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Sommario/riassunto	In 1989 news broadcasts all over the world were dominated for weeks by images of East Germans crossing the Berlin Wall to West Germany. But what did the East Germans expect to find when they excitedly broke through the Wall? And what did they actually find when they made it over to the other side? This study draws on fifteen months of research into both the lives of East Germans before the fall of communism and their fast-changing world after they embraced capitalism. Grounded in powerful anthropological insights, Milena Veenis argues persuasively

that national identifications and the bond between state and citizenry in both East and West Germany over the past twenty years has been shaped by the far-fetched, socialist and capitalist promises of consumption as the road to ultimate well-being. These promises also functioned as a way to cover up the more shameful and dirty aspects of both countries history and social life.

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