

networks that could “push” or “pull” desired informants into Western hands. A particularly vivid case takes Allen to the Archive of the Security Services in Prague. The source material illuminates all manner of Cold War fates, pointing the way toward a social history of border-crossers. Other scholars are beginning to pursue such avenues as well, such as Jeannette van Laak in her 2017 *Habilitation (Einrichten im Übergang. Das Aufnahmelager Gießen 1946-1990)*.

Allen’s main contribution is to deepen the institutional history of the security state in West Germany, a locus of intensive research over the past decade. He breaks considerable new ground by documenting the internal workings of “Joint Interrogation Centers,” known in German as “Befras” (*Befragungsstellen*). As Allen points out, salacious stories about the Befras did make headlines in West Germany from time to time, leading to angry condemnations in the Bundestag. But they have yet to feature prominently in political history narratives, and Allen’s monograph advances the rewriting of the Federal Republic as initiated by Josef Foschepoth in his pathbreaking study *Überwachtes Deutschland. Post- und Telefonüberwachung in der alten Bundesrepublik* (2012). Given the continuities that mark West German administrative procedures across the decades, Allen is surely right to wonder whether comparable interrogation practices have been foisted upon the latest wave of migrants, namely, the refugees from Syria, Afghanistan, and elsewhere.

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doi:10.1017/S0008938918000481

*Cultural Topographies of the New Berlin*. Edited by Karin Bauer and Jennifer Ruth Hosek. New York: Berghahn Books, 2018. Pp. ix + 411. Cloth \$120.00. ISBN: 978-1785337208.

Recent developments in Berlin continue to inspire a flood of research and publications, and aspects of the fascination with Berlin can be gleaned from a compendium of work by many scholars. This collection of fifteen essays, with a substantial introduction, is not fundamentally a work of history: few of the twenty contributors are trained in the field. It can better be classified under the heading of “cultural studies.” The contributors claim roots in several disciplines, but most were trained in German literature, and many of the essays examine Berlin sites through the lenses of novels, graphic novels, comics, and film. The historical events they discuss reach back only to the 1990s. Major structural developments since then, such as gentrification and changing real estate and labor markets, receive passing reference, particularly in terms of their effect on artists, but contributors do not claim to analyze them. The same is true of ethnic change and its political repercussions. The book probably would not serve well as an introduction to Berlin culture, much less to its history: it offers more a meta-narrative than a narrative of the developments in post-Wall Berlin.

The title phrase “cultural topographies” offers the reader little guidance, but it does suggest the central role of urban places in the various essays. And the resonance of Berlin’s history echoes throughout them. Disputes over sites with a deeper history are the central topic of one essay, the book’s most historical: Stefanie Eisenhuth and Scott H. Krause on echoes of the Cold War at Checkpoint Charlie, the Stasi headquarters in the

Normannenstrasse, and Tempelhof Airport. Several of the other essays discuss one or more historically “burdened” or controversial sites, most but not all of them well-known: the Brandenburg Gate, the proposed National Freedom and Unity Monument, the Palace of the Republic, the Pallasstrasse bunker, Teufelsberg, and the former Jewish girls’ school on Auguststrasse. The authors of the last essay, Ayse N. Erek and Eszter Gantner, argue that its simplified repackaging, along with official promotion of other arts venues, reveal that “history is disappearing” from Berlin’s “self-image” and that art “replaces history as the city’s master discourse” (194). Several other essays also place their discussions of art, film, and literature in the context of tourism, marketing, and branding, but are less inclined to discount the efforts of grassroots initiatives by artists or activists to call attention to neglected sites and their histories. Still others touch on less geographically specific loci of Berlin memory, such as *Wohngemeinschaften*, squatting, and artists’ lofts.

The immigrant experience in the new Berlin, a topic often neglected in discussions of fraught national identity, receives substantial treatment in Barış Ülker’s case study of an “ethnic entrepreneur,” as well as in three essays on literary topics that call attention to the lack of connection between immigrant experiences and the signposts of German national identity in Berlin. As Marike Janzen observes in an analysis of Berlin’s International Literature Festival, “the transnational ties that have long characterized migrant life in Berlin do not find representation in an official discourse about the city’s global openness” (277). The kind of analysis that she misses is found in Christiane Steckenbiller’s essay on Emine Sevgi Özdamar’s 2003 novel, *Seltsame Sterne starren zur Erde*, whose Turkish-German narrator crosses cultural boundaries in the city.

Two essays look at a recent influx of Israeli immigrants: one by Hila Amit on the revival of Hebrew, and another by Hadas Cohen and Dani Kranz on how Berlin Israelis rethink their national identities. The very presence of this Israeli community marks a fascinating new chapter in German-Jewish relations, but its growth and dynamics seem to tell us more about tensions in Israeli society than about Berlin. Nor does this immigrant community have much in common with the larger numbers of poor immigrants from Muslim lands: it more resembles the substantial population of youthful and underemployed immigrants from European Union countries.

In their introduction, the editors suggest connections among the essays’ treatment of civic engagement and ethnic diversity, among other topics. Presumably at the editors’ instigation, the individual essays make frequent reference to one another, and indeed several sites and controversies surface in more than one. The drawback of this collection, however, is that most of the contributors stake their own theoretical claims, grounded in signposts of one discipline or another while name-checking theorists rarely mentioned in any other essay (notable exceptions: Andreas Huyssen and the ubiquitous Walter Benjamin). These theoretical frameworks, often abstract and jargon-laden, take shape differently in every essay, and readers would be hard-pressed to apply one essay’s framework or theorists to any of the other essays. The result, for the reader, is the task of absorbing over and over a new (or at least partly new) set of terms and reference points. For all the insights into Berlin culture offered here, readers who seek to build a broader understanding of Berlin will face a challenge.

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doi:10.1017/S000893891800050X