

POST-CATASTROPHIC CITIES: TOTAL WAR AND URBAN RECOVERY IN TWENTIETH CENTURY EUROPE

Workshop at the German Historical Institute Warsaw, in co-operation with the Center for Contemporary History Potsdam (ZZF)

October 15-17, 2009

Organizers: Stefan-Ludwig Hoffmann (ZZF)/Martin Kohlrausch (GHI)

The twentieth century was a century of *urbicide*, of total warfare against cities and their populations. There was, however, an astounding recovery of urban life after the Second World War. This workshop explores on a comparative scale the destruction and reconstruction of the urban fabric primarily in Central and Eastern European cities—after 1944/45, but also after the end of the Cold War, when social memories of wartime violence and postwar reconstruction gained new valences.

Our aim is to uncover differences and similarities in ways of coping with urban catastrophes across national and political boundaries in the aftermath of mass death. In particular, we are interested in questions of wartime and postwar city planning (on local, national and international levels), the renewal of urban life and the commemoration of loss, and, more generally, the shattering of established patterns of viewing the city as well as the mythographic re-writing of the city text by inhabitants and postwar regimes.

The workshop will be held at the German Historical Institute (GHI) Warsaw and will be co-sponsored by the Center for Contemporary History Potsdam (ZZF). Papers are due on September 15, 2009, and will be pre-circulated in advance. The costs for travel and accommodation of all participants and for invited discussants will be covered by the sponsoring institutions.

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Conference Programme

Thursday, Oct. 15

8:00 pm DINNER

Friday, Oct. 16

9:00 am INTRODUCTION: Stefan-Ludwig Hoffmann (ZZF)/Martin Kohlrausch (DHI)

9:45 am PANEL 1

- Lisa Kirschenbaum (West Chester University), Remembering and Rebuilding: Leningrad after the Siege in Comparative Perspective
- Stefan-Ludwig Hoffmann (ZZF), Gazing at Ruins: German Defeat as Visual Experience

11:15 am COFFEE BREAK

11:30 am PANEL 2

- Stéphane Michonneau (Casa de Velazquez, Madrid), Ruins and the Heritage of Civil War: The Case of Belchite in Spain
- Jan Musekamp (Viadrina-University Frankfurt), A New Polish City on German Ruins? Rebuilding Stettin/Szczecin after 1945

1:00 pm LUNCH BREAK

- 2:30 pm PANEL 3
- David Crowley (Royal College of Art, London), Memory in Ruins: Remaking Warsaw after 1944
 - Tarik Cyril Amar (Center for Urban History of East Central Europe, Lviv), After the 'Golden September:' Recovering and Re-Covering Memories of War in Lviv, 1989-2009
 - Gruia Bădescu (London School of Economics and Political Science), Reading Postwar Sarajevo as Text
- 5:15 pm COFFEE BREAK
- 5:30 pm FINAL DISCUSSION
- 6:30 pm END OF WORKSHOP
- 7:30 pm DINNER

Saturday, Oct. 17

- 10:00 pm WALKING TOUR OF WARSAW