

Kriegszerstörungen und Verluste der Nachkriegszeit haben den Kunstdenkmälern nicht mehr Schaden zugefügt als die politischen Gegebenheiten, die sich auch auf die Erforschung der schlesischen Kunstgeschichte im Nachkriegspolen auswirkten. Glücklicherweise haben die hier skizzierten Probleme mittlerweile an Schärfe verloren.

Ich meine, daß ein Großteil der hier angesprochenen Probleme weit über den Bereich einer traditionell verstandenen Regionalforschung hinausgeht. Ich denke auch, daß sich hier ein

Feld für eine weit gefaßte Zusammenarbeit eröffnet.

Selbstverständlich ist dabei neben fachwissenschaftlichen Bearbeitungen auch eine sinnvoll angelegte Popularisierung schlesischer Kunstgeschichte notwendig. Es ist an der Zeit, das Bild eines »Niemandlands« zu korrigieren. Sonst bleibt *Silesia* weiterhin ein Gebiet, dessen Erforschung einem engen Kreis von Fachleuten vorbehalten ist, unzugänglich für andere, eine *terra incognita*.

Jakub Kostowski

TERESA MROCZKO, MARIAN ARSZYŃSKI (EDS.)

Architektura gotycka w Polsce

Volume 2, Dzieje Sztuki Polskiej. Warszawa, Instytut Sztuki PAN 1995. 3 Parts: Part I, Introductory Essays, 172pp; Part II, Catalogue, Bibliography, 514 architectural drawings, 602 pages; Part III, Album (in two volumes) 1522 black and white photographs, 812 pages.

In the last half century one of the main tasks (and achievements) of the Institute of Art in the Polish Academy of Sciences has been the preparation and publication of a series of ambitious, multi-volumed studies under the general title of *The History of Polish Art (Dzieje Sztuki Polskiej)*. The first in the series, on Polish pre-Romanesque and Romanesque, came out in 1971 under the editorship of Michał Walicki; the second (strictly the fourth) volume, on Polish Baroque architecture, by Adam Miłobędzki, appeared in 1980. The fact that we have had to wait fifteen years for the next, present work (volume 2 in the series) is a measure of the turbulent and erratic history of Polish institutions following the imposition of Martial Law in 1980, and the collapse of Communism ten years later. It may also be a symptom of the increasing practical difficulties, financial and academic, involved in such massive enterprises in collaborative scholarship.

It is doubtful if this work would have ever appeared, certainly not in such handsome form, without

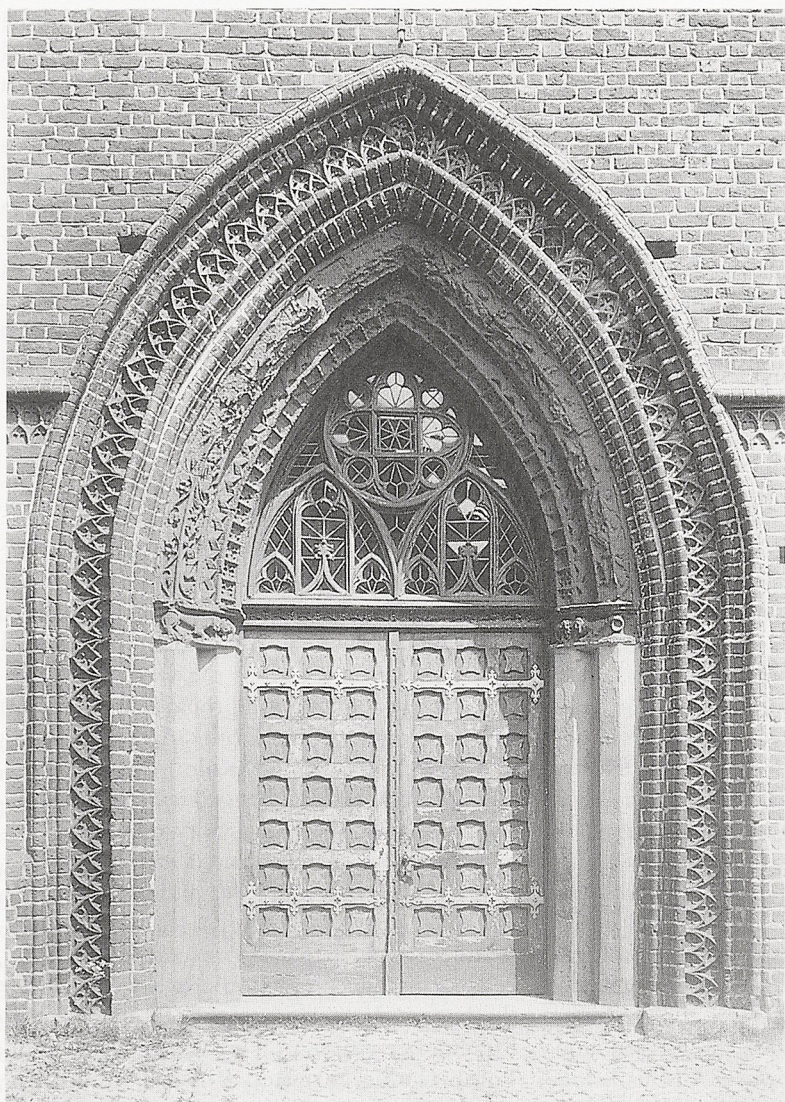
a generous subsidy from the Foundation for Polish Science and Learning; and one wonders if the new Polish market-led economy would have been as consistently generous to such a protracted, labour-intensive enterprise as the old 'Polish Peoples's Republic'. The academic problems facing this initiative must have been equally daunting, for they involve all the pitfalls of multi-author collaboration. To write one of these synthetic studies single-handed, as Adam Miłobędzki did for Baroque architecture in the 1970s was a *tour de force* that seems, in retrospect, to belong to another, more confident, art historical era. In the medieval field Polish art history has to some extent been the victim of its own success. Increasing specialization and proliferating publication have made the grand single-author synthesis a virtual impossibility. Collaboration of specialists has its own strengths, and the final team of scholars assembled for this project ranges from the formidably good to the efficiently competent; but it has clearly not been easy to coordinate contributions, or even to commission them. In a section of the book's Polish Foreword (pointedly not translated in its English version a few pages later), Stanisław Mossakowski, the Director of the Art History Institute in Warsaw, regretted the lack of cooperation in the project from some Polish academics, and suggested that the criticism aimed at the Institute for its slow rate of publication should be re-directed to the wider community of Polish art historians, who had failed to take advantage of the generous opportunities offered by the Academy.

Conceived and carried through in a climate of political upheaval, academic disagreement and financial constraint, *Architektura Gotycka w Polsce* is an heroic achievement, a cause for congratulation and celebration.

The book conforms to the general brief for the series *Dzieje Sztuki Polskiej* established in the early 1950s: to provide a synthetic account of the art of a given period; to present in catalogue form a corpus of its most significant monuments (cf. *Abb. I-II*); to summarise the current state of research on them; to amass a definitive bibliography, and to gather together a rich collection of photographs and drawings. The first volume of this massive four-volume enterprise is devoted to the panoramic picture — to the general narrative of Polish Gothic — with essays by various specialists on historical context, urbanism, military architecture, and wooden buildings. The volume closes with long chapters on the history of Gothic architecture in six main regions: Lesser Poland and Polish Ruthenia; Mazovia and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania; East Pomerania; West Pomerania and the New March; Silesia; and Great Poland, Kuyavia and the districts of Sieradz and Łęczyca. Volume two, the core of the enterprise, consists of an extensive catalogue of 500 monuments (churches, monastery complexes, castles and town buildings), each treated according to its date, its materials and techniques, its relevant written sources (archival or published), its phases of construction, and the secondary research (published and unpublished) on it up to 1993. All this is followed by a formidable bibliography on the chosen buildings, running to some 5071 items, and an impressive dossier of 514 scale drawings, most of them new. The third and last section of the work, the Album, comprises two substantial volumes containing 1522 black-and-white photographs of the monuments (some ordered specifically for the publication). Even a cursory comparison between *Architektura Gotycka w Polsce* and the two earlier works in the series shows that it not

only fulfils the requirements of the programme for the *Dzieje Sztuki Polskiej*, but goes far beyond them in the meticulous presentation of information, and the sheer ambition of its scale and coverage. Broken down in detail, the work consists of 3176 pages of text and illustration, of which 801 pages are given over to the two volumes of plates, 603 pages to the large single volume of the catalogue (278 pp), bibliography (64 pp) and drawings, and 172 pages to the volume of synthetic essays.

These statistics reveal, of course, imbalance as well as ambition. The concentration of effort on the catalogue reflects the priorities of the project's initiator and first academic editor, Teresa Mroczo, the director of the Institute's section for the history and theory of medieval art, who began her work in 1980. For her, one suspects, the catalogue volume was something more than a mere starting point; it was the core and *raison d'être* of the whole publication. She brought to it all the qualities of her excellent book on the Gothic architecture of the district of Chełmno (Kulm) (*Architektura Gotycka na Ziemi Chełmińskiej*) published in 1980, the year she began work on the catalogue: an analytic intelligence, a meticulous respect for evidence, and a scrupulous appreciation of all published sources. Sadly, her premature death in 1990 prevented her from celebrating the completion of what was already the crowning achievement of her academic life. But her vision, of a great compendium of Polish Gothic, magisterial in scale and meticulous in detail, still shapes the final publication. Before she died she had drafted the details for the whole book, had invited authors to write the synthetic essays, and had practically completed the descriptive documentation for the catalogue volume, as well as commissioned specialists to contribute to it. Her assistant, Andrzej Włodarek, completed the editing and shaping of the catalogue and the supervision of its 52 authors, and chose and arranged the photographs in the Album.



*Abb. 1
Frombork/Frauenburg
(East Pomerania),
Cathedral, west portal
(Marburg 619420)*

In 1991 Marian Arszyński took over the general editorship of the whole work, and, with the special assistance of Bożena Steinborn, saw the project through to publication. Mroczko's guiding intelligence still dominates the work, but no volume in the series has owed so much to teamwork.

Not surprisingly, it is where teamwork is most effective, in the catalogue and bibliography, that the project is at its strongest. The 500

individual monuments chosen for the catalogue represent the central achievements of the various genres of medieval architecture in Poland, from wooden churches to urbanism, from castles to cathedrals. Each building, or group of buildings, are treated to exhaustive description, careful documentary investigation, and clear summaries of the research devoted to them, from the earliest 19th-century pamphlet to the latest publications. To



Abb. 2
Frombork/Frauenburg,
interior from west
(Warsaw, Polish Acad.
of Sciences)

browse through this treasury of amassed information is to come upon startlingly new discoveries on critical buildings, hitherto buried in unpublished dissertations or obscure Polish periodicals. The entry on the castle at Malbork (Marienburg) will, for example, point you to Powierski's 1979 re-dating of the start of the construction on the upper castle from the conventional '1276' to '1283-7'. It will also apprise you of Kilarski's convincing

reconstruction of the apse of the original castle chapel as five-sided, and not as the pseudo-polygonal termination reconstructed by Steinbrecht and all German scholarship after him (apart from Matz). The re-dating of the nave of the cathedral at Kamień Pomorskie (Cammin) to c.1300 (and not to the second and third quarters of the 14th century) places it at the beginning of a series of west Pomeranian basilicas with giant orders. Unpublished

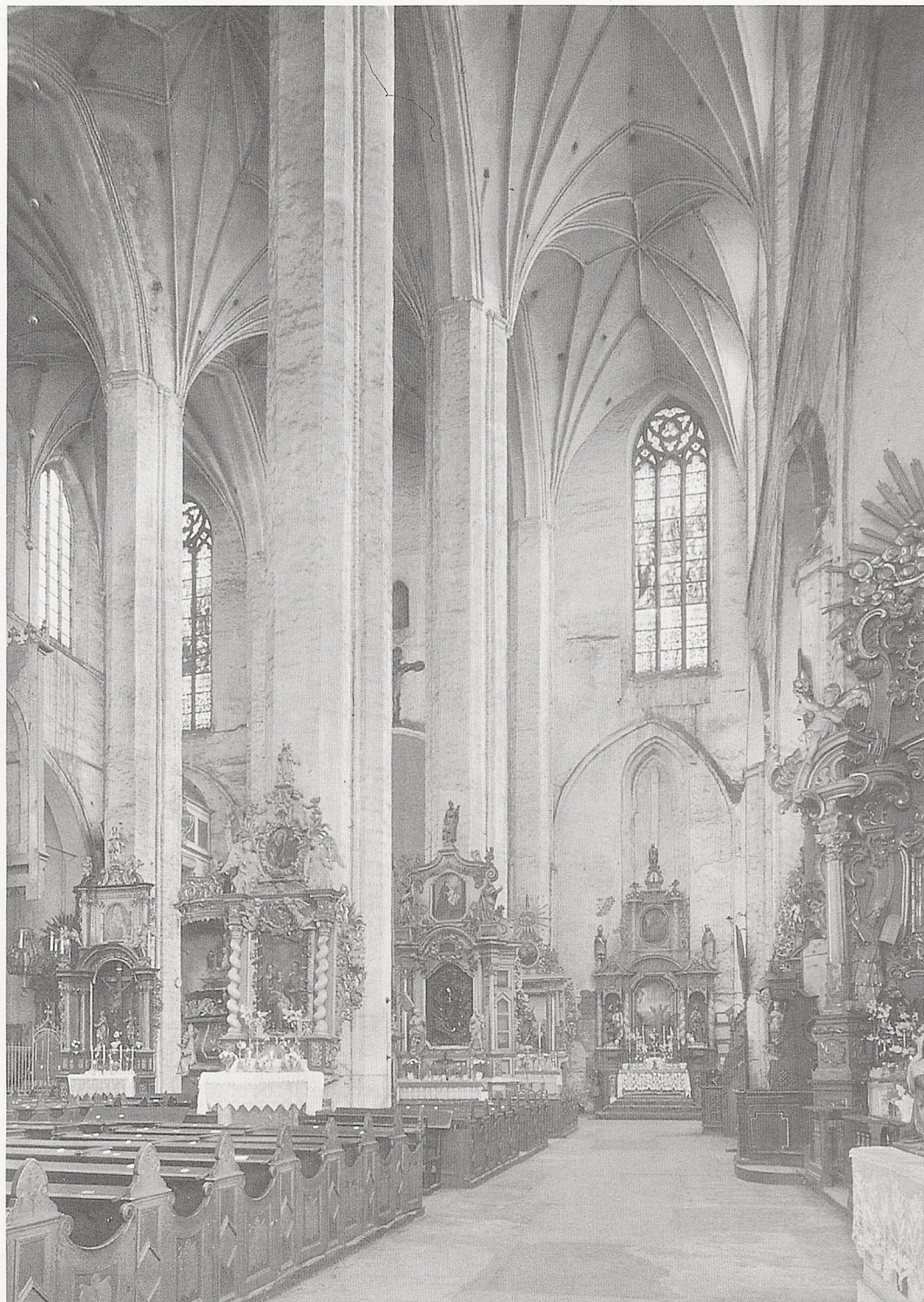


Abb. 3 *Toruń/Thorn, St Mary, interior from west (K. Grimm)*

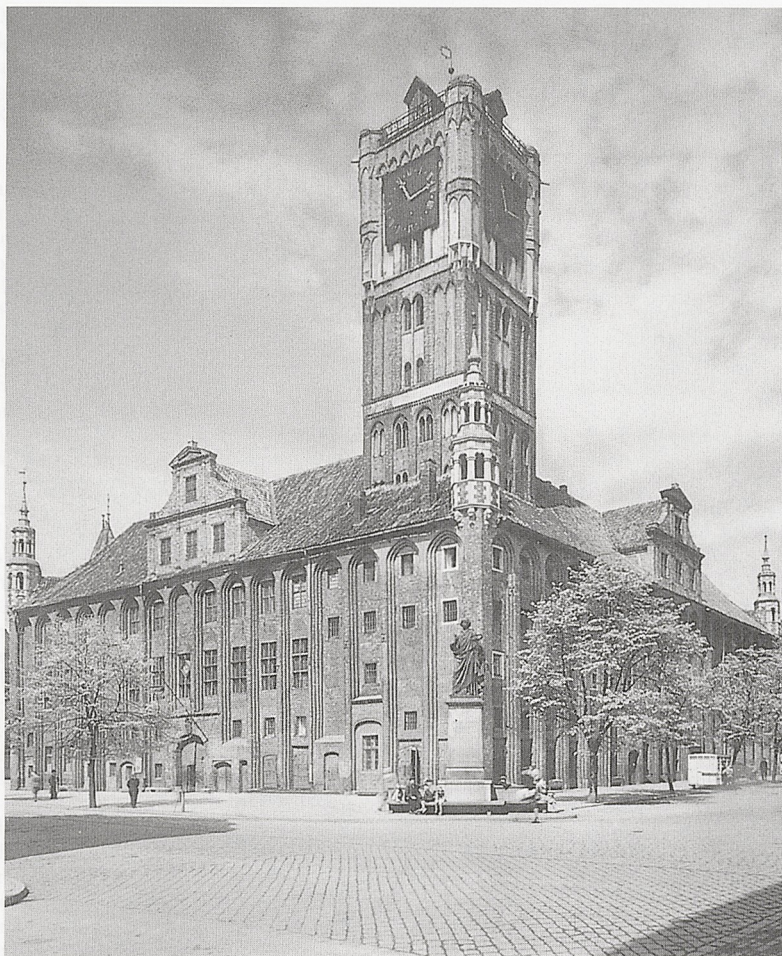


Abb. 4
Toruń/Thorn,
Town Hall
(K. Grimm)

MA theses of the late 1970s are cited as providing confirming evidence for the beginning of the hall choir of St James at Szczecin (Stettin) to c.1375. The archaeological investigations of Węclawowicz and Pietrzykówna in the 1980s have shown that the 13th-century nave of the Franciscan church in Kraków was an assymetrical, two-aisled hall with a wooden roof, attached to a three-bay choir. The first church was not, therefore, the Greek cross structure reconstructed in almost all previous literature — this format was adopted only in 1269 as part of Bolesław the Shy's additions. And it alters our whole picture of Piast archi-

tectural patronage in Silesia, and its influence inside and outside the province, to be presented (albeit summarily) with the conclusions of Stulin's unpublished work on the church of St Cross in Wrocław (Breslau), whose conception he ascribes, not to the initiative of Duke Henry IV (Probus) in the period around 1280-90 (as hitherto assumed) but to c. 1320-30. And this later dating accords with the stylistic parallels between the famous tomb of Henry destined for St Cross, and sculpture, dating to the 1330s, in the 'House of the Bell' in Prague. Equally suggestive sculptural evidence is provided by Węclawowicz's recent published



Abb. 5
*Gartz an der Oder,
St Stefan, portal of
south transept
(Marburg 62425)*

research — all of it cited in the catalogue and bibliography — into Lesser Polish 14th-century architecture. Over twenty years ago I detected vague Lower Austrian similarities in the choir of St Mary's in Kraków; Węclawowicz confirmed this orientation in a series of convincing comparisons between the architectural sculpture of the Kraków choir and that of the choir of St Stephen's cathedral in Vienna.

All this, of course, amounts to only pickings from the treasury. The freedom with which the catalogue points to the wealth of recent Polish research into Gothic architecture in Poland is a measure of Teresa Mroczko's pragmatic approach to the vexed problem of 'Poland'.

Most synoptic surveys of this kind have, eventually, to grasp nationalistic nettles; and for the last century and a half the idea of 'Poland' and 'Polish art' has been particularly allergic to clear thinking. The whole concept of a *Dzieje Sztuki Polskiej* was born in the early 1950s

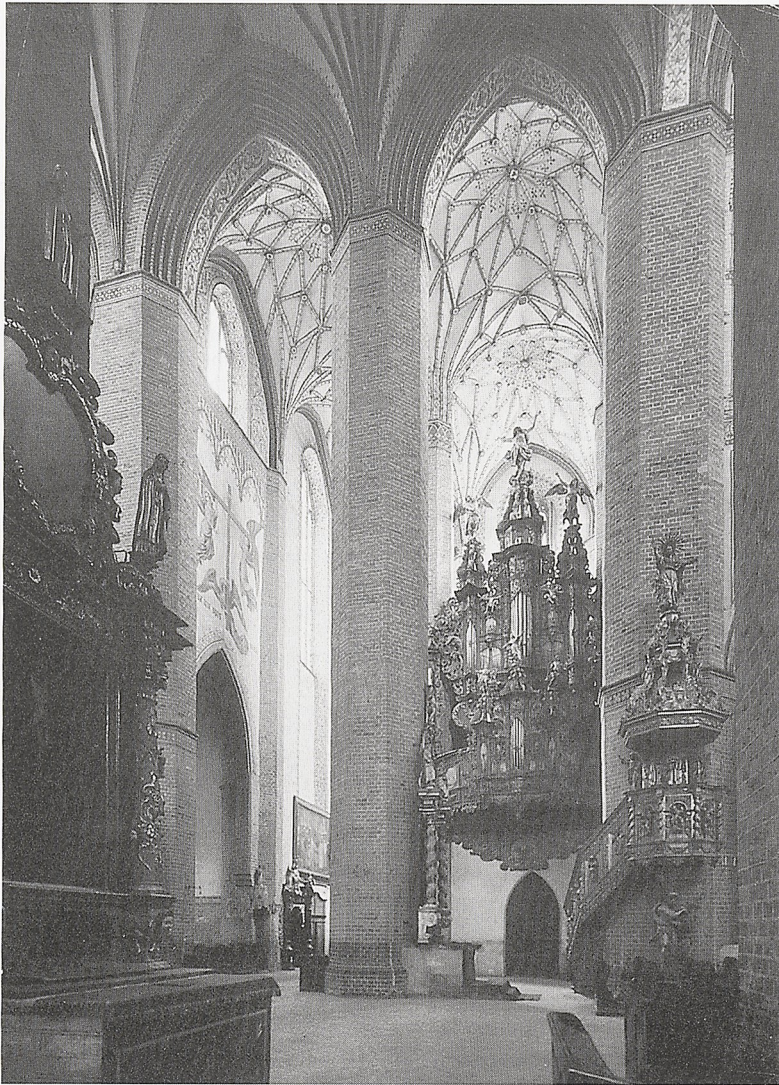
in the optimistic climate of Marxist reform and social revolution. Poland had suddenly, and quite artificially, assumed a new geographic, and in some provinces ethnic, identity. In November 1950, when Polish art historians first came together in Kraków at the first general Polish academic conference on problems of research into the history of art, it was axiomatic that the history of Polish culture was organically connected to the emergence of a national consciousness; any synthetic account of Polish art had to look for ethnic identity within artistic and cultural forms. As a 1952 outline for a new synthesis put it: 'A fundamental problem for historians of the history of art of our nation is to examine the development of artistic creativity together with the growth of a consciousness of a common nation...' It may be significant that the titles of the first two works in the series qualified their subjects as 'Polish': 'Polish Art. Pre-Romanesque and Romanesque' (*Sztuka Polska przedromańska i romańska*) and 'Polish Architecture of the 17th Century' (*Architektura Polska XVII Wieku*). The latter confined its geographical coverage to the strict political boundaries of 17th-century Poland, and thus to the ethnic core of Polish territory, omitting the 'German' territories of Silesia, Pomerania and West Prussia.

The present work avoids almost all geopolitical pitfalls by simply by-passing any idea of an historical 'Polishness' or a definitive 'Poland'. Its title is, pointedly, a history of 'Gothic Architecture in Poland' and not 'Polish Gothic Architecture'; and the 'Poland' it covers is (with a few important exceptions) the arbitrary political boundaries of the present-day Polish Republic. This takes it into territories, largely on its western and northern limits, which in the Middle Ages never, or only intermittently, belonged to the Polish Crown, and whose real allegiances were to the Empire. Admittedly, Silesia, the Prussian territories of the Teutonic Knights and West Pomerania contained multi-racial populations subject to local rather than national loyalties; but their high culture was 'German' rather than 'Polish'. Once into them, we encounter the meaninglessness of modern political frontiers. The Oder-Neisse line has nothing whatever to do with the real forces that shaped the *Kunstlandschaft* of western Poland, especially in West Pomerania. It makes no logical sense to devote, over the years, a great deal of Polish research (all of it summarized here) to the churches of Hinrich Brunsberg and his associates on the right (Polish) side of the Oder — in Szczecin (Stettin), Stargard and Chojna (Königsberg in the Neumark) — but to have to ignore very similar churches by the same architects on the left (German) side (St Katherine at Brandenburg, St Stefan at Gartz). In particular, Gartz (*Abb. 5*), situated on the left bank of the river, less than twenty miles from Szczecin, looks directly and tantalisingly out over Polish territory. In an a-political world, its tragically ruinous condition since the war would have benefited from the recording skills of the Polish Academy of Sciences!

But the advantages of working within the present Polish borders, and ignoring the dubious idea of an historical 'Polishness', far outweigh the brutal divisions of modern frontiers. Many of the outstanding monuments of Gothic architecture in the northern and western territories of present-day Poland were not 'Polish' in any cultural or institutional sense. But to ignore them for that reason would have been folly. For a history of Gothic in Poland to have excluded the castle of the Teutonic Knights at Malbork (Marienburg), or the Silesian churches of Strzegom (Striegau) and Świdnica (Schweidnitz) or the brick Gothic of East and West Pomerania, would have amounted to nationalist perversity. It would have missed the opportunity to confront some of the masterpieces of Central European Gothic, and to report on the exemplary post-war research which Polish scholars have devoted to the Gothic architecture of all these 'German' regions. German scholars, particularly of *Backsteingotik*, will have to take account of the rich body of Polish research presented in these volumes.

This pragmatic approach to cultural geography is not without its inconsistencies. It was decided, perhaps as a result of the collapse of the Soviet Union, to include some architecture to the east of Poland's present eastern frontiers, in present-day Ukraine, Lithuania and Belarus. This was justified on the culturally correct grounds that at the time of their construction they were predominantly 'Polish' since they came under the political control of the Polish Crown and Grand Duchy of Lithuania. But where does that leave the culturally 'German' buildings further west? In their case, cultural criteria can be ignored in favour of the accidents of national frontiers; in the Polish case geography can be set aside. But this is to quibble. Happily, the first serious opportunity to look into the obscure but creative history of eastern Poland's architecture in the later Middle Ages has not been wasted. As we might expect, the results are in the nature of a preliminary foray. These areas have long been inaccessible to 'western' historians, and their architecture still awaits detailed investigation. But here, for the first time in any systematic work of reference, the reader will find an outline discussion of Kasimir the Great's initiatives in Ruthenia, an illustrated account of a distinctive group of semi-fortified Orthodox churches in Lithuania, and full catalogue entries on the churches of Wilno and Lwów. This may not be geopolitical logic, but art historically it is pure gain.

More serious difficulties come with the work's chronological boundaries. The later limit, with the early Renaissance, is straightforward enough, though the omission of Master Benedict's early 16th-century laminated portals in Wawel castle in Kraków ignores the tenacity of Saxon-inspired Latest Gothic in Lesser



*Abb. 6
Pelplin
(East Pomerania),
Cistercian church,
south transept
(K. Grimm)*

Poland into the 1520s. More serious is the decision to start the work with buildings belonging to the third quarter of the 13th century. This late starting date was no doubt forced on the editors by the Walicki's volume on the Romanesque, which included buildings of around 1240-50 that were clearly 'early Gothic'. The late starting date makes sense in regions where Gothic made a belated debut (Mazovia, East Prussia, Lithuania); but it is

misleading in advanced provinces like Lesser Poland and Silesia, where formative Gothic buildings were well underway in the middle of the century. How can we have a definitive reference work on Lesser Polish Gothic which does not include the rib-vaulted choir of the Poor Clare's church at Zawichost (before 1255), or the choir of the Cistercian church at Mogiła? The chronological straightjacket can sometimes be loosened, as, for example, when



*Abb. 7
Pelplin,
Cistercian church,
from west
(Marburg 619236)*

Węclawowicz includes in his catalogue entry on the Franciscan church in Kraków much material on the recently discovered double-aisled nave of the earlier 13th century. But these welcome transgressions are no substitute for a proper analysis of earliest gothic in Lesser Poland and Silesia. In his excellent outline of early Silesian Gothic in the volume of synthetic essays, Marian Kutzner mentions a string of formative early Gothic buildings

which do not appear in the catalogue because, presumably, of their early date, or their inclusion in the Walicki volume: the Cistercian churches of Henryków (Heinrichau), Trzebnica (Trebnitz) and Rudy, the castle chapel at Legnica (Liegnitz) and the choir of Wrocław cathedral. Kutzner's necessarily brief treatment of these decisive buildings, and their absence from the drawings, photographs and catalogue volumes, seriously distorts the pic-

ture of early Gothic in western Poland. The fact that he mentions them at all, and has to do so in a coherent survey of Silesian Gothic, even though it oversteps the remit of the catalogue, points to one of the critical problems of the whole multi-volume venture: the seeming lack of coordination between the volume of synthetic essays and the rest of the work. From the start, the *Dzieje Sztuki Polskiej* set out to combine two complementary tasks: a catalogue and state-of-research component, which amassed factual information in reference form, and a synoptic survey of the main developments of the period. The relationship between the two has varied from volume to volume. Although Walicki's Romanesque book contained a large catalogue and bibliography, it was dominated by the survey volume, which consisted of essays by various specialists on all the art forms of the period. Miłobędzki's volume on the Baroque narrowed the survey element by dealing only with architecture, but emphasized its importance by devoting most of the work to it (400 pp), concluding with a comparatively short bibliographical section (33 pp). *Architektura Gotycka* reverses these roles with colossal catalogue and bibliography sections (342 pp) and a short and rather thin-looking survey volume (172 pp). As we have seen, the catalogue was Teresa Mroczo's prime concern, and from the start, the survey element seems to have caused problems. The initial list drawn up in 1984 included, like the Romanesque volume, all the arts, but it soon became clear that specialists could not agree on the principle of presenting all the media in a single work, and that a concentration on architecture was the only practical solution. On the whole, this narrowing of focus has been a price worth paying for the eventual publication of the work, though the exclusion of architectural sculpture from architectural analysis, particularly in the Gothic of Lesser Poland and Silesia, impoverishes our understanding of the whole structure. 'Architectural

sculpture', says Mieczysław Zlat in his excellent essay on Silesian Late Gothic in the survey volume, 'constitutes an essential element of the building'. How then are we to appreciate the quality, and the arguments for the chronology, of St Mary-on-the-Sands in Wrocław without a discussion and illustration of its architectural sculpture? or how can we assess its influence on the Franciscan church in Wrocław, an influence largely sculptural? A dating of the choir of Pelplin in East Pomerania (*Abb. 7*), a critical building in the transmission of decorative vaulting to the continent, is partly dependent on a close analysis — not forthcoming here — of its architectural sculpture (even though Jurkowlaniec's important study of architectural sculpture in the territory of the Teutonic Knights is mentioned in the catalogue).

But the decision to concentrate on architecture alone did not solve the problems of writing the survey. No single author, it appeared, was able or willing to write the survey volume single-handed. Instead, each of the main regions of Polish Gothic was assigned to a specialist or specialists, and the result has gained in diversity of informed opinion what it lacks in cohesion. Not all the essays have the same authority. It is clearly their purpose to do what the factual and detailed catalogue entries cannot do: provide a survey of trends across all genres of architecture, and analyse the dominant architectural problems of the region. In this, the essay on East Pomerania, the territory of the Teutonic Order, is disappointing. It fails to set the masterpiece of the region (perhaps the greatest building in all Gothic Poland), the Grand Master's Palace at Malbork (*Abb. 8*), in the broad context of western palace architecture. It ignores the development of the Backsteingotik decorative gable. It does not discuss the links between the Teutonic Knights and their architecture outside Poland, nor does it venture into the vexed question of the origins and development of decorative vaulting. The other chapters do a difficult job well, though they are bound to provoke disagreement on points of detail or emphasis. Marian Kutzner's suggestive theory of an opposition to the Krakowian or 'court style' of Kasimir the Great in the architecture of Great Poland in the second half of the 14th century hardly applies (as he argues) to Jarosław Skotnicki's new choir at Gniezno cathedral, since the Czech influences at work there are in line with a similar Bohemian orientation present in Lesser Polish architecture from the 1320s; and Skotnicki, as canon of Kraków cathedral and advisor and friend of Kasimir, was a king's man. I also cannot fol-

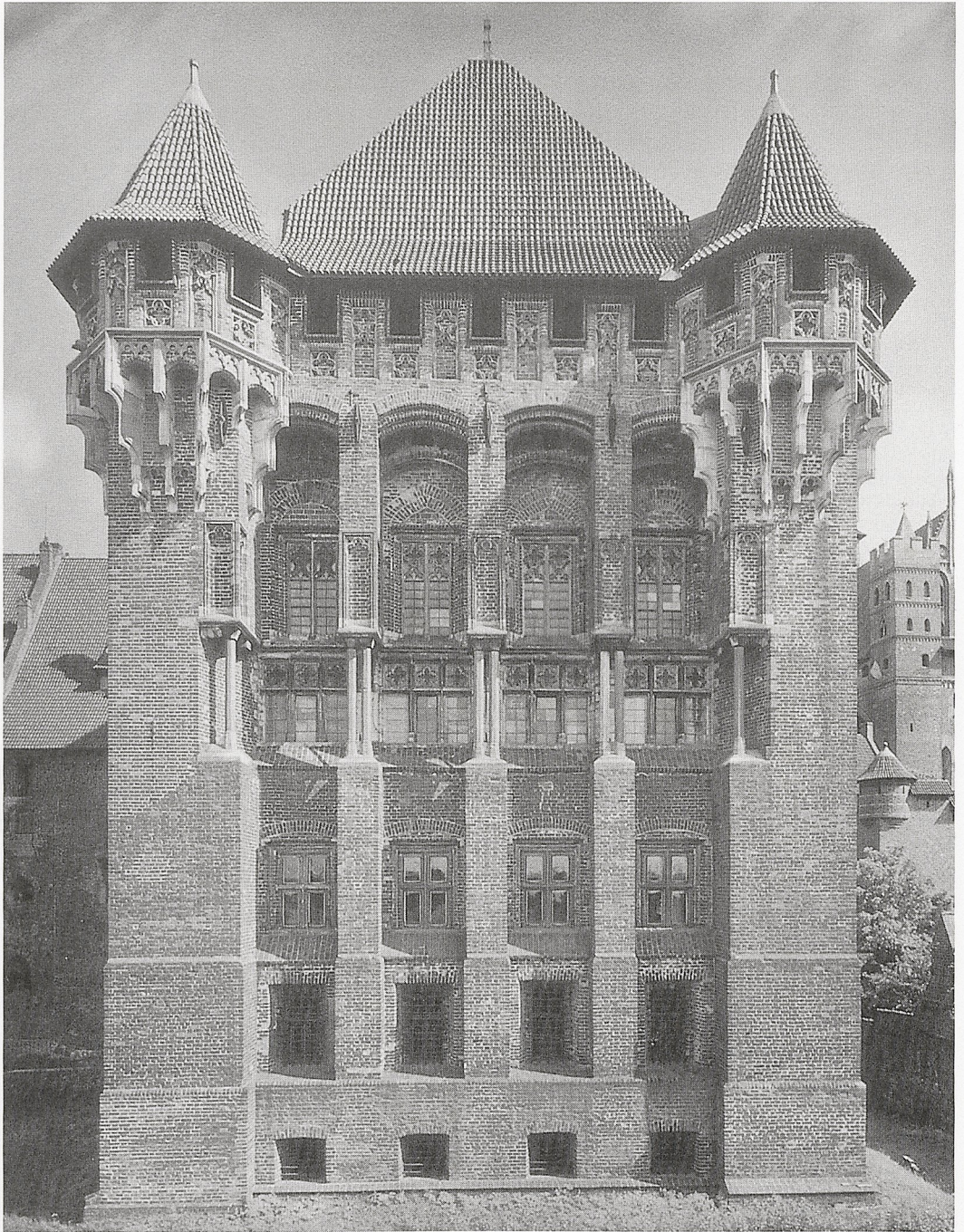


Abb. 8 Malbork/Marienburg (East Pomerania), Castle of Teutonic Knights, Grand Master's Palace (Ehem. Staatl. Bildstelle Berlin)

low Skibiński in seeing vestiges of the 'aristocratic court style of Louis IX' in the brick micro-architecture of the buttresses of Pырzyce and Gryfice in West Pomerania. The group of late 14th-century Silesian net vaults made up of simple repeating cross-rib units (Legnica, Jelenia Góra), singled out by Zlat, owes less to Třebič and Angevin influence (as Zlat argues) than to Parler drawings in Prague of English tunnel vaults with identical net structures. While I agree with Węclawowicz that the double-aisled halls of Kasimir the Great owe nothing to the Papal Palace at Avignon, I am unconvinced by his suggestions that their style is southern French and 'Mediterranean'. I would also want to emphasize the Bohemian contribution as strongly as the Upper Rhenish in the development of Lesser Polish Gothic under Kasimir the Great.

All this amounts to little more than critical tinkering. Synoptic surveys are bound to provoke disagreement; it is a tribute to the quality of this one that the criticism is not more fundamental. Almost all its authors provide balanced and incisive analyses of the broad trends of their region, and include secular and military architecture as well as ecclesiastical. The real problems with the survey volume are structural, not academic. In the first place, super-regional issues are inevitably overlooked, or not coordinated. Critical here is the problem of decorative vaults, an essential component of Central European Late Gothic. Some of the earliest examples of decorative vaults on the continent appear across many parts of Poland in the second half of the 14th century. The fact that these vaults seem, mysteriously, to have been inspired by English models, and to have anticipated, or paralleled, Peter Parler's virtuoso displays of vaulting in Prague, should have made them a central issue in the synoptic essays, with their avowed intention of setting Polish Gothic in its broad international context. Instead, accounts of vaulting appear sporadically in the chapters on Lesser Poland and Silesia (where the Kraków cathedral high altar vaults [Abb. 9] are acknowledged as the source for the first Wrocław jumping vaults, in the pseudo-transept of the cathedral), and with little sense of context in the other essays. The date of the vaults in the choir of Pelplin (Abb. 7) is critical to understanding the possible transmission of English 'star' and lierne vaults to the southern Baltic. If 'early' (i. e. c. 1300) these vaults imply a direct contact with Lincoln and act as the prime source for the decorative vaults of the whole southern Baltic; if 'late' (i. e. second half of the 14th century) they have virtually no art historical significance. Yet the catalogue signally fails to come to grips with this problem. Where it retreats into vagueness, the writers of the synoptic essay confidently date the choir to 'before 1323', while Kutzner in his essay on Great Poland places the Pelplin vaults contemporary with similar star vaults in Pelplin's sister church, at Koronowo, which he ascribes to '1290-1330'. But if the Koronowo vaults were up by 1315, when the church and monastery are mentioned

in a contemporary source, then they may precede the Pelplin patterns, and suggest an origin for the star patterns in Koronowo's affiliations in Mecklenburg and Brandenburg. The issues are riddled with hypothesis and speculation, but they need a coherent discussion, not a series of piecemeal observations.

The difficulty of relating catalogue to synoptic essay goes deeper than single para-regional issues such as vaulting. This is particularly obvious in Kutzner's essay on early Gothic in Silesia. Kutzner argues that the enterprises of Duke Henry the Bearded dominated the architecture and culture of 13th-century Silesia, and he gives proper weight to the duke's remarkable record in church foundations, castles, and new towns. Yet hardly anything of this appears in the catalogue, where the reader turns for more detailed information. Trzebnica and Henryków are absent, Henry's castle at Legnica, the best preserved Silesian *Pfalz*, is not included, perhaps because of its appearance in the Walicki volume. Henry's town foundations, among the most precocious urbanistic developments in Central Europe at that time, hardly appear in the separate chapter on urbanism (which deals with typological and not patronal problems), and have only a limited space to be mentioned in Kutzner's essay. Apart from Lwówek, they are ignored in the catalogue. Not one of the towns mentioned by Kutzner appears in the drawings section as a ground plan. By its nature, the catalogue has to be selective; but in enhancing the detail of the catalogue entries, and reducing the length and factual substance of the survey essays, the impression left is of an unbridged gulf between the massed information of the catalogue and the thin generalities of the synthesis. The purpose of all great surveys, to illuminate general argument with particular evidence, and in turn to place vivid detail in a grand vista, is lost.

The feeling that the essay volume 'floats free' from the catalogue, and is its poorer relative, is inherent in its format. It has no index of buildings, which means that vital information from the catalogue cannot be followed up in

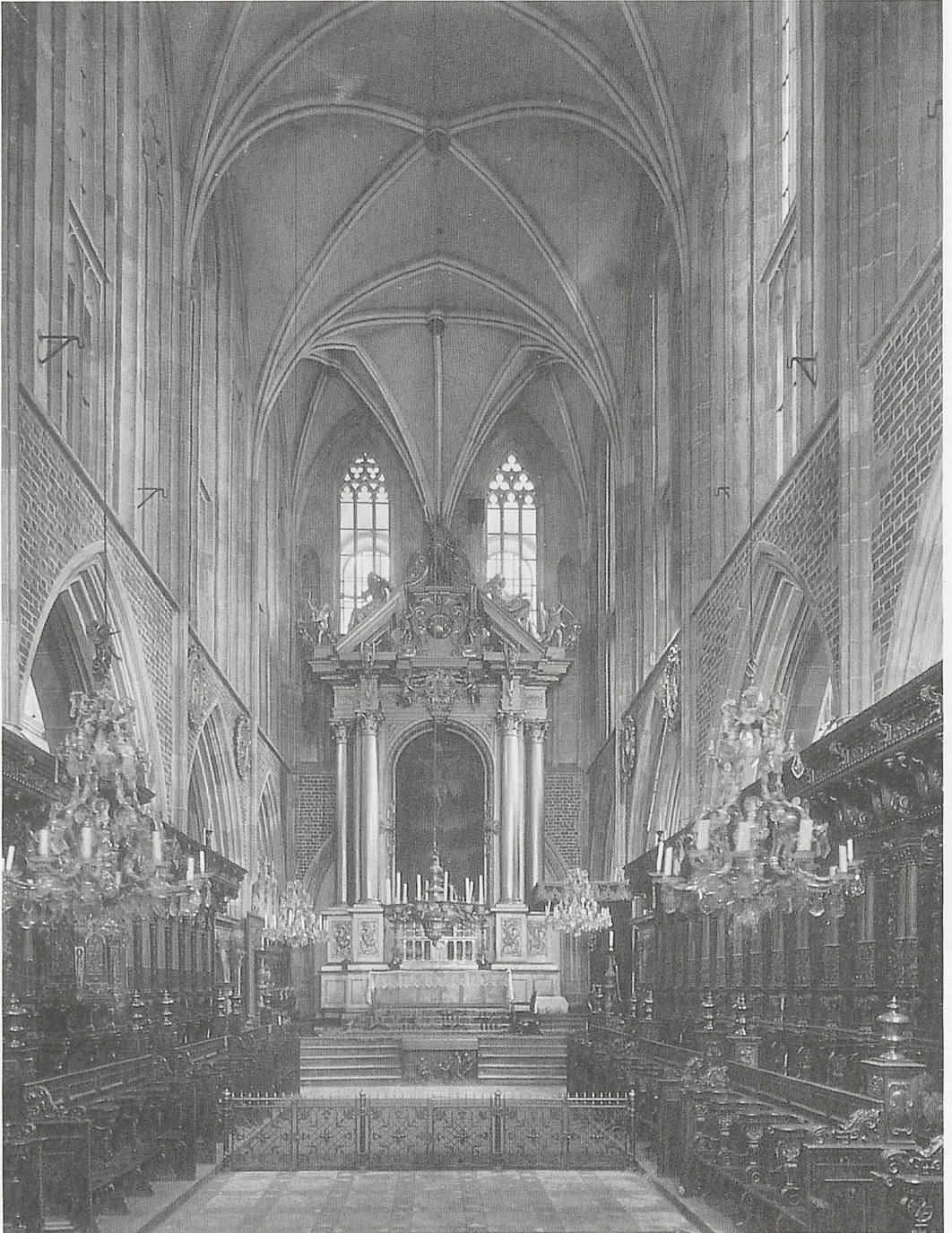


Abb. 9 Kraków/Krakau, Cathedral, choir from west (Ehem. Staatl. Bildstelle Berlin)

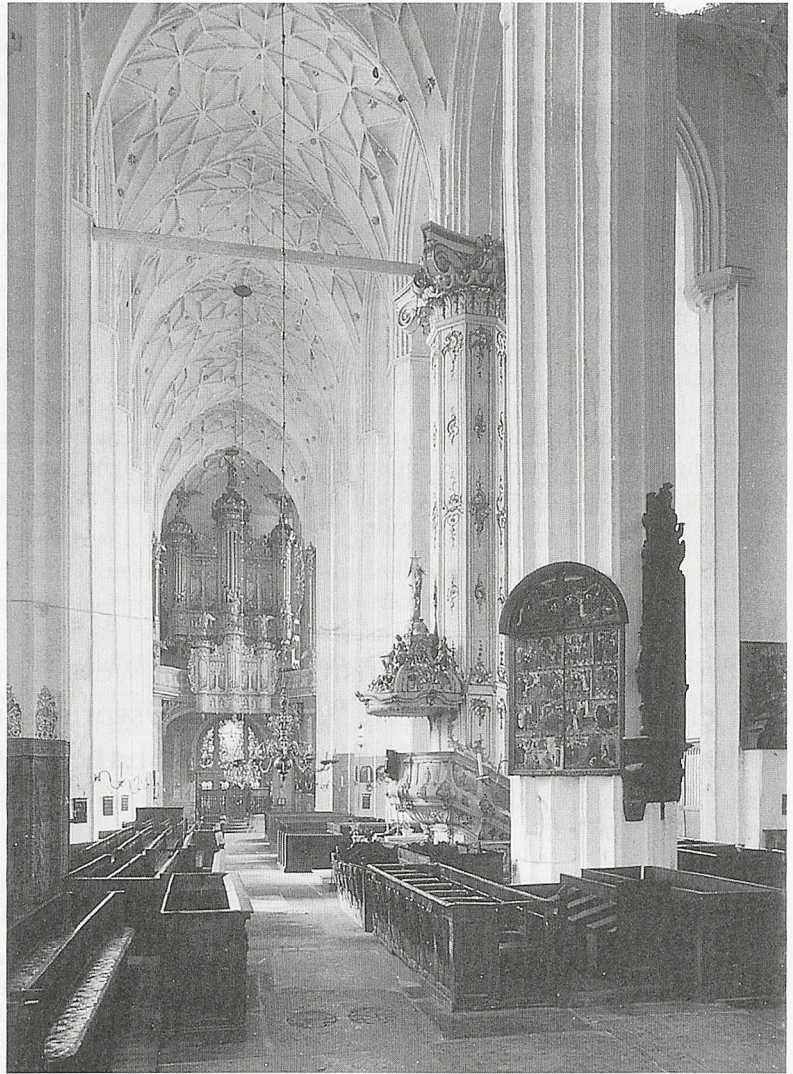


Abb. 10 Gdańsk/Danzig, St Mary, from south (Deutscher Kunstverlag)

the essays, nor any points in one essay compared to similar issues in another. This makes for further fragmentation. It also has no footnotes. Nor, infuriatingly, does it have any numbers in the text referring to the photographs or the drawings. Thus, if you want an illustration of a building mentioned in the essays, you have either to look through all the drawings (arranged alphabetically) or go to the catalogue, look under the building, and find the illustration references there. Sometimes, of course, the building is not in the catalogue, and the search is fruitless.

The drawings are beautiful, but singularly un-didactic. They are not differentiated by shading so cannot indicate phases of construction (for a building like St Nicholas in Brzeg this could have been done to spectacular effect). They are sometimes downright unhelpful. Castle or town plans have no keys to show which buildings are which (see the mystifying plan of Wrocław,

fig. 473, or Warsaw, fig. 454). There is nothing in the caption to the cut-away drawing of St James at Szczecin (fig. 407) to indicate that this shows the early 14th-century basilican choir — a confusing omission, since a ground plan of the late 14th-century *hall* choir is shown in the preceding drawing. Nor do drawings 422 and 423, simply labelled 'the gallery' at Świdnica, make it clear that we are dealing, in fact, with what the survey essay (which gives no reference to the drawing) describes as 'the chapel of the Blessed Virgin Mary'. It is as if drawings and survey were planned as separate projects, both executed to high standards, but not conceived as partners in a cooperative effort to explain and mutually interpret. The maps accompanying the essays are also difficult to read, since the only references are to the places, which float in a kind of featureless no-man's land, with no names of rivers (which are drawn) and no regional boundaries to give scale or orientation. All this makes the survey essay volume a cumbersome tool for enlightenment. Instead of presenting, as Walicki's and Miłobędzki's survey texts did, an integrated, well-illustrated introduction, this volume seems like an afterthought, subsequently brought in to festoon the catalogue with a general background.



*Abb. 11
Gdańsk/Danzig,
St Mary, interior
from east (Deutscher
Kunstverlag)*

To demand that a work of such scale achieve a perfect harmony of its parts may seem like a counsel of perfection. Colossal, evolving enterprises of this kind are human constructions, not mathematical exercises. And if there is imbalance in all this, it may turn out to be of the right kind. Synoptic surveys and broad syntheses are not only increasingly difficult to write as specialisation takes its hold on all academic disciplines; they are notoriously susceptible to intellectual fads and fashions: they

come, all too quickly, to look facile and dated. But corpuses of evidence are quarries that can be mined for generations. As the endless stream of generalisation, theoretical speculation and opinion about opinion pours out from our modern academies, we may come to feel more and more grateful to Teresa Mroczko and her team of successors for their heroic concentration on empirical evidence. The vast accumulation of data which they have assembled here, the fruit of years of patient checking and

cross-checking, of reading and digesting, has built an imposing foundation for many years of future research into Polish and Central European Gothic.

But in the shorter term surveys and panoramas are needed, and one solution to the frustrations of the first volume might run as follows: take out the survey volume from the rest of the work and reprint it as a completely separate book. Since the essays are of a high standard, the text need not be altered; but it should be translated into a western European language. Although its first, introductory chapter already has an English version, the whole volume deserves translation, for however much the editors aimed at an international audience for this book, its qualities will, sadly, only be properly appreciated outside Poland

(and Slavonic Europe) by those few scholars who read Polish. The English (or German?) reprint should include footnotes and indexes, and the relevant plans and photographs should be taken from the other volumes and included *within* the text. The result would be a handsome and useful history of Polish Gothic — not, certainly, a substitute for the present Polish work, but its more accessible satellite. Behind it would always loom the magisterial shadow of this multi-volumed *magnum opus*. Not the least of the satellite's virtues would be to act as a proper tribute to the tenacity and intelligence of the Polish scholars, chief among them Teresa Mroczo, who brought this great account of Gothic architecture to fruition.

Paul Crossley

MICHAEL ANTONI

Dehio-Handbuch der Kunstdenkmäler West- und Ostpreußen. Die ehemaligen Provinzen West- und Ostpreußen (Deutschordensland Preußen) mit Bütower und Lauenburger Land

München und Berlin, Deutscher Kunstverlag 1993. 728 Seiten mit zahlreichen Plänen und Grundrissen. DM 68,—

Die von Georg Dehio 1905 initiierte Erfassung der deutschen Kunstdenkmäler wurde nach großen, eher geographisch als historisch definierten Räumen (Süd-, Mittel-, bzw. Nordwestdeutschland) des Deutschen Reiches in den Grenzen von 1914 vorgenommen. Die Grenzen deckten sich nicht mit denen der historischen Regionen, die Erfassung der Denkmäler mußte angesichts der Größe der in den jeweiligen Bänden behandelten Gebiete notgedrungen etwas oberflächlich bleiben. Dies gilt auch für den erstmals 1906 erschienenen Band *Nordostdeutschland*, in dem die Beschreibung des alten Ordenslandes Preußen nur einen bescheidenen Raum einnimmt. Dieses Konzept wurde in den 30er Jahren durch die Gliederung der Bände in historisch gewachsene territoriale Einheiten ersetzt (*Die*

Rheinlande, Pfalz und Rheinhessen, Oberbayern etc.). Als in der Zwischenkriegszeit die Idee eines Dehio-Bandes über das Ordensland Preußen aufkam, war das zu untersuchende Gebiet jedoch bereits von politischen Grenzen durchzogen und die Einheit des alten Ordenslandes nur noch eine Fiktion, ihre Wiederherstellung nach dem September 1939 bekanntlich von kurzer Dauer. Als die von Ernst Gall, Bernhard Schmid und Grete Tiemann Anfang der 40er Jahre durchgeführte Inventarisierung schließlich 1952 im Band *Deutschordensland Preußen* erscheinen konnte, befand sich kein einziger Teil der behandelten Region innerhalb der neuen deutschen Staaten.

Dieser letzte Band ist 1993 als überarbeitete Neuauflage erschienen, versehen mit dem langen Titel: *Dehio-Handbuch der Kunstdenk-*