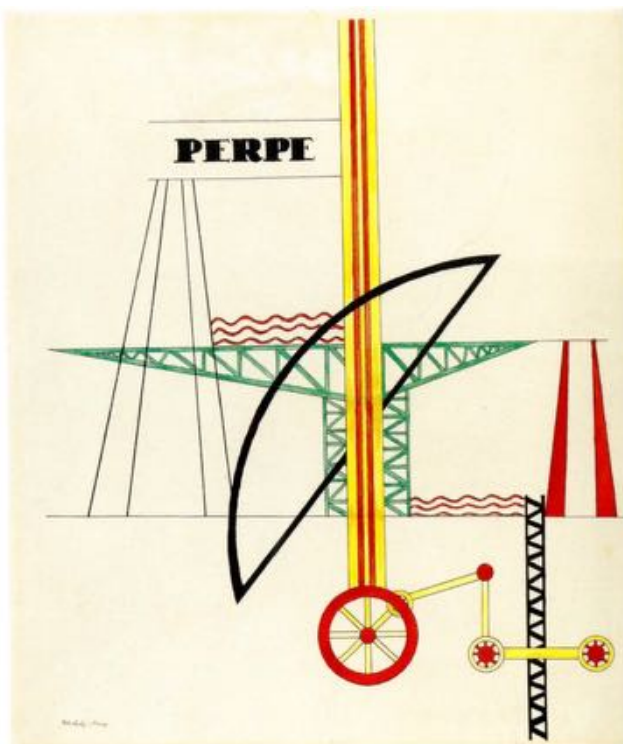


Fig. 2. Moholy-Nagy László: *Perpe* (1919–1920)



Fig. 4. Moholy-Nagy László:
Red Cross and White Balls (1921)

PLATE VIII



Fig. 5. Moholy-Nagy László:
F in Field (1920)

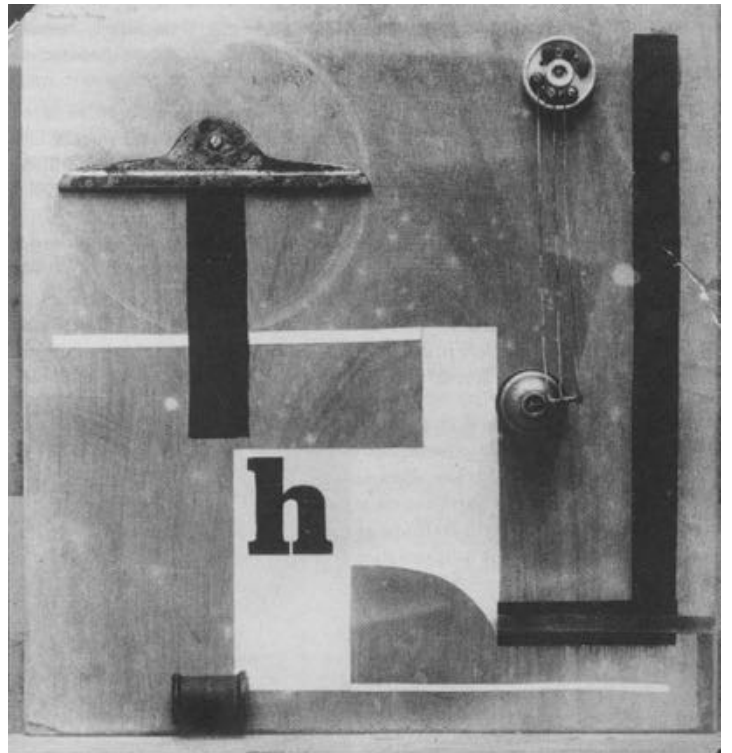


Fig. 6. Moholy-Nagy László:
h Construction (1921)



Fig. 7. Moholy-Nagy László:
Circus and Variety Poster
from *Painting, Photography, Film*, (1925)



Fig. 8. Moholy-Nagy László:
Militarism
from *Painting, Photography, Film*, (1925)

PLATE IX



Fig. 9. Moholy-Nagy László:
Pneumatik
from *Painting, Photography, Film*, (1925)



Fig. 10. Moholy-Nagy László:
Leda and the Swan
from *Painting, Photography, Film*, (1925)



Fig. 11. Moholy-Nagy László:
"Boxing" detail
from *Dynamic of the Metropolis*, (1925)



Fig. 14. Moholy-Nagy László:
Farewell, photoplastic (1924)

PLATE X



Fig. 12. Moholy-Nagy László: Samples from *Sketch for a Film: Dynamic of the Metropolis*



Fig. 13. Moholy-Nagy László: Samples from *Sketch for a Film: Dynamic of the Metropolis*

PLATE XI



Fig. 15. Traditional "farewell" postcards from the 1920's



Fig. 16. Moholy-Nagy László:
Cover for the prospectus of the 1929
Film and Foto exhibition



Fig. 17. Moholy-Nagy László: *Jealousy*
(Eifersucht, 1925)

PLATE XII

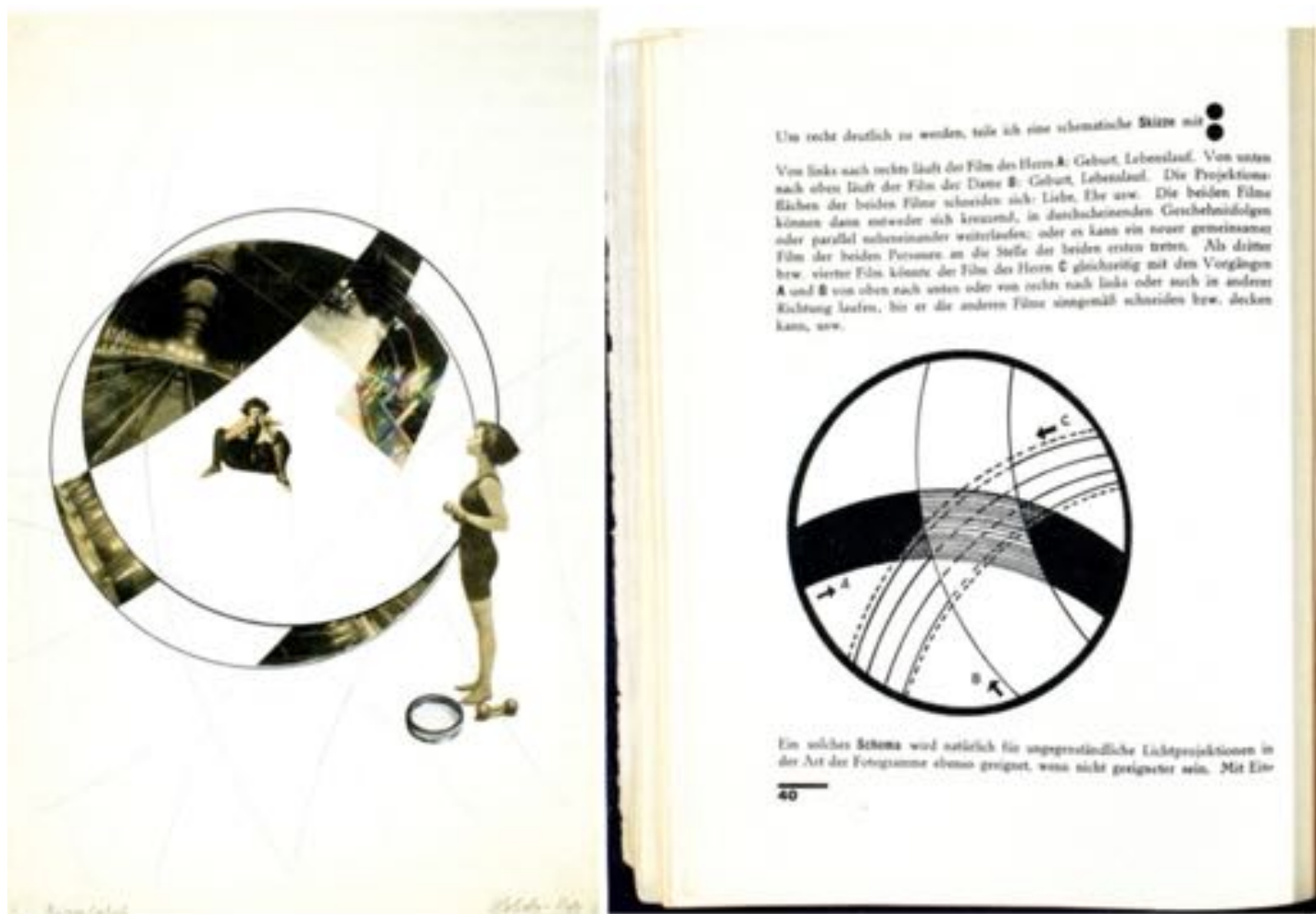


Fig. 18. Left: Moholy-Nagy László: *Love Your Neighbor*;
right: Moholy-Nagy László: illustration from *Painting, Photography, Film* (1925)