

its character, without which it faces a double disappearance beneath the rising tides of climate change and linguistic generalities.

When Deakin writes, 'that is why walking, swimming and cycling will always remain subversive activities ... they allow us to regain a sense of what is old and wild in this world' (4), he would do well to add boating. It is through these modest activities that Stilgoe and Deakin move far beyond an understanding of simply 'water' to a landscape of estuaries, rills, tarns, marshes, bores, gorges, guzzles, and sea-greens. Stilgoe observes that 'landscape—or seascape—that lacks vocabulary, cannot be seen, cannot be accurately, usefully seen' (54). This idea transcends the nostalgic tendencies of both authors: each ultimately recalls a means of comprehending water in the landscape based on

a cultural object and a representation' (8), articulating the whole in the contexts of both history and modernity, repositioning the body in space. This is what the triple reading of a single image explores here. This finely made booklet is part of the VOIR-FAIRE-LIRE (see-make-read) book series. While FAIRE explores questions of technique and workmanship and LIRE allows for interpretation and analysis, VOIR deciphers an artwork. It is reproduced on the booklet's back cover interior and analyzed in three essays. What you see (voir) is a black and white photograph by László Moholy-Nagy (1895–1946), *Marseille, le pont transbordeur*.

It is an image of a steel transporter bridge designed and built (1903–05) by engineer Ferdinand Arnodin in Marseilles as a model of modern construction and celebrated twenty years later as an icon of modernism. A closer examination of the low-angle view reveals a fishing boat under the bridge through the steel trelliswork. Readings of this famous photograph are delivered by Olivier Lugon, an expert in the history of photography in the 20th century; Philippe Simay, an architecture and urbanism philosopher; and the playwright François Bon.

Before its destruction in 1944, the transporter bridge made it possible to cross the Old Port of Marseilles on a large moveable platform gliding 2 m above the water. It was suspended from a deck with a souvenir shop and a café-restaurant accessible by stairs or elevator. A 'machine' to see the city, the bridge fascinated the European avant-garde, and was chosen by architectural historian Sigfried Giedion as the cover for his 1928 *Construire en France: Construire en fer, construire en béton* (Building in France: Building in Iron, Building in Ferro-concrete). It next inspired his friend, the Hungarian painter and photographer László Moholy-Nagy, who made a series of photographs of it in 1929—including the one that is the subject of the book under review. He considered the bridge not only 'a miracle of technology', but also an emblem for his photographic exploration of bodies in modern space.

Olivier Lugon first sheds light on the making of the image through an in-depth reconstruction of its story from the points of view of the different 'players' connected to it: Arnodin, the engineer who built the bridge, Giedion, the historian who promoted it, and Moholy-Nagy, the Bauhaus

instructor who photographed it. Lugon's text summarizes their interactions from technical considerations to aesthetic research and representational interrogations.

In the subsequent contribution, Philippe Simay offers troubling reflections on the difficult place of experience in the modern world, constantly taking the reader from 1929 to the present. The dialectical relationship between abstraction and figuration, expressed in the image, is at the heart of the work of Moholy-Nagy, who also completed a documentary about social and political realities in Marseilles in which he advances an optimistic assessment of modern life.

Last, François Bon—trained as an engineer—explores the symbolic meaning of the bridge; he notes the inability of the English translation, 'transporter bridge', to express the essence of the French 'pont transbordeur', in which 'bord à bord' (edge to edge, rim to rim) is embedded. Bon's incantatory and poetic final essay restitutes the symbolic force of the view, the dizziness and elevation, the entire epic of the ancient struggle between man and insuppressible water. By combining rigour and poetry, distance and experience, intuition and knowledge, this editorial gem offers multiple facets for readers to explore, linking their own experience of bridges to the powerful symbolism of urban waters.

Bernadette Blanchon-Caillet



François Bon, Olivier Lugon, Philippe Simay
Le pont transbordeur de Marseille,
Moholy-Nagy
 (The Marseilles Transporter Bridge,
 Moholy-Nagy)

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Bridges respond to the intransigence of waterways and may offer a range of reflections about the way a contemporary city links to its landscape: denouncing the triviality of present-day transport bridges, revealing the 'intersection of a real object,