

## Riga's Capital Modernism



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## RIGA'S CAPITAL MODERNISM

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Book Condition: New. Publisher/Verlag: Leipziger Universitätsverlag | For a number of years now, art historians discuss the idea of East Central Europe as an artistic region. One of the most convincing and pragmatic answers has been given by Steven Mansbach: He strikingly demonstrated that from the Fin-de-siècle to the beginning of World War I the region From the Baltic to Balkans constituted a coherent and interactive art-historical meso-region characterized by specific national art traditions and innovations. Steven Mansbach stresses in the tradition of his own discipline the overwhelming importance of urban centers in his predominantly rural Eastern Europe . It is cities which shape artistic regions, and this the more so in a part of Europe where there are fewer cities than in other parts. This is one of the reasons why Mansbach in his 2013 Oskar Halecki Lecture analyzes (and visualizes) the capital modernism of the only Baltic metropolis Latvia's capital Riga. In looking at Riga's central role not only for Latvia but for all three Baltic countries and the wider Baltic Sea Region, Mansbach aptly applies Klaus Zernack's post-Haleckian meso-regional concept of Nordosteuropa which constructs a Mediterranean of the North reaching from the Neva to the Kattegat a region of enhanced economic, military, cultural, political, and ethnic cooperation and conflict from the Nordic Wars of the early modern period to the interwar years of the 20th century. As Mansbach demonstrates with the example of the city on the Daugava's modernism, after Hanseatic commercialism, Russian imperialism and Latvian nationalism also Soviet communism left its visible impact resulting in a novel eclecticism by a quixotic intermingling of Riga's inventive modernism and constraining Soviet politics. Northeastern Europe lives on, and the Soviet legacy, unwelcome as it may be today, is a constituent part of it as...

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