

Małgorzata Popiołek-Roßkamp: Warschau. Ein Wiederaufbau, der vor dem Krieg begann. (Fokus, Bd. 1.) Brill Schönningh. Paderborn 2021. IX, 464 S., Ill., Kt. ISBN 978-3-506-70424-5. (€ 179,-)

In 1946, Polish National Conservator Jan Zachwatowicz insisted that the Nazi decimation of Polish architectural landmarks justified concerted action to “reconstruct them, rebuild them right from their foundations, to show future generations, at least, exactly what they looked like—the form still alive in our memories and accessible in our records—even if it is not authentic.”¹ Speaking before American scholars at Williamsburg in 1966, Poland’s long-serving National Museum director Stanisław Lorentz asserted that Warsaw had favored historicizing façade replicas due to a uniquely Polish “attachment to national traditions and the love of monuments of the past.”² The modern preservationist urge to simulate heritage in postwar Warsaw helped to inspire David Lowenthal’s 1975 dictum that “Nations continually reinterpret traces of their own history.”³ After Nazi defeat, old towns across communist Poland staged a selective, eternalized, “national” past—with global implications as planners around the world sought to give “faceless” modern cities an aura of “historianness”⁴: an inventive infusion of historical-looking landmarks after modern bombing and demolitions had wiped out so much that was old.

And yet, as Małgorzata Popiołek-Roßkamp exhibits in this much-anticipated publication of her 2017 PhD dissertation, planner-preservationists such as Zachwatowicz and Lorentz were *already* pursuing a nationalist reinterpretation of architectural heritage in Poland’s interwar Second Republic. Although Warsaw was devastated by the Nazis and rebuilt under communist rule, P.-R. argues, “there was a direct continuity in historic preservation from the prewar period through the postwar period in Poland. The particulars of the reconstruction plan had their origin in the renovation and restoration plan for Warsaw’s historical structures that was planned before and during the war.” Furthermore, despite the singularity of Warsaw’s near-total destruction, communist-approved reconstruction plans bore great commonalities with prevailing European architectural theories (p. 12).

Of the considerable scholarship on Warsaw’s architectural transformation, recent highlights include Jana Fuchs’s assessment of the interwar hubs Plac Zwycięstwa and Plac Teatralny; Ewa Grażyna Herber’s examination of the post-1945 reconstruction of Warsaw’s old town; an architectural survey by David Crowley; and P.-R.’s own articles.⁵ Scholars such as Arnold Bartetzky have also proven how post-1945 Poland’s architectural

¹ JAN ZACHWATOWICZ: The Program and Principles for the Conservation of our Cultural Heritage [Warsaw, 1946], in: JOLANTA FAJKOWSKA (ed.): In Memoriam Professor Jan Zachwatowicz, 1900–1983, Warszawa 1983, pp. 5–16, here p. 5.

² STANISŁAW LORENTZ: Reconstruction of the Old Town Centers of Poland, in: Historic Preservation Today: Essays Presented to the Seminar on Preservation and Restoration. Williamsburg, Virginia, September 8–11, 1963, Charlottesville 1966, pp. 43–78, here p. 51.

³ DAVID LOWENTHAL: Past Time, Present Place: Landscape and Memory, in: Geographical Review 65 (1975), 1, pp. 1–36, here p. 13.

⁴ ANDREW DEMSHUK: Three Cities after Hitler: Redemptive Reconstruction across Cold War Borders, Pittsburgh 2021, pp. 342–343.

⁵ JANA FUCHS: Städtebau und Legitimation: Debatten um das unbebaute historische Warschauer Zentrum, 1945–1989, Berlin 2020; GRAŻYNA EWA HERBER: Wiederaufbau der Warschauer Altstadt nach dem Zweiten Weltkrieg: Im Spannungsfeld zwischen denkmalpflegerischen Prinzipien, politischer Indienstnahme und gesellschaftlichen Erwartungen, Bamberg 2014; DAVID CROWLEY: Warsaw, London 2003; MAŁGORZATA POPIOŁEK: Keine Stunde Null: Das Wiederaufbauprogramm von Jan Zachwatowicz für die polnischen Altstädte nach dem Zweiten Weltkrieg, in: URSULA SCHÄDLER-SAUB, ANGELA WEYER (eds.): Geteilt – Vereint! Denkmalpflege in Mitteleuropa zur Zeit des Eisernen Vorhangs und Heute, pp. 179–189, Petersberg 2015.

reinvention drew from interwar efforts to nationalize cityscapes across the formerly partitioned territories.⁶ Building on her deep reading of this scholarship, P.-R. offers an enticing new analysis of concrete biographies and locations based on rich archival sources. With painstaking detail—set against the backdrop of Warsaw’s old town, new town, and royal route—she unpacks the continuous biographies of diverse planners, notably Lorentz and Zachwatowicz.

In her first chapter, P.-R. exposes the pre-1918 roots of Poland’s modernizing, nationalizing preservation methods in European discourses. The restoration of Krakow’s Wawel castle, wartime debates about reconstructing Kalisz after Russian devastation, and general ideas about building national pasts flowed through Galicia into partitioned Poland. Particularly original are the second chapter’s analysis of interwar planning priorities in Warsaw and the third chapter’s introduction of the *dramatis personae* who debated and drafted plans that combined a usable Polish past with what Stefan Starzyński’s 1936 exhibition called “the Warsaw of the Future” (p. 119). General distaste for preceding historicist eclecticism among Europe’s interwar preservationists and architects took on a strongly national quality in Poland. With the reestablishment of the Polish state, a “tendency toward idealization of what had taken place politically and also architecturally in Warsaw until the 1830s” prompted demolition of monuments attributed as “Russian” (notably the enormous 1912 Alexander Nevsky cathedral on Saxon Square) and the recrafting of Warsaw’s old town into an imagined premodern Polish appearance (p. 73). Though Zachwatowicz was clearly impressed by Nazi old town “sanitation” methods, P.-R. claims (without clear evidence) that his campaigns for old town hygiene lacked the “ideological involvement” (that is, racial mindset) which suffused German efforts of the time (p. 105). The fourth chapter demonstrates strong continuity in both planners and their ideas during and immediately after Nazi occupation. Allured by his interwar dreams, Zachwatowicz praised the ruins of 1945 for their “enormous possibilities” whose “results could be extremely fruitful” (p. 117). For Zachwatowicz and his colleagues, unparalleled destruction opened a singular chance to realize their most radical historicizing plans from the 1930s.

Experts may discover new continuities in the lengthy fifth chapter’s architectural case studies. Already the book’s preface whets one’s interest with the seemingly oversized Messalka house (named after singer Lucyna Messal, a famous inhabitant). Longstanding preservationist ambitions to eliminate the Messalka house gained sway after it was damaged and nationalized by the late 1940s. The resulting “two-story houses with façades in a Baroque-Neoclassical style” meshed with surrounding buildings to depict an idealized pre-partition golden age (p. 4). Desire for such renovations had already produced a civic initiative in 1906, which displaced impoverished (often Jewish) old town residents and renovated historic buildings; by the 1920s, municipal leaders were having old town façades repainted to stage pre-1800 splendor. Critique at this superficial solution to decayed living conditions prompted plans to renovate interiors similar to efforts in Nazi Germany, but only the 1936–1938 campaign by Zachwatowicz (as architect) and Lorentz (as city preservationist) to reconstruct Warsaw’s medieval walls as a “national monument” had taken shape before the outbreak of war in 1939 (p. 227). Richly detailed here for the first time, the story exhibits Zachwatowicz’s early sense that replicas could function as “historic preservation,” applying “stylistic unity under simultaneous attentiveness to the demands of modern urban planning” (p. 230), as well as pre-communist awareness that “the abolition of property rights and the implementation of substantial state resources” could foster historical reconstructions (p. 235). Further case examples include the modernizing, nationaliz-

⁶ See, for instance, ARNOLD BARTETZKY: *History Revised: National Style and National Heritage in Polish Architecture and Monument Protection—before and after World War II*, in: MATTHEW RAMPLEY (ed.): *Heritage, Ideology, and Identity in Central and Eastern Europe: Contested Pasts, Contested Presents*, Woodbridge 2012, pp. 93–113.

ing historyness applied to numerous churches and streetscapes, as well as Warsaw's royal palace.

Beautifully bound with 85 color and 198 b/w architectural photos, blueprints, and historical maps, P.-R.'s archivally informed research articulates how the post-1918 "emphasis on Warsaw's glorious architectural past [to] prove the right to Poland's political existence" thrived after 1945, when the same actors sought "restoration" of the city center through "Polonization" thanks to wartime destruction and communist expropriation (pp. 332–333). A strength is the author's regular articulation of how Warsaw planning interconnected with ideas across Europe. Zachwatowicz learned from the Nazi "sanitation" of old towns such as Frankfurt am Main and Kassel; and the final, sixth chapter sketches how after the 1960s Warsaw become a model for idealized old towns everywhere. P.-R.'s necessarily close attention to Warsaw does mitigate against substantial comparative analysis, however, which could have proven fruitful. For instance, the communist-era reconstruction of Wrocław as an ancient "Polish" city was strongly based upon Rudolf Stein's interwar plans to remake Breslau into an ancient "German" city. Integration of deep research from other centers might well de-singularize interwar Warsaw planning, even as it reinforces postwar Warsaw's reputation as an archetype for crafting homogenized, simplified urban narratives for modern-national consumption.

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Nicole Kandioler: Widerständige Nostalgie. Osteuropäische Film- und Fernsehkulturen 1965–2013. transcript. Bielefeld 2021. 291 S., Ill. ISBN 978-3-8376-4750-1. (€ 34,99.)

Die vorliegende Monografie von Nicole Kandioler ist keine Geschichte des osteuropäischen Films und Fernsehens, wie die Autorin auch selbst betont (S. 264). Was aber ist das Buch dann? K. verspricht eine „Relektüre der osteuropäischen Filmgeschichte(-n)“ (S. 9), und zwar aus einer Perspektive, die nicht von der bisherigen westeuropäischen Geschichtsschreibung verzerrt werde und die Verflechtungen zwischen den nationalen Kinematografien wahrnehme. Dafür entwickelt K. ein ebenso innovatives wie kompliziertes Forschungsverfahren, das sog. Double Feature, in dem sie jeweils zwei Szenen aus zwei unterschiedlichen Filmen miteinander vergleicht bzw. zusammen interpretiert. In Anlehnung an Alain Bergala charakterisiert K. diese Methode als „Pädagogik des Fragments“ (S. 71). Die Double Features bestehen jeweils aus einem älteren, d. h. vor 1989 gedrehten, und einem neueren Film. Fünf der elf Double Features stellen Werke aus demselben nationalen Kontext zusammen; sechs kombinieren Filme aus unterschiedlichen Ländern Osteuropas – bzw. Mitteleuropas, wie man Deutschland, Tschechien (Tschechoslowakei), Polen, Ungarn, Österreich und Rumänien eigentlich bezeichnen sollte. Die Ansprüche, die K. mit dieser Methode verknüpft, sind groß: Sie soll „blinde Flecken in der Erfassung osteuropäischen Filmschaffens“ (S. 29) füllen, das historiografische Narrativ der „Gleichsetzung der gesamten osteuropäischen Filmgeschichte mit der sowjetischen Ära“ und „nationale[r] Identitäten, im Sinne von Moskaus Machtinteressen“ (ebenda) hinterfragen, den „Fokus auf westeuropäische Kritik und Theorie“ in Bezug auf osteuropäische Filme (S. 30) überwinden sowie die „Romantisierung des Auteur“ (ebenda) infrage stellen. Durch die Aufdeckung „intermedialer Referenzen“ strebt K. die Erfassung einer von ihr so bezeichneten „Counter-Nostalgie“ im osteuropäischen Kino an (S. 53), womit sie das „subversive Potential der Nostalgie“ meint.

Löst K. diese ambitionierten Versprechen ein? Die Antwort auf diese Frage hängt davon ab, welche Maßstäbe wir ansetzen. Betrachten wir die Monografie als Beitrag zu einer spezialisierten Forschung – was sie letztendlich ist, denn es handelt sich um eine Dissertation – so erweist sich K.s Anwendung des Double Features meines Erachtens als wenig zielführend. Unklar bleibt nämlich, nach welchen Kriterien K. die Filme und Szenen auswählt. Die osteuropäischen Kinematografien der letzten 50 Jahre sind dermaßen reich an Titeln jeglicher Art, dass sich bei einer Auswahl von nur 22 Szenen für jedwede These ein