



**Ingo Herklotz; Richard Krautheimer in Deutschland. Aus den Anfängen einer wissenschaftlichen Karriere 1925–1933** (Academia Marburgensis 17); Münster: Waxmann 2021; 614 pp., 101 illus.; ISBN 978-3-8309-4351-8; € 49,90

Richard Krautheimer, perhaps the most celebrated of all architectural historians of the twentieth century, died in Rome on 1<sup>st</sup> November 1994. For the majority of his professional life he had taught in the United States, having been driven from his university post in Marburg by the National Socialist régime in 1934. The eight years which he spent as Privatdozent at the Philipps University Marburg form the core of this major monograph. He was born in Fürth, near Nuremberg on 6<sup>th</sup> July 1897, the son of Nathan Krautheimer, a successful Jewish businessman, and Martha Landmann. Fürth lies some 160 kilometres from the village of Krautheim in Baden-Württemberg, presumably the family's ultimate place of origin. Krautheimer's career in Germany occupies almost 400 pages. To this account is added a very valuable group of letters, Krautheimer's correspondence with the art historians Richard Hamann (401–412) and Hermann Beenken (413–437), accounts of his guided tours and talks at the Bibliotheca Hertziana in Rome between November 1930 and April 1932 (438–463), and the full surviving text of the unpublished *Geschichte der deutschen Baukunst des Mittelalters* which he composed during his Marburg sojourn (464–560).

Krautheimer wrote three books during this early period. The first, derived from his dissertation at the University of Halle under Paul Frankl, *Die Kirchen der Bettelorden in Deutschland*, was published in Cologne 1925. It was to be followed by *Mittelalterliche Synagogen*, printed at Berlin in 1927. There were also numerous very substantial periodical articles, on among other topics, Lombard hall churches, Venetian Trecento sculpture, San Nicola at Bari, and a book-length text (one of the many important novelties of Herklotz's book, 184–271), the *Geschichte der deutschen Baukunst des Mittelalters*. This manuscript was submitted to the Teubner publishing house in January 1933, but was rejected soon afterwards by the publisher because of the darkening political situation. The first volume of the monumental *Corpus Basilicarum Christianarum Romae*, which covers the churches from Sant' Adriano to San Gregorio Magno, was published in English and Italian by the Pontificio Istituto di Archeologia in 1937, but the great bulk of research for this initial volume was prepared before Krautheimer's departure for the United States.

Despite having spent the period from July 1916 to March 1919 in the army and completed an admirably successful university student career (fig. 1), Krautheimer regarded himself as something of a slow starter, and openly chafed at his feeling that everything he wrote was an echo of his teachers Frankl and Richard Hamann. Their impact was to last a lifetime, and the influence of Frankl's analytic approach to architecture was profound.



Fig. 1: Richard Krautheimer als Feldjäger, 1916 (20)

*Die Kirchen der Bettelorden* begins with a 'Systematischer Teil' (systematic part) which is almost as long as the subsequent 'Historischer Teil' (historical part). Herklotz forcefully defends its approach against the somewhat doctrinaire critique by a later Marburg architectural historian Wolfgang Schenkluhn in his *Ordines Studentes. Aspekte zur Kirchenarchitektur der Dominikaner und Franziskaner im 13. Jahrhundert*<sup>1</sup>. While Krautheimer's book *Bettelorden* received a number of serious reviews in German scholarly periodicals, the book on synagogues, from many points of view a more original work, received none – although it provoked some stinging criticisms in the Jewish press. The book on mendicant architecture reads very much as a book of its time. The fitness for purpose ('Zweckhaftigkeit') of Franciscan building is emphasized. Despite the careful attention accorded to regional differences among the German Franciscan houses, the fundamental provision of the Order, preceding even the Constitutions of the General Chapter at Narbonne in 1260, stipulating construction 'secundum loci conditionem' is not given due weight, although the Constitutions had already been published by Cardinal Franz Ehrle in 1892. The mendicant orders investigated were restricted however to the Franciscans and the Dominicans: the Carmelites had not yet received systematic treatment, and the architecture of the Augustinian friars still remains a stepchild. It is indicative perhaps that Herklotz is particularly critical of the notion of 'Architekturzitat', a methodology associated particularly with Marburg during the 1980s. Willibald Sauerländer once wryly remarked that with the publication of Kingsley Porter's photographs the number of "new" Romanesque sculptors grew exponentially. Perhaps at the home of the photographic archive

1 See Wolfgang Schenkluhn, *Ordines Studentes. Aspekte zur Kirchenarchitektur der Dominikaner und Franziskaner im 13. Jahrhundert*, Berlin 1985, pp. 19–21.



Fig. 2: Richard Hamann, um 1930 (91)

Deutsches Dokumentationszentrum für Kunstgeschichte – Bildarchiv Foto Marburg, ‘Architekturzeit’ was predestined. As Paul Crossley commented in his review of Schenkluhn’s *Ordines Studentes* its use “[...] sometimes stretches common-sense credibility.”<sup>2</sup> Yet it is interesting to reflect that one of the very first Roman mediaeval churches which Krautheimer assigned to an American doctoral student was the Franciscan church of Santa Maria in Aracoeli, which produced the pioneering and still valuable monograph by Ronald Malmstrom.<sup>3</sup> A space-frame analysis, it carefully identified the ‘spolia’ and suggested a new chronology. The Franciscan friars themselves and their liturgy are largely absent. The approach still reflects Malmstrom’s ‘Doktorvater’. It is wholly different from the recent discussion by Claudia Bolgia, *Reclaiming the Roman Capitol. S. Maria in Aracoeli from the Altar of Augustus to the Franciscans c. 500–1450*.<sup>4</sup> To the best of this reviewer’s knowledge, Krautheimer never subsequently discussed mendicant architecture during his Roman years.

The 1927 book on mediaeval synagogues, *Mittelalterliche Synagogen*, retains an importance far beyond Krautheimer’s own scholarly development or self-discovery. By applying architectural dating criteria derived from other buildings, he was able to place the chronology of the surviving synagogues on a much firmer footing than heretofore. It was written in a more pared-back language, and one conclusion was equally plain: “Synagogenarchitektur bildet baugeschichtlich kein Sondergebiet. Sie

2 Paul Crossley, “[Rezension von:] Schenkluhn, Wolfgang: *Ordines studentes*. Aspekte zur Kirchenarchitektur der Dominikaner und Franziskaner im 13. Jahrhundert”, in: *Burlington Magazine* 128 (1986), pp. 220f., here 221.

3 Ronald Malmstrom, *S. Maria in Aracoeli at Rome*, Ann Arbor, MI 1973.

4 Claudia Bolgia, *Reclaiming the Roman Capitol. S. Maria in Aracoeli from the Altar of Augustus to the Franciscans c. 500–1450*, London 2017.



Fig. 3: Trude Krautheimer, 1920er Jahre (30)

schaftt Bauten für den jüdischen Kultus, keine jüdischen Bauten.”<sup>5</sup> Borrowings from profane architecture however do not necessarily render the new buildings themselves profane. The polyvalent use of space he discovered there was to prove useful later in the analysis of the Roman basilicas. In the catastrophic aftermath of the Nazi rise to power the book also gained a significant if tragic documentary value.

Herklotz handles the problem of endemic antisemitism delicately, although the incredible encounter he records with Paul Clemen, whom Krautheimer briefly sounded out in 1926 as a potential director of his habilitation, is truly shocking. Clemen enquired: “Sind Sie eigentlich noch Jude, Herr Doktor?” “Jahwohl Herr Geheimrat.” “Das liesse sich wohl ändern?” “Nein Herr Geheimrat.” (89) The almost frivolous assumption that Krautheimer’s religious conviction might be shuffled off for a more comfortable university career trajectory still takes the breath away. A good deal of space is devoted to the institutional environment at Marburg University during the period of Krautheimer’s presence there, at times slowing the development of the narrative. (89–143) But Herklotz is crisp and measured about his own celebrated predecessor in the art history chair, Richard Hamann (fig. 2). To the external observer, Hamann’s treatment of his university colleagues, nonetheless, emerges as consistently shabby, self-serving, and duplicitous. As the National Socialist régime consolidated its power in Germany, political divisions within the Philipps University and a widespread and unwholesome acquiescence at all levels to governmental pressure must have made the intellectual atmosphere nearly intolerable. But Herklotz makes splendidly clear the fundamental importance of the support, intellectual,

5 Richard Krautheimer, *Mittelalterliche Synagogen*, Berlin 1927, p. 142.

moral, and financial which his marriage with Trude Hess (fig. 3) provided throughout these tumultuous years.

During this period Krautheimer's *Corpus Basilicarum* nevertheless made substantial progress. The fundamentals of its amalgam between structural and formal analysis, viewed through the filter of textual, historical, and earlier visual documentation, had already been firmly conceptualized. As Krautheimer noted in a letter of November 1934 to an English sympathiser, "[t]he work at this moment is more than half completed. Among the approximately 70 monuments in Rome with which it has to deal, more than 35 have been studied by me and their work is accomplished. The remaining churches are in preparation and so is the introducing [sic] general part of the work." The initial volume was published in English and Italian in 1937: in the preface to Volume II, he apologized for its "barbarous English." Through the good offices of Monsignore Johann Peter Kirsch, rector of the Campo Santo Teutonico in Rome, the enterprise was eventually placed on a stable financial footing. The Istituto Pontificio made architects and office space available in Rome, and Krautheimer's lifelong friendship with Enrico Iosi was cemented during these years. In another letter of 30<sup>th</sup> May 1935 Krautheimer wrote: "The work with the Vatican is (except the financial part) going on in a really fantastical manner so that in this moment four architects are at my disposal." But the Vatican's financial support was rigorously restricted to funding the basilica project alone. Its author, as a non-Christian, could not be provided with personal financial assistance.

Herklotz has made revelatory use of surviving documents to illustrate Krautheimer's attempts to leave Germany. Among many other unpublished sources, he has drawn on the dossier concerning Krautheimer among the files of the Academic Assistance Council, a high-powered group of English well-wishers founded by Lord William Henry Beveridge, which is now deposited in the Bodleian Library at Oxford. Its secretary often drew on the advice of Fritz Saxl, who had already established the Warburg Library in London. Saxl's opinions could at times seem alarmingly wrong-headed: in a letter dated 19<sup>th</sup> November 1934, concerning Wolfgang Fritz Volbach, Krautheimer, and Frederick Antal, he concluded: "Antal [is] in some sense more gifted than both as a scholar but not well disciplined as a collaborator and scholar." History was to prove decisively otherwise. Krautheimer emerges from this miscellaneous correspondence as an infinitely humane, resilient, and honourable person – one of the very few who persistently attempted to repay the subventions which the committee provided for him. Safely ensconced, first at the University of Louisville in Kentucky and later at Vassar, Krautheimer provided a valuable and enduring conduit of information about possible university openings and the potential appropriateness (or unsuitability) of particular individual émigrés for specific posts. Baptist Colleges of pretty heiresses required particular caution. In a subsequent letter of thanks for Krautheimer's help, dated 13<sup>th</sup> April 1938, the Committee's secretary acknowledged "how welcome this is at the moment when we are swamped with Austrian scholars."

The vicissitudes of Krautheimer's own career moves make for illuminating reading. He was initially attracted to England. A secretary at the Academic Assis-

tance Council, Mr Adams, with whom, characteristically, Krautheimer was soon on cordial terms, discreetly warned him that a post at Manchester University would not be offered to a Jew. There was also a quite lengthy flirtation with the prospect of going to Jerusalem: one of his letters in the Bodleian contains the passage: "I should think it is a beautiful task to do research work at Jerusalem and perhaps eventually to create an art historical research department." The idea that the corpus of Early Christian basilicas, the *Corpus Basilicarum Christianarum Romae*, might have been devoted to buildings in the Holy Land rather than the Eternal City sheds a different and surprising light on the adaptable methodology of the enterprise.

Herklotz works persuasively to establish the hypothesis that the seeds of Krautheimer's major methodological ideas germinated during his years at Marburg. The *Warburg Journal* finally published the extraordinarily influential essay<sup>6</sup> on the iconography of mediaeval architecture in 1942, almost a decade after Krautheimer had left Germany. Its essential insight about the subject-matter of mediaeval architecture, which needed to be recognized and understood on its own terms, could certainly be traced earlier. Fifteen years before, his analysis of synagogues had taught Krautheimer to keep architectonic form separate from cultic use and symbolic interpretation. Herklotz's argument carries conviction, but it is at least worth enquiring whether a similar scrutiny of Erwin Panofsky, who was five years older, would produce comparable conclusions. One thing which seems clear to this reviewer, whose decades-long friendship with Krautheimer concerned only his retirement in Rome, is that the experience of exile, the magnificent resources of the great American universities, and the manifold challenges of teaching students who had no initial familiarity with mediaeval buildings made Krautheimer a more resourceful, penetrating, and communicative scholar. As was said of another distinguished émigré, Roberto Sabatino Lopez, he became a great scholar because he left Genoa and went to the United States. Something of this was also true of Richard Krautheimer. In his Roman years Krautheimer remarked that the 1942 iconographic essay had fathered more bastard children than any other of his writings. In a letter to Harald Keller, quoted by Herklotz (379), he shows himself completely aware that his American experience had conferred a broader perspective to his work.

Appropriately enough, some of the central findings of this lengthy book were presented by Herklotz in a sparkling lecture at the Institute of Fine Arts at New York University: delivered in English in May 2017, it regrettably remains still unpublished. But this book on Krautheimer's Marburg years is, by any measure, an exemplary achievement. Like conversations with Richard Krautheimer himself, it leaves its reader reflecting on the personal impact which a supremely gifted teacher could have on everyone with whom he came into contact.

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<sup>6</sup> Richard Krautheimer, "Introduction to an 'Iconography of Mediaeval Architecture'", in: *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 5 (1942), pp. 1–33.