

Title: Hungarian Marxist Theorists in the USSR: Janos Macza and Gyorgy Lukács  
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Abstract:

This presentation examines the intellectual evolution of the Hungarian art historian Janos Macza (Ivan Matsa) from an avant-garde playwright, who flirted with Dadaist techniques as late as 1922, into a Marxist theoretician of art by the mid 1920s. To make sense of this seemingly radical change, I interrogate Macza's position toward avant-garde art in his first foray into "Marxist" modes of cultural analysis, *The Art of Contemporary Europe* (1926). I argue that in this study, Macza offers a defense of the avant-garde masked as a critique, which constitutes one of the earliest theories of the avant-garde as a transnational movement. Moreover, I show that Macza's "Marxist" methods in this book are deeply indebted to his participation in Hungarian avant-garde periodicals such as *Ma* (Today), as well as to his editorial work for the emigre newspaper *Kassai Munkas* (The Kosice Worker).