

Representing Localities in Urban Culture in Birgit Weyhe's Graphic Novel *Madgermanes*

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The representation of the aesthetic and political dimensions of the city in the case of comics as a medium touches on a range of issues, from the relationship between comics and street art as well as the representation of urban space and popular culture as identity-shaping factors. Birgit Weyhe's graphic novel *Madgermanes* (2016) shows us a specific historical context: after the construction of the Berlin Wall in 1961, labor force was also needed in East Berlin, as a result of which the leadership invited cheap manpower from communist-oriented countries such as Vietnam, Cuba, Angola, or Mozambique. A total of around 15,000 guest worker immigrants arrived from the latter country in East Berlin within a decade. Three of them are the protagonists of the examined graphic novel, where their story of integration difficulties, coping practices about finding a home, and rootlessness is told. During the process of acculturation explored in the genre of comics, the focus of pictorial representation is on the contrast between cultures and the identity crisis. In this particular graphic novel, this cultural shock is present through the popular and urban culture of the 1970s and 1980s, in the built heritage, political posters, lifestyle, music, records, performers, clothing, etc. In this paper, we examine how this comic intersects representations of locality, everyday life, and urban space with the perceptions and experiences of interculturality and media culture.

Keywords: East Berlin, Graphic Novel, *Madgermanes*, Mozambique, popular culture, urban culture