

**Articles**

**‘Berlin – A City “Condemned to Forever Become and Never to Be”’, in *The Cultural Identity of European Cities*, edited by Katia Pizzi and Godela Weiss-Sussex (Bern: Lang, 2008).**

Since the fall of the Wall, there has been a strong drive by the city government, by policy forums, individual thinkers and marketing campaigners to search for or construct a new image and identity for the re-united city. One, if not the main, aspect highlighted in this image construction has been Berlin’s significance as a city of culture. The public discourse on Berlin cultural identity has focused on two lines of argument in particular: firstly, the characterisation of Berlin as a city of constant flux and self-re-invention and with an orientation to the future; and secondly, the attempt to conjure up a second ‘golden’ metropolitan age through the insistence on parallels and continuities between the 1920s and the post-1990 era. This essay discusses both discourse strategies and their limitations, and offers a suggestion for a third way of approaching the cultural definition of Berlin by reference to the city’s literary history.