

Guides to the City: Berlin Anthologies

Ulrike Zitzlsperger

University of Exeter, England

Michael Lewitscharoff's *Berlin-Paket* (Berlin Package) first appeared in 2001; it invites readers to take a stroll through the city and promises "surprising revelations" about Berlin's architecture, culture and history. The city is made tangible, in the literal sense of the term: aesthetically pleasing pop-ups present sights of Berlin, while maps, pictures and compact blocks of information provide snapshots of the city at different periods: pre-war, before the *Wende*, and since unification. But the pleasure is short-lived—not because the cardboard *Reichstag* shows signs of wear and tear after repeated viewings but because the appeal of a three-dimensional Brandenburg Gate or Ludwig Erhard House begins to wane once this journey of discovery and the trip through time and space have been completed. Revealingly, the on-line bookshop amazon.de points out that readers of this book have also bought Dietmar Arnold's *Der Potsdamer Platz von unten: Eine Zeitreise durch dunkle Welten* (Potsdamer Platz from Below: A Journey through Shadowy Worlds), for instance, or Christoph Stollowsky's *Geheime Orte in Berlin* (Secret Places in Berlin). More than ten years after the fall of the Wall and the unification of Germany, the unusual and the new clearly still have their appeal: the guises in which the city appears and the need to make these forms visible seem to be inexhaustible. Berlin titles and especially travel guides (in the widest sense of the term) are demonstrably profiting from this continued interest, in contrast to other subject areas in the book trade.¹

Since the fall of the Wall in 1989, the fascination produced by the amalgamation of two cities into a metropolis has been reflected in a very wide spectrum of publications: the search for big-city novels, post-reunification novels, and Berlin novels; the discovery of the new city by literary flâneurs; the discovery of Berlin's districts by local enthusiasts; the popularity of picture-books illustrating Berlin's building sites; new editions of earlier Berlin literature; and the recent spate of retrospective studies inspired by nostalgia for former East Berlin and former West Berlin alike—all these works profit from a popular desire to understand what Berlin is and/or was. The three-dimensional presentation of the city in *Berlin-Paket* is more generally applicable: apart from the need to acknowledge changes in readers' tastes, the great number of anthologies and documentary collections to have appeared since 1989 suggests that books exploring the city and its life appeal to book buyers and are therefore financially worthwhile for publishers.² This approach to the city, accumulative and re-appraising, appears to be highly successful, and publishing houses in Berlin and Germany as a whole have benefited from it considerably.

This essay deals with the question of what these anthologies—not least by the diversity of their subject matter—tell us about contemporary preoccupations. The period in question is short; the topic, Berlin, is complex. The essay concentrates on the ideas that feature prominently in the postscripts and introductions to these anthologies, and it attempts to characterize trends observable at the end of the 1990s.

With their evocation of longing or their claim to the exemplary nature of Berlin, the titles themselves speak volumes: Berlin is Babel, Berlin can concentrate on merely naming names with and without exclamation marks, Berlin, it seems, is always worth a story. Many have felt called upon to write about Berlin—their contributions have been collected by journalists, by literary specialists and, if only occasionally, by creative writers. Most anthologies have appeared as paperbacks with well-known views of Berlin on the cover; some, for the most part those with a particular objective, have also been produced in hard-back.³

I

The first ten years after unification are often referred to in Berlin as a “period of transition,” a period that is characterized by the notions “no longer” and “not yet.” It is more difficult to decide when precisely this period ended than it is to date its beginning, either 9 November 1989 or 3 October 1990. But if we consider the reduction in the number of large-scale cultural events staged in the city to be a pertinent factor, and if the retreat into the local neighborhood is seen as a symptom, there has been a marked relaxation in attempts at locating Berlin since 1999, the tenth anniversary of the fall of the Wall. During these ten years the transfer of the capital of Germany from Bonn to Berlin was accomplished and Berlin, the building-site city celebrated on countless picture postcards and in lavish coffee-table books, has brought East and West closer in an architectural and political sense, especially now that the so-called *Band des Bundes* (federal strip) has been completed. Despite severe financial problems, the “New Berlin,” as it is often called, has provided German unification with its “bridge,” its “building site” and its “workshop.” Under the management of *Partner für Berlin*, a conglomerate of metropolitan attributes has finally been devised to characterize it: “Kulturmetropole,” “Kreative Stadt,” “Hauptstadt,” “Ost-West-Metropole” and “Lebenswerte Stadt” ‘cultural metropolis,’ ‘creative city,’ ‘capital city,’ ‘east-west metropolis,’ ‘a city worth living in.’ These attributes are intended to establish Berlin’s status quo and suggest a desire for normality.

In the imagination of writers of new Berlin, the image of the city is less sharply defined: they are concerned not only with Berlin present, past, and future but also with perceptions of the city by non-Berliners at home and abroad and with the contrast between East and West Berlin. Transitional Berlin has afforded them opportunities not only to create works of fiction but also to document the past and a city in transit—from a number of different perspectives. The more stress is laid on temporary phenomena, the more the *Berlin* reader with his prior knowledge of the city is catered to.

A number of factors act as external markers lending extra weight to the anthologies: the decentralization of culture in the city, the appearance of a new generation of young authors (following a long debate about the role of German literature and the function of Berlin in this context) and an economic crisis that increasingly affected Germany and Berlin. However, wherever one went, the prevailing atmosphere was that of a new beginning: everyone, so it seemed, had something to say on the subject of Berlin. The mass of material available provided an opportunity not to be missed. And it was no mere chance that many anthologies with a more specific theme did not appear until the middle of the 90s onwards, when certain issues began to emerge more clearly. It is hardly surprising that anthologies bring together many of the items that otherwise can be found in the specialist Berlin departments of larger bookstores and on the "Berlin tables" of smaller bookshops.

II

A characteristic feature of literature in the 90s was the *flâneur*—for example reprints of those strolls through the city by Alfred Kerr, Siegfried Kracauer, Walther Kiaulehn and Joseph Roth that, for the most part, were written before 1933.⁴ These reprints were complemented by collections of *feuilleton* articles which were becoming popular in the daily press, appearing at regular intervals. *Feuilleton* articles profited from the increase in popular interest not only in Berlin but also in the whole question of the future of large cities. While the reprints of the "older" *flâneurs* made a comparison between yesterday and today possible and were often a goldmine of trenchant Berlin quotations, the *flâneurs* of the 90s could explore new territory. They could make the East accessible, discover the charm of areas that for years had lain fallow and, with a keen eye for the history of Berlin, they could monitor new developments such as, for instance, the *Reichstag* and the reconstruction of the *Potsdamer Platz*.

This is what *Jetzt Berlin* (Berlin Now) by Hans Scherer, the Berlin cultural correspondent of the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, sets out to do. Bringing together articles that appeared in

the feuilletton of the FAZ with commentaries, diary entries and short articles.⁵ Some East Berlin writers, such as Friedrich Dieckmann and Heinz Knobloch, have embarked on new walks in the city: less concerned with presenting astounding new discoveries, they aim rather to present familiar locations in a new context.⁶

At the end of the 90s, major newspapers with their lavishly produced Berlin sections were beset by the general crisis in the newspaper market; at the same time, as the major building projects in the city center were nearing completion, popular interest in the literary stroll through the city decreased. Instead, attention was now increasingly directed towards detail. Wilfried Rott's views of Berlin in 1999 and 2000—expanded in the book edition—concentrate on who's who and where's where in the city; appropriately, the book contains an index of locations. The focus is no longer on Berlin as a whole, but on Berlin society. Once again, it is complemented by a retrospective view: the publishing house Bostelmann & Siebenhaar, committed to the publication of material about Berlin, has published Hermann Haarmann's book *Die Berliner Gesellschaft* (Berlin Society), which assembles commentaries on society then and now.

The interests of the book-buying public are catered to in these anthologies not only by descriptions of the city but also by documentary studies and special projects. Alongside the publication of numerous collected editions of essays and newspaper articles, many works concentrating on specific periods, localities or themes have appeared since the *Wende*.⁷

Given the widespread curiosity about literary life in Berlin it is appropriate that a book with the title *Flaneure, Musen, Bohemiens, Literaturleben in Berlin* should have appeared (*Flâneurs, Muses, Bohemians—Literary Life in Berlin*).⁸ The now markedly open literary scene is also characterized by literary festivals such as the "internationale literaturfest berlin" (Berlin International Literature Festival), held for the third time in 2003. It is significant that, once again, the event was composed of a number of individual events staged in various parts of the city, and evidently this was seen as an essential part of the concept. Admittedly, the con-

tents of *Berliner Anthologie*, the volume that appeared following the second festival, may have little to do with the city, but the importance of Berlin as the venue and the way in which the city functioned as an integrating force for the event are made abundantly clear.⁹

The mood of this period of transition is also exploited by newspaper articles which later appeared in book form: they follow literary trails and, in most cases, conjure up the past with extracts taken from a whole range of authors—as in *Dichters Tatort* (The Writer—Where it Happened), for instance, or *Berlin, wie es im Buche steht* (Berlin, as Described).¹⁰ The choice of Berlin as the setting for both works of fiction and publications of more practical use can, then, be explained in three ways: first, in view of its open position inviting definition, the city provides a venue for debate; secondly, it offers a framework, within which a variety of themes can be conveniently accommodated; and, finally, literary pieces act as signposts through the world of today.

Evidently, there is also a need to document the past with contributions in which quotations from observers alive at the time feature prominently, be it the attempt to demythologize *Prenzlauer Berg*, to rescue the reputation of the *Palast der Republik*, to recall 9 November 1989, or to permit West Berlin, neglected for so long, to come into its own once more.¹¹ The process of documenting and taking stock underlines that this is a time of new beginnings; “less is more” seems inappropriate.

This is true, in particular, of attempts to reduce developments after 1989 to a common denominator. Here, more than elsewhere, the project nature of the reunited city is prominent. Beginning with the *Stadtidee* (Concept of the City) a study commissioned by the Berlin Senate Department for Town Development and Environmental Protection, which at the start of the 90s invited new ideas about urban development,¹² right down to the project *Die Endlichkeit der Freiheit* (The Finite Nature of Freedom), sponsored by the Berlin Senate Department for Cultural Affairs, Berlin is seen as a place where opportunities abound. This mood becomes the leitmotif of the introduction to *Die bewegte Stadt* (The City on the Move), published in 1998. The editor, Thomas

Krüger, Berlin Senator for Youth and Family Matters from 1991 to 1994, proceeds from the assumption that the sense of a new beginning, discernible in a whole range of cultural activities in the city, can be captured only in a mosaic of different “snapshots”—a limitation that is acknowledged in most anthologies. He describes Berlin as the sum of widely varying opportunities:

Berlin has—until now—been a city marked by indecision. . . . Berlin is becoming the screen on which new biographies and ideas can be projected. Berlin is a fast-moving, diverse and dynamic laboratory for new ideas, and offers the best conditions available in the 90s for putting on show a whole display of different lifestyles. (Krüger 21f.)

Accordingly, the range of authors contributing to this mosaic is extremely diverse: journalists, public relations advisers, established creative writers, German nationals and foreigners.

The image of Berlin’s being “a number of phenomena strung together” also provides the starting point for *Remake Berlin* (2000). Fourteen international artists and authors who had lived in Berlin for varying periods of time were invited to sketch a portrait of the city with the help of texts and photographs. Once again, subjectivity plays a central role here: the book focuses on a whole range of different areas, such as observation of building sites and people, description of Berlin’s history and life in the capital, or documentation of foreigners’ way of life and culinary customs. The starting point of this catalogue, written in German and English, was the staging in Berlin of an exhibition of the Photography Museum in Winterthur, launched and sponsored by a bank; the exhibition was supported by the *daadgalerie* and the *Neuer Berliner Kunstverein*. In the words of the introduction, Berlin is a “metaphor for the new millennium” (Becker and Stahel 8)—the favorite notion of a transitional era has been replaced by an image of the future. But both the exhibition and the catalogue differ from other, comparable projects in one important aspect: the Berlin project had been preceded in 1997 by a similar project with Zurich as its subject. This succession of exhibitions somewhat reduced the earnestness of the exercise, a characteristic that Berlin projects otherwise tend to assume.¹³

III

The boom in Berlin anthologies needs to be seen in this wider perspective—Berlin after unification arouses curiosity, it invites new interpretations and, in whatever form it takes, be it exhibitions, events or publications, it sells well.

This is not to say that Berlin finds itself in this extraordinary situation for the first time: the struggling capital city of the 20s and the city divided by the Wall intensified attempts to make a statement with the help of anthologies. The main achievement of an anthology may consist in the conclusions it reaches on particular current situations—not for nothing was the topic of a conference of authors in the *Literarisches Colloquium Berlin* in 1995 entitled “Literature as the precursor of intellectual and cultural unity in Germany,” and, significantly, the basis for the conference was the anthology *Von Abraham bis Zwerenz* (From Abraham to Zwerenz), published by the German Ministry of Education.¹⁴ 104 authors contributed to this volume about the *Wende* and its consequences. In the context of the reunification of Berlin (and also of Germany) stimuli for observations about the city of Berlin were provided by literature and especially by short stories and, when drawing up his report on local politics in Berlin in the 1990s, Uwe Rada, for example, asks, “Where exactly is Berlin?” he finds the answer in literature:

Berlin lies elsewhere—this is the title the writer Renée Zucker gave to her latest book on the city. For Zucker, Berlin is not a place on the map but, rather, a social approximation; Berlin is the voice of its inhabitants. (Rada 56)¹⁵

The Berlin anthology is well suited to playing the part of a contemporary witness offering explanations. In 1929 the Berlin journalist Herbert Günther collected fifty contributions from writers, composed according to the precept “Only living people can speak.” Günther points to the relationship between the city and the writer, a complexity that, with the narrower focus on the city, was long absent in the 90s:

This book is concerned with the city and it is concerned with the authors of this city. It's a description of Berlin and it is a debate about Berlin—made possible by bringing together its most important authors.

Here for the first time, a large and significant part of Berlin's intelligentsia has come together to give evidence about the phenomenon Berlin: in works of art created in Berlin, in depictions of Berlin and in statements about Berlin. (Günther 9)

Making a planned choice was seen as an essential restrictive requirement in Günther's anthology:

But anthologies are destined to be heterogeneous rather than organic. This is an old idea but it is nevertheless valid and often painful. One can collect, select and rearrange as much as one will. . . . The aim here was to give a picture of Berlin, to project the literary vision of Berlin. Or a part of it. The aim was to provide an excerpt. . . . (Günther 12)¹⁶

The city behind the Wall also became a subject taken up by literature; in a disturbing way, it showed how, in the 80s, the issue of West Berlin had become exhausted. The anthology *Berlin, ach Berlin*, edited by Hans Werner Richter, appeared in 1984. Richter, one of the founding members of the Gruppe 47, approached 23 authors, requesting contributions—including such well-known names as Helmut Heissenbüttel, Günter Kunert, Uwe Johnson and Sten Nadolny. The introduction describes a process of growing disillusionment with the project as a whole, whose genesis turned the final product into a warning about the growing provincialism of West Berlin:

When I began work on this book many . . . readily agreed to take part in the project. Berlin, it seemed, was an issue on which everyone had something to say: the problematic nature of memories of this city, sorrow, melancholy, nostalgia, anger—but, then, everything changed and it seemed to me as if no one could deal with this problem: there were cancellations, delays, postponements of the agreed deadlines. . . . And so this book looks back rather than forward, contains more memories than impressions of the future. Now and again there is a glimpse of life in present-day Berlin, but only rarely does the whole problematic nature of the city become visible. . . . Only one thing is certain: all the writers I invited to co-operate are very attached to this town.

If the problem of West Berlin was its provinciality which could, evidently, lead to a certain inability to speak, the anthology *Berliner Geschichten* (Berlin Stories) shows how the situation on the other side of the Wall was one of enforced speechlessness. In May 1975 the first version of this anthology was dispatched to the eighteen writers still working on the project:

The collection was gratifyingly unbalanced; it ranged from the grotesque to the impressionistic, from the classical short story to linguistic experiments. The reactions of those involved were as disparate as their texts. While Gert Neumann informed us "that reading the individual contributions was accompanied by an extraordinary sense of suspense," Stefan Heym commented that not only would the anthology meet with opposition from the authorities, it would also fail to find a publisher. (Plenzdorf, Schlesinger and Stade 10)

Heym was proved right: infiltrated by members of the Stasi, the project did not find favor with the censors, and it wound up forgotten in a drawer; it was published twenty years late, in 1995. Thus, the anthology is fascinating in a number of ways: the contributions can now be read with knowledge of the subsequent development of the individual contributors and, with the fall of the Wall, criticism of the East German regime, evident to a greater or lesser degree throughout the volume, has acquired new status. Naturally, one particular aspect of this anthology stands out: the fact that it failed to be published. This failure is documented with quotations from relevant Stasi files; in this way, it has become a record both of time and of change.

Adolf Endler's diary entries, written in *Prenzlauer Berg* in the early 80s, show clearly how an anthology can act as the barometer of a political climate. Here he writes, in note form:

The new edition of the Berlin anthology "Stimmen einer Stadt" (Voices of a City), published some time ago; Sarah Kirsch has been dropped; Kurt Batsch is still in (because he did not go to the West until later).—This anthology and others like it (if, as is normally the case, they appear in more than one edition) should be subjected to cold-blooded scrutiny in terms of the who's in, who's out, in, out, in, out game. (Endler 67)¹⁸

IV

Anthologies often have the nature of a project, and this makes them more difficult to compile. In his documentary novel about the history of the Kurfürstendamm, Dieter Hildebrandt recalls a group of writers who met in Berlin in the early 80s:

in order to discuss an anthology of their diverse and yet interrelated leave-takings from the Kurfürstendamm, with the title *Glanz und Elend eines Boulevards* (Rise and Fall of a Boulevard). The volume—as is so often the case with anthologies—never appeared. (Hildebrandt 335)

In contrast to the stagnation of the 1980s, there was a superabundance of anthologies in the subsequent decade. Retrospective anthologies remained attractive or lucrative, but readers were equally willing to consider collections with new perspectives, such as particular locations. These anthologies contain contributions not only from well-known authors from East and West; the wider canon of themes was accompanied by a broader spectrum of writers contributing to the publications who subsequently became essential elements in anthologies. A frequent factor is still the declaration of love for Berlin, earlier identified by Hans Werner Richter, but a difference between the generations may be detected even in this respect—younger writers with less experience of Berlin as a city divided between East and West are less determined in their attempts to capture a particular state of affairs.

Inevitably, there is a particular interest in locations that acquired a new status following the reunification of the city or that set themselves up as new. With his anthology on the Potsdamer Platz, the journalist Günther Bellmann caters to popular interest in a location that, like no other in the 90s, embodies the past (the twenties, the destruction during World War Two, the black market and the construction of the Wall), the present (the contentious new architecture), and the future of Berlin (the supposed new heart of the city). Inevitably, the anthology turned into a historical review whose value lies in repeated elements:

The occasional repetition increases its appeal, deriving, as it does, from the different viewpoints or from the opposition of harsh

realism, nostalgic lyricism and all manner of irony. That is all part of the Potsdamer Platz. (Bellmann 11)

Bellmann proceeds historically, selecting, as seemed appropriate at the beginning of the 90s, more well-known authors such as Fontane, Roth and Kästner and fewer less-well-known authors such as Edel and Mauter—writers, whose work was initially available only in older editions and not always easily accessible. With this selection he documents both the transitory nature of the Potsdamer Platz and the continuity provided by authors familiar to the public. The aim, according to Bellmann, is to present a comprehensive picture of the Potsdamer Platz as sketched by the authors.

With the increasing accessibility of the city, the utility of such anthologies becomes more obvious: *Berlin am Meer* (Berlin on the Ocean), for instance, offers not only poems, essays and prose texts on the city's waterways by established writers but also a service section and a list of addresses.¹⁹

On the other hand, anthologies concerned with specific Berlin phenomena—whether it is the *Berliner Zimmer* (Berlin Room) or a particular district—are more of a long-term investment. In contrast to anthologies that concentrate on a district, the Berlin room in this anthology has once more become a metaphor. This room, an architectural feature in Berlin apartments, may be described as a corridor room. And while many authors actually discuss the unusual features of such a room, others use it to tie in descriptions of other rooms or turn the issue into the starting point for an autobiographical statement that, although still connected to Berlin, could have been made without the help of the reference to the room. In his postscript the editor formalizes the contrast to Bonn and emphasizes the essential quality of Berlin, which the individual contributors seek to illustrate. The editor closes with the familiar Berlin topos:

The Berlin room, this “shadowy link,” this “place of contemplation between noisy rooms,” as Ingeborg Bachmann has called it, is really a transit room. And in this sense, it is an accurate metaphor for a city condemned, as Karl Scheffler noticed as early as 1910, “always to evolve and never to be. (Plath 215)”²⁰

The impossibility of providing a satisfactory answer is ascribed to a basic condition of Berlin's existence—with the help of well-known quotations—while the “declaration of belief in the city” (Bekennntnis zur Stadt) referred to in the subtitle replaces the lack of commitment.

On the other hand, the movement away from the general towards the particular, something not representative of Berlin as a whole, is evident in the following initiative. *Gallery Expo 3000 and Friedrichshainfirst.de* attempted to offer a survey of the literary scene in the district of Friedrichshain, including a survey of the Berlin daily press. The results evidently satisfy the requirements of local patriotism and bring together information on a limited factual topic, information that otherwise would be difficult to come by. Contributions by thirty-four writers of all ages, together with a detailed introduction, provide outsiders with an insight into the district and residents with an impression of how others perceive their surroundings.²¹

The mantra of the post-war years, “Berlin is worth a visit,” is now obsolete. The volume *Berlin* in the series *Europa Erlesen* (Europe—Choice Reading) cannot avoid pointing to the diversity of a city conditioned by historical influences, but in other respects Berlin has regained a sense of normality, joining ranks with cities like Prague, Venice, Trieste and Vienna.²²

In the 90s, voyages of discovery through the city were undertaken on a contemporaneous or historical level and, on occasion, in collections of poetry, certain groups of issues were opened up. *Berlin, mit deinen frechen Feuern* (Berlin with your Cheeky Fires), for instance, embarks on the journey under a series of chapter headings: “Stadt-Gesänge,” “Verkehr in, um und nach Berlin,” “Stadtlandschaften,” and “Die Ex- und Neuhauptstadt” (City Songs, Travel in, around, and to Berlin, The Former Capital and the New Capital). The attraction here is due to the continuity provided by constant change, which makes Berlin unique:

It is hardly surprising that Berlin has not developed that kind of poetic myth familiar to us in London, Paris, or Rome. This is because the history of the former Prussian city has been characterized by rapid change. In 1871 the seat of the Hohenzollern

dynasty was transformed overnight into the capital of the German Empire; after 1945 it was a city divided into four sectors; it then became a constituent *Land* of the Federal Republic of Germany and, simultaneously, the capital of the German Democratic Republic; and, since 1990 it has been the capital of the Federal Republic. Thus, no basic structures, territorial or cultural, have remained constant for any length of time. (Speier 117)²³

The ever-increasing pace of change since the *Wende* provides the theme for *Ecke Friedrichstraße* (The Corner of Friedrichstrasse). The reference to Friedrichstrasse evokes—for Berliners, at least—a wealth of associations: the night-life of the 20s, the division of the city and the subterranean GDR border checkpoint known as the “Tränenpalast” (Palace of Tears). The anthology provides a collection of reports and accounts taken from the Berlin page of the Munich-based *Süddeutsche Zeitung*. As one would expect of a newspaper, it too sees the speed of change as central to the debate—the documentation of change motivates the publication in book-form for future reference: “We attempted to capture the swift pace of change and to record life in this city here and now” (Roll 12).

Only a few years later, both the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* and the *Süddeutsche Zeitung* decided to discontinue these Berlin reports, on financial grounds. At the end of Berlin’s period of transition, interest in reporting the process of change faded abruptly.

Bahnhof Berlin (Berlin Railway Station) also makes use of Berlin’s transitional character. The editor, Katja Lange-Müller, left East Berlin in the 80s to settle in the western part of the city. The thirty-five writers in the anthology present both sides, that of the former GDR and that of the Federal Republic. Many of the authors are well known but in part, at least, their contributions are newly written. And, like Günther in 1929, Lange-Müller stresses that her writers were all still alive at the time of publication:

They are all different but nonetheless lively—and, what is more, all the pieces in this book are written by living writers—these textual pictures, reading voices and literary sounds. These de-

scriptions in prose and poetry of conditions (in the big city, in Berlin), and of the different species of beings that descend on it, inhabit, and leave it . . . memories of arriving and leaving, excursions and emigrations, occasions, meetings, events. (Lange-Müller 267)

Both the contributions and the city itself seem to fulfill the conditions implied in the title:

And since many people can neither fully arrive nor really progress, they are traveling in the railway station itself—Berlin, the mobile station, the transitional as an essential.

In fact, the poems and prose passages collected in *Bahnhof Berlin* share only one thing: they . . . are “grounded” in Berlin. (Lange-Müller 288)²⁴

Thus the supposed lack of ambition emerges as a sustained motif—something that is normally absent from other collections of texts. The picture on the cover, the ruins of the *Anhalter Bahnhof*, is apt: this railway station serves as a poignant reminder of Berlin’s stations at their heyday and of their destruction during World War Two; the *Anhalter Bahnhof* has successfully survived attempts since the *Wende* to smarten it up.

Following Herbert Günther’s lead, the representative character of Berlin as something non-committal is maintained in *Berlin zum Beispiel* (Berlin, for Instance). Although a “literary mosaic” (8) of times and places is promised here, the representative function of the urban is emphasized—thanks to the variety of the contributions—as was the concept of transit earlier:

The fact that this book contains texts by “only” nineteen Berlin writers results from the intention to present the ‘narrated’ city and to allow individual stories their necessary space. . . . The abundance of issues, places, and times presented in this book demonstrates that Berlin; as an example of a ‘narrated’ city, can only ever be a particular example. (Arnold and Jannetzki 9)²⁵

The book contains unpublished texts by writers from east and west who, like Jurek Becker, Ingo Schulze, Monika Maron, Katja Lange-Müller or Klaus Schlesinger were either already familiar names in the 90s or, like Thomas Brussig, were establishing them-

selves on the literary market. Once again, the anthology benefits from the focus on the writer and on history rather than on the city, while the contemporary story and its exemplary character provide cohesion. With the help of these examples certain expectations are also met. And so nothing is left out: a retrospective view of the Nazi past, memories of a GDR youth and of east-west espionage, memories of the *Wende* or a visit to one of the largest inner-city building sites of the 90s, the Potsdamer Platz.

Berlin is timeless as a starting point for topics that could apply anywhere and which, consequently, deal more freely with the big city—for example, crime in the city, the metropolis where adolescents try to find their way, or the city at midnight.²⁶ Under the heading “Die x-te Berlin-Anthologie” “The Umpteenth Berlin Anthology,” Cornelia Geissler pointedly writes about the anthology *Berlin um Mitternacht* (Berlin at Midnight): “This book is well suited to the city, it doesn’t allow you to be happy but it doesn’t make you miserable either” (“Die x-te” 27). The journalist Rüdiger Schaper presents here a motley collection of writers—very few of them Berliners—who show the different scenes in the city at night, partly as fiction, partly as reports. At night, Schaper argues, the contours of the city become clearer—although a little further on he maintains that midnight is the moment of true illusions. More expensively produced, in dark blue to match the nighttime, this publication repeats the credo to be found in most others anthologies:

Where is Berlin, in East or West, in the center of Europe? What is Berlin? This provides Berlin literature with its classical topos: the search for the lost city that has to be reinvented daily. Berlin does not always resemble even Berlin. (Schaper 9)

Thus, as far as most anthologies are concerned, the wheel has come full circle—whether Berlin tells a story²⁷ or authors tell a story about Berlin, whether the authors are well known or new to the market, whether the topic is tangible or the city itself: for the most part, Berlin has become a phenomenon with certain characteristic qualities, but a phenomenon that defies description. This is due to its fragmented history, the atmosphere of new depar-

tures, the particular location or the metropolitan capital itself, as is reflected, for example, in the volumes of lyric poetry. Prefaces and postscripts confirm the hopeless nature of the attempt to reduce the city to a common denominator. Instead, they convey the impression given by many Berlin novels: a fear of leaving out any observation that could be made about the new city.²⁸

V

Some anthologies demonstrate clearly formulated literary ambitions—particularly if they distance themselves from the traditional treatment of Berlin and offer a new perspective. This is the case with a number of younger authors whose formative experience was the *Wende* and not the divided Germany; and, from a thematic standpoint, it is also true of anthologies that make comparisons with other cities.

Significantly, the anthology *Frische Goldjungs* (Gilded Youth) was published not by a journalist but by a creative writer who started out in the Berlin scene giving readings in pubs. Wladimir Kaminer, resident in Berlin since 1990, first made a name for himself with *Russendisko* (Russian Disco), a collection of short stories, and then, by the end of the 90s, went on to become one of the great hopes of the Berlin literary scene. The authors of *Frische Goldjungs* are united by their experience of spontaneous literature, which developed in public readings; moreover, most of them come from the former east. A number of the characteristics that are otherwise typical of anthologies do not apply here. In place of concise descriptions of the authors in the appendix, they briefly introduce themselves before their individual contributions. The emphasis in these introductions is directed more towards creating surprise effects and convictions than on presenting factual information. This may be clearly seen in the example of Jochen Schmidt: he had become known with his book *Triumphgemüse*, a text that is not short of ironic comments about the established literary scene.

Born in Berlin in 1970. Only recently fathomed how to talk to other people. A first volume of stories, *Triumphgemüse*, which

deals with the period beforehand, was published by C. H. Beck. Anyone who now says "If he can do it I can too" is probably right. (Schmidt 31)

In place of the obligatory introduction or postscript, four authors contribute jointly to the preface, in which their common literary experience, an inter-related and ironically viewed experience, is the main focus, rather than the attempt to link the stories as one whole statement:

A rumor has been spreading in the city for some time now: the new German literature has emerged from somewhere in the ghettos of Berlin. It leaves tracks everywhere and teases the journalists. . . . Journalists from *Der Spiegel* encounter it in the Kalkscheune in Berlin Mitte while *Tagesspiegel* people suddenly come across it in a pub in Friedrichshain. Young German literature casts its shadow over everything but does not reveal its true face. . . . It would make no sense to list all the authors by name in this brief preface because most of them are hardly known anyway. (Kaminer 7f.)

The significance of the writers' common experience of giving readings in pubs provides the texts with a certain unity in the sense that it functions as a distinguishing feature. In the second preface Jakob Hein takes a decisive stance against the established literary world:

Recently, I have had to visit many other literary events, for professional reasons The audience looked strained, there was an important task for them to do. Most of the texts were, as Lichtenberg once put it, "a picnic for which the author supplies the words and the reader the meaning." During one of those discussions I asked a question about the honesty of the texts. I could not have cracked a better joke. (Hein 10)

These young writers lay a certain claim to storytelling. At the center of their work is everyday life with its general appeal, everyday life that needs no explanation.

The next generation's ambitions can also be seen in *Die Stadt nach der Mauer* (The City after the Wall). Once again, the editors, who have already been mentioned (Becker and Janetzki), are not

journalists but people active within the framework of the *Literarisches Colloquium Berlin* and in the promotion of literature. The seventeen authors whom they brought together, born for the most part in the 60s, are reckoned among the promising new generation of writers in Germany and, in particular, in Berlin. In the last few years, Judith Hermann, Tim Staffell, and Inka Parei, for instance, have succeeded in attracting favorable critical attention with their stories and novels. Their background is different from that of the spontaneous literature mentioned earlier. The contributions of these writers, Berliners mostly by choice rather than by birth, are extracts from planned publications, dubbed by the editors “work in progress, city in progress.” The editors’ intention was to show the change in the perception of Berlin among those people who had experienced the Wall but had not begun writing until after its fall:

We wanted to add to the many Berlin anthologies one up-to-date publication that would point beyond the year 2000. We asked for contributions from writers who, we thought, would be mentioned in future discussions of present-day Berlin and its literature. (Becker and Janetzki 9f.)²⁹

As in *Frische Goldjungs* this publication does not attempt to take Berlin’s particular characteristics into account—instead, the collection emphasizes new literary approaches and Berlin as a modern habitat. Particularly striking are contributions that abandon the usual pattern: Ingo Schramm’s “Virtual Megacity; Release Berlin” and Judith Hermann’s “Regenviertel” have features of science-fiction, while other contributions contrast Berlin with Munich, Vienna, the provinces (Steffen Kopetzky), and the past (Micha Schmidt). This approach is further emphasized by the cover design: building cranes point to the Berlin of reconstruction and construction on the one hand, while, on the other hand, the inset color photograph displays not one of the symbols of Berlin, such as the Brandenburg Gate or the Berlin bear, but the urban wasteland behind *Tacheles*, the alternative arts center in Berlin Mitte, a derelict site, home to gutted Trabant cars.

Some of the authors represented in these anthologies—Wladimir Kaminer, Tim Staffel—also contributed to the project *Dokumente aus Babel* (Documents from Babel). Two features, the chaotic variety associated with Babel and the reference to the twenty-six “snapshots” that presuppose changeability as a characteristic of the city, suggest the noncommittal attitude that had already defined the other examples of writers who were young but quickly establishing themselves. Berlin is no longer an issue; in the editors’ words, it is a “backdrop” (Casper 5). Writers from a wide variety of places have created a collage of the city that renounces a common concept but selects the status quo of Berlin as an *urban* habitat. This approach recalls Günther’s attempt in 1929: the wish to capture the city as an “event” with the help of living authors and to comprehend this approach from the writers’ point of view rather than from that of the city.

Sehnsucht Berlin (Longing for Berlin) is a publication that combines approaches such as these, while distinguishing between different relations to the city.

And it was these projected images [of Berlin], these private movies, we were asking for; we approached younger and older authors, Berliners and non-Berliners, Berlin-haters and Berlin-lovers, those who remembered Berlin as it was and those with nostalgic memories of East Berlin. (Sorg and Brüns 7)³⁰

The anthology is divided into three chapters with headings that recall film titles and towns, “Berlin, mi amor,” “Wo bitte, geht’s nach Mitte” (Show me the way to Berlin-Mitte) and “In weiter Ferne so nah” (Far Away So Close). In this way the anthology presents Berlin as the projected image of the older or younger observer, while each illusion can be assigned to a certain direction. Berlin as a literary montage of “films,” as it were, is typical of the transition years: diverging attempts, such as the anchoring of the city in past, present, or future and the juxtaposition of different generations. While reviews of anthologies are usually undertaken with a certain amount of impatience, this publication has at least been called an “honest anthology” (“Ertrunken” 25).

From here it is but one small step to anthologies that use the interrelations between cities in order to indicate common ground and differences. Berlin's town planners found comparing towns particularly interesting at the beginning of the 90s when they looked outside Berlin to find the best concept for the renewal of the wasteland in the city center; and at the same time, cities were perceived as the determining factors of the twenty-first century to come. *Traumstadtbuch* (Dream City Book) takes this idea as a starting point and looks at Berlin, New York, and Moscow. The town, this *particular space*, is now seen as something that can be read, a collection of pictures, texts and codes that make up an "urbanely fragmented reality." Accordingly, pictures are placed next to a variety of different texts, so that the montage concept works on two levels: the juxtaposition of ways of life in the cities, together with the similarities and the differences between the three cities. In so doing, the editors presuppose that there is an element common to Berlin, New York, and Moscow: all three are a village and a metropolis at the same time and are therefore, as the editors claim, the interface of two eras. The montage concept provides the link: "In this way a literary 'megalopolis' is planned outside the city boundaries in which the three cities can redraw their boundaries anew (Bönt, Vaihinger and Sasse 5f.)."³¹

While in *Traumstadtbuch* the perspective of these authors on the spot is essential, in *Moskau, Berlin, Stereogramme* (Moscow, Berlin, Stereogram Images) the reciprocal perspective of the two cities is all-important. The anthology is based on a project of the same name in which eleven Russian and German authors took part. Referring to Hermann von Helmholtz, the editor describes the methodology on which the project is based:

"The natural truth of stereograms and the liveliness with which they portray the physical shape is, indeed, so great that some objects with which one is familiar in stereoscopic pictures do not appear to be unknown or even half-known if one later faces them in reality." The task was to look at Berlin and Moscow simultaneously and, by means of this extended perspective, to create stereograms, snapshots of unusual depth of field and high density. We set off to tackle the job. (Spengler 7)

Once again, snapshots are the central idea but in this case they form part of the traveling experience, an experience that opens the perspective for strange elements through its reference to known ones. The project character of such approaches presupposes communication; instead of a more or less skilled accumulation of known and unknown texts, this anthology is indeed “complete.”

VI

The flood of Berlin anthologies is manifest and is treated with a certain fatigue in reviews in the local press. Nevertheless, they allow new writers to make their contribution, they are attempts to make the city accessible, and it is obvious that Berlin has a variety of topics to offer to a diverse group of people. Possibly as a result of the return of urban normality, the anthologies of works by younger writers in particular emphasize the temporary as opposed to the transitional.

It is certainly no coincidence that Walther Ruttmann’s documentary classic *Berlin—Die Sinfonie der Großstadt* from 1927 (Berlin—The Symphony of the City) has recently been given a remake; the observation of patterns of life in post-*Wende* Berlin is of renewed interest.³² At the same time most anthologies aim to take their readers by the hand and lead them through the cities within the city—not dissimilar to the pop-ups of the *Berlin-Paket*; this manifests itself particularly in the view beyond the city boundaries. More than anything else anthologies of Berlin’s transitional years show the editors’ sense of their duty to chronicle a status quo and to capture the city’s position. The interchangeability of many of the prefaces and postscripts quoted here, the repertoire of definitions, makes it clear that there is unanimity about the problematic nature of the topic. The attraction of Berlin anthologies of the 90s will doubtless become obvious retrospectively in view of the documentation they provide about a certain era and the information they give about the authors—in the same way as Günther’s panorama of the Weimar Republic and Richter’s lament for West Berlin.

Notes

1 On the subject of the boom in Berlin literature, compare also Eberhard Fromm, "Berlin-Bücher ohne Ende?" in: *Berliner Lesezeichen*, ed. Bundesministerium für Bildung, Wissenschaft, Forschung und Technologie, volume 9 (1995), 6-9.

2 In 1999, for example, there was still a service provided by *Berlin.online* listing Berlin anthologies separately—17 at the time.

3 Consider the following examples: *Berlin ist ein Gedicht*, ed. Peter Geißler (Frankfurt a.M.: Fischer, 2001) shows the bear, the heraldic animal of Berlin—it is depicted here as a down-at-heel tramp. In contrast to this, the associations evoked by the picture on the cover of *Berlin im Gedicht* are wholly unambiguous: Loeillot's lithograph of 'The Brandenburg Gate around 1850' will easily be recognized by most; *Berlin im Gedicht*, ed. Jutta Rosenkranz (Husum: Husum Druck- und Verlagsgesellschaft, 1987). *Ecke Friedrichstraße: Ansichten über Berlin*, ed. Evelyn Roll (Munich: Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag, 1997) at first glance seems to present the topic of the big city with an anonymous busy street, but the locality, Friedrichstrasse, can be more closely defined because of the inclusion of the underground station *Französische Strasse*. It is, however, worth noting, that the *Süddeutsche Zeitung* in which the contributions to this anthology first appeared, has its office here.

4 Alfred Kerr, *Aus dem Tagebuch eines Berliners* (Frankfurt: Fischer, 1999); Siegfried Kracauer, *Berliner Nebeneinander: Ausgewählte Feuilletons 1930-33* (Zürich: Edition Epoca, 1998); Walther Kiaulehn, *Berlin: Schicksal einer Weltstadt* (Munich: Beck, 1997); *Joseph Roth in Berlin: Ein Lesebuch für Spaziergänger*, ed. Michael Bienert (Cologne: Kiepenheuer & Witsch, 1996).

5 Similar to this is: Wilfried F. Schoeller, *Nach Berlin! Reportagen* (Frankfurt a.M.: Schöffling, 1999). Among the editors of contributions to the topic Berlin—in particular the Berlin of the building-site years—there are often authors who are no Berlin specialists but who have written on a wide range of other specialist topics.

6 See for example, Friedrich Dieckmann, *Wege durch Mitte: Stadterfahrungen* (Berlin: Berlin Verlag, 1995) and Heinz Knobloch, *Stadtmitte umsteigen: Geschichten aus dem Osten Berlins* (Berlin: Jaron Verlag, 2002). A similarly personal picture of Berlin is depicted by

Charlotte von Mahlsdorf, *Ab durch die Mitte: Ein Spaziergang durch Berlin* (Munich: Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag, 1997).

7 See, for example: László F. Földenyi, *Ein Foto aus Berlin: Essays 1991-1994*, trans. Hans Skirecki (Munich: Matthes & Seitz, 1996); Jane Kramer, *Eine Amerikanerin in Berlin: Ethnologische Spaziergänge*, trans. Elke Geisel (Berlin: Verlag Klaus Bittermann, 1993). Magazines such as "du" and "Freibeuter" also devoted special editions to the topic, with the help primarily of town planners, architects and writers. Up-market travel magazines such as *Merian* (1998: Berlin) normally include a number of short stories with the aim of making the reader more familiar with the city.

8 One of the authors, Christiane Landgrebe, is the editor of numerous books on current Berlin topics.

9 The first volume, *Welt über dem Wasserspiegel*, received a favorable response. The second volume chooses Berlin as a "secret addressee." Thirty-three authors from all five continents contributed to this anthology of lyric poetry, *An den Toren einer unbekannten Stadt: Berliner Anthologie*, ed. Ulrich Schreiber and Beatrice Faßbender (Berlin: Alexander Verlag, 2002).

10 Bellmann's and Holtz-Baumerts's articles first appeared in the newspapers *Berliner Morgenpost* and *Neues Deutschland*. It is worth noting that by 2003 newspapers handed the initiative for exploring the town to their readers. In conjunction with eight city walks, for example, *Der Tagesspiegel* encouraged its readers in autumn 2003 to write about their own experiences, while the *Berliner Wochenblatt* and the *Spandauer Volksblatt* published the anthology *Verliebt in Berlin. Geschichten zwischen Lust und Leid* (Norderstedt: Book on Demand BoD/GmbH, 2003).

11 The following books are examples for each category mentioned. Prenzlauer Berg: *Durchgangszimmer Prenzlauer Berg: Eine Berliner Künstlersozialgeschichte in Selbstauskünften*, ed. Barbara Felsmann and Annett Gröschner (Berlin: Lukas, 1999). In an introductory comment (7-19), the publisher Frank Böttcher sees the publication also as a protest against the presence of too many newcomers in the area: "(It is) a report about the boring normality of a still special life, which years later turned into a myth and today has all but disappeared behind it." Ultimately, this means a broadening of the approach adopted by Irina Liebmann, who even before the *Wende* had pub-

lished a collection of conversation transcripts: Irina Liebmann, *Berliner Mietshaus* (Berlin: Berliner Taschenbuch Verlag, 2001). Palast der Republik: *Von Erichs Lampenladen zur Asbestruine: Alles über den Palast der Republik*, ed. Kirsten Heidler (Berlin: Argon, 1998). 9 November 1989: One excellent documentation by two journalists should be mentioned amongst the mass of reminiscences: *Mein 9. November: Der Tag, an dem die Mauer fiel*, ed. Hans-Hermann Hertle and Kathrin Elsner (Berlin: Nicolai 1990). The book appeared in connection with an ARD television documentary broadcast on 9 November 1999. It takes a consciously open point of view—the editors mention in the introduction that they intend to “throw some light” on the topic (7). Westalgia: In this publication too a journalist has attempted to present the documentation in the form of interviews with contemporary witnesses: *West-Berlin! Westberlin! Berlin (West)! Die Kultur—die Szene—die Politik: Erinnerungen an eine Teilstadt der 70er und 80er Jahre*, ed. Olaf Leitner (Berlin: Schwarzkopf & Schwarzkopf, 2002). The editor describes his attempt as the “addition of the subjective” (9).

12 An anthology dealing with aspects of architecture and townplanning is *Berlin! Berlin!*, ed. Thies Schröder (Berlin: Dirk Nishen, 1995).

13 Volumes in praise of Berlin present an alternative to the topical linking: “Hommage à . . . Berlin,” for example, was the title of the exhibition (and the catalogue) in the Museum Mitte (December 2002–February 2003) which showed exhibits by sixty-two artists, under the aegis of the *Verein Berliner Künstler*.

14 Compare: Christel Berger, “Zum Kontext der Anthologie *Von Abraham bis Zwerenz*,” in: *Berliner Lesezeichen* 4 (1996): *Literatur der Wende—kann Literatur zur geistig-kulturellen Einheit beitragen?*, 13.

15 Rada refers to Renée Zucker, *Berlin ist anderswo* (Berlin: Rowohlt, 1995).

16 The anthology fell victim to the so-called Nazi cultural policy in the burning of the books on the *Opernplatz* in Berlin in 1933; the first new edition was published in the 1960s.

17 The anthology *Berlin zum Beispiel*, ed. Hannes Schwenger (Berlin: Staneck, 1964) was also written in a political key. It has to be seen as an anthology of the united Berlin; the contributions consist of examples of lyric poetry, prose and the graphic arts.

18 Endler finds little to attract him in the genre itself (see 130).

19 A review of the anthology (*Berliner Zeitung*, 21 June 2000) criticizes the numerous printing errors—a complaint that could justly be extended to other anthologies. The publishers' prime consideration was that this was the right time for it to appear on the market. The title of the anthology alludes to the paintings "Berlin am Meer" (1946) by Werner Heldt. A comparable anthology is *Berlin, wo es am schönsten ist—101 neue Lieblingsplätze*, ed. Klaus Siebenhaar (Berlin: Bostelmann & Siebenhaar, 2001); the first part had to be content with a mere "99 favorite spots."

20 The authors include, amongst others, gallery owners, journalists, artists, and academics.

21 Compare: Verena S. Diehl, Jörg Sundermeier, and Werner Lalisch eds., *Mittebuch* (Berlin: Verbrecher Verlag, 2002) and Jörg Sundermeier, Verena S. Diehl, and Werner Lalisch, eds., *Kreuzbergbuch* (Berlin: Verbrecher Verlag 2002). An anthology focusing on the district Neukölln is still to appear.

22 The editor Helmuth A. Niederle especially points out the difficulty of choice in the face of the quantity of material available. See in particular the postscript (251-55). Holger Wolandt, editor of literary anthologies, adds yet another historical perspective encouraging readers to explore Berlin: Holger Wolandt, ed., *Einmal Ku'damm und zurück: Das große Berlin-Lesebuch* (Munich: Droemer Knaur, 2003).

23 A forerunner of this anthology had already appeared before the *Wende*: Hans-Michael Speier, ed., *Berlin! Berlin! Eine Großstadt im Gedicht* (Stuttgart: Reclam, 1987). The division into chapters can be compared to the 'poetic walk' following central motives in the series *Regionalia*, which also treats other topics, such as childhood memoirs and Christmas stories from Berlin. See for example *Berlin im Gedicht: Gedichte aus 200 Jahren*, ed. Jutta Rosenkranz (Husum: Husum Druck- und Verlagsgesellschaft, 1992).

24 Although relevant for Berlin, Ingo Schulze's contribution to this anthology, "Zwei Frauen, ein Kind, Terry, das Monstrum und der Elefant," makes the limited value of excerpts from novels clear. Unlike in *Simple Stories: Ein Roman aus der ostdeutschen Provinz* (Berlin: Berlin-Verlag, 1998), where the material was combined to form a harmonious whole, it remains fragmented here.

25 Both editors, Arnold and Janetzki, work for the Literarisches Colloquium, Berlin. A review of this anthology appeared in *Zitty, Berliner Stadtmagazin* 22 (1997), 78.

26 Anthologies with "criminal topics": *Der Bär schießt los: Criminale Geschichten aus der Hauptstadt*, ed. Karl Michael Stöppler (Berlin: Rotbuch, 1998). The anthology summarizes the contributions to the twelfth "Criminale," a conference of German, Austrian, and Swiss writers. Similar to this is: Thea Dorn, Frank Goyke, Heiner Lau, eds., *Berlin Noir* (Berlin: Rotbuch, 1997). The only real link between people is provided here by the S-Bahn (suburban railway). Anthologies for adolescents: *Berlin? Berlin! Storys und mehr*, ed. Katharina Diestelmeyer (Ravensburg: Ravensburger Buchverlag, 2001). Most of the writers are comparatively young; the alternative perspective is interesting here, because it is about the lives of young people who live not in districts associated with the fashionable Berlin scene, such as Berlin Mitte, but on the edge of the city and in the back yards. Authors who usually remain unheard but meet regularly can be found in Rainer Stolz, Stephan Gürtler, eds., *Feuer bitte: Berliner Gedichte über die Liebe* (Berlin: Dahlemer Verlagsanstalt, n.d.).

27 The title is used in: *Berlin erzählt: 19 Erzählungen*, ed. Uwe Wittstock (Frankfurt a.M.: Fischer, 1991). The attempt to understand or describe the city is abandoned; its history serves here as a matrix. Ingrid Grimm uses a similar principle, without preface or post-script, with authors such as Glassbrenner, Döblin, Mehring, Fontane, Heine, Tucholsky, Uris and Ören: *Berliner Geschichten*, ed. Ingrid Grimm (Munich: Heyne, 1986).

28 This phenomenon becomes obvious if, for example, one compares two novels published in 1999. Both Cees Nooteboom's *Allerseelen* and Peter Schneider's *Eduards Heimkehr* link the story of their protagonists to that of the city—whether it be the role of the visible or invisible past with which they still have to come to terms, new building developments, urban topography, the Wall, or the contrast between metropolis and province in general. Cees Nooteboom, *Allerseelen*, trans. from Dutch into German by Helga von Beuningen (Frankfurt a.M.: Suhrkamp, 1999) and Peter Schneider, *Eduards Heimkehr* (Berlin: Rowohlt Berlin, 1999).

29 The review in the *Tagesspiegel* (22 October 1998) points out the pessimism of the young authors but recognizes the presentation of

30 In accordance with the overall approach of the anthology, the more or less Berlin-specific photos are an integral part of the publication.

31 The contributions are provided mainly by writers who were born in the 60s and 70s and who come from the most diverse backgrounds.

32 The view of the city from the outside through the eyes of foreigners provides these attempts with a further facet as, for example, in *Abends um Acht: Schweizer Autorinnen und Autoren in Berlin*, ed. Beatrice von Matt and Michael Wirth (Zürich/Hamburg: Arche, 1998) and *Dies ist eine wahre Geschichte: Neuseeländische Autoren in Berlin*, ed. DAAD Berliner Künstlerprogramm and Goethe Institut/Internationales Wellington (Berlin: 2002). For the interest in Berlin outside Germany see, for example: *Berlin—Anthologie littéraire*, ed. Ingrid Ernst (Paris: Quai Voltaire, 1993). The anthology includes texts from several centuries.

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