

The lecture contrasts Kracauer's scattered urban miniatures, collected in the 1960s under the title „Straßen in Berlin und anderswo“, with those of Benjamin's Einbahnstrasse, both distinct contributions to a mode of modernist feuilleton writing in the Baudelairean tradition. The modernist miniature emerged as an experimental literary space that could test new metropolitan perceptions in the context of the rise of new technological image media and of the breakdown of boundaries between the visual and verbal arts. Benjamin's miniatures are related to the baroque medium of the emblem, which combined language and image, while Kracauer's texts are discussed

in relation to the snapshot photograph. Significantly, neither writer supplements his texts with images and both first published many of these short prose pieces in the feuillets of urban papers before collecting them into book format.

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His books include „After the Great Divide: Modernism, Mass Culture, Postmodernism“ (1986), „Postmoderne - Zeichen eines kulturellen Wandels“, co-ed. with Klaus Scherpe (1986), „Modernity and the Text: Revisions of German Modernism“, co-ed. with David Bathrick (1989), „Twilight Memories: Marking Time in a Culture of Amnesia“ (1995), and „Present Pasts: Urban Palimpsests and the Politics of Memory“ (2003). Editor, most recently, of „Other Cities, Other Worlds: Urban Imaginaries in a Globalizing Age“ (2008). His work has been translated into many languages world-wide.



Lecture

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The Urban Miniature
and the Feuilleton
in Kracauer and Benjamin

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in English

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