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Sarah Jost, Gabriela Wachter, eds. *Die verschwundene Arbeit: In Fotografien aus Berliner Sammlungen und Archiven.* Berlin: Parthas Verlag, 2008. 309 pp. EUR 29.80 (paper), ISBN 978-3-86601-385-8.

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Work on Film: Berlin's Bygone Businesses

Sarah Jost and Gabriella Wachter's effort to collect photos of now marginal forms of work and commerce in *Die verschwundene Arbeit* contributes to research in diverse fields, including history, cultural anthropology, and of course German studies, but does so in an unorthodox manner. The book contains 295 photographs from the nineteenth century's waning years up to the late twentieth century. Accompanying captions identify and explain each photograph in detail. It is divided into chapters by the particular type of "lost" work and depicts the circumstances and the evolution of subsistence labor in Berlin.

Three short introductory essays by Jost, Wachter, and Helga Gebring situate the photographs within a theoretical and historical framework. Jost provides the most robust introduction to the text, in which she introduces the historic development of marginal labor as a result of social crisis and industrial development. She looks to the high unemployment rates and relative lack of social security during much of the first half of the twentieth century as major contributing factors to the prevalence, and indeed necessity, of different forms of marginal and hard manual labor. Additionally, and reasonably, she points to the development of rationalized, mechanized labor as responsible for the now "lost" apprentice and horse-powered forms of work. The "lost" forms of labor include many cottage industries in which children and women played a prime role, such as the decoration of ceramics, the production of clothing, or the assembly of children's toys, as well as the manual slaughter of animals or the crafting and assembling of wooden carts and wheels.

Wachter's introduction deals with the practical and archival issues related to creating this photo collection. The editors sent letters to many potential sources, which generated a corpus of two thousand photographs from which the editors could choose (p. 11). Many were damaged by age and exposure, while others were thematically redundant. The editors thus only chose representative samples. Further shrinking the selection of images was any depiction of forced labor workers, which reduced the available number of photographs from 1936-45. As the editors conceive it, this is a first attempt at uncovering the "treasures" (*Schätze*) available in Berlin that chronicle forms of labor that are no longer visible in Berlin (p. 11).

Further introductory remarks by Helga Grebing address this visibility. She puts the "lost" work in a global economic perspective and emphasizes that much of the work photographed, especially photographs depicting women and children, is not missing in an absolute sense, just from wealthy, capitalist Germany. Primary to her argument is that the "missing" work is not due simply to technological innovation and social security, but also to the changing nature of German society. She observes that the number of fifteen- to twenty-year-olds employed in Germany is 20 percent of what it was in 1950. Women's rights movements have also significantly improved the educational and economic prospects for German women. Grebing is clear on this distinction, making the point that undocumented–and therefore invisible–immigrant workers still engage in the sort of domestic work depicted in this collection. She widens that claim to the developing world, and encourages the reader to remember that the sort of work depicted in the collection is "lost" both because it has been outsourced (to the developing world) and because the (developed) Western world does not wish to recognize that fact.

The photographs are divided into nine sections, each with numerous examples of that particular kind of work. The kinds of work represented range from those changed by the advancement of technology (transportation, food production, factory work) to those changed by social and economic developments (domestic service, cottage indus-

tries, and street vending). The pictures are not in chronological order: their only internal logic is that the pictures that appear opposite one another on the page are often related thematically, either showing the same sort of work, or variations on a particular theme (like slaughterhouses, or coopers, or maids, or type-setters). The echoes of August Sander's attempt to create a cross-section of German society through a series of photographs of professional types are strong. Because this volume is a first attempt to publish the visual contents of various Berlin archives, it appears as if the main organizational goal was simply to publish images showing particular categories of work, rather than to construct a narrative or commentary with the images. Although the editors introduce each section with a small number of epigrams, primarily from the first three decades of the twentieth century, this selection is the extent of their narrative efforts. The quotations serve more as introductions to the general theme of the photographs than as a critical framework.

The collection focuses almost exclusively on work in Berlin. Indeed, all of the photographs originated in Berlin archives and collections. As such, the collection gives a wide-ranging representation of labor performed in Berlin during the first half of the twentieth century. As a research tool, the collection is a rich source for material specifically concerning Berlin. Beyond those uses, because of the limited numbers and varieties of source material, the collection provides only limited information about work outside the metropolis–even if the transport and delivery of cabbages to sauerkraut manufacturers is an interesting agrarian caveat. The editors do not try to hide the limited scope of their collection: it is written on the cover of the book that all photos come from Berlin archives and collections. For scholars interested in forms of labor, dress, techniques, and tools of trades no longer found in Berlin, the collection is a rich resource. The collection also provides insight into and commentary on some current German narratives, in particular, a picture from 1917 featuring a Turkish guest worker.

The editors state in the introduction that this volume is a first effort to collect and disseminate photography from Berlin archives. As such, this collection should be looked at as fertile ground for further research, and as the first steps toward more in-depth histories of labor, culture, and economy, or photo essays that concentrate on specific aspects of lost labor, or simply the development of particular types of labor. This collection puts a high value on photographs and thereby recognizes the importance of visual culture. The work's value lies in its willingness to go beyond traditional modes of representation of knowledge. The resulting lack of narrative can occasionally be frustrating, but if the reader has the time or inclination to leaf through the collection, it contains some well-composed and revealing photographs. The editors provide section headings, epigrams, and captions for each picture, but because of its nontraditional format the individual chapters lack significant internal cohesion. The collection as a whole is simply that–a collection. Although the introductory essays are informative and well written, the book could benefit from a sturdier academic apparatus.[1] The editors do accomplish the goals set out by the title. This volume is a collection of photographs depicting "lost" work from Berlin collections and archives. Taken at face value, the work is a success, but the photographs beg to be used in future, more comprehensive research and cultural analysis.

Notes

[1]. For a good example of the effective use of text and photos to describe social and economic change, see Sabine Hake, *Topographies of Class: Modern Architecture and Mass Society in Weimar Berlin* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2008).

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