



EINBLICK INS GEHEIME

„BLICK IN EINEN ZERRSPIEGEL“
"LOOKING IN A DISTORTING MIRROR"

**DER FALL GILBERT RADULOVIC
IN DEN STASI-UNTERLAGEN**

**THE CASE OF GILBERT RADULOVIC
IN THE STASI RECORDS**

**DIE VORGESCHICHTE:
„... SAGEN, WAS MAN DENKT“**
"PROCEEDING: ... SPEAKING YOUR MIND"

**DER FALL:
„... ZUR KLÄRUNG EINES
SACHVERHALTS“**
"THE CASE: ... TO CLARIFY A MATTER"

**DIE FOLGEN:
„... MIT DEM VORSATZ,
DER DDR ZU SCHADEN“**
"CONSEQUENCES: ... WITH THE
INTENTION OF HARMING THE GDR"

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ACCESS TO SECRECY
EXHIBITION ON THE
STASI RECORDS ARCHIVE

This catalogue to the permanent exhibition "Access to Secrecy" sheds light on the bureaucratic information system, working methods and everyday tasks of the Stasi. It also offers insight into the current work of the Stasi Records Archive, which preserves for future generations the files left behind by the State Security, thereby assuring that they remain accessible to the people who were personally affected by the Stasi as well as to the broader public.

The following pages provide an overview of all the topics addressed in the exhibition, from the establishment of the Stasi Records Archive to the Stasi's extensive indexing system and the vast and varied records it left behind. Furthermore, the single case of a person directly targeted by the Stasi is presented in the catalogue and demonstrates the effects of Stasi surveillance.

In addition to historical photos showing the everyday work and surveillance measures of the Stasi, the catalogue also contains reprints of original documents from the Stasi Records Archive. All the exhibition objects, most of which are presented to the public for the first time, are listed in the catalogue appendix with detailed information on the sources and picture credits. The catalogue includes a preface addressing the origins and development of the exhibition concept, an epilogue on the history of the former Stasi headquarters site where the exhibition is presented, and photos providing an impression of the construction phase of the exhibition. The colour photographs allow readers to experience the exhibition and room atmosphere without personally visiting the site or exhibition. Thus, they too can become acquainted with the mission and work of the Stasi Records Archive.

Access to Secrecy

Exhibition on the Stasi Records Archive



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GREETING

The Bureaucracy of Repression – Access to Secrecy

“Where is my file?” was scrawled on a wall at the Stasi headquarters in January 1990. Today a photograph of this graffiti adorns the entrance to “Access to Secrecy”, the exhibition on the Stasi Records Archive. Where is my file? That was the question citizens cried out to the Stasi during the Peaceful Revolution.

After forty years of surveillance by the GDR Ministry for State Security, people wanted access to the files that the Stasi had compiled on them. But a revolution would have to occur before they gained access to this information. In the autumn of 1989, people took to the streets to liberate themselves from the SED’s one-party dictatorship and to assert their democratic rights. Part of this liberation entailed retrieving the secret information collected by the Stasi. When the GDR secret police set about destroying documents, courageous citizens occupied the offices, putting an end to the Stasi’s destructive activities. What began in the districts of the GDR on 4 December 1989, reached a climax at the Ministry’s headquarters in Berlin on 15 January 1990.

Repression – Revolution – Reflection. This triad describes the historical site of the former Stasi headquarters. The site where the repression was organized for forty years now exists as the “Campus for Democracy” and stands for an examination of this history and what it means for society today.

Together with the ASTAK association, the civil society initiative which runs the Stasi Museum with the exhibition “State Security in the SED Dictatorship”, and with the Robert Havemann Society/Archive of the GDR Opposition, which created the open-air exhibition “Revolution and the Fall of the Wall”, the Stasi Records Archive, as a federal institution, presents its exhibition on the archive and invites visitors to engage in a discourse on the past and present, and on dictatorship and democracy.

The vast amount of information collected by the Stasi, sometimes described as a “monument of surveillance”, can now be viewed at the historical site in Berlin-Lichtenberg. The files represent a state’s decision to interfere in the lives of people who refused to accept the precepts of the single ruling party. The files document rebellion and repression, contradiction and obedience, resistance and the bureaucracy of suppressing human rights.

With the exhibition “Access to Secrecy”, we wish to convey the uniqueness of the archive and unveil what the files contain. We show how the Stasi officers organized the oppression of people from their desks: an index card used to register someone grew into an “action plan” for persecution and in the end, the person landed in prison. But we also explain how Stasi documents are used today to give people clarity about their own lives and to give society a chance to address what happened.

By looking into a past dictatorship, we can sensitize ourselves to shaping democracy today. With this in mind, we appreciate your interest!

Roland Jahn, Federal Commissioner for the Stasi Records
April 2020

FOREWORD

The First Permanent Exhibition on the Stasi Records

More than 111 linear kilometres of files, 41 million index cards, 1.8 million photographs, some 25,000 video, film and audio recordings, and approximately 15,500 bags of torn documents – these dimensions alone give an idea of just how extraordinary the Stasi Records Archive, where these huge amounts of records left behind by the Stasi are stored, actually is. Now, for the first time, a separate permanent exhibition has been created that focuses specifically on this archive. The exhibition describes its establishment, mission and work methods and makes this “monument of surveillance” tangible to the public.

The sheer mass of surviving documents impressively bears witness to the GDR's surveillance system and spying operations that allowed it to monitor millions of people. But how was this huge collection of data created in the first place? Why and how did the GDR secret police, also known as the State Security, or Stasi, collect, store, link and process all this information? Why do the files still exist today, what do they contain and what can they show us? How are they preserved and how are we dealing with them today?

The exhibition “Access to Secrecy”, which opened on 16 June 2018, explores these questions and the story behind the Stasi Records Archive, its significance for the present and how this unusual collection of documents came to exist. The permanent exhibition of the Federal Commissioner for the Records of the State Security Service of the Former GDR (BStU) is presented on the grounds of the former Stasi headquarters in the Berlin district of Lichtenberg. It provides in-depth information about the archive, the collection stored there, and the archival work with Stasi documents.

Do we need another exhibition about the Stasi?

Some observers might ask: Thirty years after the political upheaval in the GDR and the reunification of Germany, do we really need another exhibition about the Stasi? After all this time, should we still be dealing with the difficult legacy of a system that has long since disappeared? And younger generations may ask: What does this have to do with me?

A review of the debate about the SED dictatorship and State Security shows that three decades of legal and political reappraisal lie behind us. Through this process it was discovered that prominent people in politics and society served as Stasi informants; Stasi cronyism was exposed and public discussions were ignited over concepts such as the “unjust state”. In addition, historians conducted intense research on the history of the GDR, the structures of the SED state and the role of State Security. From today's perspective, it may seem as if we have already asked all the important questions, that we have enough initiatives aimed at coming to terms with the past and plenty of memorial sites to remind us of this “second German dictatorship” in the 20th century.

Nevertheless, remembrance culture in reunified Germany cannot do without a constant, repeated and perpetually innovative examination of power mechanisms in the GDR as a crucial part of German and European post-war history. Moreover, an intense scrutiny of the past can help us discover new perspectives on problems that affect the present and the future. The questions regarding the legacy of the Stasi continue to be very relevant today: What happens to our data when the state and security authorities have uncontrolled access to information about us from all areas of life? How far can and may state surveillance measures go to make us feel safe? How does this affect our everyday lives as we openly express criticism and articulate our own views or instead try to adapt to the given circumstances to avoid disadvantages, unpleasant consequences or even negative repercussions?

“Presenting the Archive”

Against the background of these reflections that continue to be relevant today, the exhibition shows how the system of surveillance and control in the SED dictatorship functioned in practice and it also gives the people who lived under this system a chance to speak. Taking a glimpse *behind* the information system of the GDR secret police is instructive and helps to broaden the perspective. The bureaucratic organizational structures and concrete work procedures for processing, managing and storing information formed the basis for the mass collection of data and made it possible for the Stasi to monitor and persecute large parts of the population. The permanent exhibition makes a point of not delving deeply into the history, structure and development of the Stasi – these topics are addressed in detail at other sites, for example in the neighbouring Stasi Museum. Instead, the exhibition concentrates on the preserved documents and the historical sources now available to us in the Stasi Records Archive.

It is no coincidence that the exhibition project initially went by the working title “Presenting the Archive”. The name makes clear that the exhibition focuses on the material on which the archive is based – the actual documents of the Stasi. The instruments of surveillance cannot be entirely ignored of course and therefore also find mention in the exposition. Another important aspect was placing the archive in historical context, which is why the exhibition provides background information. But the “Access to Secrecy” exhibition is the first attempt to address this subject primarily through the written documents themselves and through the archive that has preserved them to this day. Thus, the ultimate aim of the exhibition is to create a space for an independent and critical examination of historical sources and questions.

From the start, this idea of “presenting the archive” was closely linked to the aim of presenting and illustrating that which exists many times over in the Stasi Records Archive, but which remains hidden to the public. The curators were confronted with a special challenge: how to convey in an appealing way to a diverse group of people what at first glance seems like a rather “dry” topic, and how best to show all the potential uses and opportunities an archive offers. As one of the first comprehensive exhibitions devoted to an archive and its work, “Access to Secrecy” demonstrates that it is not just about old dusty files: behind these documents lie the stories, lives and fates of real people. The archive also provides a unique glimpse

into the daily routine, work processes and functioning of a secret police agency.

Clearly, a presentation of the Stasi Records Archive must take a few special factors into consideration. An archive storing records from a former secret service also contains evidence of the Stasi’s massive violation of basic human rights. When Stasi documents are used and published, it is important that the personal rights of the people affected be protected at all times. For archivists to be able to order and index the documents, they have to understand the Stasi’s idiosyncratic organizational system, which was based on conspiracy and secrecy. They also have to address the chaotic state in which the files were left behind, a situation created by the Stasi’s last-minute attempts to destroy them. For these reasons, the exhibition of the Stasi Records Archive is not the presentation of an ordinary archive: The particularities of dealing with Stasi documents are revealed time and again and help us to understand what makes these testimonies so important today.

An exhibition at a historical site

The idea of presenting the Stasi Records Archive in an innovative way in order to increase its visibility and attract stronger public attention to its holdings meant that a few fundamental conceptual considerations were necessary. It was clear from the start that the exhibition had to be presented at the historical site, a place that symbolizes both the surveillance of millions of people as well as the overcoming of a dictatorship. It was not enough to simply show it at the main location of the Stasi Records Archive. It had to be shown on the very grounds where the State Security organized the surveillance of the population for almost four decades and where that same population later occupied the Stasi headquarters, an event that proved central to the Peaceful Revolution.

The permanent exhibition “State Security in the SED Dictatorship” opened in the Stasi Museum in early 2015; the open-air exhibition of the Robert Havemann Society, “Revolution and the Fall of the Wall” has been presented on the grounds since summer 2016. These exhibitions are now joined by this new permanent exhibition on the Stasi archives, which aims to do its part in transforming the former site of repression and revolution into an educational site on dictatorship and resistance, human rights and democracy. This “Campus for Democracy” is open to everyone and is the home to various associations dedicated to dealing with history and engaging in a lively examination of the past, present and future.

This historical site holds special challenges. Any building plans have to take into account the structural conditions of the building and honour the requirements demanded by the monument protection authorities. The current building operations were also a factor that had to be addressed. For reasons of inventory protection, it was not possible to install the exhibition in the actual archive rooms. It is displayed instead in House 7, the building adjacent to the archive building which is also a historical site. It served as the headquarters of the Stasi’s Department XX, which was responsible for monitoring opposition groups, art and culture in the GDR. This historical fact offers ideal conditions for dealing more intensively with the Stasi’s areas of activity and for discovering a wealth of other stories. This is why the building’s history is also presented in a special section of the exhibition.

The exhibition concept: A modular design for a target group-oriented approach

The permanent exhibition mainly uses the Stasi documents as evidence of surveillance, showing the context in which they were created and the current archival work being done to make these historical sources accessible. The exhibition is designed to provide a comprehensive overview of the documents that were left behind by the Stasi and preserved in the Stasi Records Archive.

Linked to this is the interest in presenting the archive and its special features in a stimulating and comprehensible way to the general public. The exhibition, which is open daily, aims to explain the tasks, subject matter and working methods of the archive in a clear, transparent and user-friendly way. It strives to be accessible not only to groups on a registered tour but also to individual visitors exploring on their own, thereby complementing in a meaningful way the resources that are already offered at the site. The archive exhibition focuses on the records left behind by the Stasi, showing the archive’s daily work with these documents and the challenges it faces as it struggles to store them safely, make them usable and preserve them for the future.

Perhaps the greatest challenge the project team faced as it prepared the exhibition was finding a way to present such a multi-layered subject – the intertwined and secretive management of information – in a way that is accessible to the general public. In order to meet this challenge, “Access to Secrecy” concentrates on the essential features, presenting them in an overview that allows visitors to position the individual subjects within an overall

context. By using concrete examples that personalize the content, the presented material becomes both comprehensible and tangible. Nevertheless, pointing out the complexity of the files left behind by the Stasi accentuates one of the decisive points about which the documents still provide information today: The system of collecting, linking, processing, evaluating and storing data was highly complex in itself, because it had to serve the Stasi’s main task – the investigation of any indication of behaviour that might in any way endanger the state leadership. And thus, if one leaves the exhibition with an impression of widely ramified and closely interwoven information, one has, in fact, gained an important insight into the Stasi files.

The exhibition is designed to encourage independent study of the structure, methods and impact of the State Security and is therefore open to anyone inclined to explore it on their own. The topic sections are freely accessible and the modules can be interchangeably combined, making it possible for very different target groups – individuals visiting spontaneously or registered groups from Germany and abroad; people without any previous knowledge or highly-informed visitors – to learn about the Stasi documents and how they can be used. Given that visiting groups have different interests and time constraints, they are free to decide on their own how they wish to explore the exhibition. They can take part in a guided tour, follow the exhibition narrative from floor to floor, or focus on specific aspects of the exhibition, such as the Stasi’s computer technology or the audio-visual media. Individual exhibition modules remain flexible and can be integrated or left out of guided tours, depending on the interests and previous knowledge of the visiting group. This modular structure enables a target group-oriented approach to visitors that takes into account the different needs of a diverse audience. All the exhibition rooms can be accessed from the original historical staircase or by elevator, which means they are barrier-free. In addition, the exhibition offers different levels of content, meeting the needs of visitors interested in more in-depth information. This approach ensures that the general information level of the exhibition is not overloaded with detail.

The content-related juxtaposition of past and present runs through the entire exhibition, an effect that can also be experienced visually and invites visitors to think about the future. Historical themes showing equipment used by the Stasi are presented alongside current photographs of the Stasi Records Archive. This relates the work of the Stasi for the purpose of surveillance to the work of today’s archive

for the purpose of clarification and coming to terms with the past.

In each chapter, classical text, object and image components are accompanied by different media stations, film sequences and projections to create a certain atmosphere, a pictorial background or a specific spatial impression. The visual language has been carefully selected to give visitors an authentic impression of the archival rooms and an opportunity to immerse themselves entirely in each separate chapter of the exhibition. In addition, people who experienced this history first-hand express themselves in interview sequences and tell the personal stories that lie behind the files. In this way, the Stasi's viewpoint, which is fixed in the documents, collides with the perspective of its surveillance targets, who are given a voice in the exhibition. At other film stations, specific aspects of the archive work, such as the project to reconstruct torn documents, are vividly explained. By integrating these different media formats, the exhibition avoids becoming monotonous and one-dimensional, and allows visitors to experience the different exhibition themes on many different levels.

While considering how to present the Stasi documents, the project team always had in mind that the ongoing archive operations should not be interrupted by the exhibition and that all possible measures must be taken to protect the original documents. The Stasi Records Archive is, after all, ultimately assessed on its ability to permanently protect its holdings while simultaneously informing the public about its work in a transparent manner. Since large numbers of visitors in the archive rooms could cause damage to the files in the long term, "Access to Secrecy" presents the archival documents outside these rooms. By giving visitors an impression of the storage rooms and file shelves in this alternative way, while allowing them to have contact with the preserved documents, the new exhibition area ensures increased protection of the holdings and helps preserve the original documents for the future.

The design concept

The exhibition design deliberately employs a clear language of colour and form. The furniture used in the exhibition incorporates components from the world of archives, while the materials, such as glass and sheet steel, create a modern contrast to the past and express openness and transparency. In addition to conveying information, the scenographic representations provide visitors with actual insight into historical facts.

Information texts and visual components are set on simple, grey exhibition walls that do not distract from the content-related examination of exhibition themes. At the same time, the unequal, trapezoidal surfaces ensure that the arrangement of exhibition chapters does not appear monotonous, rigid or static. The sheet steel used as a background element on the walls of the exhibition rooms alludes to the equipment used by the Stasi. The colour and structure of this surface is based on the material of the Stasi's working instruments, such as index card machines, cabinets and shelves. In this way, a sense of the atmosphere of the daily work with index cards and documents is conveyed. At the same time, by creating an airy feeling inside the rooms, the modern design components and light colours set themselves apart from the views from the Stasi era, which were rather heavy and gloomy. For the design of exhibit displays and shelf components, elements were also used that make reference to current archival work.

Clear lines run through the entire exhibition design, providing orientation and creating a contrast to the confusion caused by the complex information structures of the Stasi and the mass amounts of data it collected. In addition, they set themselves apart from the dark wood panelling and colourful wallpaper patterns which were typically found in Stasi offices from the 1960s to 1980s and which came to characterize its daily work. Each exhibition room has its own colour scheme, which serves as an additional orientation aid to visitors as they walk through the multi-level exhibition. It is employed discreetly, however, so as not to disturb the atmospheric room décor.

One special feature of the exhibition is the clever integration of film and three-dimensional installations, such as archive shelves and file stacks, into the room designs. In addition, nearly original sized photographs, archival motifs with former Stasi equipment and views of the current archive rooms are displayed on glass walls in the individual chapters. A visitor has the impression of standing inside an index room, a file repository room with stuffed file cabinets or between oversized file folders surrounded by Stasi documents. In this way the motifs, colours, forms and materials help stimulate the imagination. Visitors are able to step back in time and engage with the content of the exhibition without being exposed to an oppressive atmosphere. The three-dimensional installations function as a metaphor: one is able to enter the files and "open" the formerly sealed documents - they also serve as a reminder of the historical moment in the 1990s when the files were opened and the people under surveillance achieved access to their documents.



1 ↑

Before the exhibition was installed in House 7, the staircases and foyer areas on each exhibition level were renovated according to historical conservation guidelines. Large-format, symbolic photos in the foyers set the mood for the themes addressed in the exhibition space behind them. These pictures at the entrance are mounted on large glass surfaces to optimize the presentation of colour and texture on the walls in the foyers, which are protected as historic monuments.

The way in which the content in the exhibition is approached - from the archive itself to the information and organization system that made the work of the Stasi possible, to the diverse surveillance work documented within it and even a case study - provides a consistent dramaturgy for the individual chapters and floors. As a "climax" to the exhibition, the last room presents the case of a person who was monitored by the Stasi. Even here, though, it is not imperative that the exhibition be viewed in any specific order. Visitors can spend a short amount of time in the exhibit or focus on a specific theme or single section. The unambiguous colour-coding system and the

exhibit arrangement within the individual chapters makes the structure and thematic assembly of the exhibition clearly discernible.

Access to Secrecy - A tour of the exhibition

In terms of content, the exhibition takes visitors back to the time when the documents were created, to the time when the staff of the Stasi performed its work, but it also illustrates the challenges facing the Stasi Records Archive today. Introductory texts, historical photographs and film recordings, original documents and objects from the archive as well as interactive media stations offer visitors an "access to secrecy". The State Security itself never imagined that its records would ever be seen by the people it monitored or by the general public. The title of the permanent exhibition refers to the extraordinary and worldwide singular opportunity to look into formerly secret files.

The exhibition presents the Stasi's complex information system on nearly 600 square metres of space spread over four floors. The data collected through surveillance work

was elaborately arranged and stored so that it could be used against politically inconvenient people, dissidents and alleged enemies of the GDR. A tour through the thematic units reveals why these “testimonies of injustice”, which document an attack on the privacy of millions of people, are still being stored and used. The exhibition is structured according to four thematic chapters, which build on each other, but can also be viewed separately.

The history behind the Stasi Records Archive

The entrance area and rooms on the ground floor of House 7 serve as the arrival point, first orientation and information area. The eye-catcher here is a sculpture representing stacks of files that was created from replicas of some 420 individual files. It symbolizes the massive amounts of files left behind by the State Security and builds a kind of emotional bridge to the Stasi Records Archive. In the information room, the background and history of the archive is explained by means of a chronological review of the central historical events: When East Germans occupied the Stasi offices in 1989/90 and took possession of the files, the conditions were created for preserving the documents. It made it possible for the people who had been targeted by the Stasi to view the unlawful documents created on them. These documents are also useful in reparation and rehabilitation proceedings and provide clarification through research and media projects. Selected documents can also be viewed and used by the public in exhibitions, publications and the Stasi Records Online Resource.

The information system of the GDR secret police

The exhibition then offers insight into the Stasi’s complex information system. The exhibition room on the first floor describes the system’s structure and how it functioned. This is where the card index system, containing millions of index cards and symbolizing both the bureaucratic registration of the population and the Stasi’s data collection mania, is explained. Photographs and films give an impression of the rooms where the Stasi worked and make visitors feel as if they are actually standing in an index room. The central exhibit is an original paternoster index cabinet from the 1980s. In this way visitors become acquainted with a few of the index cards, which make up some of the most important documents in the Stasi Records Archive and are still deeply important for contemporary research. Media stations and touchscreens provide more in-depth information; film clips inform about the current work in the archive.

The diverse legacy of the Stasi

The next exhibition area on the second floor is dedicated to the vast range of different records left behind by the Stasi. Upon entering the room, the visitors’ attention is drawn to the file shelves, which have been modelled after the actual repository rooms of the archive. In addition to millions of index cards and files, the Stasi also left behind thousands of photos, films and videos, audio recordings and electronic data storage devices, such as floppy disks or database fragments. Some selected original exhibits, including old film reels, a tape recorder and a working computer that were used by the secret police, are presented to the public for the first time. The exhibition presents the origin and nature of these objects, but also discusses the challenges posed by this difficult legacy of the Stasi, for example its indexing, use and conservation.

A separate exhibition wall is dedicated to information storage by the Stasi. A chart illustrates the complex inter-relationships and links between records. The example of the civil rights activist Ulrike Poppe demonstrates the challenges of researching the documents: a person could be registered in many different card indexes and procedures of the Stasi. There is also a film interview with Ulrike Poppe, a historical witness who agreed to participate in the exhibition, which allows the topic to be approached more personally.

“Walk-in files” are like “looking into a distorting mirror”

In the last exhibition room, visitors are presented with the story of another person who was targeted by the Stasi. This one does not claim to serve as an example for all cases of surveillance and persecution by the Stasi. Instead, it illustrates how easily an individual could be caught in the sights of the Stasi. This case examines the work processes, surveillance methods and effectiveness of the Stasi. All of the previous exhibition themes come together here in a concentrated space: the bureaucratic registration of bothersome individuals, the covert collection of information in order to take action against someone, and the secret police “processing” that was organized and recorded in the documents and which still today bears witness to the Stasi’s surveillance measures and human rights violations. Its view and working methods find expression in selected original documents and is countered by the perspective of Gilbert Furian, who was targeted by the secret police in the 1980s.

The over-dimensional “walk-in files” are a special feature of the exhibition. Behind the open file ends, which symbolize the individual, successive chapters of the case, visitors become immersed in the story. Film interviews with Gilbert Furian provide personal insight into his biography and allow visitors to experience his story more directly. Gilbert Furian, who gave his consent to the publication of his documents, said that viewing his Stasi files later was “like looking into a distorting mirror.” His case illustrates in both a depressing and impressive way – beyond the systematics and working methods of the Stasi – how the surveillance system affected people directly and caused personal consequences.

That the GDR, despite its extensive surveillance apparatus, ultimately failed to completely control every corner of society, and that the people whom it monitored for decades were successful in their struggle to gain access to the secret documents – is what the Stasi Records Archive stands for.

If the exhibition and accompanying catalogue is able to provide “access to secrecy” by giving an impression of the work and significance of this extraordinary archive while also encouraging people to address the legacy of the SED dictatorship and reflect about history and memory, then this will be its greatest achievement.

Nadja Häckel, M.A.

As a member of the project team “Presenting the Archive”, the author worked on the concept, development and implementation of the permanent exhibition.



INFORMATION ON THE ARCHIVE

2 ↑

The Stasi

The Stasi Records Archive and the permanent exhibition "Access to Secrecy" are located at the very site where the secret police of a dictatorship worked for 40 years, collecting information on a society under surveillance. From 1950 to 1990, the grounds in Berlin-Lichtenberg housed the central offices of the GDR State Security Service (*Stasi* for short). The Stasi headquarters expanded over time, ultimately covering an area of almost 2 square kilometres. At times, as many as 7,000 full-time employees were working in some fifty different buildings. From here the Stasi, as an essential pillar of the Socialist Unity Party of Germany (SED), asserted the SED's claim to leadership in the GDR and secured its power.

Under the Soviet model of communist dictatorship, the aim of the single ruling party in eastern Germany was to control all areas of life. There was no tolerance in the GDR for anything that could be interpreted as a rejection or criticism of the SED's autocratic rule. The Ministry for State Security (MfS) was established in 1950. Although it functioned as a foreign intelligence and secret service agency, it was primarily a secret police force engaged in the systematic surveillance of its own population. Removed from any parliamentary control, it acted as the "shield and sword of the party" solely on behalf of the SED. Its main task was to identify critics and possible "opponents" of the regime, prevent their activities, and thus secure the existing

balance of power. As “enemies of socialism”, all dissenters and dissidents were criminalized and persecuted. To this end, the MfS used its far-reaching powers, including the authority of police and prosecutors, as well as surveillance instruments. In addition to postal surveillance, telephone tapping, secret observations, apartment searches and spying on “suspicious” persons, its surveillance methods included measures to psychologically “undermine” its targets, the use of informers – called “unofficial collaborators” (IM) – and above all, systematically gathering information about activities and individuals.



3 ↑
Full-time Stasi employee going about his work in a surveillance station, around 1980

Erich Mielke (1907–2000) was the last Minister for State Security, an office he held from 1957 to 1989. Mielke strongly influenced the development of the Stasi. Under his leadership and responsibility, the surveillance apparatus spread its tentacles into all areas of society. To live up to his claim: “Comrades, we must know everything”, the staff of the Stasi grew and its range of tasks expanded. In 1989 Mielke was in charge of around 91,000 full-time, salaried employees – out of a total population of 16.4 million.

Some 180,000 unofficial collaborators (IM) worked covertly for the Stasi as informants, collecting information about their fellow citizens and passing it on to the secret police. In this way, for many years the Stasi was able to convey the impression of being omnipresent and seemingly omnipotent. The diffuse fear that this generated became its most powerful weapon; it led many people to adapt and subordinate themselves to the dictatorship, thus helping suppress resistance.



4 ↑
The Minister for State Security, Erich Mielke, (right) welcomes the head of state and party leader, Erich Honecker, (left) on the occasion of the 30th anniversary of the MfS in front of his ministerial seat, House 1, 1980.



5 ↑
Stasi employee at a paternoster cabinet with space-saving storage of index cards, around 1985

6 ↓

Stasi employee in front of filing shelves in the repository area, where the Stasi kept its archived files, between 1984 and 1989



7 ↓

Stasi employee reading a file, undated



The Stasi's Store of Knowledge

The Stasi collected data on millions of people for the purpose of surveillance. To prevent and suppress criticism of the government, and if necessary, take measures towards prosecution, it had to obtain a comprehensive view of the entire GDR population and have knowledge of all conceivable social developments and tendencies. In a number of different ways, it compiled and evaluated information and used the results for secret police measures.

Conspicuous individuals were recorded, registered and "processed" by the Stasi in various types of transactions and file categories. There were a number of reasons why a person might be registered by the Stasi, which meant being put on file. If someone worked in areas important to the state, such as the army, the Stasi would examine that person's general background and social environment so that it could provide information about their political reliability. If the Stasi was enlisting new informants and wanted to recruit a candidate, it would also covertly gather information about that person. The Stasi was particularly interested in people who voiced criticism of the state and party leadership. It secretly monitored people it regarded as political opponents, for example members of peace or environmental groups, or people who did not conform to the GDR's social norms. If its suspicion of "hostile-negative activity" was confirmed, the Stasi persecuted its targets with intimidation and threats, which could lead to their arrest and imprisonment.

But all the information gathered during surveillance operations had first to be classified, managed, stored and made available. To this end, the Stasi developed a clever system of interlinked card indexes, data storage and case files. This complex information system constituted the Stasi's store of knowledge, which it managed and stored in the card index and archive department. The archive of the State Security thus formed the foundation stone for its work as a secret police.

The End of the Stasi

The Peaceful Revolution in the GDR finally put a stop to the surveillance activities of the State Security. Political changes in Eastern Europe, a catastrophic economic situation inside the country, and the refusal of the political leadership to implement reforms had caused the emigration and exodus movement to grow ever stronger. The situation worsened when the "Iron Curtain" fell in the summer of 1989 and the border between Austria and Hungary opened, making it possible for GDR citizens who had taken refuge in the West German embassy in Prague to emigrate. In the autumn of 1989, growing protests within the country, public actions by opposition groups, and the ongoing mass demonstrations by disenchanted citizens led to a fundamental process of upheaval in the GDR.

East Germans demanded a genuine dialogue with the government. They wanted the SED to renounce its absolute claim to leadership and they called for democratic changes such as freedom of opinion and travel rights. The SED, and with it its secret police, the Stasi, increasingly lost its sole interpretative authority and the ability to steer events in a desired direction. Hoping to appease the population and maintain its power, the government introduced new regulations on permanent emigration. But the opening of the Berlin Wall on 9 November 1989 accelerated the people's efforts to bring the economy of scarcity and paternalism to a swift end. During discussions on change, the demand for German unity gained urgency. The SED was forced to abandon its absolute claim to power. Without clear instructions from the party leadership, the Stasi was unable to fulfil its main task of securing internal power.

The population's resentment was directed especially at the Stasi, which was seen as the symbol of oppression and persecution, bullying and spying. Public outrage over decades of surveillance led to protests throughout the GDR that culminated in a wave of Stasi offices being occupied. Beginning on 4 December 1989, demonstrators gained access to Stasi buildings - first in Erfurt, later in many other cities - to stop the work of the secret police and its destruction of evidence documenting abuses of power and human rights violations.

By 15 January 1990 the course had been set for the complete dissolution of the State Security Service. During a demonstration, thousands of citizens took control of the Stasi headquarters in Berlin-Lichtenberg, which until then had been left largely undisturbed. After 40 years, they shut down the secret police headquarters and sealed the end of the Stasi. As a consequence, millions of documents were salvaged and evidence of the surveillance system was secured.



8 ←

"Never again Stasi! Oust the Socialist Unity Party from power! Germany, United Fatherland!" are the demands of demonstrators storming the Stasi headquarters in Berlin-Lichtenberg on 15 January 1990.

9 ↓

After storming the Stasi premises on 15 January 1990, demonstrators painted their demand "Enough spying - out now!" on a wall of a building of the Stasi.

Stasi offices in the GDR (as of 1989)

The surveillance network of the State Security extended across the entire territory of the GDR. Its objective was to monitor the population locally in all areas of life. The following units with territorial competences were subordinated to the Stasi headquarters in East Berlin:

- the 15 district administrations (BV) in the respective district cities (Schwerin, Rostock, Neubrandenburg, Potsdam, Berlin, Frankfurt/Oder, Cottbus, Magdeburg, Halle, Leipzig, Dresden, Karl-Marx-Stadt/Chemnitz, Erfurt, Gera and Suhl),
- 209 county offices (KD) in smaller towns (such as Eberswalde, Görlitz, Zwickau, Meiningen, Jena and Weimar) and
- 7 "on site" offices (OD) which monitored large, economically important enterprises (the nuclear power plant in Greifswald, the chemical combines in Buna, Leuna and Bitterfeld, the "Carl Zeiss Jena" combine and the glass combine "Schwarze Pumpe") and security sensitive university areas (at the Dresden University of Technology).

The ministry in Berlin consisted of various service units, organized according to their areas of responsibility. They included main departments, independent divisions and working groups that were each assigned to certain topics or social areas. In accordance with the so-called "line principle", the work division of the service units on the district and county level reflected the divisions and units at the Berlin headquarters.

The end of the Stasi began when the Stasi offices were occupied in the districts of the GDR. In the permanent exhibition, an interactive touch screen shows the locations of Stasi offices, indicating which ones were occupied in the individual districts and which ones later became archival sites. It also shows the number of records left behind at each site.

10 ↓

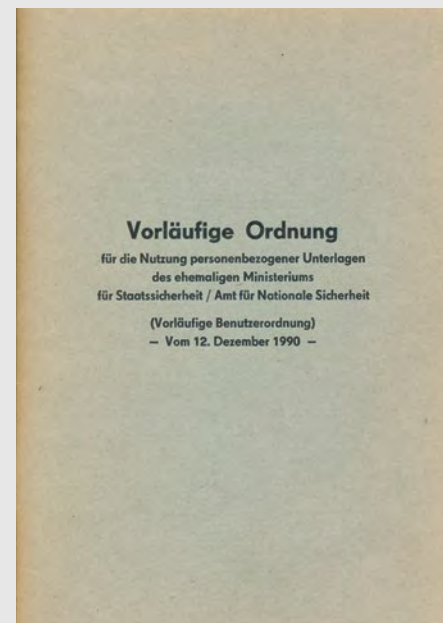


11 ↓

Bundles of documents and sacks with various Stasi items salvaged after the Stasi headquarters in Berlin was occupied in 1990, 18 March 1992







13 ←
Interim order concerning the use of records containing personal data of the former Ministry for State Security/Office for National Security (interim user rules) of 12 December 1990

The first user regulations from December 1990 provisionally regulated the taking over, storage, administration, archiving, cataloguing and use of Stasi records. It was initially restricted to examining whether employees in public service had collaborated with the Stasi and to provide information for criminal prosecution and rehabilitation purposes.



14 ←
Act regarding the Records of the State Security Service of the Former German Democratic Republic (Stasi Records Act - StUG)
On 14 November 1991 the united German Bundestag passed the Stasi Records Act, which entered into force on 29 December 1991. As of 1992, citizens could personally view the files that the Stasi had compiled on them.

Opening the Stasi Files

The occupation of the Stasi offices marked the start of an unprecedented event: The first time that the files of a secret police were opened to the public.

But first the issue of how to deal with the files of the Stasi became the subject of political and social debate. The decision to preserve the documents and provide access to them was the result of lengthy negotiations. Fearing data abuse and a poisoned social climate, sceptics in politics and society repeatedly argued for blocking the files. It was understood, however, that the records were indispensable as evidence in rehabilitation cases and as sources for personal as well as historical and cultural reappraisal. Questions such as which institution should be responsible for administering the files, whether the files should continue to be stored decentrally or moved to a central location, and what degree of access should be granted to victims and affected persons had yet to be resolved.

When it became known later in 1990 that demands to open the files had not been considered during negotiations on German unification, public outrage was great. In protest, on 4 September 1990, civil rights activists again occupied the former Stasi headquarters in Berlin-Lichtenberg. A hunger strike lent emphasis to their demands and attracted public attention. People throughout the GDR held vigils and strikes to express their solidarity with the strikers. The public pressure led to success when a supplementary agreement was added to the Unification Treaty. The preservation, opening and use of the files were set in writing and the German Bundestag was instructed to begin deliberations on a corresponding law "immediately" after reunification.

On the official day of German unification, 3 October 1990, the Rostock pastor Joachim Gauck was appointed "Special Commissioner of the Federal Government for the Records of the Former State Security Service". In a historic move in December 1991, the Stasi Records Act (StUG) provided a legal basis for handling the files. This Act established access rights to the records, the right to view one's own personal file, and the possibility to check whether someone had worked for the Stasi. The Special Commissioner was renamed the "Federal Commissioner for the Records of the State Security Service of the Former German Democratic Republic" (BStU).

On the basis of the Stasi Records Act, in January 1992 citizens were allowed for the first time to view the documents that the Stasi had created about them. After ensuring the safekeeping of the records, the people also fought hard for and finally won the right to open their files. For the first time worldwide, the documents of a secret police and the information that had been unlawfully collected were made accessible to the people who had been monitored.

15 ↘
Eva-Maria Hagen, Pamela Biermann, Katja Havemann, Jürgen Fuchs and Wolf Biermann inspecting files for the first time in January 1992





16 ↑
View into a repository room of the Stasi Records Archive,
10 January 2017

Using the Stasi Files

The “opened” files, a symbol of the Peaceful Revolution, are used today for the personal, legal and historic reappraisal of the SED dictatorship.

The Stasi Records Archive, both in Berlin and at other locations, manages the preserved records of the Ministry for State Security (MfS). The archival holdings are safely stored, their contents catalogued and made accessible for use. While protecting personal privacy, the documents are made available on request to private individuals, institutions, research bodies and the media.

In principle, everyone has the right to view the documents that the MfS created about them. By inspecting the files, people who were spied on by the Stasi are able to learn how the Stasi interfered in their lives and who was responsible for this. Under certain conditions, relatives can also view the files of missing or deceased persons. The staff of the Stasi Records Archive is available to answer any questions concerning the regulations and to offer guidance on how to submit a request to view records.

In many political persecution cases, the Stasi files remain the only available evidence. They serve as an important basis for legal restitution and compensation proceedings. They are also used to check whether individuals in politics, business, and society had past involvement with the Stasi. This includes members of the government, the federal and state parliaments, holders of local political office, judges, and civil servants.

As a subject of historical research and political education, the documents shed light on the Stasi’s secret hegemonic knowledge and its methods and actions. They also provide unique insight into the social developments and everyday life in the GDR from the viewpoint of the Stasi. Publications, exhibitions, and educational programs give the public the opportunity to view selected documents. It is important that the records of the surveillance system that document the systematic violation of fundamental rights be preserved for future generations and that they be available for studies of dictatorship and democracy.



I think if we had left the files closed, no one would have believed us.

Ulrike Poppe



17 ↑

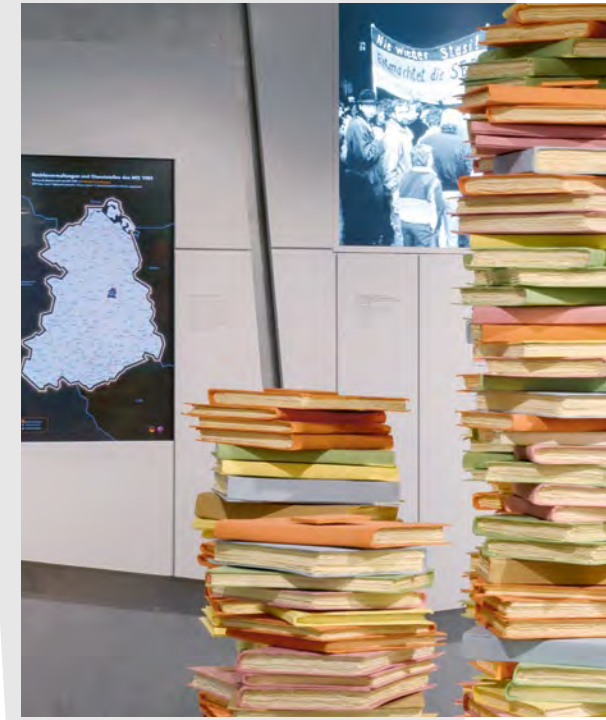
The Stasi Records Online Resource

The Stasi Records Online Resource (www.stasi-mediathek.de) provides an example of a public use of the files. It is an online window into the Stasi Records Archive and gives an idea of the vast range of preserved archival holdings. The digital resource provides easy, multimedia access to selected contents of the archives.

Visitors to the Stasi Records Online Resource can view images of original documents and independently research file material, photographs, film and audio recordings from four decades. Filters can be added to achieve a better overview of the Online Resource's constantly growing

collection and all online documents can be searched in full text. Historical events and personal stories are compiled under additional theme-based collections.

The contents of the Stasi Records Online Resource are accessible via desktop computers and mobile devices such as tablets and smartphones.



18 ↑
19 →



20 ↵
21 ↑
22 ←



THE CARD INDEX SYSTEM OF THE STASI

23 ↑

The multiple card indexes rank among the most important written records of the Ministry for State Security (MfS). In total, around 5,700 different indexes with approximately 41 million index cards have been preserved. The vast majority of indexes refer to individuals and contain very different types of information ranging from general facts down to intimate details.

The card indexes were very important in the everyday work of the Stasi. They were its main work tool for recording, storing, managing and analysing information that had been collected on people and situations for the purpose of surveillance and control. The Stasi used indexes to structure the data it collected so that the stored information and archived cases could be accessed directly at any time. In the gigantic bureaucratic apparatus, the work of the secret police would have been almost impossible without this information management.

Today, the card indexes play a key role in the work of the Stasi Records Archive, too. They constitute the starting point for every search and are, at the same time, finding aids, information storage and archival holdings. Not only do they provide access to the most important files of the MfS, serving as an indispensable tool for information management, they also often contain information that makes it possible to search for further documents.

Central Indexes

Among the Stasi's many different card indexes, the "central card indexes" provided basic services for all areas of the Ministry for State Security (MfS). Even today, they are used to find initial data about a person and can provide information about data stored in other cases and files. The Stasi headquarters in Berlin and all district administrations had index and archive departments under the designation Department XII. These offices were responsible for maintaining and updating indexes with the most important information for their specific area of responsibility. These storage facilities that were managed in a uniform manner by the index departments are called "central indexes".

The central indexes were used to carry out fundamental tasks for the other Stasi service units: the recording of individuals and the registration of cases. When a person came to the attention of the Stasi, the relevant service unit sent a request to the index department, Department XII. This department first checked the central indexes to determine whether information already existed on that individual. If so, the employees had access to a multi-level system of stored information and archive files.

This complicated work sequence was put in place to foster "internal concealment". Fearing "internal and external enemies", the Stasi strove to maintain a high level of secrecy and discretion among its own staff. Individual employees were only meant to know as much as they needed to do their job.

However, the personnel who processed the cases could, if necessary, draw on information that had been collected and added to Stasi files at an earlier time and which might again be useful. The index cards were the key to finding this stored information amidst the vast quantities of documents.



24 ↑

A staff member of Department XII using a paternoster index cabinet containing index cards of the central persons index F 16, around 1985

25 ↓

A staff member of Department XII filling out index cards on a typewriter, around 1985



26 ↓

Index room in the archive building that still contained the earlier equipment with Stasi paternoster index cabinets, around 2000



27 ↓

View into an index room of the Stasi Records Archive with modern paternoster index cabinets, 10 January 2017



Concrete examples of an index card

The complex centralized card index management system is based primarily on the following card indexes: the central persons index F 16, the central case index F 22 and the codename index F 77. These designations are derived from the number on the form on which the respective data was entered.

The index cards and records shown on the following pages were created by the Stasi on Lutz Rathenow, who has kindly granted us permission to use these documents.

Name Rathenow		XV/6414/80	
Geburtsname		Reg.-Nr./Erfassungsort	
weitere Namen		MfS	
Vornamen Lutz		MfS/BV/Verw.	
Geburtsdatum 22.09.1952		DE/Mitarbeiter (bei registrierten Vorgängen nicht angeben)	
Geburtsort Jena		Archiv-Signatur	
PKZ 2 20 9 5 2 4 1 9 3 1 8		MfS/BV/Verw./abliegende DE	
Staatsangehörigk. DDR		Mitarbeiter nicht gesperrt	
Anschriften 1034 Berlin 1035 Thierstr. 34		Karte angelegt am	
Beruf/Tätigkeit Gabelsbergerstr. 3 freischaffend		OPK HA XX/5	
Arbeitsstelle			
Form 16		* Rufname unterstreichen	

Vorg.-Art Op.-Vorg.		XV/6414/80	
Deckname "Assistent"		Reg.-Nr.	
IM-Art/Delikt 14		MfS	
Angelegt am 18.11.80		BV/Verw.	
Abt./KD XX/5		Mitarb. Vogel	
Beendet am		Archiv-Nr. 7076/91	
		Nicht gesperrt 17324/91	
Datum	Art der Veränderung		
3.12.82	an MfS, HA XX/9 Klein		
Form 22 440 773 30.0			

Op.-Vorg.		Assistent"	
Vorgangsart		XV/6414/80	
Aktenart 14 § 106		Reg.-Nr.	
Tatbestand		MfS	
HA/Abt./KD XX/5		MfS/BV/Verw.	
angelegt am 18.11.80		Mitarbeiter Vogel	
umregistriert am		zum	
beendet am		wegen	
Archiv-Nr. A			
Form 77			

28-30 ↑

The central persons index F 16

The Stasi recorded individuals in whom it was interested in the central persons index F 16. They could be citizens of the GDR as well as people from West Germany or other countries. The reasons for the Stasi's interest in certain people varied: if someone worked in areas important to the state, or in the army, or if they expressed critical views about the social conditions in the GDR, they quickly drew the attention of the Stasi. The F 16 index contains data on targeted individuals under surveillance, but also on official employees and unofficial collaborators (IM) about whom the Stasi had covertly gathered information.

The F 16 index is also referred to as the central "legal name index". Unlike other indexes, it contains the real first names and surnames of individuals along with details of their addresses and professions. The identities and personal data of the registered persons can be viewed in this file without encryption. As a rule, however, the file does not indicate *why* the Stasi monitored the person listed on the file card. The F 16 initially serves as a storage system for the names of the people about whom the Stasi collected information. The "registration number" links the file to other index cards, making it possible to search for additional information.

The F 16 index is sorted by name, but not strictly alphabetically according to the written form. Instead it is arranged phonetically so that similar sounding names can be found more easily. For instance, **Maier**, **Mayer**, and **Meyer** are all classified under **Meier**. The next criterion is the first name: **Claus** is archived, for instance, under **Klaus**. This allowed the employees in the index department to obtain initial information about a person relatively quickly when necessary. Even today, it is essential that the archive staff be familiar with the idiosyncrasies of the Stasi's information management and data storage methods. Without understanding the complicated system developed by the Stasi, the staff would be unable to find information in the different files requested by researchers and other interested parties.



31 →

Index card boxes lined up in the Stasi Records Archive, around 2000
In the central persons index F 16, the Stasi classified cards with the names Möller, under Müller because "ö" and "ü" sound similar. Employees of the Stasi Records Archive in Berlin came up with the idea of visually depicting the

scale of the indexes. They placed all the Müller index boxes behind each other so that they formed a 21-metre-long line of files.

Name <u>R a t h e n o w</u>		XV/6414/80
Geburtsname		Reg.-Nr./Erfassungsart
weitere Namen		MFS
Vornamen *	<u>Lutz</u>	MFS/BV/Verw.
Geburtsdatum	<u>22.09.1952</u>	DE/Mitarbeiter (bei registrierten Vorgängen nicht angeben)
Geburtsort	<u>Jena</u>	Archiv-Signatur
PKZ	<u>2 2 0 9 5 2 4 1 9 3 1 8</u>	MFS/BV/Verw./ablegende DE
Staatsangehörigk.	<u>DDR</u>	Mitarbeiter <u>nicht gesperrt</u>
Anschriften	<u>1034 Berlin 1035 Thaerstr. 34 Gabelsbergerstr. 3</u>	Karte angelegt am
Beruf/Tätigkeit	<u>freischaffend</u>	
Arbeitsstelle	
Form 16	O	* Rufname unterstreichen

OPK HA xx/5 2

32 ↑

Persons index card F 16 on Lutz Rathenow

33 ↘

Index room in the archive building of the Stasi headquarters, around 1985

This is where the persons index cards with the initial letters A-K were stored. The index cards with the initial letters L-Z, including the index card on Lutz Rathenow displayed here, were kept on the floor above in a similarly equipped room.



The central case index F22

The data on cases was stored separately from the persons index. In a case, the Stasi registered individuals and objects that were the subject of intensive scrutiny. Depending on the reason for surveillance, measures and objectives, the Stasi conducted different categories of cases, mostly undercover investigations of individuals and storing information in files.

When the Stasi decided to create and register a file on a certain person or situation, the index department assigned a registration number to this file. Then it created a corresponding F22 index card with this number. The entire case file is arranged according to the registration numbers.

In contrast to the persons index F 16, a person's real name (legal name) is not listed in the case card, only the code-name. This is because the details on the case card alone were not supposed to allow any direct inference about the person recorded in the case. Out of fear that secrets could be betrayed, employees within the Stasi were not allowed to know everything.

In general, only the case file contains information on the nature of a particular case. The F22 card can provide information on whether the case involved the surveillance of an individual or, for instance, the recruitment of an informant. But the F22 file alone does not reveal who is behind the given codename. The F 16 index card, on the

other hand, contains the name and personal data of a certain person, but it is not possible to deduce from this card alone why the Stasi was monitoring the person or why they were included in this index. In order to reconstruct this, it is necessary to combine references from the different indexes containing related information.

Moreover, by linking the information from the persons file and case file, one gains access to the files that have been created on specific persons or situations. As a rule, the archive numbers are only entered on the case file card F22, which in turn leads to the corresponding documents in the archive repository.

D Vorg.-Art **Op.-Vorg.** Reg.-Nr. **XV/6414/80**
 Deckname "Assistent"
 IM-Art/Delikt 14
 Angelegt am 18. 11. 80 BV/Verw. **MfS**
 Abt./KD XX/5 Mitarb. Vogel
 Beendet am BV/Verw. Archiv-Nr. 1076/91
 Nicht gesperrt 17399/91

Datum	Art der Veränderung
3.12.82	an MfS, HA XX/9 Klein

Form 22 440 773 50.0

35 ↑
Case index card F22
on the operational case
"Assistant"

34 →

An employee of Department XII
working on index cards and lists,
around 1985



36 ↓



The codename index F77

The codename index F77 records the codenames for cases, objects, measures or individuals. For the purposes of secrecy, the Stasi used codenames for covert activities and to conceal identities. The codenames for cases were laid down by the Stasi. Unofficial collaborators (IM) normally chose their codenames themselves. The unofficial collaborators, as well as covert actions or measures, appear in Stasi documents, such as reports on persons under surveillance or situations that interested the Stasi, only under the codenames assigned to them. Accordingly, access to certain documents does not reveal the person or measure involved. To learn this, one has to link the information to other files and documents.

The Stasi used the codename index mainly for statistical purposes and as an overview of the existing registered cases. For ongoing cases that were still being processed, the F77 index cards were sorted according to the service units that oversaw the cases. F77 index cards of closed cases were sorted directly by codenames.

38 ↓



37 ↓



Op.-Vorg.

Vorgangsart
 Aktenart 14 § 106
 Tatbestand
 HA/Abt./KD XX/5/9
 angelegt am 18. 11. 80
 unregistriert am
 beendet am
 Archiv-Nr. A
 Form 77

Assistent"

Reg.-Nr. XV/6414/80

MfS

MfS/BV/Verw.
 Mitarbeiter Vogel
 zum
 wegen

39 ↑

Codename index card F77 with the codename "Assistent"

By comparing the registration number on the index cards shown here - F77 (codename "Assistent"), F22 (Operative case) and F16 (Lutz Rathenow) - we are able to determine that all three index cards refer to the same case and person.

40 ↓

Full-time Stasi employee processing index cards, around 1985



Paternoster index cabinet

From 1984 on, this original index cabinet was used in the new archive building of the Stasi headquarters. The Stasi used these cabinets to store its index cards in an orderly and space-saving manner. They gave its employees in the index department rapid and efficient access to information. The cabinets were operated by an integrated electric motor (which has been removed from the exhibit for safety reasons) that rotated the index sections around to the cabinet opening. Because of its rotation, this machine is often called a "paternoster index cabinet". The front flap which is open here could be locked to prevent unauthorized persons from gaining access to the index cards inside the cabinet.

In the 1980s, House 8, the new archive building of the Stasi headquarters in Berlin-Lichtenberg, housed about 140 of these rotating index cabinets. The cabinet in the permanent exhibition is one of the few preserved original machines from the Stasi era. The staff of the Stasi Records Archive continued to use these machines in the early 1990s, but now have modern (rotating) index cabinets that allow them to find specific index cards more quickly.

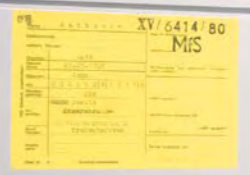


41 ↑



F 16

THE CENTRAL READING ROOMS (1911-1912) FOR
THE CENTRAL READING ROOMS (1911-1912) FOR



F 22



F 77



Decentral Indexes

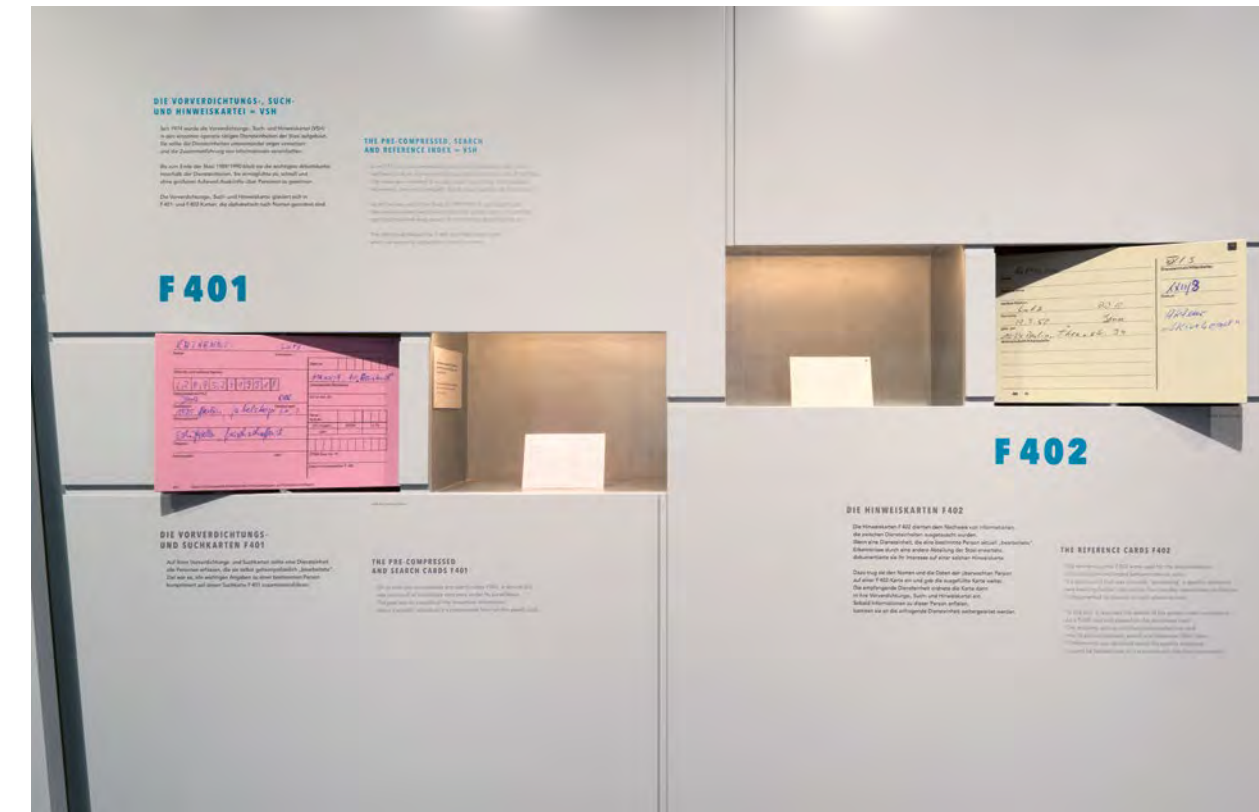
In addition to the central indexes, a large number of “decentralised indexes” from the Ministry for State Security (MfS) has been preserved. These indexes were used directly in the work of the Stasi’s individual areas of responsibility. Each service unit, including all main departments, independent divisions and working groups at the MfS headquarters in Berlin as well as all subordinate service units in the district administrations and county offices, kept their own decentralised indexes.

The many different decentralised indexes were mainly used to facilitate the compilation of information. Networking between the individual service units enabled them to store personal data more independently. It also allowed the Stasi to massively expand its database of registered persons. The imperative objective of the Stasi in accumulating these enormous volumes of data was to record and control every “suspicious” individual and every potential “enemy” of the state and party leadership.



43 ↑
Full-time Stasi employee processing index cards, around 1985

44 ↓



The pre-compressed, search and reference index = VSH

The “pre-compressed, search and reference index” (VSH) is an example of a decentralized index. This index had been built up in the individual operational service units of the Stasi since 1974. The index was intended to create closer networking links between the service units and simplify the compilation of information.

Up to the very end of the Stasi in 1989/1990, the VSH continued to be the most important work index in the service units. It facilitated rapid and relatively easy access to information about individuals.

The VSH is subdivided into F401 and F402 index cards, which are sorted in alphabetical order by name.

The pre-compressed and search index F401

On its pre-compressed and search index card, a service unit recorded all the individuals whom it secretly "processed". The goal was to compile all the important information about a specific individual in a compressed form on this search card.

45 ↓

A concrete example:

An F401 card on Lutz Rathenow

On the F401 index card about Lutz Rathenow, his basic personal details are recorded, such as name, birth date, personal identifier, which served as an identification number in the GDR, along with his address and occupation.

The service unit of the Stasi that was "processing" Rathenow is listed here, too: Main Department (HA) XX/9, responsible, among other things, for surveillance of the alternative culture scene and "combating the political underground", of which it believed Rathenow to be a part.

In addition, an index card of this kind may also contain references to information about the individual stored in other indexes, like here to the operational case (OV) with the codename "Assistant". This case is found in the central file F22 and contains a reference under the same registration number to Lutz Rathenow in the central file F16. When processing a particular case, the Stasi was able to use these cross-references to access information that had already been stored elsewhere.

Name RATHENOW		Vornamen Lutz		1189	
Geburts- und weitere Namen 220952419318		ZMA-Nr.			
Geburtsdatum/PKZ Jena		Diensteinheit/Mitarbeiter HA XX/9 Ov. Assistent			
Geburtsort 1035 Berlin, Jabelsteper Str. 3		Erf. in Abt. XII			
Wohnanschrift Selbststeller, freischaffend		Serie/ SLK-Nr.			
Tätigkeit		Erf. in/gem.		ZPDB 11/79	
Arbeitsstelle		Jahr			
Jahr		ZPDB-Dok.-Nr./PI			
Datum-Hinweiskarten F 402					
401 Datum/Schlagworte/Maßnahmen/Entscheidungen auf Rückseite eintragen					

Reference card F402

The reference cards F402 were used to document information exchanged between service units. If a service unit that was currently "processing" a specific individual was awaiting further information from another department of the Stasi, it documented its interest on these reference cards.

To this end, it recorded the name and details of the person under surveillance on an F402 card and passed on the completed card. The receiving service unit then incorporated the card into its pre-compressed, search and

reference (VSH) index. As soon as information about the specific individual was obtained, it was handed over to the service unit that had requested it.

In this way, the Stasi was able to ensure that "valuable" information reached all the offices that could use this knowledge to process their cases. At the same time, it made it possible to trace which information had been passed between different departments of the Stasi.

46 ↓

A concrete example:

An F402 card on Lutz Rathenow

The F402 card presented here contains the personal details of Lutz Rathenow and the Stasi service unit that "processed" him at that time: Main Department (HA) XX/9 is listed here, too. This unit was responsible for surveillance of the alternative culture scene and "combating the political underground" in the GDR. The name of the service unit in which the reference card was classified is also noted: Main Department (HA) XXII/8, responsible for "counterterrorism". It sent information obtained about Rathenow back to Main Department XX/9.

However, no details are given on why Lutz Rathenow was being monitored by the Stasi. What lies behind the additional reference to "Akteur Skinhead" cannot be determined on the basis of the card displayed here.

Name Rathenow	Diensteinheit/Mitarbeiter XX/9
Geburtsname	XXII/8
weitere Namen Lutz	Datum 22.9.52
Vorname Jena	DDR
geb. am 22.9.52	Jena
Wohnanschrift/Arbeitsstelle 1034 Berlin, Theaterstr. 34	Akteur "Skinhead"
402 ○	



DECENTRALISED INDEXES

Besides the central indexes, a large number of "decentralised indexes" of the Ministry for State Security (MfS) has been preserved. These indexes were used directly in the work of the Stasi's individual areas of responsibility. Each service unit, i.e. all main departments, departments and working groups at the MfS headquarters in Berlin as well as all subordinate service units in the district administrations and county offices, kept their own decentralised indexes.

The many different decentralised indexes were mainly used to facilitate the drawing together of information. The imperative objective of the Stasi behind the accumulation of these enormous volumes of data was to record, if possible, every "suspicious" individual and every potential "enemy" of the state and party leadership.

DIE VORVERDICHTUNGS-, SUCH- UND HINWEISKARTEI - VSH

Seit 1978 wurde die Vorverdichtung-, Such- und Hinweiskartei (VSH) in den einzelnen Ministerialabteilungen des Ministeriums für Staatssicherheit (MfS) eingeführt. Sie sollte die Dienststellen über den Personenstand und die Zusammenfassung von Informationen informieren.

F 401



DIE VORVERDICHTUNGS- UND SUCHKARTEN F 401

Auf diesen Vorverdichtungs- und Suchkarten sollte eine Übersicht über alle Personen entstehen, die in einer bestimmten Personengruppe oder in einer bestimmten Abteilung des Ministeriums für Staatssicherheit (MfS) arbeiteten.

THE PRE-COMPRESSED, SEARCH AND REFERENCE INDEX - VSH

Since 1978 the pre-compressed, search and reference index (VSH) had been used in the individual departments of the Ministry for State Security (MfS). The index was intended to inform the departments about the status of persons and the summarization of information.

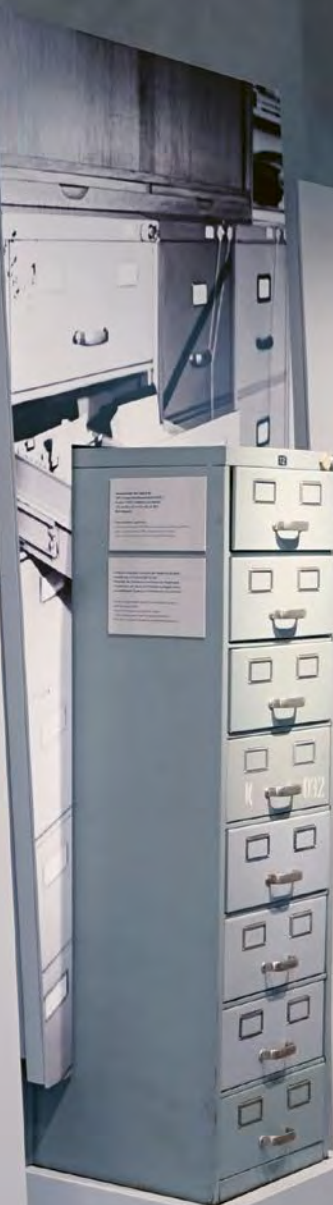
F 402

DIE HINWEISKARTEN F 402

Die Hinweiskarten (F 402) sollten eine Übersicht über alle Personen in einer bestimmten Personengruppe oder in einer bestimmten Abteilung des Ministeriums für Staatssicherheit (MfS) geben.

THE REFERENCE CARDS F 402

The reference cards (F 402) were intended to provide an overview of all persons in a certain group of persons or in a certain department of the Ministry for State Security (MfS).



Original index cabinet of the Stasi

This original index cabinet was used by the Stasi to store DIN A6 index cards. Above the drawers, remains of the sealing mass used to fasten the drawers are visible. This was done to prevent access by unauthorised persons.



48-50 ↗



Seal stamps used by the Stasi

These stamps presented in the exhibition were used by Stasi employees to seal index cabinets and safes in order to restrict access to certain information. They were also used on offices to prevent entry by unauthorised persons.



53 →
Operational notice of letter hand-over
 With this document from December 1988, Department M, on behalf of its director, Major General Strobel, handed over a confiscated postal item to Main Department (HA) XX/9. It had asked Department M to monitor post from and for Lutz Rathenow, whom the Stasi regarded as a suspect from the "political underground".

000257
 XX/UK/14469/88
 8191 2264/88

Abteilung M
 Leiter

Berlin, 10. 12. 1988
 we-le 4540 /88

BSTU
 000261

Hauptabteilung XX
 Leiter

Operativer Hinweis

Als Anlage übergebe ich Ihnen eine Briefsendung der sogenannten "Arbeitsgruppe zur Situation der Menschenrechte in der DDR", die an den bekannten Exponenten des politischen Untergrundes

Lutz Rathenow

gerichtet ist, zur weiteren Veranlassung.

Inhalt der Sendung sind zwei A 4-Bogen eines vervielfältigten Textes mit hetzerischem Charakter anlässlich des 40. Jahrestages der Annahme der Allgemeinen Erklärung der Menschenrechte.

Die Sendung wurde in Leipzig zum Versand gebracht.

Über o. g. Sachverhalt wurde mit einem Schreiben am 10. 12. 1988, Tgb.-Nr. 7531/88, der Stellv. des Ministers, Gen. Generalleutnant Neiber, informiert.

Strobel
 Generalmajor

BSTU
 000041

Jan, 1. 11. 89

Lieber Lutz!

Falls Du am kommenden Wochenende (4./5.) noch nach Jena kommen möchtest, wäre meine Freude groß. Unsere letzte Gelegenheit verstreift, noch ein paar Fotos von Dir zu machen! Außerdem ist am Samstag Bürgerforum auf dem zentralen Platz, dem Du zuschauen könntest.

Der Termin unserer Abreise steht seit gestern fest: der 8. November (Dittwoch) um 1.30 Uhr ab Wernitz, 4:22 Uhr Bebra an. Danach kannst Du anrufen, wenn Du willst.

Ich werde ebenfalls versuchen, Dich anzurufen, bevor wir abreisen. Mein Brief hier nur für den Fall, daß Du nicht erreichbar bist. Alles weitere, wie wir es besprochen haben.

Brigitte Köpfer würde sich freuen, Dich alsbald zu sehen in Jena. Also, es wäre schön, Du wädest an diesem Wochenende noch mal herüberkommen. Beste Grüße auch von Carola an Euch!

Danke für Deine Hilfe!!!
 Dein W.

54 ←
Handwritten letter to Lutz Rathenow
 This letter to Lutz Rathenow dated November 1989 was opened by Department M within the framework of postal surveillance and copied for further use. Department M gave a copy of the letter to the Stasi service unit that had "processed" and collected information on Rathenow. As the State Security was disbanding and evidence was being destroyed, this document was torn up. It was later possible to reassemble the snippets and have the letter classified into the appropriate file in the Stasi Records Archive.

Concrete postal surveillance

On the one hand, the surveillance of postal communications was done in a general manner with spot checks of postal items for any unusual external features. This could be incomplete sender details, handwritten embellishments or envelopes with additional glue.

At the same time, there was person-related surveillance that targeted specific suspicious senders or recipients. To this end, Department M executed search orders from other Stasi service units and searched purposefully for postal items of observed persons. It passed on photographed letters and seized material to its colleagues, placing a copy in its index card file pockets. For these personalized postal checks, it conducted "special letterbox emptying". After observing a specific person dropping off post, the Stasi removed these items from the letterbox, sometimes even from private letterboxes.



55 ↗
Employee of Department M opening letters, undated

56 →
Work station for the manual resealing of postal items, undated

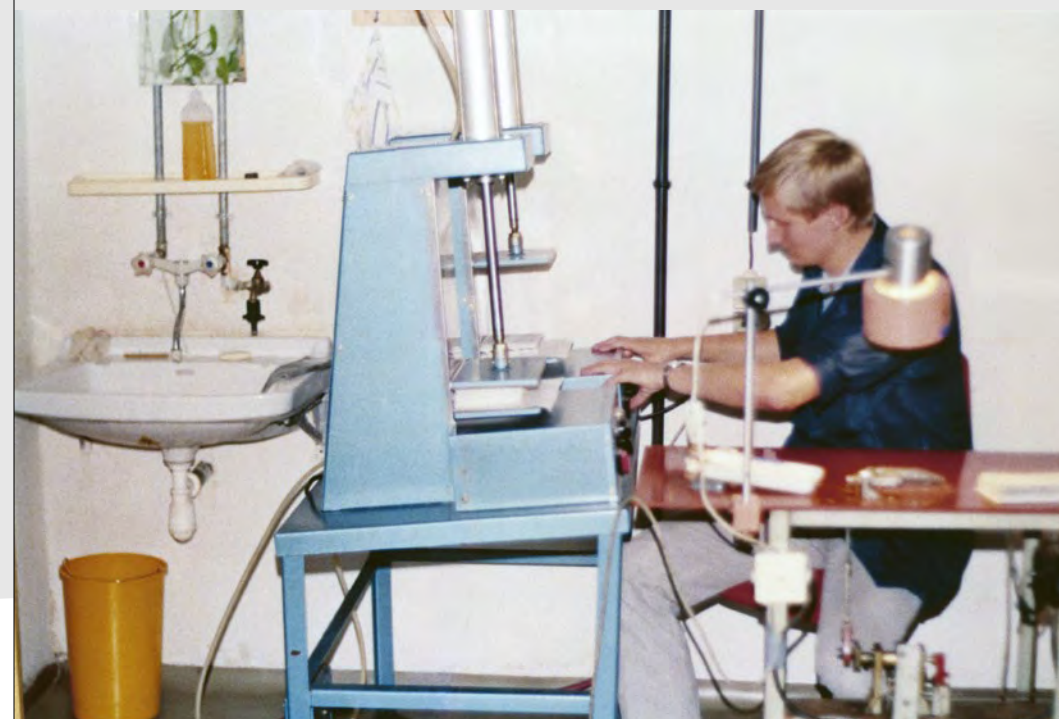
Technical devices to open and seal letters

Beginning in the 1970s, the Stasi increasingly used technical aids such as letter opening machines, letter sealing machines and x-rays to screen letters. Postal control evolved into a highly effective surveillance method.



57 ↗
Already opened letters are placed in a letter sealing machine, around 1984.

58 →
Checked letters are reclosed in a letter sealing machine, around 1984.



59 ←
Employee of Department M placing resealed envelopes in a letter press to remove any traces of postal control, around 1984.



60 ↑
 61 ↗
 62 →



63 ↑
 64 ←





THE STASI'S LEGACY

65 ↑

The broad array of documents, material and data carriers left behind by the Ministry for State Security (MfS) make up the current holdings of the Stasi Records Archive.

Included in this collection are the files that had already been archived by the Stasi. Since 1984 its central archives had been located in House 8 on the grounds of the Stasi headquarters in Berlin-Lichtenberg. It stored its archived files of closed cases in several repository rooms there. For reasons of secrecy, access to them was highly restricted.

The current archival holdings also contain documents that were still being processed in 1989 and 1990. Until March 1990, when the State Security Service was disbanded, its employees were still monitoring social developments and working on ongoing cases. In a final effort to obscure the scale of the decade-long spying, the Stasi attempted to destroy documents or render them unusable. When citizens' committees began occupying Stasi offices in December 1989, they were able to secure damaged documents as well as completely intact records, working materials and data carriers of the secret police.

Today's archive consists of various kinds of information storage such as photos, slides, videos, films, sound carriers, microfiches, magnetic tapes and floppy discs. These records left behind by the Stasi are preserved in the House 8 archive building, in other neighbouring buildings and at additional archive locations of the Stasi Records Archive. They are archivally processed and put into a form that protects privacy while making them available to those affected, to researchers, the media, and the public.

The Reconstruction of Torn-Up Documents

The Stasi not only left behind intact papers and media, but also destroyed and torn-up documents. As a secret police and intelligence agency, it made a strong effort to destroy as many documents as possible during the Peaceful Revolution in the GDR. It hoped to eliminate evidence of its mass surveillance and repression of society and to cover up traces of illegal activity. In many of the Stasi offices, massive amounts of documents were destroyed. Stasi employees tore, burned, shredded or pulped countless documents in paper disposal machines.

The occupation of Stasi offices from December 1989 on put an end to the further destruction of records. Citizens' committees managed to salvage many "pre-destroyed" papers that had been torn up by hand and were awaiting removal. Thousands of bags were stuffed with torn-up pages, index cards, chopped up photos or tangled balls of audio recordings and films. Records that had been put through a shredder and rolled into clumps were beyond repair and had to be disposed of. This left around 16,000 containers with torn-up material that could be saved from permanent destruction.

The state in which the Stasi left its documents created a particular challenge to the archive in its goal of making documents accessible for use.



66 ↑



67 ↑

Bag storage facility in Magdeburg where the containers with pre-destroyed material are stored today, 2017



68 ← Employees of the Stasi Records Archive sort and manually piece together paper snippets that were torn up by the Stasi prior to 1990, 2008.

Manual Reconstruction

The Stasi Records Archive has been commissioned by law to safely store the Stasi files and make them accessible for use. Hence, it is also responsible for reconstructing torn documents. This undertaking is one-of-a-kind in the field of archives in Germany and perhaps in the entire world.

The first step in the reconstruction of documents is the examination of the bags containing the torn-up material. The "Manual Reconstruction" project began in 1995. It involves inspecting the bags one by one and sorting the contents. The torn documents are removed from the sacks in layers and laid out on a work surface to ensure that contextual connections are not lost. Then they are arranged according to the different shades of paper, the writing material, the typeface and, finally, on the basis of the written text content, at which

point the matching pieces of paper are pieced together by hand.

Through this precise detailed work, several pages or even entire cases can be reassembled. This is how thousands of documents have been reconstructed, subsequently archived and made available for use.

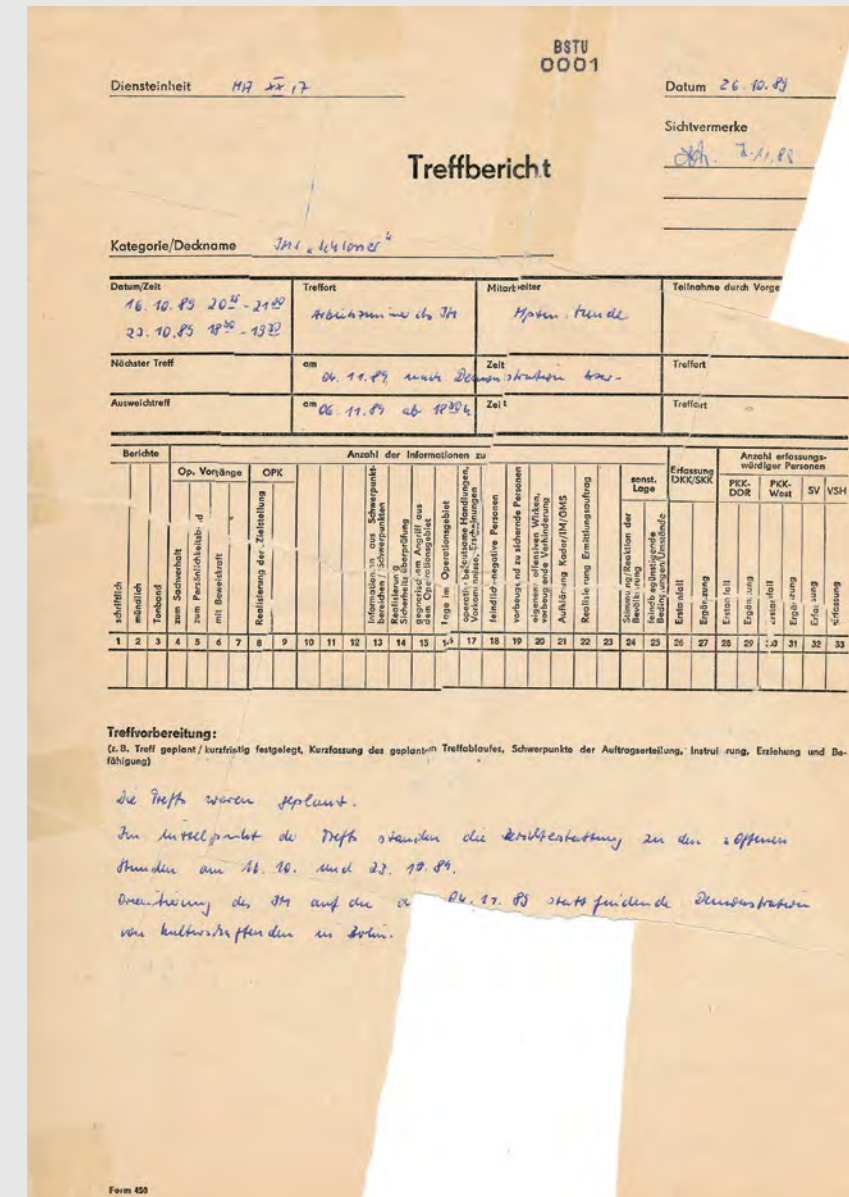
Although a new process of virtual composition has been developed, the process of manual reconstruction of Stasi documents continues. When a sheet has only been torn once or twice, it is faster and easier to reassemble it by hand. Moreover, this method assures the preservation of the original pages.

A puzzle of Stasi snippets

This report from an IM file documents two meetings between an unofficial collaborator of the Stasi (IM) and his case officer. The Stasi used an IM file to store both the documents about unofficial collaborators as well as the written reports they provided. Unofficial collaborators were divided into different categories according to their area of activity. An IMS, which was the most common category, was supposed to identify "suspicious situations" and "new security requirements". Providing unsolicited reports was meant to have a "preemptive and damage-preventing" effect.

Shortly after the meeting described in this report took place, Stasi employees tore up the page. It was later reassembled by hand through the manual reconstruction project and assigned to the corresponding case in the Stasi Records Archive.

In the permanent exhibition "Access to Secrecy", visitors can try their hand at assembling the individual snippets on a digital touch surface.



BSTU
0001

Dienst Einheit MZ 22 17 Datum 26.10.89

Sichtvermerke
2/1/89

Treffbericht

Kategorie/Dachname JM 441000

Datum/Zeit	Treffort	Mitarbeiter	Teilnahme durch Vorge
<u>16.10.89 20⁰⁰-21⁰⁰</u> <u>23.10.89 18⁰⁰-19⁰⁰</u>	<u>Hörsaal im 1. JH</u>	<u>Matthias Frenkel</u>	
Nächster Treff	am <u>06.11.89 nach Delegation</u>	Zeit	Treffort
Ausweichtreff	am <u>06.11.89 ab 18⁰⁰</u>	Zeit	Treffort

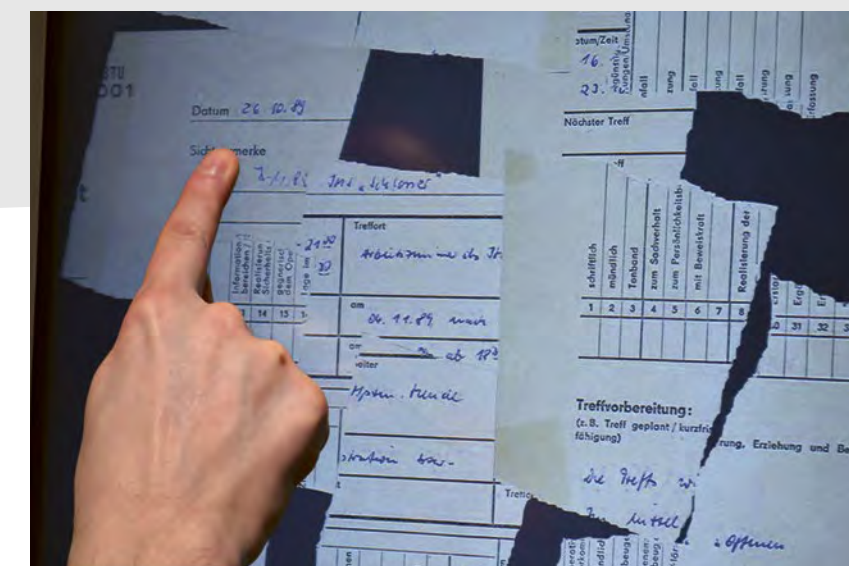
Berichte	Anzahl der Informationen zu											Anzahl erfassungswürdiger Personen																				
	Op. Vorfälle	OPK	Informationen im Zusammenhang mit Schwerepunkten	Informationen im Zusammenhang mit Schwerepunkten	Informationen im Zusammenhang mit Schwerepunkten	Informationen im Zusammenhang mit Schwerepunkten	Informationen im Zusammenhang mit Schwerepunkten	Informationen im Zusammenhang mit Schwerepunkten	Informationen im Zusammenhang mit Schwerepunkten	Informationen im Zusammenhang mit Schwerepunkten	Informationen im Zusammenhang mit Schwerepunkten	Informationen im Zusammenhang mit Schwerepunkten	PKK-DOK	PKK-Wert	SV	VSH																
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33

Treffvorbereitung:
(z.B. Treff geplant / kurzfristig festgelegt, Kurzfassung des geplanten Treffablaufes, Schwerpunkte der Auftragserteilung, Instruierung, Erziehung und Befähigung)

*Die Treffs waren geplant.
Im Mittelprotokoll der Treffs standen die Zielvorgaben zu den offenen Stunden am 16.10. und 23.10.89.
Anweisung des IM auf die 06.11.89 statt findende Demonstration von Kulturbesuchenden in Berlin.*

Form 453

69 → Report on a meeting with the IMS (unofficial collaborator used to penetrate and secure the area of responsibility on a politically operative level) "Schlosser" from 26 October 1989



Virtual Reconstruction

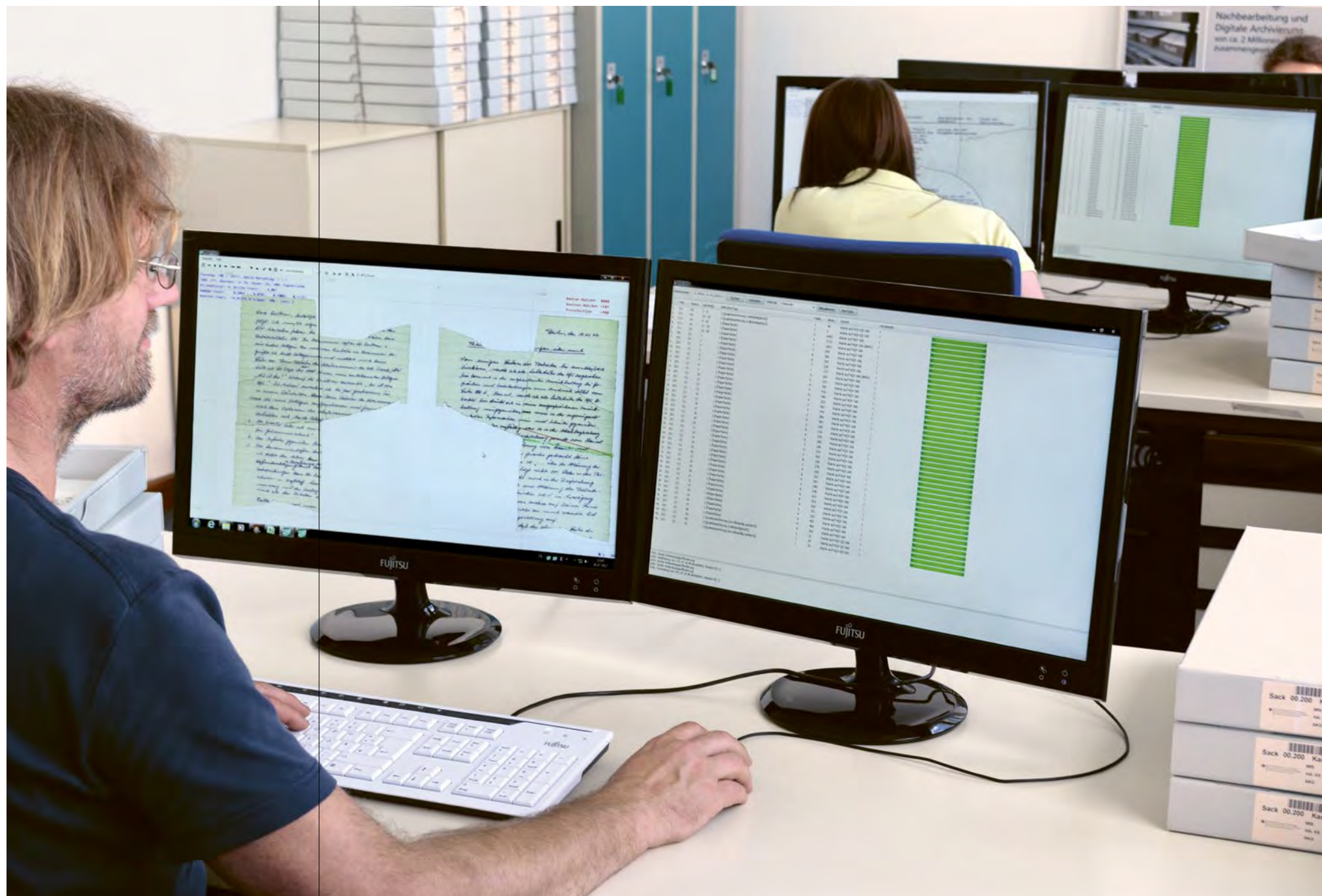
The successful reconstruction of Stasi documents has shown that restoring torn documents is feasible and invaluable for political and historical reappraisal.

Many pages, however, were torn into several small pieces. Reconstructing these documents by hand would be very laborious. It would require a high level of manpower and take decades to complete. In 2007 the research project "Virtual Reconstruction" was launched to enable the Stasi Records Archive to fulfil its mission of making the documents - even damaged documents - accessible in the foreseeable future.

In a pilot project for computer-aided reconstruction, the Fraunhofer Institute for Production Systems and Design Technology (IPK) has developed a software that can reassemble the paper fragments virtually. In preparation for the scanning process, the snippets are sorted layer by layer into small boxes to ensure that the contextual framework remains intact. A high-performance scanner then creates high-resolution images of

the snippets. The developed software, the so-called "e-Puzzler", compares the snippets for matching characteristics, such as colour, writing or cracked edges, and reassembles the pieces that fit together into complete pages. The resulting reconstructions can then be added to files and cases in the archive.

The project has already successfully demonstrated that virtual reconstruction works in principle. During the project test phase, it became apparent that this undertaking, which is unique in the world, is highly complex. It is being developed further to improve the process, speed up the scanning technology and make it generally more effective. The goal is to fill the gaps in the archive by creating a stable method for the virtual reconstruction of documents.



71 ↑

Quality assurance of the virtual reconstruction of Stasi records, 2013

In the quality assurance stage, archivists assist in reassembling the snippets by checking whether the puzzle proposals are complete, after which they confirm or reject them. The Stasi Records Archive takes the reconstructed pages, compiles them into files and cases and returns them to the context in which they were created.



72 ↑
Repository room in House 8 with mobile aisle shelving units used by the Stasi to store its records, between 1984 and 1989

The Written Records of the Stasi

Written documents make up the lion's share of the records left behind by the Ministry for State Security (MfS). These include files on individuals under surveillance, on unofficial collaborators and administrative procedures, index cards, work instructions, minutes, telegrams, transcripts of oral reports and much more.

The preserved written material is not limited to the documents archived by the Stasi as file folders on completed cases. Before the Stasi was dissolved, over half of its documents were still in the departments of the individual service units. Citizens' committees were able to secure a large part of these "active", not yet fully pro-

cessed, cases, as well as individual documents that they found in the offices and on the desks of Stasi employees. These were added to the holdings of today's Stasi Records Archive.

Over 111 linear kilometres of written material – the equivalent to the distance between Leipzig and Dresden – have been preserved. Today, around half of these records are stored in the central Stasi Records Archive in Berlin. The documents from the MfS headquarters are kept here along with those from the district administrations of Berlin and Potsdam. The other half of the file material, which came from the other Stasi district administrations and county offices, is spread over the Stasi Records Archive's twelve additional locations. These archives are situated on the territory of the former districts of the German Democratic Republic (GDR), in the new federal states of Germany.

The "Acker II" file

Operational case (OV) "Acker II" is an example of a file that had already been archived by the Stasi and stored in its archives. An operational case was a specific procedural category of the Stasi, in which it collected information on criminal offences, mostly undercover investigations of individuals and secret police actions.

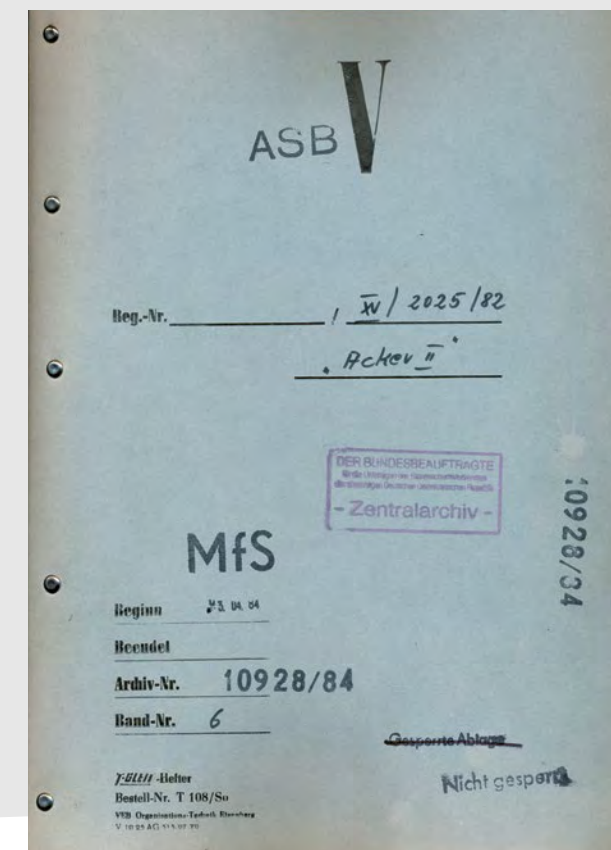
In December 1981 the State Security district administration in Berlin opened the operational case (OV) "Acker II". It was preceded by other surveillance cases, including "Acker". In these cases, the Stasi compiled its findings about an organized group of smugglers that helped people who wanted to leave the GDR cross over the border into the West. In 1984 the "Acker II" file was closed, archived and transferred to the Stasi central archive.

The archived folder 6 of the OV "Acker II" is presented here. The same file folder is seen in the photograph taken by the Stasi. Photographs like this one from the everyday work of the Stasi are rare. The taking of photographs was strictly regulated. This one, however, was taken for documentation purposes and displayed to its own employees as part of its efforts "to keep traditions alive" and depict the work of the archive department.

73 ↓



74 →
Folder 6 of the operational case "Acker II"



Mobile shelving

These original parts belong to mobile shelving used by the Stasi to store its archived files in Berlin. In House 8, the new archive building, in which the Stasi's central archive had been located since 1984, four large rooms were equipped with a system of manually operated mobile rolling shelves. These devices are used in archiving and library systems in order to cut back on floor space and provide more storage area.

Before the repository rooms were refurbished in 2000, the files were stored in the central Stasi Records Archive in these shelf systems left behind by the Stasi. Today, the repository rooms in House 8 are fitted with state-of-the-art mobile aisle shelving units which allow for proper storage of the Stasi records. The shelf labelled H089, which is presented in the permanent exhibition, is one of the few original mobile shelves preserved from the Stasi era.



75 ↑



76 →

**Photograph of the repository room
of the Stasi Records Archive, 2017**

The loose pages were tied together into bundles of documents, arranged and indexed according to content so that they can be used for research.

**From the bundle to the file -
cataloguing**

When citizens' committees occupied the Stasi buildings during the Peaceful Revolution in the GDR in 1989/1990, they discovered utter chaos in the offices of the Stasi employees. Thousands of documents were in disarray. The contents of folders and loose sheets of paper had to be tied up in bundles and collected for storage. A large share of the Stasi documents was unsorted and uncatalogued.

For the records to be at all useable, they had to be restored to the context in which they were created. In 1992, when the Stasi Records Act (StUG) granted affected persons the right to inspect files, the documents had to be sorted and prepared for use while maintaining data protection. One of the most urgent tasks was to establish connections between the highly complicated card index system and the masses of preserved files.

The work of recording, cataloguing and indexing the contents of unsorted documents continues to be one of the most important tasks of the Stasi Records Archive today. This requires reconstructing the original order of the documents and organizing them according to the corresponding Stasi service unit from which

they originated. The archivists summarize the important contents of a file and record them in a database so that they can be retrieved and searched by subject, person or place. To do this, it is necessary to take into account the structure, working methods, information paths and the special filing system of the Stasi.

As part of its work as a secret police, the Stasi massively encroached on personal rights and unlawfully collected information about people. This means that before the documents can be used by the public, they have to be prepared in accordance with data protection regulations.

Preservation of written records

Since the written documents are constantly being used, the archive must also address the task of restoring and conserving them for the future. The various paper materials are fragile; some are brittle and cannot be stored indefinitely. It is important to limit any additional damage caused by external influences. Conservational measures such as acid-free protective packaging and air-conditioned archive rooms are also used to extend the life of the documents. In the Stasi Records Archive's restoration workshop, measures such as paper de-acidification and mould removal are applied to already damaged pages to restore their legibility and make them usable.

It is also the responsibility of the archive to ensure that the constant use of original materials does not cause erosion. This is where the digitalisation of documents can play a role, creating new opportunities by increasing the use of digital copies. To this end, the documents are prepared comprehensively and digitalised with scanners that are gentle on the documents' content. It is also easier for users to work with the digital documents. Systematic digitalisation is being planned as part of the strategy for preserving the

collection. The Stasi Records Archive is collaborating with partner archives to achieve this goal. Long-term digital archiving represents a particular challenge that must be met in the future. Currently, digitalised documents are being stored in an archive-compatible storage system based on specific parameters so that they are available for further retrieval.

77 ↘



78 ↑

View into the repository room of the Stasi Records Archive with modern equipment, 2018

The rolling shelves contain new archive boxes, in which records can be properly stored today.





Ulrike Poppe in the Stasi Records

This example, based on an extract from the file on Ulrike Poppe, illustrates the diversity of the records left behind by Stasi. In many cases, when a person's name is found in the Stasi documents, there does not exist *one* specific individual file or *one* surveillance case targeting this sole individual. The same person can crop up in very different documents. Ulrike Poppe, for instance, is mentioned in several cases in which the Stasi collected, stored and processed information about different individuals and situations.

Ulrike Poppe was born as Ulrike Wick in Rostock in the GDR in 1953. She moved to East Berlin to begin her university studies in the early 1970s. There she became acquainted with people who met in discussion groups to exchange their critical views about politics and society in the GDR. This is how she came to the attention of the Stasi, which saw these meetings as "subversive" and part of the "political underground".

In the GDR, political opponents, acts of resistance and any criticism of the ruling party fell into the category of PUT ("political underground activities"), which the Stasi aimed to prevent. Main Department XX was in charge of combating the PUT. Its task was to uncover plans and intentions hostile to the state and to prevent opposition groups from networking and gaining public attention.

The Stasi stepped up surveillance of Ulrike Poppe in the 1980s when she became active in the independent women's and peace movement, which was classified as part of the "political underground". In addition to taking covert photographs and tapping telephones and private homes, the Stasi also used informers who passed on information about Ulrike Poppe and her acquaintances to the secret police.

The photos and document excerpts presented on the following pages were taken from files that the Stasi kept on Ulrike Poppe. We would like to thank Ulrike Poppe for consenting to the use of these documents as well as for the interview she provided for the exhibition.

Various Stasi records on Ulrike Poppe:

V op "Partner" / AOP "Monolith" / AOP "Atelier"

From January 1972 on, Ulrike Poppe (still named Wick at the time) appeared in records of the Stasi in the role of a "contact person". A few registered surveillance cases (such as the preliminary file "Partner" or the later archived operational person control "Monolith" and "Atelier") on people active in opposition circles in East Berlin also contain information on Ulrike Wick. However, the Stasi did not process her in a targeted manner. For a few years her name was simply entered into what was known as a Kerbloch-Kartei, an edge-notched index card. This allowed the Stasi to begin collecting information on her without having to abide by the strict guidelines and work regulations that applied to registered cases.

In an interview presented in the permanent exhibition, Ulrike Poppe speaks about her experiences of being surveilled by the Stasi and later viewing her Stasi file. Excerpts from this interview from 2018 are presented here.

"I graduated from high school in Oranienburg in 1971. And then right away I began my studies at the university in Berlin. Art education and history.

As soon as I arrived in Berlin, I came in contact with groups that discussed politics a lot. Members of those groups were also former students that had been kicked out of the university for political reasons. I happened to live in the flat of someone who got arrested. So this is how I experienced my first house search. And that's when my problems with the Stasi started."

OV „Zirkel“

In September 1977 the operational case (OV) "Zirkel" (circle) was set up, in which the Stasi carried out surveillance of individuals whom it attributed to the "political underground" (PUT). One of these people was Poppe's husband. Through these connections information on Ulrike Poppe quickly landed in the "Zirkel" case, which meant that the Stasi monitored her in several parallel cases. The Stasi stepped up its surveillance and tapping activities in the operational case (OV) "Zirkel" in January 1986, as Poppe and her husband were helping to establish the "Initiative Peace and Human Rights" (IFM), one of the most important opposition groups in the GDR.

"This OV 'Zirkel' (circle), the operational case compiled on me and my former husband Gerd Poppe. And he took it upon himself to filter out all the IMs from the records. He found 80 unofficial collaborators. [...]

The 'Initiative Peace and Human Rights' was founded after we failed to organize a human rights seminar under the roof of the church. And this work became more and more important.

We had accounted for the fact that our phones were tapped, that the post was examined. At some point we found a microphone in our flat. We resorted to writing important things onto a piece of paper and not talking in our flat."

ZMA on OV "Zirkel"

An additional file, a central collection of information (ZMA - Zentrale Materialablage) that corresponds with the OV "Zirkel" also contained information on Ulrike Poppe. The ZMA was different from registered cases in that it functioned more like a manual file in which the Stasi could store situational information that it could continue to process directly. The "Zirkel" case and the related collections of information were still being processed by the State Security up to its dissolution in 1989/1990.

ZMA "Women's Circles/Groups"

In March 1982, when the GDR extended the mandatory military service under certain circumstances to women, Ulrike Poppe joined the protest against the new law. This initiative led to the founding of "Women for Peace" in East Berlin in October 1982. The group was opposed to militarization and rearmament policies and grew into a network of women's groups throughout the GDR. Classifying the activists as "exponents of political underground activities" (PUT) directed from the West, the State Security began taking action against them. It gathered material from different sources into a central file, called a ZMA, that was used to provide daily reports on the women's movement.

"My first organized group was 'Women for Peace'. This women's group was founded in 1982. It was a reaction to the newly amended law on military service that planned to include women into active duty service, under certain conditions. We protested this provision. And that was, so to speak, the start of this group's work."



Investigative Case AU XV 5340/83

Ulrike Poppe was arrested by the Stasi on 12 December 1983. She was interrogated and taken to the remand prison in Berlin-Hohenschönhausen the following day. The Stasi instigated preliminary proceedings against her on grounds of suspected "treasonous transfer of information". The official reason was a meeting that had taken place between Poppe and a civil rights activist from the British women's movement. Following massive international protests, Ulrike Poppe was released after six weeks in detention on 24 January 1984. The preliminary proceedings against her were dropped. The investigative case was closed and archived in the central archive of the Stasi in Berlin.



"Then an English peace activist, she was originally from New Zealand, was used as a reason or rather our contact with her was used as a reason to arrest four women from the women's group 'Women for Peace' in December 1983.

It took me five weeks before I started to take this detention seriously. That is when I understood, we were approaching a trial. Surprisingly I was released after six weeks. And that was due to the enormous statements of solidarity that were pouring in from all over the world."

82 ↖
83 →
Mugshot of Ulrike Poppe after her arrest by the Stasi in December 1983

ZOV „Wespen“

In response to the increased networking of women's groups, the Stasi's Main Department XX set up the central operational case (ZOV) "Wespen" (wasps) in June 1985. The Stasi wanted to prevent a nationwide merger and the systematic organization of the women's groups. It used both informers and psychological destabilising measures to hinder their high-profile activities and thwart their connections abroad. When the central operational case "Wespen" was created, the Stasi deleted from its central database the registration of Ulrike Poppe in the "Zirkel" case. In actuality, however, Poppe continued to be processed in both cases in the following years, which was not typical of the Stasi's work methods.

"Well, we did notice that the Stasi was observing us relentlessly, but we were still quite astounded when we were handed over the records in January of 1992 and saw what a humongous collection of records they put together. Because really, we were not as threatening as the Stasi made us out to be."



ZMA "Women for Peace"

In parallel to "Wespen," the central case about the women's movement, the Stasi set up an extensive central collection of information (ZMA) file titled "Women for Peace". It consisted of partial files from all 15 districts of the GDR from Rostock, East Berlin, Leipzig, Dresden, Halle all the way to Erfurt. Only some of the ZMA still exists, however, because it was partially destroyed by the Stasi in late 1989.

"I think if we had left the files closed, no one would have believed us. Because if we had talked about the methods of surveillance and we had not been able to prove them, people would have thought us preposterous. They would have thought that we wanted to exaggerate our own roles. But it was actually the Stasi that hyped our activities. We, the few opponents, would have never been able to topple the state."



84 ↖
85 ↖
86 ←
87 ↙

Stasi surveillance photos of Ulrike Poppe in East Berlin in the 1980s



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Images, Audio Recordings, Films – Diverse Archival Holdings

In addition to its collection of written documents, the Stasi Records Archive also preserves a wide range of information media. These include more than 2,800 films and videos, at least 1.8 million photographs and around 24,000 audio recordings. The Stasi's work operations and methods are therefore not only documented in files and card indexes, but also in photographs, audio recordings and film.

These different forms of media primarily served the Stasi's central task: monitoring and controlling the GDR population. Photo, film, video and audio technology provided the Stasi many different opportunities to observe suspicious individuals, collect information about alleged "enemies of socialism" and secure evidence. Suspicious persons were observed in their everyday activities at diverse locations such as on a streetcar, in public areas, at the theatre or in a restaurant. Since most observations were "conspiratorial", i.e. secret, the Stasi employees camouflaged their technical equipment in umbrellas, suitcases, briefcases, strollers, toolboxes, or otherwise.

Observation and investigative photos, surveillance videos, recordings of room, radio and telephone tapping operations, recorded court proceedings, interrogations and informant reports are all part of the preserved archival holdings.

In addition to the Stasi's own productions, the collection also contains recordings of television and radio programmes that the Stasi used for evaluation purposes. There is also preserved material that the Stasi seized from people who documented



89 ↑

Tangled reels of film from the Stasi before they were catalogued in the Stasi Records Archive, before 2000

abuses, such as environmental damage or violent police operations. The Stasi also used audio-visual technology for self-promotion and training purposes. Agitation against the "class enemy" was meant to strengthen their employees' identification with their mission. In addition, to document its inner life and "keep traditions alive", the Stasi captured on audio and film numerous work conferences, festive events, as well as party and state receptions – recordings that shed light on the Stasi's self-perception.

90 ↓



91 ↘



Training films and videos from the Ministry for State Security

The Stasi also produced training films for internal use. Some of these training films are presented in the permanent exhibition and are available in their entirety, sometimes with audio, in the Stasi records online resource (www.stasi-mediathek.de).

Cataloguing and making the media available

When the Stasi buildings were occupied in the winter of 1989/1990, citizens' committees found countless photos, negatives and slides in disarray and tangled balls of unwound cassettes, audio and film tapes in the offices of Stasi employees. The first steps involved sorting and packing them for storage.

The archival cataloguing work continues to be absolutely essential in order to locate the information media and render it suitable for use. To this end, the content of the data carriers is examined, after which key words describing the main information are recorded in a database.

One major challenge here is to determine the origin of the individual media and to link the items to the written records. In many cases, the recordings have been removed from the historical context in which they were created and lack any accompanying information such as title, name, time or location. Finding the corresponding original context is an ongoing task of the archive staff. Technical details are frequently missing as well. The first task of the Stasi Records Archive is finding the right device for playing a recording.

In creating these media recordings, here too the Stasi massively encroached on the personal rights of the people it monitored. It is therefore important that the provisions of the Stasi Records Act be observed when using and publishing them. As part of the right to view one's own file, affected individuals are able to view records and media that involves them personally. Researchers and media representatives may only view records in connection with a specific purpose. The persons affected may decide for themselves how the observation photos or films are used. To ensure that data protection regulations are complied with, in cases of doubt the Stasi Records Archive renders individuals anonymous.

Preserving the media

Preserving the inventory is another focus of the archive work. Because media carrier material is fragile, the preserved items often have defects - background noise or scratches, which can cause interference, noise and unintelligibility. When possible, the Stasi Records Archive tries to repair and restore such damaged material.

The photo laboratory is able to use acid tests to detect and counter damage to pictures at an early stage. The storage conditions have also been improved to achieve the best possible protection of the media.

Digitalisation also opens up new opportunities in this area. Contents from data carriers that cannot be preserved are digitalised, thus securing them for the future. Increasing the use of digital copies can also help prevent further wear and tear of the originals.

In addition, digitalisation offers advantages for developing the media. Scanning and digitalising negatives, for example, makes it easier to capture images visually and catalogue their content. In the digital format, places and personal attributions can be compared more efficiently, specific sequences of sound or film material can be accessed more easily, and user queries can be responded to more quickly.

In the digital age, however, when formats and technical requirements are constantly changing, the Stasi Records Archive is faced with the important task of establishing a digital long-term archive.

92 ↓

Work area in the Stasi Records Archive where films and videos are processed, digitalised and made usable, 2018





93 ← Surveillance photos taken by Stasi employees with a hidden camera on 27 April 1983 in the vicinity of the Church of the Redeemer (Erlöserkirche) in Berlin-Lichtenberg. Main Department VIII of the MfS, which received its orders from other Stasi service units, was responsible for this type of covert surveillance.

Images

From the beginning, the Stasi used photography for different purposes: as evidence, for its own documentation and, from the 1970s on, increasingly in its surveillance work. In addition to investigative and surveillance photographs, the preserved pictures include confiscated photos and numerous pictures of celebrations, events, receptions, office anniversaries and official hunting outings.

When the Stasi offices were occupied, individual photographs, photo albums, boxes with negative folders, cartons of positives and negatives, slide series, individual glass plates, microforms and Polaroids were found. In the first years, archivists had to describe the content of the

pictures to make them usable and to index the important topics. Since then the staff has been working on reconstructing the context in which photographs were taken, identifying places and objects, and linking images to the preserved written material.

Audio recordings

In the 1950s, the Stasi began using audio technology to record court proceedings, interrogations and hearings, party events and festive occasions, business meetings and conferences. The recordings of surveillance operations and interrogations tend to be of particularly low quality. Usually recorded covertly, they often contain disruptive background noise. Dictations of verbal informant reports and recordings of room, radio and telephone surveillance make up the bulk of preserved audio material from the 1970s and 1980s. The sound collection also includes audio recordings of radio broadcasts that were evaluated by the Stasi.

The Stasi Records Archive contains every form of analogue sound storage media in use in Europe between 1950 and 1989. 1/4-inch magnetic records of varying lengths and materials make up the lion's share. It also includes compact and dictation cassettes, rare tapes, long playing records, gram sound sheets or even wire recordings. The archive is continuously checking the content of additional audio recording media. It catalogues, archives and makes them accessible. Occasionally empty or deleted tapes have to be disposed of.

94 ↓ ORWO audio tape





95 ↑
ORWO K 60 compact cassettes

Cassettes

Compact or audio cassettes were among the most frequently used sound recording media in the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s. Each side normally has a recording capacity of between 30 and 60 minutes. Although they have now largely been replaced by digital technology, because of their robustness cassettes are sometimes still used. Hundreds of cassettes were also salvaged from the Stasi. Their contents are being examined and safely stored on more up-to-date digital formats.

Tape recorder

This four-track mono tape recorder from the Czechoslovakian company TESLA was made in the late 1960s for analogue audio recording and replay. The foldable table device was operated by pressing buttons and could be connected to a slide projector for presentations. The Stasi used the audio recorder to make and replay its magnetic audio tapes.

96 ↓



Films

Film and video make up another important holding of the Stasi Records Archive. They too provide insight into the work processes and surveillance technology of the Stasi.

The Stasi Records Archive contains films in 8 mm, 16 mm and 35 mm formats as well as videos of varying types in different standards. The Stasi's own productions, which mostly stem from its surveillance or training activities, make up the core collection of the salvaged film rolls and video cassettes. There are also recordings of television broadcasts and film material seized by the Stasi.

The Stasi also observed "suspicious" individuals with concealed mobile or fixed cameras. In the 1980s it increasingly used video technology from Western countries for this purpose. These surveillance videos generally do not contain information about the context in which they were made, which makes it difficult to assign them to specific cases.



97 ↑
Film canisters



98 ↑

View of the Siemens 4004 computer system in the central computer centre of the MfS in Wuhlheide, Berlin-Köpenick, around 1975

Electronic Data Carriers of the Stasi

The Ministry for State Security (MfS) had already begun using computer technology and electronic data processing (EDV) in the 1960s. It set up and maintained several databases in the 1970 and 1980s so that it could more systematically evaluate surveillance results and “process” individuals in a targeted secret police manner.

In the “central persons database” (ZPDB), for instance, the Stasi stored information about individuals, situations and incidents that could be interlinked in diverse ways. The ZPDB could also handle complex queries. The “travel database” (RDB) contained details of incoming and outgoing trips across the GDR border and was designed to store 80 million datasets. To manage its data on registered persons, the Stasi used the “automatic preselection system”, which reproduced the data of existing indexes.

Numerous other EDP projects were developed in the 1980s. Plans extending into the year 2000 called for a massive expansion of electronic data storage. The idea was not, however, to entirely replace the manual management of information in the card indexes with electronic data carriers. The indexes contained more detailed information, were less prone to breakdowns and had proven their usefulness in everyday work. Moreover, technological development was limited by the scarce resources in the GDR. Until 1989 the Stasi continued using the card indexes and databases in parallel and keeping them in sync with one another.

In early 1990, during the political upheaval following the Peaceful Revolution, the Central Round Table of civil rights activists and representatives of the old state

leadership decided to have a large portion of the Stasi’s electronic data storage media destroyed. It justified this decision with protecting personal rights and preventing the misuse of personal data – for instance by Western secret services. In spite of this, it has been possible to make 54 data processing projects from preserved magnetic tapes and fragments of databases accessible in the Stasi Records Archive.

To secure the information, the data was copied from floppy disks, magnetic tapes and removable disks, stored on modern data carriers and made available for research.

The Stasi computer centre

The Stasi used its first computer systems to register West Berliners entering the GDR and to record addresses as part of its postal surveillance. In 1970 the Stasi purchased three high-performance large-scale computers (type 4004) from Siemens to establish its own central computer centre in the Berlin district of Köpenick. From 1979 it used the “Standardised System of Electronic Computer Technology” (ESER) that had been jointly developed by the Eastern Bloc states. These ESER large-scale computers were generally compatible with Western IBM systems.



99 ↑
Placing a magnetic disc on a removable disc device, undated



100 ←
Employee of the index and archive department recording data on an office computer made by Robotron, around 1985



101 →

Magnetic disc storage

Information could be stored in track circles on magnetically coated removable disks. The data on a removable disk device the size of a washing machine could be written or read by means of a rotating head. In the 1970s the Stasi began using these magnetic disks as mass storage for its large-capacity computers.

Office computer

The A 5120 model office computer for text and data processing was made by Robotron, a state-run enterprise (VEB). Manufactured in the GDR since 1982, this computer was only supplied to enterprises and institutions. The Stasi's index and archive department (Department XII) used this model - seen in the photo on the far left - to enter and process data on individuals.

Disks

Portable magnetic disks were a widespread and frequently used data carrier from the 1970s until well into the 2000s. Unable to cope with the steadily growing volume of data coupled with the need for greater storage capacity and speed, they later became obsolete. The Stasi also used various disk formats to store its collected data.



102 ↗
5.25-inch floppy disk left behind by the Stasi, from the 1980s



103 ↖
104 ←
105 ↑

106 ↑
107 →





THE CASE OF GILBERT RADULOVIC IN THE STASI RECORDS

108 ↑

“Looking in a Distorting Mirror”

As the preserved documents make clear, the Ministry for State Security (MfS) collected and processed large amounts of information on the people in whom it was interested. The example of Gilbert Furian, formerly Radulovic, shows how this was done and how the information found its way into the files.

The following excerpts from original documents testify to the intensity with which the Stasi pursued its relentless collection of data. They also provide insight into the workings of a secret police force. In addition to reflecting its methods, the documents also reveal the Stasi’s objectives and overriding task: to collect information to be used in controlling and disciplining the population. This was how the Stasi fulfilled its function as the SED dictatorship’s surveillance apparatus and instrument for maintaining its power. Above all, however, the example of Gilbert Radulovic shows how quickly one could draw the attention of the Stasi and the profound impact this could have. It documents how a seemingly harmless private interest became “subversive” action with serious consequences.

Gilbert Furian, whose case is presented here, describes tracing his own biography through the lens of a secret police as “looking into a distorting mirror.” This distorted image presented by the Stasi in its documents is juxtaposed here with the personal views and memories of Furian, in whose life the State Security massively intervened.

Prelude: “... Speaking Your Mind”

Gilbert Radulovic was born in Görlitz in 1945 as Gilbert Kloß. He had already come into conflict with the political system in the GDR during his youth. He caused trouble by repeatedly expressing dissenting opinions and openly voicing criticism.

In an interview in the permanent exhibition, Gilbert Furian, formerly Radulovic, provides insight into his story. The following excerpts from this interview and from the epilogue he wrote for the document booklet “Looking in a distorting mirror” shed light on his experience of being surveilled by the Stasi.

“When the opportunity arose after the end of the GDR to take a look at the Stasi files, I made a request to view my records as fast as I could. I then found myself for the first time in a reading room in 1992 looking through a surprising number of folders. Before this I would never have believed there could be any reason for putting together a file on me.”

“In my family we frowned upon a practice that was widespread in the GDR. This practice involved speaking differently in public and at home, saying what you really think at home but in public saying what you think other people want to hear. In my family this was called hypocrisy. I was always encouraged to say what I think.”

In 1970, after Radulovic had drawn attention to himself repeatedly by expressing “negative political-ideological views”, he was dismissed from his philosophy studies at the Karl-Marx-University in Leipzig. He moved to East Berlin where he took a job as an insurance clerk. In his free time, he met with friends and acquaintances in a discussion group called the “Thursday Circle.”



“The Thursday Circle, which I took part in from 1971, was held in a private apartment in Treptow. Around 10 to 12 people met there once a month and we discussed artistic, scientific or political issues. After about three years, in 1974 or maybe 1975, I left because the direction the discussions were taking was not critical enough of the GDR for me. However, throughout my participation I never had the feeling that I should be worried about surveillance.”



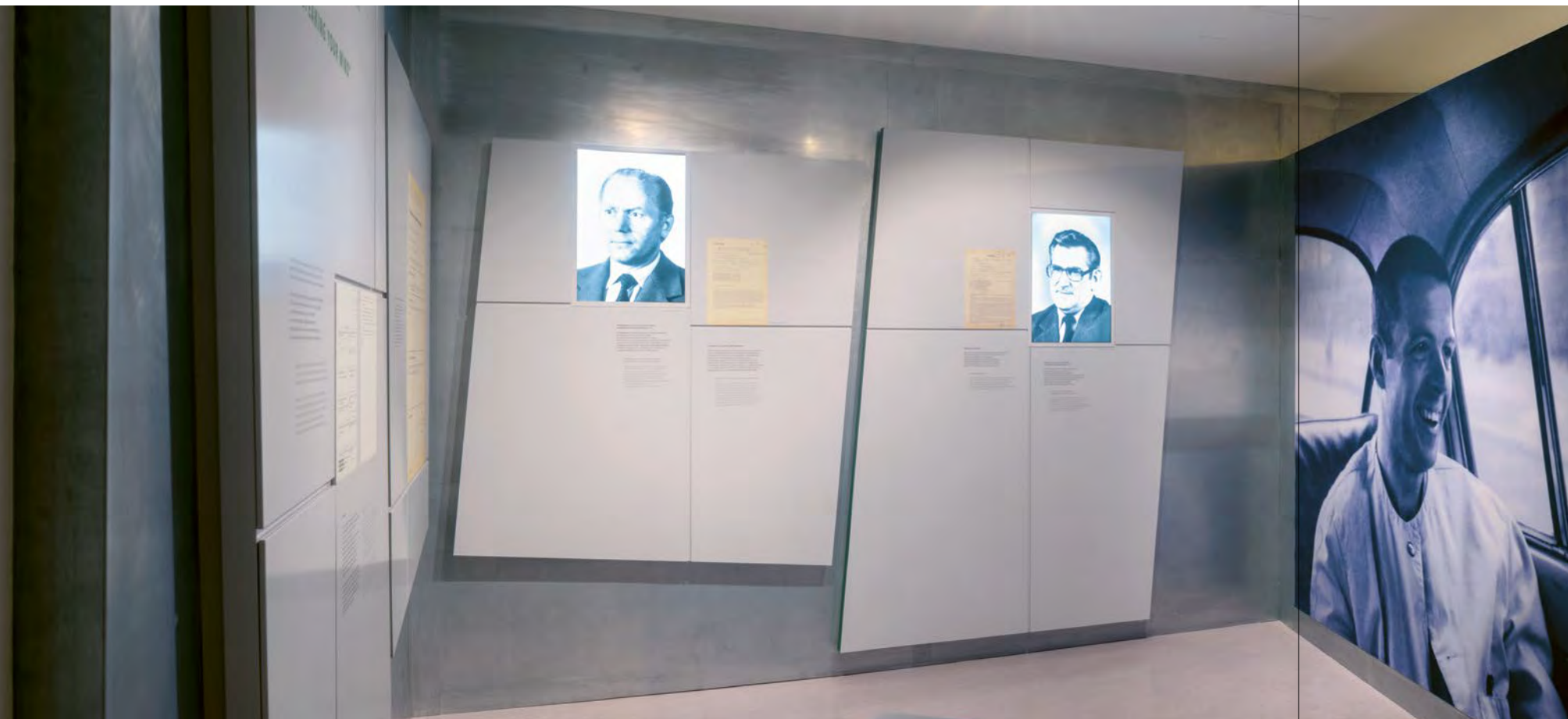
110 ↑
Gilbert Radulovic on assignment for the state-run enterprise (VEB) heating system construction plant in East Berlin, late 1970s

The Stasi kept a critical eye on the Thursday Circle and classified it as a “hostile-negative group”. It identified Radulovic as one of the “most negative people” in the circle. It began monitoring him carefully and suspected him of engaging in anti-state agitation. In the GDR, this accusation could be used to criminalise and punish nearly any expression of criticism according to Section 106 of the Criminal Code.

111 ↓



109 ←
Gilbert Radulovic in front of a propaganda poster of the GDR during a short vacation in Pasewalk, 1966



To verify its initial suspicion and gather evidence of the crime, the Stasi initiated a surveillance and control operation (OPK) against Radulovic under the codename "Kopernikus" in early 1979. Captain Willi Marquardt took charge of the case. Despite extensive investigations, however, he was unable to prove that Radulovic had committed a crime. In 1980 the OPK was closed and the case was archived without Radulovic having ever noticed the surveillance measures. For the time being, the Stasi lost interest in him. By then the Thursday Circle had ceased to exist. The Stasi had successfully infiltrated the group with informants and used targeted psychological measures to destabilise its members.

"After viewing the files in 1992, I realised that the Circle had been under surveillance after all and that one of the people reported to the Stasi what went on at the meetings. At the same time I also read that after the disintegration of the Thursday Circle, the Stasi had lost interest in me for a while."



113 ↑
Willi Marquardt, photo from his personal file at the Ministry for State Security, undated



114 ↑
Hans Buhl, photo from his personal file at the Ministry for State Security, undated

Willi Marquardt (born in 1930) was an experienced employee of the Ministry for State Security. The trained locksmith joined the Stasi in 1957 and worked for many years for Main Department XX. In Department 2 of Main Department XX, responsible for prosecuting "subversion", Marquardt led the surveillance operation "Kopernikus" against Gilbert Radulovic. He was a Captain at the time, but had achieved the rank of Major by the end of his career in 1988. The Stasi repeatedly decorated him for his work "fighting the political underground."

Hans Buhl (born in 1933) joined the State Security in 1952. During his career with the Stasi, he was assigned to various leadership positions. From 1974 to 1980 he was in charge of Department 2 of Main Department XX, which was responsible for investigating "subversion." As Willi Marquardt's supervisor, he was also responsible for the surveillance of Radulovic in conjunction with the OPK "Kopernikus". Buhl still held the rank of Lieutenant Colonel at that time; by 1989 he had advanced to Colonel.



115 ↑

The Case: “... To Clarify a Matter”

In the early 1980s, Gilbert Radulovic became curious about the emerging punk scene in East Berlin and its non-conformist way of life. Through his church contacts he became acquainted with a group of young punks. He was interested in their attitude towards life and their views and began recording his conversations with them. Radulovic initially planned to publish them with a GDR publishing house. He abandoned this idea, however, after realizing that the state might interpret their comments as highly critical of the regime.

“In 1982 I had got to know a group of punks here in the Pfingstkirche (Pentecostal Church) thanks to a deacon responsible for social affairs. And I interviewed the punks because I was interested in how and why they wanted to demonstrate to the general public their desire to live differently from what was expected of them by the GDR state.”

“The material initially disappeared into a drawer as publication was impossible. The punks had expressed their criticism of the GDR in a relatively free manner.”



116 ➤
Punk in East Berlin in front of the slogan: “No-one does what he should - everybody does what they want”

Interested in the alternative lifestyle of the East Berlin subculture, Gilbert Radulovic conducted interviews with young punks in the summer of 1982. His colleague Nikolaus Becker photographed the teenagers. When the Stasi began investigating the author of the material two and a half years later, Becker expected his photos to be confiscated. He scratched out the faces on the negatives to protect the punks' identity.



117 ←
Gilbert Radulovic at his desk in the state-run enterprise (VEB) heating system construction plant in East Berlin, around 1980

000077

Stichwort: Anarchie (1)

KEENE MACHT KEENE GESETZE KEENE BONZEN

BStU

000091

- A Wir machen Anarchie, und dann ...
- B Anarchie is eben ein Ausweg, und nach Anarchie müßte man eben wat andret finden, um eben das auszugleichen ... Aber Anarchie is jedenfalls nich Bombenwerfen oder so.
- A Na, erst mal keene Macht. Keene Gesetze.
- B Keene Bonzen und so'ne Typen, weeb ick, die immer allet machen, wat von oben kommt.
- C Na ja, ohne Grenzen, wa.
- B 'n Boß, den die andern haben, den ham wir nich.
- A Na, denn bräuchten wir ja nich Anarchie machen, wenn wir so wären wie die andern.



- G Anarchie gibts nich.
- F Anarchie - det is ooch so'ne Flucht, weil man nich mehr wußte, auf wat man hinauswill. Meiner Meinung nach is det nich durchsetzbar. Is 'ne Illusion, aber 'ne gute. Man kann allet tun, um det zu erreichen. Aber trotzdem wirds 'n Traum bleiben.
- G Mittel zum Zweck.

SPONTANZERFALL

118 ←

Excerpt from "Reminder of a Youth Movement: Punk"

This was the title of Radulovic's booklet, in which he tried to capture the subculture's attitude towards life. He used various catchwords - such as anarchy, appearance, community, music, love, and future - to get the teenagers to speak about their views.

119 →

The Gutenfürst border checkpoint in Saxon Vogtland was located between the cities of Plauen in the East (GDR) and Hof in the West (FRG). In the course of inter-German travel, passenger trains crossing the border had to stop here.



Two years later Radulovic compiled the material into a booklet titled "Reminder of a Youth Movement: Punk" and distributed it privately to people he knew. He wanted to give a few copies to acquaintances in the West and asked his mother to take eight addressed envelopes containing copies of the booklet with her on her trip to the West. As a pensioner she was allowed to travel to West Germany, where she was to post the envelopes.

"After two years I took it back out, shortened it to 20 pages and secretly got someone to make copies in the factory where I worked. That would have been impossible through official channels. So a colleague printed 100 copies for me. I distributed 90 copies in the East to family and friends and gave the rest to my mother. She was a pensioner and, as such, was allowed to visit the West. She sewed eight copies into a seat cushion. But the customs officials discovered them at the border."

The envelopes were discovered at the Gutenfürst border crossing point during a routine control on 17 January 1985. Because the booklet contained provocative remarks by punks, it was classified as "subversive writing directed against the GDR" and promptly confiscated. When asked about the author, Radulovic's mother had to disclose her son's name. This set the machinery of the Stasi in motion again. The production and distribution of the punk booklet was, in the opinion of the Stasi, likely to harm the interests of the GDR abroad and should, therefore, be criminally prosecuted.

To determine without a doubt that Gilbert Radulovic was the author of the booklet, the Stasi launched a new surveillance operation (OPK) codenamed "Schreiber" (writer) on 31 January 1985. This time Main Department XVIII was in charge of processing the case. Responsible for "securing" the national economy in the GDR, it also had the task of monitoring the plant where Radulovic worked. Captain Gerd Staedtler was the Stasi officer overseeing the case.

The new surveillance operation was based on the suspicion that Radulovic was disseminating texts with "hostile-negative content" in the "non-socialist economic area", meaning countries deemed by the GDR to be hostile. It interpreted this act as "illegal establishment of contact" – a serious crime in the GDR. Radulovic was suspected of having wanted to supply the "class enemy" in the West with subversive material directed against the GDR. The aim of the OPK was to collect evidence to corroborate this suspicion so that it could initiate criminal proceedings against Radulovic.

"My sister phoned me and told me that they had found the booklets. This led to me almost collapsing because my body clearly wanted to give me some idea of what was going to happen next. I myself tried to suppress any thoughts and initially no-one showed up. Nothing for one, nothing for two, nothing for three weeks. I was beginning to think that perhaps they hadn't taken it so seriously."

Captain Staedtler began analysing the data that the Stasi had already collected on Radulovic. To obtain incriminating evidence against him, special attention was paid to Radulovic's past, his personal background and his surroundings. During this process the first surveillance operation, "Kopernikus," resurfaced. The more information the Stasi collected on him, the more it found confirmation of its initial suspicion. It felt that his attempt "to establish illegal contact" was the logical consequence of the ongoing evolution of Radulovic as an "enemy of the state".

The precondition for instigating preliminary investigations was finding concrete evidence to show that Radulovic was indeed the author of the punk booklet. To achieve this, he was to be observed secretly and subsequently interrogated. After he had been under continuous surveillance for an entire day, he was picked up from his workplace by the Stasi on the morning of 27 March 1985.

"And then on 27 March, when I almost wasn't expecting it any more, they came to get me and told me I had to go with them 'to clarify a matter'. I went and got my leather pouch from my office and had to get into one of the two cars without knowing where they were taking me."



121 ↑

Gerd Staedtler, photo from his personal file at the Ministry for State Security, undated



120 ↑

Gerd Staedtler (born in 1949), a trained measurement and control engineering technician from Zeitz, had been with the State Security since 1968. He first served three years with the MfS "Felix Dzerzhinsky" Guards Regiment in Berlin. As a Stasi employee, he was sent to study engineering in Zwickau in 1971 to learn the technical expertise he would need for his future work. After completing his engineering studies, he joined Main Department XVIII of the Ministry for State Security in 1975. He worked there, monitoring central industrial sectors in the GDR, until 1989. He was repeatedly decorated for his many years of reliable service, including for his "successful" handling of the OPK "Schreiber". At the time he still had the rank of Captain, but by 1989 Staedtler had advanced to the position of deputy head of section with the rank of Major.



Personenkontrollakte
 'Kopernikus'

Beginn August 1978

Beendet _____

OPK-Nr. _____

Archiv-Nr. _____

11

100 411 1000 Form 311

MfS AOPK
 23732/80
 Band 2

23732

-1-

BStU
0002992-7
246

Bild 1



26.03.85 16.45 Uhr "Schreiber" vor der REWATEX -
annahmestelle Sredzkistr. Ecke Kollwitzstr. .

Bild 2



26.03.85 16.58 Uhr "Schreiber" beim Beladen des
Anhängers vor der Annahmestelle Sredzkistr.
Ecke Kollwitzstr. .

Radulovic was taken to the pretrial detention centre II on Magdalenenstrasse in Berlin-Lichtenberg, which was right next door to the Stasi headquarters. The suspect Radulovic was expected to respond to the crimes he was accused of. He immediately confessed to having made the punk booklet, stressing, however, that his interest in documenting "how punks live and think" had been purely personal and that he did not have the slightest intention of disseminating this material as propaganda against the GDR.

As soon as he "confessed" he was formally arrested by the Stasi. Only now did the Stasi have sufficient incriminatory material to support the strong suspicion of "illegal establishment of contact", as defined in Section 219 of the GDR Criminal Code. Radulovic's status shifted from accused to strong suspect. With the aim of proving his "subversive intentions", the Stasi moved him to pretrial detention.

Das Stadtbezirks-gericht Berlin-Mitte

000004

Aktenzeichen: Hs.C. 30/85
(Bei Eingaben stets anfügen)Berlin, den 28. März 1985
FernrufBStU
000010**Haftbefehl**

Der RADULOVIC, Gilbert, geb. am 3. Januar 1945, wohnhaft in
1058 Berlin, Husemannstraße 10

ist in Untersuchungshaft zu nehmen.

Er wird beschuldigt, sich der ungesetzlichen Verbindungsaufnahme
schuldig gemacht zu haben, indem er im Herbst 1984 zum Zwecke
der Verbreitung im Ausland Aufzeichnungen mit Nachrichten her-
stellte, die geeignet sind, den Interessen der DDR zu schaden.

Vergehen/Verbrechen gem. § 219 Absatz 2 Ziffer 1 StGB

Er/Sie ist dieser Straftat dringend verdächtig.

Die Anordnung der Untersuchungshaft ist gemäß § 122 Absatz 1 Ziffer 2 StPO
gesetzlich begründet, weil ein Verbrechen den Gegenstand des Verfahrens
bildet.

Gegen diesen Haftbefehl ist das Rechtsmittel der Beschwerde zulässig (§ 127 StPO).
Sie ist binnen einer Woche nach Verkündung des Haftbefehls bei dem unterzeichneten Gericht zu
Protokoll der Rechtsantragstelle oder schriftlich durch den Betroffenen oder einen in der DDR zu-
gelassenen Rechtsanwalt einzulegen (§§ 305, 306 StPO).



Best.-Nr. 220 16 Haftbefehl - §§ 124, 127, StPO
Vordruckbetrieb Demos Osterwick

Ag 305/DDR/81/705

123 ←**Photo report on "Schreiber"**

From the early morning of 26 March 1985 through to the next morning, Stasi employees continuously observed the "suspect" Gilbert Radulovic. They noted in detail where Radulovic went that day, how much time he spent at each location and exactly what he did. Equipped with conspiratorial surveillance technology, the Stasi employees also covertly photographed and painstakingly recorded their observations.

124 ↑**Warrant for the arrest of Gilbert Radulovic**

After the initial interrogation on the morning of 27 March 1985, the Stasi applied to the public prosecutor's office for a court arrest warrant on the basis of a strong suspicion of "illegal establishment of contact". The competent municipal district court of Central Berlin issued the arrest warrant the following day. The judge ordered the pretrial detention of Gilbert Radulovic on the grounds that the suspect was accused of the "crime" of having made "records with the purpose of dissemination abroad" that could "harm the interests of the GDR".

The Consequences: „... With the Intention of Harming the GDR“

After the initial interrogation, Gilbert Radulovic was taken to the central pretrial detention centre in Berlin-Hohenschönhausen. The notorious Stasi prison was located in the middle of a restricted military zone that appeared on the city maps of East Berlin merely as a blank area. The inmates were intentionally left in the dark about where they were detained – one of many psychological “undermining methods” used by the Stasi to make prisoners feel powerless and at their mercy.

“At the end of the questioning I had to get into a small van, a tiny, windowless cell. Prior to this, they handcuffed me and I was told that if I tried to escape, they would use their firearms.”

“The journey lasted about 20 minutes and I was taken to a secret destination. As I found out later: to the central detention centre of the State Security in Hohenschönhausen.”

125 ↘

Typewriter, Rheinmetall Record

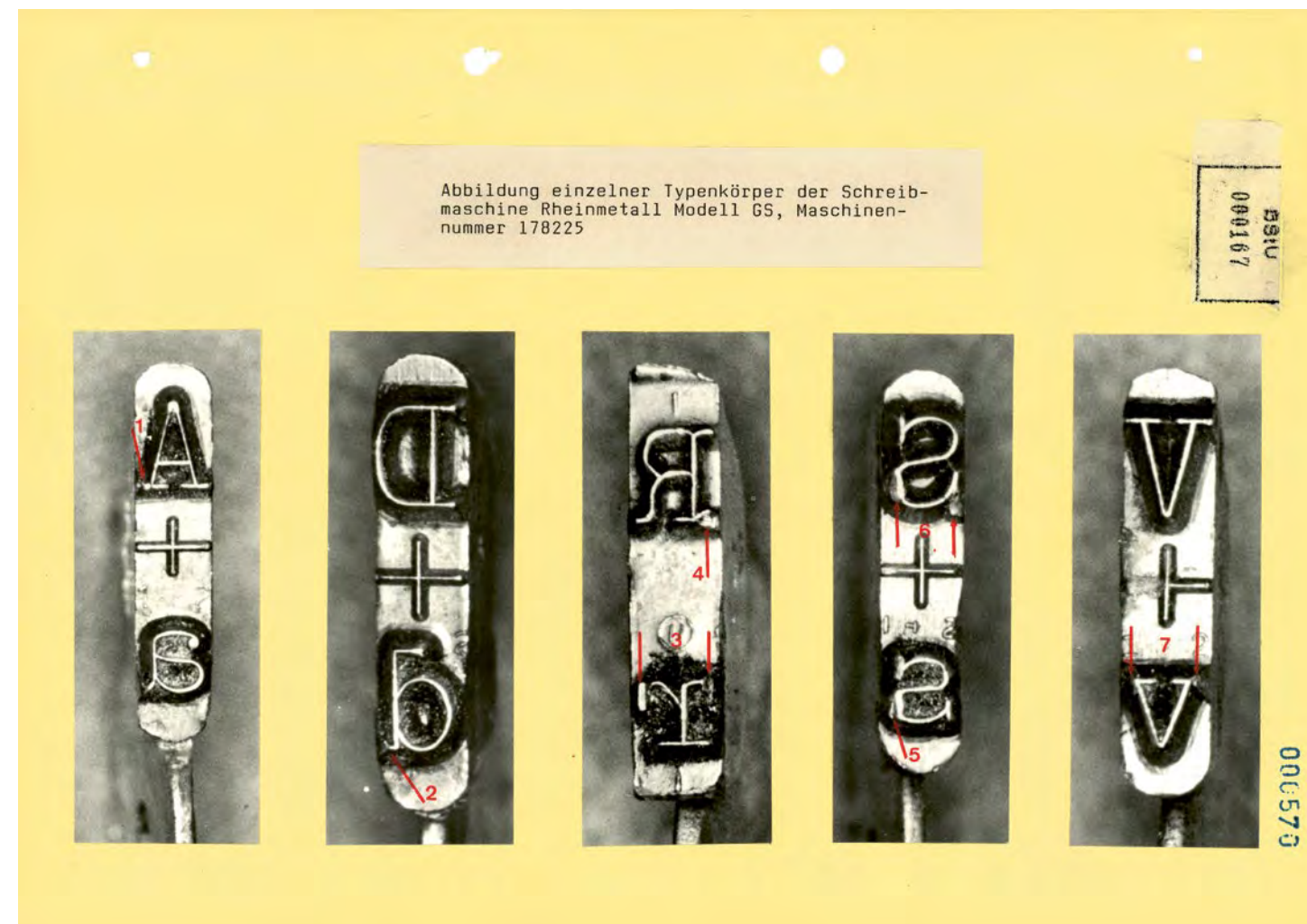
In the early 1980s, Gilbert Radulovic wrote his booklet: “Reminder of a Youth Movement: Punk” on a typewriter of the same make. The Stasi confiscated the original typewriter as evidence in a house search conducted during the preliminary investigations. Its whereabouts are still unknown today.



126 →

Detailed pictures of the typewriter

The Stasi, suspecting that Radulovic had written the punk booklet on this typewriter, requested a forensic examination. The technical investigative unit prepared an expert report that compared the typeface samples from the confiscated typewriter and punk booklet. These photos show certain keys of the typewriter. The expert report confirmed that Radulovic's typewriter had indeed been used for the text on the punks.



In the GDR the Ministry for State Security (MfS) was also responsible for criminal prosecution in political cases. In its capacity as investigative body, Main Department IX of the MfS had criminal police powers and conducted criminal investigations. On paper, it reported to the public prosecutor but, in practice, it largely worked on its own. Department 2 within Main Department IX, which focused on investigating cases involving “political underground activities”, took over the “Schreiber” case and initiated extensive action to prove Radulovic’s alleged

“subversive intentions”. It collected work evaluations from Radulovic’s employer, compiled information from his personal circle, examined his post, questioned a number of witnesses, and seized incriminating material.

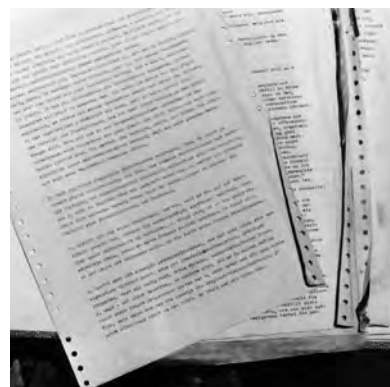
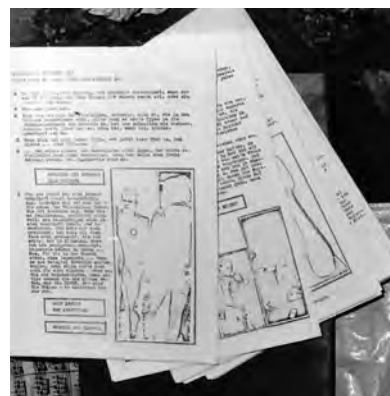
The extended investigation focused on interrogations of the suspect by the investigative officer in charge, Major Wolfgang Mascher. He interrogated Radulovic more than 40 times during his pretrial detention, sometimes three times a day. Again and again he had to outline his political views, his reasons for preparing the booklet, the exact circumstances of its production and the circle of recipients.

"In Hohenschönhausen I was always interrogated by the same officer for the entire seven months. He did everything to create a friendly atmosphere. He talked about his home life, what his sons were studying, answered my questions. For instance, I wanted to know why the guards acted like robots. And he said: "They have been trained in healthy hate."

In mid-July 1985 the Stasi concluded the preliminary investigations against Gilbert Radulovic. Technically, Major Mascher had not achieved his investigation goal of proving that Radulovic's intention was the "illegal establishment of contact". There was no evidence that he had wanted to publish the punk booklet in Western countries or had consciously intended "to harm the interests of the GDR". In fact, the accused repeatedly stressed that he had indeed made and distributed the booklet, but that he had not been aware of the criminal nature of his actions.



"At the end of the preliminary investigations, things changed dramatically. No more friendly tone, no tea with lemon, no special books, no chatty tone. It had clearly been a pretence or a means of more or less successfully completing his interrogations."



127-130 ←

Photo report of an apartment search

To compile all incriminating evidence against him, the Stasi repeatedly searched Radulovic's flat and workplace. During a targeted search of his attic, Stasi employees found additional material related to the punk booklet and took these pictures to record the location of their finding.

"The main emphasis in the interrogations was obviously for him to prove that I had made the punk interviews 'with the intention of harming the GDR'. That was the precondition for sentencing. And as that did not work for a long time, he started searching for dark spots in my past. And when I asked him what this was all about, he said without any qualms, 'I'm doing this to put together evidence for the court.'"

In early September 1985, the main proceedings were opened before the criminal division of the municipal district court of Berlin-Lichtenberg. After two days in court, the judge sentenced the accused to a prison sentence of two years and two months on the grounds of "illegal establishment of contact". When pronouncing the sentence, she went beyond the demands of the prosecution. She also found Radulovic guilty of the "public defamation of state organs" pursuant to Section 220 of the Criminal Code of the GDR.



131 ↑



132 ↑

Wolfgang Mascher, photo from his personal file at the Ministry for State Security, undated

Wolfgang Mascher from Erfurt (born in 1946) began working for the Ministry for State Security (MfS) at the age of 20. The trained concrete constructor was first assigned to different service units of the MfS before beginning his studies in criminology at Berlin Humboldt University in 1970 as preparation for his investigative work. Afterwards, Mascher became an investigative officer in Main Department IX, the investigative body of the MfS. In this capacity he led the preliminary investigations against Gilbert Radulovic. By the end of his career with the Stasi in 1989, Mascher had advanced to the position of head of section with the rank of Major.

Aktenzeichen: 17 8469/85
211-132-85

001982

BStU
000289



Urteil

Im Namen des Volkes
In der Strafsache

gegen Radulovic, gebr. Kloß, Gilbert
PKZ: 030145 4 2242 5, geb. in Görlitz,
wh.: 1058 Berlin, Husemannstr. 10,
geschieden, 1 Kind,
nicht vorbestraft, Staatsbürger der DDR,
seit dem 27.03.1985 in U-Haft,

wegen ungesetzlicher Verbindungsaufnahme



hat die Strafkammer des Stadtbez. gerichts Berlin-Lichtenberg
in der Hauptverhandlung am 19.9. und 23.9.1985, an der teilgenommen haben:

- Richter Frau Vogel
als Vorsitzender
- Herr Hennig
- Herr Conrad
- Frau Bahn
als Staatsanwalt v. d. GSTA v. Berlin,
- Herr de Maiziere
als Verteidiger
- ./.
- als gesellschaftlicher Ankläger / gesellschaftlicher Verteidiger
- Frau Klein/Frau Schneider
als Protokollführer



für Recht erkannt.
Der Angeklagte wird wegen verbrechensicher ungesetzlicher Verbindungsaufnahme in Tateinheit mit öffentlicher Herabwürdigung - strafbar gemäß der §§ 219 Abs. 2 Ziff. 1. 220 Abs. 2 StGB - zu einer Freiheitsstrafe in Höhe von 2 (zwei) Jahren und 2 (zwei) Monaten verurteilt.

133 ←
Conviction in the criminal proceedings against Radulovic
After six month's surveillance, preliminary proceedings and detention, the main trial in the criminal proceedings against Radulovic was held on 19 and 23 September 1985. The municipal district court Berlin Lichtenberg found Gilbert Radulovic guilty of the "illegal establishment of contact" pursuant to section 219 of the GDR Criminal Code. He was sentenced to two years and two months imprisonment.

"In the beginning the court proceedings looked like they were governed by the rule of law, like you naively imagine they would be. There was a state prosecutor, a judge, two lay judges. I had a defence lawyer whom I could choose myself. But to put it bluntly, I could have picked a broom handle to defend me, it would not have made any big difference."

After the conviction the Stasi concluded both the surveillance and control operation (OPK) "Schreiber" and the preliminary investigations against Gilbert Radulovic. The OPK file ended with the final report by Staedtler, the Stasi employee who had originally been responsible for the case. In his report he once again stressed the "questionable" character and the "hostile intentions" of the sentenced person. Since Radulovic had wanted to present a marginal youth culture as a mainstream movement, his writings were likely "to be used in a defamatory manner against the GDR".

134 ↘
Reminder of a Youth Movement: Punk
This booklet was the starting point for the arrest and conviction of Gilbert Radulovic. In 1984 Radulovic summarised on 20 pages the discussions he had held two years previously with seven young people from the East Berlin punk scene. Divided into topic based chapters, he presented statements of the punks alongside his own passages, song lyrics and lines of poetry. The brochure was illustrated with photos of the punks taken by Radulovic's colleague, Nikolaus Becker. Radulovic called his writings a "document of a youthful take on life". The State Security, however, interpreted it as "subversive writing" and as a provocation to the SED's claim to absolute power.

Gilbert Radulovic was taken to the prison in Cottbus, Brandenburg to serve his sentence. Never had he imagined that the punk booklet he compiled would have such drastic consequences for him.



8469/85
-132-85

Urteil

Im Namen des Volkes
In der Strafsache

001982

BStU
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als Verteidiger

./.

als gesellschaftlicher Ankläger / gesellschaftlicher Verteidiger

Frau Klein/Frau Schneider

als Protokollführer

Angeklagte wird wegen verbrechensicher ungeset-
her Verbindungsaufnahme in Tateinheit mit öffentlicher
abwürdigung - strafbar gemäß der §§ 219 Abs. 2 Ziff. 1.
Abs. 2 StGB - zu einer
heitsstrafe in Höhe von 2 (zwei) Jahren und 2 (zwei)
aten verurteilt.

Ag 305-DDR IV-27-13 O



After the DDR collapsed, there soon was the unique opportunity to look
into the lives that the State Security had put together about citizens.

OPK-Akte

Original erhalten

MIS - / XV1009/85

Schreiber

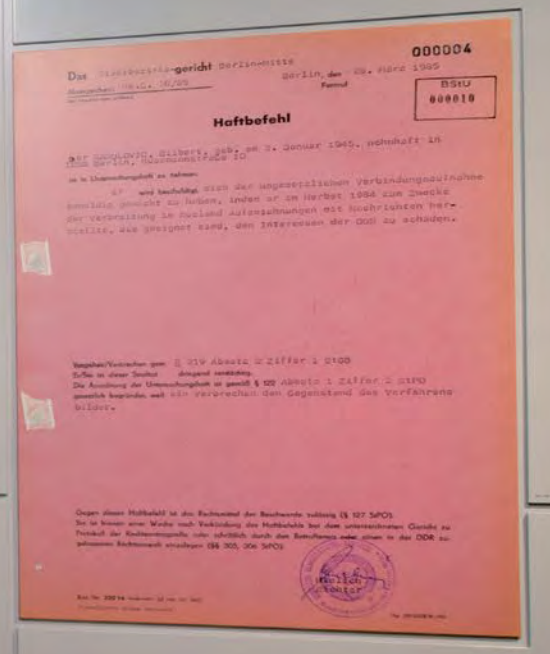
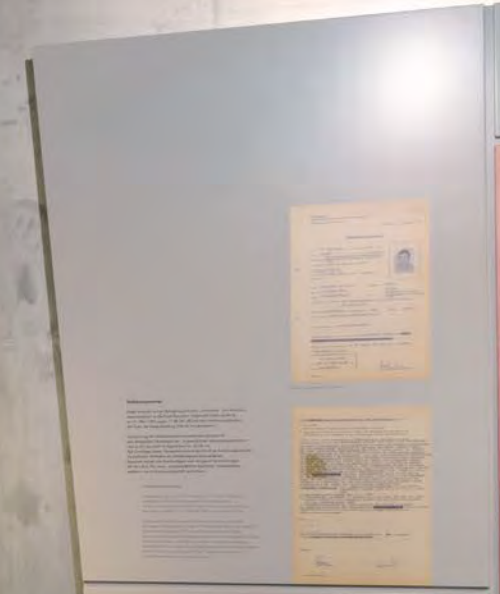
ALLEMAGNE FISCAL
- Zentralarchiv -

1230/88

MIS AOPK

1230/88

/So
Buchen



000004

BStU
000010

Haftbefehl

Das Landgericht Berlin-Mitte
am 19.09.1985
Berlin, den 19.09.1985
Formal

Der Angeklagte, Gilbert, geb. am 7. Januar 1945, geboren in
Görlitz, Matrikelnummer 2242 5

ist in Untersuchungshaft zu halten.

Er wird beschuldigt, sich der ungesetzlichen Verbindungsaufnahme
schuldig gemacht zu haben, indem er im Herbst 1984 zum Zweck
der Vorbereitung in Russland Aufnahmen mit schriftlichen be-
weiligen, die geeignet sind, den Interessen der DDR zu schaden.

Geheimhaltungsgebot gemäß § 119 Absatz 2 Ziffer 1 StGB
Sollte zu einer Straftat Anlaß werden.
Die Ausübung der Untersuchungshaft ist gemäß § 120 Absatz 1 Ziffer 2 StGB
gemäß Befehl des in der Sache zuständigen Staatsanwalters
zu vollziehen.

Gegen diesen Haftbefehl ist die Rechtsmittel der Beschwerde zulässig (§ 127 StGB).
Sie ist binnen einer Woche nach Verkündung des Haftbefehls bei dem unterzeichneten Gericht zu
Protokoll der Rechtsanwaltschaft oder schriftlich durch den Rechtsanwalt oder einen in der DDR zu
gewähltem Rechtsanwalt einbringen (§§ 305, 306 StGB).





Before this I would never have believed there could be any reason for putting together a file on me.

Gilbert Furian (formerly Radulovic)

"Since my lawyer had informed me in our one and only conversation prior to the court proceedings that I was looking at a custodial sentence of between two and three years, I was relatively prepared when the sentence was pronounced. In any case since the beginning of my pretrial detention, I had instinctively immersed myself in a kind of daze to prevent 'them' from taking control of my feelings, too. Thanks to this I was released from prison, after serving half of my sentence, without suffering any major mental harm. When I arrived at the station, my oldest friend welcomed me quite rightly with the words: 'Welcome to the big prison'".

"Up to the summer of 1989, I had been the best-behaved person in the world. I never crossed the road when the pedestrian light was red, never took the underground without paying. But I had to get it off my chest and told all my friends about it, even if there was a fear lurking in the back of my mind that 'they' could find grounds for turning that into a criminal offence, too."

"I applied for my rehabilitation even before the end of the GDR. In June 1990 the Berlin municipal court (GDR) acquitted me in a kind of self-forgetfulness. This was particularly satisfying for me because GDR judges sat across from me who had to set aside one of their own sentences. A GDR state prosecutor apologised to me on behalf of the chief public prosecutor."

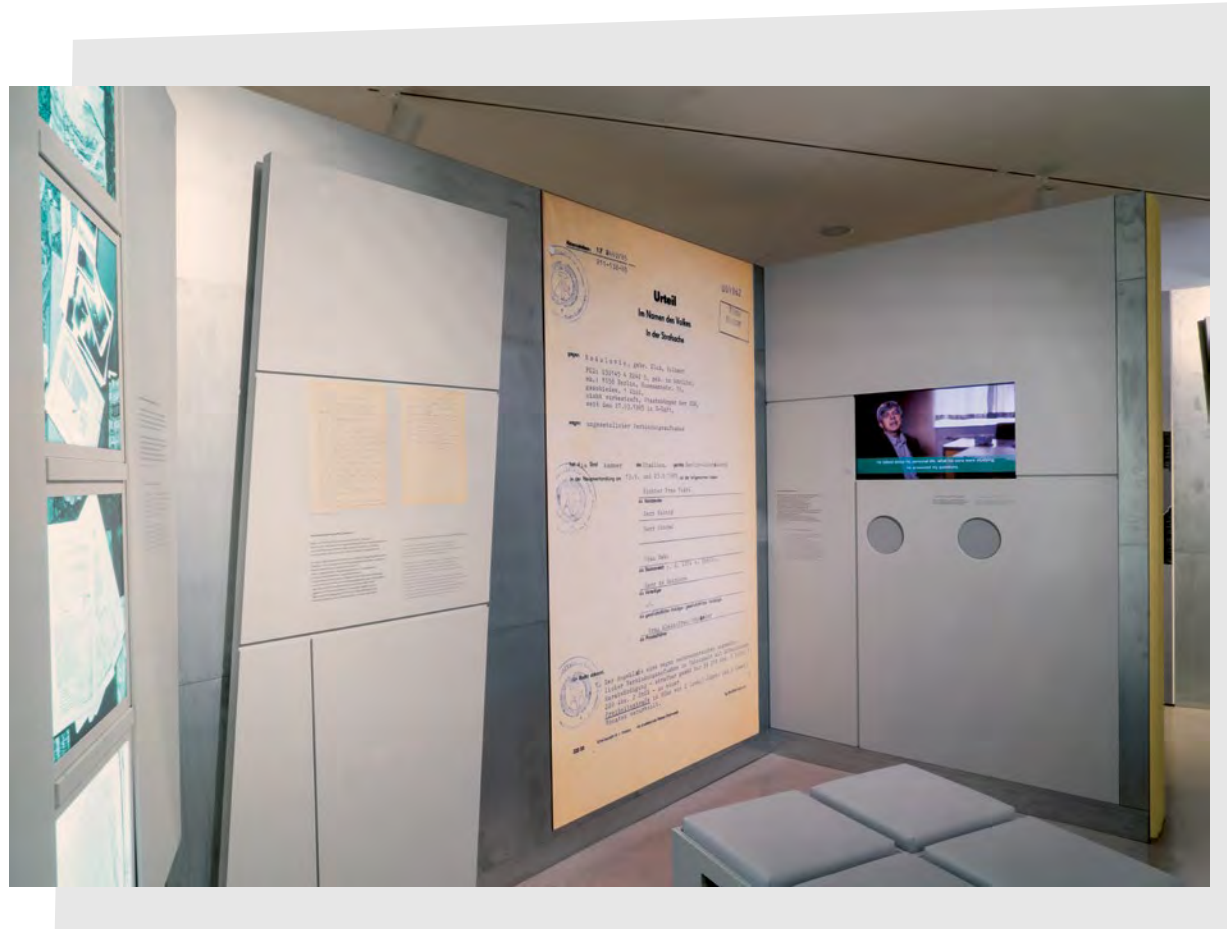
"After the end of the GDR, I soon had the exceptional opportunity to take a look at the files the Stasi had put together about me. For me it was like looking through a distorting mirror where a once menacing secret service had looked at my life. But when I sat in the reading room, every time I looked at the files it was something like a late victory over the State Security."

136 ↓

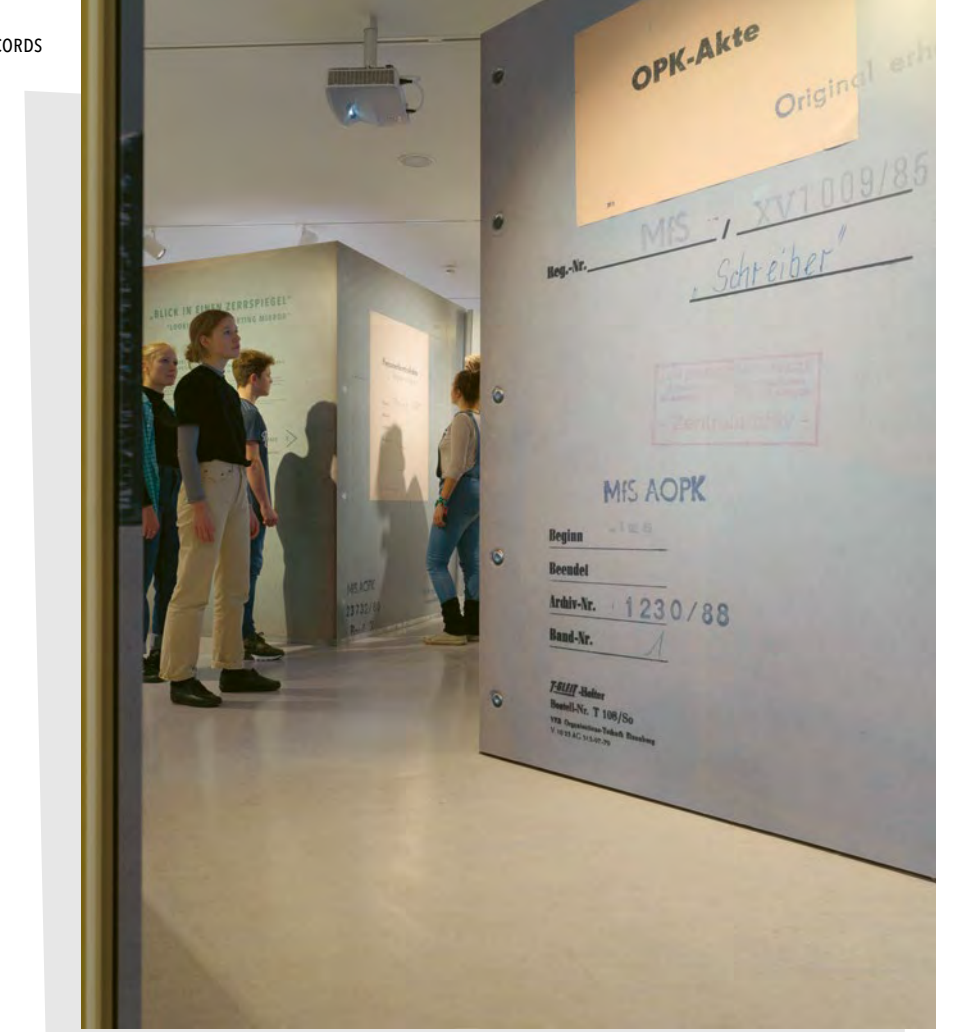
Gilbert Furian in June 2018 in the section of the exhibition titled "Looking in a distorting mirror" that is dedicated to his story

We would like to thank Gilbert Furian (formerly Radulovic) for consenting to the use of the documents that the Stasi compiled on him in violation of the rule of law. We also appreciate his willingness to share his story and participate in the exhibition.

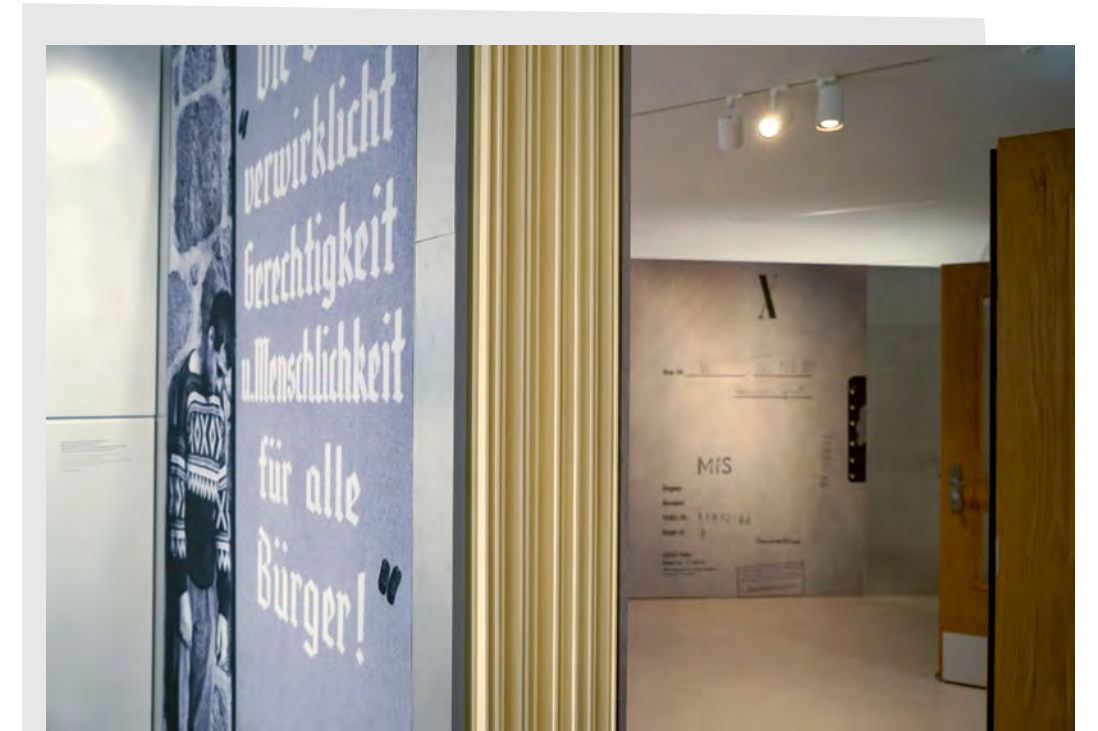
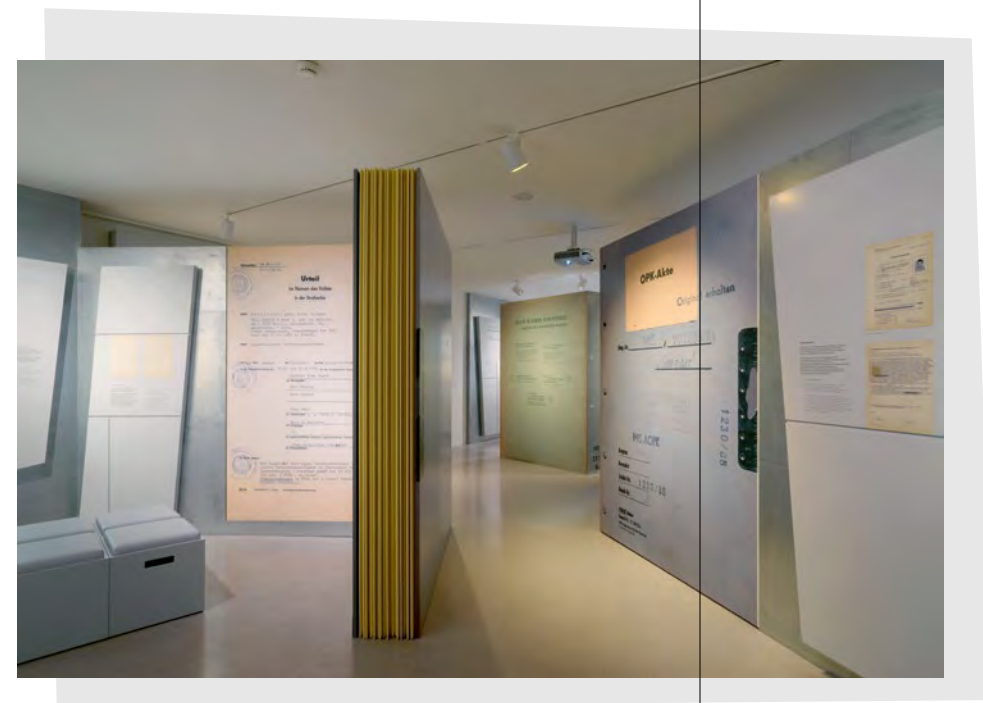




137 →
138 ↓
139 ↘



140 →
141 ↓





EPILOGUE: AT THE HISTORICAL SITE

142 ↑

The headquarters of the GDR State Security were located in the Berlin district of Lichtenberg from 1950 to 1990. It was from here that the Stasi organized the surveillance and persecution of the population for almost 40 years, thereby securing the rule of the Socialist Unity Party of Germany (SED).

The Stasi headquarters expanded over the decades, cutting through a long-established residential neighbourhood and destroying an allotment garden. Little by little, buildings and streets disappeared behind walls and fences. The grounds developed into a militarily-secured secret service complex that was sealed off from the surrounding area. The Stasi headquarters underwent constant change as older buildings were razed, new buildings erected and service units relocated. In the end, it covered an area of 2 square kilometres, containing around fifty buildings and thousands of offices.

Houses 1, 7, 8 and 22, which were of central importance to the Stasi, stand at the centre of the complex. The former Stasi buildings, which for decades represented a system of repression, are now part of the "Campus for Democracy". Today, exhibitions, guided tours, public events and more are offered at this historical site, facilitating a vivid, impressive and lively examination of the past and encouraging discussions about dictatorship, democracy and human rights.

House 1

Former seat of the Minister for State Security Erich Mielke

Today: Stasi Museum with the permanent exhibition "State Security in the SED Dictatorship"

House 1 formed the centrepiece of the Stasi headquarters from 1962 to 1989. This is where the offices of Minister for State Security Erich Mielke were located. This central building within the Stasi complex closed the gap to House 7, which had been built in 1957. But the building's main entrance, with its modern, glass doorway, was clearly visible from the nearby residential high-rises on Frankfurter Allee, making it a weak point in the design. To block this view from the outside, the Stasi added a concrete block structure to the front of the building in the mid-1970s.

Today, the Stasi Museum, located in House 1, presents the permanent exhibition "State Security in the SED Dictatorship," which describes the structure, development and surveillance methods of the Stasi and displays the historical offices, which have been preserved in their original form. The workplaces of several initiatives dealing with the past and victims' associations are also located in the building.



143 ↑

Frontal view of House 1, seat of the Minister for State Security, early 1980s

House 22

Former Stasi service building with conference room and cafeteria

Visitors Centre of the "Stasi Headquarters. Campus for Democracy."

In 1960 the Stasi built a new dining house, House 22, to create space for work conferences and provide food to senior officials. Built in the modern style, its large windows, stairwell glazing and interior design made it suitable for official occasions. The ground floor contained a dining hall; the upper floor included a conference room that was used for festive events, work conferences and receptions for foreign delegations.

Today, House 22 functions as a visitors centre, providing general information and an overview of the grounds. It also serves as an event venue with a reading café.

144 ↘

View of House 22 from the parking lot, early 1980s



House 7

Former Stasi office building, used primarily by Main Department XX (surveillance of culture and opposition) in the late 1980s

Today: Office building of the Stasi Records Archive and site of the permanent exhibition "Access to Secrecy"



145 ↑
Northern view across the parking lot to House 7, photo from 1986

House 7, which now houses the permanent exhibition on the Stasi Records Archive, was built in 1956/1957 as one of the first extensions to the Stasi headquarters. The six-storey building, erected in the neoclassical style of Stalinallee (today Karl-Marx-Allee), was completed in a single year. It consists of two building wings arranged at right angles to one other, with a rooftop addition at the point of intersection. House 7 contained the offices of several Stasi service units until the end of the GDR. In the late 1980s, it mostly housed offices of Main Department XX. In the fall of 1989, many of the 461 full-time employees of Department XX were still working in this building.

Main Department XX was responsible for the surveillance and political persecution of people critical of the regime in the fields of art, culture, literature, media, church and sports. It also had the task of suppressing opposition and any conduct that deviated from official party policy in important sections of the state apparatus, such as the health and education divisions, as well as in the bloc parties and mass organizations. Main Department XX, therefore, made up the core area of political repression and surveillance.

Floor occupancy of House 7 in 1989 1st floor



146 ↑



Colonel Horst Kuschel
Head of Department 2 of Main Department XX

Areas of responsibility: "anti-state agitation", youth policies, war crimes

147 ←



Lieutenant General Gerhard Neiber
One of four deputies to the Minister for State Security

As "Deputy to the Minister for Military-Operative Tasks", Gerhard Neiber was in charge, among other things, for the departments of defence work and terror defence. In this function, Neiber was largely responsible for organizing the reception and shelter in the GDR of RAF (Red Army Faction) members who had dropped out of the West German left-wing extremist terrorist organization.

148 ←

**Floor occupancy in House 7
in 1989**

2nd floor



149 ↑

**Floor occupancy in House 7
in 1989**

3rd floor



152 ↑



Lieutenant General Paul Kienberg
Head of Main Department XX

Paul Kienberg had served as department head since 1964, and was responsible, among other things, for monitoring the arts and culture, media, church and sports, for prosecuting "political underground activity" (PUT), and controlling important areas of the state apparatus, including the judiciary, healthcare and education.

150 ←



Colonel Eberhard Jaekel
Head of Department 1 of Main
Department XX

Areas of responsibility: surveillance of government and judiciary, healthcare, bloc parties (all parties except the SED) and mass organizations

153 ←



Lieutenant Colonel Jürgen Notroff
Head of Department 3 of Main
Department XX

Areas of responsibility: surveillance of sports, central sports facilities, sports associations and major sports events.

154 ←



Lieutenant Colonel Fritz Busch
Head of Department 10 of Main
Department XX

Areas of responsibility: SED institutions and special buildings

151 ←

Fritz Busch was responsible, among other things, for "safeguarding" and controlling the editorial staff, the publishing house and printing plant of the daily newspaper "Neues Deutschland" (ND), the Institute for Marxism and Leninism and the Academy of Social Sciences.



**Lieutenant Colonel
Werner Fleischhauer**
Head of Department 8 of Main
Department XX

Areas of responsibility: "securing" and surveillance of the education system, universities and technical schools

155 ←



Colonel Wolfgang Reuter
Head of Department 9 of Main
Department XX

Areas of responsibility: combating "political underground activity" (PUT) and "hostile bases" within the GDR

156 ←

**Floor occupancy in House 7
in 1989**
4th floor



157 ↑



Colonel Joachim Wiegand
Head of Department 4 of Main
Department XX

Areas of responsibility: churches and
religious groups

Joachim Wiegand was responsible, among other things, for the surveillance of the Protestant Church, the Catholic Church and the diocese, religious orders and priest seminaries, religious groups and sects and also conscientious objectors and construction soldiers.

158 ←



**Lieutenant Colonel
Joachim Tischendorf**
Head of Department 7 of Main
Department XX

Areas of responsibility: arts, literature,
culture and media

Joachim Tischendorf's responsibilities included the control of radio, television, film and central state press institutions as well as the surveillance of literature, publishing, writing, journalism and visual artists.

159 ←

**Floor occupancy in House 7
in 1989**
5th floor



160 ↑



Colonel Hans Buhl
Head of Department 5 of Main
Department XX

Areas of responsibility: "political
underground activity" (PUT) from
the operational area (OG) = Federal
Republic of Germany, especially
West Berlin

Hans Buhl was responsible, among other things, for combating and preventing PUT against the GDR by the Federal Republic of Germany and West Berlin, for "processing" supporters of alternative groups and organizations in the Federal Republic and West Berlin, and for combating "hostile" individuals in the OG who "left illegally or were expelled from the GDR".

161 ←

House 8

Former Stasi archive building

Today: Central Stasi Records Archive preserving the documents left behind by the Stasi



The west wing of House 7 is adjoined to the archive building, House 8, by a connecting building. Today, House 8 is used by the Stasi Records Archive as an office and archive building, in which a large part of the documents left behind by the Stasi is safely stored, processed and made usable. In addition to the files already archived by the Stasi, these holdings include the material that was still being processed by the secret police until its dissolution in 1989/1990. House 8 contains records of the Stasi central headquarters as well as those from the district administrations for State Security in Berlin and Potsdam. These include files and index cards, as well as photos, audio and film recordings, and many other information storage systems. The Stasi Records Archive makes these documents accessible to the people who were targeted by the Stasi and to the broader public as a way to provide information on the structure, methods and impact of the State Security and to contribute to the discussion on dictatorship and democracy.

162 ↖

View from the courtyard to the archive building, House 8 (left), the connecting building House 9 (centre), and the adjoining west wing of House 7 (right), 1986

163 ←

Northern view of the archive building, House 8, taken from Magdalenenstrasse, 1986

164 ↘

Main access road to the central Stasi remand prison on Freienwalder Strasse in Berlin-Hohenschönhausen, with the former central archive on the left, mid-1980s



From 1984 to 1989, the Stasi's central archive was located in House 8, one of the few buildings erected in the GDR specifically for archival purposes. It was finally completed following many years of planning, after which Department XII, the central card index and archive department, moved in with its file holdings. The Stasi's central archive had previously been housed in a makeshift administration building that had belonged to a former machine factory on Freienwalder Strasse in Berlin-Hohenschönhausen. The Stasi continued to store its secret archive of personal documents from the Nazi era there after the archive department moved to its new location. The Stasi's central pretrial detention centre along with other office buildings were also located in Hohenschönhausen.



CREATING THE EXHIBITION

165 ↑

From 2016 to 2018, the permanent exhibition "Access to Secrecy" was established in House 7, the former Stasi office building which is today part of the Stasi Records Archive.

Before the exhibition could be installed at the historical location, the building had to be prepared structurally, taking into account its special features. Renovation work and modern barrier-free access had been planned for House 7 in any case. In creating the exhibition, one challenge was to find a way to carry out these measures in an office building that was in daily use, without strongly interrupting ongoing operations.

Additionally, an investigation of the building's landmark-protected features, particularly in the stairways and foyers of each floor, was also being conducted. In the new exhibition areas, the historical colour and texture of the columns and walls from the 1950s were partially exposed and restored.

The strict fire protection requirements for House 7, which lies adjacent to the archive building with its special collection of Stasi documents, posed an additional challenge. This led to a rethinking, revision and adaption of the exhibition content and design concept on several occasions.

With the completion of this lengthy preparation phase, the actual installation of the exhibition began in the first half of 2018. The photos on the following pages provide an impression of this final phase of the exhibition assembly work.



166 ←
 167 ↑
 168 ↘





169 ↖
 170 ←
 171 ↑
 172 ↓





- 173 ↖
- 174 ←
- 175 ↑
- 176 ↓





177 ↖
 178 ←
 179 ↑
 180 ↓



ACCESS TO SECRECY



- 181 ↖
- 182 ←
- 183 ↑
- 184 ↓



ACCESS TO SECRECY



185 ↑
 186 ↓
 187 →
 188 ↘





- 189 ←
- 190 ↙
- 191 ↑
- 192 ↓



ACCESS TO SECRECY



- 193 ↖
- 194 ←
- 195 ↑
- 196 ↓



APPENDIX

166	Exhibition Objects
170	Film and Media Stations in the Exhibition
171	Index of Sources and Illustrations in the Exhibition
183	Exhibition Imprint
184	Literature
188	Catalogue Illustrations Index
190	Contact
191	Thanks
192	Imprint

Exhibition Objects

Information on the Archive - Ground floor

Stacks of Files

Barbara Krückemeyer; Potsdam, 2018; replica out of cardboard, paper, plaster, acrylic; 280 cm (h) × 200 cm (d) × 280 cm (w); BStU

Interim User Rules

Special Commissioner of the Federal Government for the Records of the Former State Security Service; Berlin; edition from December 1990; paper; DIN A5; BStU

The first user regulations from December 1990 provisionally regulated the taking over, storage, administration, archiving, cataloguing and use of Stasi records. It was initially restricted to examining whether employees in public service had collaborated with the Stasi and to provide information for criminal prosecution and rehabilitation purposes.

Stasi Records Act

The Federal Commissioner for the Records of the State Security Service of the Former German Democratic Republic; Berlin, edition from June 2016; paper; DIN A5; BStU

On 14 November 1991 the united German Bundestag passed the Stasi Records Act, which entered into force on 29 December 1991. As of 1992, citizens could personally view the files that the Stasi had compiled on them.

The Card Index System of the Stasi - 1st Floor

Paternoster Index Cabinet K 071 Type KG II 303

VEB Gothaer Metallwarenfabrik (GDR); year of manufacture 1981; metal and plastic; 535 kilogram in its original condition; 133 cm (h) × 100 cm (d) × 218 cm (w); BStU-holdings

From 1984 on, this original index cabinet was used in the new archive building of the Stasi headquarters. The Stasi used these cabinets to store its index cards in an orderly and space-saving manner. They gave Stasi employees in the index department rapid and efficient access to information. The cabinets were operated by an integrated electric motor (which has been removed from the exhibit for safety reasons) that rotated the index sections around to the cabinet opening. The front flap could be locked.

Persons index card F 16 on Lutz Rathenow

Ministry for State Security (GDR); original from 1980; Barbara Krückemeyer; Potsdam, 2018; facsimile; DIN A6; BStU

Case index card F 22 on the operational case "Assistant"

Ministry for State Security (GDR); original from 1980; Barbara Krückemeyer; Potsdam, 2018; facsimile; DIN A6; BStU

Codename index card F 77 with the codename "Assistant"

Ministry for State Security (GDR); original from 1980; Barbara Krückemeyer; Potsdam, 2018; facsimile; DIN A6; BStU

Pre-compressed and search index F 401 on Lutz Rathenow

Ministry for State Security (GDR); original from 1989; Barbara Krückemeyer; Potsdam, 2018; facsimile; DIN A6; BStU

F 402 card on Lutz Rathenow

Ministry for State Security (GDR); undated; Barbara Krückemeyer; Potsdam, 2018; facsimile; DIN A6; BStU

Index cabinet, type B-A6

VEB Gothaer Metallwarenfabrik (GDR); year of manufacture 1978; steel plate and metal; 135 cm (h) × 63 cm (d) × 42 cm (w); BStU holdings

This original index cabinet was used by the Stasi to store DIN A6 index cards. Above the drawers, remains of the sealing mass used to fasten the drawers are visible. This was done to prevent access by unauthorised persons.

Seal stamps used by the Stasi

GDR; before 1990; Metal; Ø 3 cm; BStU holdings

These stamps presented in the exhibition were used by Stasi employees to seal index cabinets and safes in order to restrict access to certain information. They were also used on offices to prevent entry by unauthorised persons.

The Stasi's Legacy - 2nd Floor

Replica of file shelves from the repository room of the Stasi Records Archive

Files and folders of various case categories

(surveillance cases, cases of unofficial collaborators, administrative cases, personal files, archive files) Ministry for State Security (GDR); originals from 1950 to 1989; Barbara Krückemeyer; Potsdam, 2018; replicas out of cardboard, paper; DIN A4; BStU

Courier bag from the Ministry for State Security used to transport documents

GDR; 1950 to 1989; textile, leather and plastic; 28 cm (h) × 10 cm (d) × 41 cm (w); BStU holdings

Original archive boxes from the archive department of the Ministry for State Security

GDR; between 1950 and 1989; carton with metal staples; 35.5 cm (h) × 26 cm (d) × 12.5 cm (w); BStU holdings

Folder 6 of the operational case "Acker II"

Ministry for State Security (GDR); original from 1981; Barbara Krückemeyer; Potsdam, 2018; facsimile; DIN A4; BStU, MfS, AOP, No. 10928/84, Bd. 6; BStU

Bundles of various paper material, documents collection, forms, service books, work files, and others

Ministry for State Security (GDR); between 1950 and 1989; deaccessioned material (material deemed unworthy of archiving); BStU holdings

Modern archive boxes from the Stasi Records Archive, in which documents can be properly stored

WAHL Kartonagen Mainz (Federal Republic of Germany); 2018; acid-free cardboard; 14.5 cm (h) × 34 cm (d) × 28 cm (w); BStU

Section of original mobile shelf H 089 from the MfS central archive

VEB Gothaer Metallwarenfabrik (GDR); around 1984; metal and plastic; 120 kilogram; 241 cm (h) × 45 cm (d) × 113 cm (w); BStU holdings

These original parts belong to mobile shelving used by the Stasi to store its archived files in Berlin. In House 8, the new archive building, in which the Stasi's central archive had been located since 1984, four large rooms were equipped with a system of manually operated mobile rolling shelves. These devices are used in archiving and library systems in order to cut back

on floor space and provide more storage area. Today, the repository rooms in House 8 are fitted with modern mobile aisle shelving units in which the Stasi records can be stored properly.

Selection of original files in which the Stasi compiled information on Ulrike Poppe

Ministry for State Security (GDR); between 1972 and 1989; paper; DIN A4; BStU

Tangled reels of film from the Ministry for State Security

GDR; 1970s/1980s; coated plastic, BStU holdings

ORWO K 60 and K 90 compact cassettes from the Ministry for State Security

VEB Chemiefaserwerk "Friedrich Engels" Premnitz (GDR); ca. late 1970s; plastic casing, magnetic tapes made of coated plastic; 6.35 cm (h) × 1.27 cm (d) × 10.6 cm (w); BStU holdings

Compact or audio cassettes were among the most frequently used sound recording media in the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s. Each side normally has a recording capacity of between 30 and 60 minutes. Although they have now largely been replaced by digital technology, because of their robustness cassettes are sometimes still used. Hundreds of cassettes were also salvaged from the Stasi. Their contents are being examined and safely stored on more up-to-date digital formats.

TESLA B 47 tape recorder with tape

TESLA (Czechoslovakia); ca. 1969/1970; plastic casing, metal and coated plastic; ca. 6.5 kilogram; 12 cm (h) × 30 cm (d) × 31.5 cm (w); BStU holdings

This four-track mono tape recorder from the Czechoslovakian company TESLA was made in the late 1960s for analogue audio recording and replay. The foldable table device was operated by pressing buttons and could be connected to a slide projector for presentations. The Stasi used the audio recorder to make and replay its magnetic audio tapes.

ORWO film canisters from the Ministry for State Security

VEB Filmfabrik Wolfen (GDR); between 1950 and 1989; metal canister; various formats, BStU holdings

The Stasi Records Archive contains films in 8 mm, 16 mm and 35 mm formats as well as videos of varying types in different standards. The Stasi's own productions, which mostly stem from its surveillance or training activities, make up the core collection of the salvaged film rolls and video cassettes. There are also recordings of television broadcasts and film material seized by the Stasi.

Magnetic tapes from the Ministry for State Security

VEB Fotochemisches Kombinat Wolfen; ca. 1970s/1980s; magnetic coated plastic, various formats, BStU holdings

VCR (Video Cassette Recording) cassette from the Ministry for State Security

BASF Ludwigshafen (West Germany); late 1970s; plastic casing, magnetic tape; 14.6 cm (h) × 4 cm (d) × 13 cm (w); BStU holdings

The Stasi also observed "suspicious" individuals with concealed mobile or fixed cameras. In the 1980s it increasingly used video technology from Western countries for this purpose. These surveillance videos generally do not contain information about the context in which they were made, which makes it difficult to assign them to specific cases.

Magnetic disc storage EC 5266.01 from the Ministry for State Security

ISOT (Bulgaria); 1980s; coated plastic, plastic cover; 100 MB capacity; 13.5 cm (h) and Ø 37 cm; BStU holdings

Information could be stored in track circles on magnetically coated removable disks. The data on a removable disk device the size of a washing machine could be written or read by means of a rotating head. In the 1970s the Stasi began using these magnetic disks as mass storage for its large-capacity computers.

Disk from the Ministry for State Security

BASF Ludwigshafen (West Germany); 1980s; plastic with magnetic coating; 5.25 inch; BStU holdings

Portable magnetic disks were a widespread and frequently used data carrier from the 1970s until well into the 2000s. Unable to cope with the steadily growing volume of data coupled with the need for greater storage capacity and speed, they later became obsolete. The Stasi also used various disk formats to store its collected data.

Robotron A 5120 office computer with 5.25 inch disk drive from the Ministry for State Security

VEB Kombinat Robotron Buchungsmaschinenwerk Karl-Marx-Stadt (GDR); around 1985; metal, plastic; ca. 15 kilogram; 33.5 cm (h) × 46 cm (d) × 68 cm (w); BStU holdings

Computer keyboard from the Ministry for State Security

VEB Schaltgerätewerk Auerbach (GDR); year of manufacture 1987; plastic; 7 cm (h) × 24.5 cm (d) × 52 cm (w); BStU holdings

The A 5120 model office computer for text and data processing was made by Robotron, a state-run enterprise (VEB). Manufactured in the GDR since 1982, this computer was only supplied to enterprises and institutions. The Stasi's index and archive department (Department XII) used this model to enter and process data on individuals.

"Looking in a Distorting Mirror": The Case of Gilbert Radulovic in the Stasi Records - 3rd Floor**Room installation "Walk-in Files": Archived file folder 2 from the surveillance and control operation "Kopernikus"**

BStU; original from 1980; replica of laminated wood, plastic; 245 cm (h) × 35 cm (d) × 375 cm (w); BStU, MfS, AOPK, Nr. 23732/80, Bd. 2

Room installation "Walk-in Files": Archived file folder 1 from the surveillance and control operation "Schreiber"

BStU; original from 1988; replica of laminated wood, plastic; 245 cm (h) × 35 cm (d) × 375 cm (w); BStU, MfS, AOPK, Nr. 1230/88, Bd. 1

Room installation "Walk-in Files": archived file folder 3 from the investigation on Gilbert Radulovic
BStU; original from 1986; replica of laminated wood, plastic; 245 cm (h) × 35 cm (d) × 375 cm (w); BStU, MfS, AU, Nr. 11980/86, Bd. 3

Typewriter, Rheinmetall Record

Rheinmetall-Borsig AG, Sömmerda (Thuringia); after 1936; metal, rubber, plastic; 24 cm (h) × 34 cm (d) × 60 cm (w); BStU

In the early 1980s, Gilbert Radulovic wrote his booklet, "Reminder of a Youth Movement: Punk" on a typewriter of the same make. The Stasi confiscated the original typewriter as evidence in a house search conducted during the preliminary investigations. Its whereabouts are still unknown today.

"Reminder of a Youth Movement: Punk"

Gilbert Radulovic (today: Gilbert Furian); photographs by Nikolaus Becker; Berlin; original from 1984; Barbara Krückemeyer; Potsdam, 2018; facsimile of paper, ink, cardboard; DIN A4; BStU

The original booklet is currently in the permanent exhibition of the Memorial Prison Cottbus

This booklet was the starting point for the arrest and conviction of Gilbert Radulovic. In 1984 Radulovic summarised on 20 pages the discussions he had held two years previously with seven young people from the East Berlin punk scene. Divided into topic based chapters, he presented statements of the punks alongside his own passages, song lyrics and lines of poetry. The brochure was illustrated with photos of the punks taken by Radulovic's colleague, Nikolaus Becker. Radulovic called his writings a "document of a youthful take on life". The State Security, however, interpreted it as "subversive writing" and as a provocation to the SED's claim to absolute power.

Film and Media Stations in the Exhibition

Information on the Archive - Ground Floor

Stasi offices in the GDR (as of 1989)

Media station; production: BStU/kreativköpfe; Berlin, 2018

The Stasi Online Resource

Media station, production: BStU; Berlin, 2018

The Card Index System of the Stasi - 1st Floor

The persons index card F 16 and the central case index card F 22

Video documentation; production: BStU; Berlin, 2018; playing time: 3 minutes 1 second

A concrete example of an index card F 16

Media station; production: BStU/kreativköpfe; Berlin, 2018

A concrete example of a central case index card F 22

Media station; production: BStU/kreativköpfe; Berlin, 2018

A concrete example of a codename index card F 77

Media station; production: BStU/kreativköpfe; Berlin, 2018

The M index - postal surveillance

Video documentation; production: BStU; Berlin, 2018; playing time: 2 minutes 8 seconds

The Stasi's Legacy - 2nd Floor

The reconstruction of torn-up Stasi documents

Video documentation; production: BStU/DEMAX GmbH Filmproduktion Munich; Berlin, 2018; time: 2 minutes 40 seconds

A puzzle of Stasi snippets

Media station; production: BStU/kreativköpfe; Berlin, 2018

"We really weren't that threatening ..."

Video documentation on Ulrike Poppe in the Stasi records; production: BStU; Berlin, 2018; time: 3 minutes 29 seconds

Training films and videos of the Ministry for State Security

Media installation; production: BStU/kreativköpfe; Berlin 2018

The work of the video studios in the Stasi Records Archive

Video documentation; production: kreativköpfe/Bodo Brüsehaber for the BStU; Berlin, 2017; time: 3 minutes 2 seconds

"Looking in a Distorting Mirror": The Case of Gilbert Radulovic in the Stasi Records - 3rd Floor

Projection "Looking in a Distorting Mirror"

Media installation; projection: BStU/kreativköpfe; Berlin, 2018

"... speaking your mind"

Video documentation on the case of Gilbert Radulovic (part 1); production: kreativköpfe/Bodo Brüsehaber for the BStU; Berlin, 2018; time: 3 minutes 15 seconds

"... to clarify a matter"

Video documentation on the case of Gilbert Radulovic (part 2); production: kreativköpfe/Bodo Brüsehaber for the BStU; Berlin, 2018; time: 2 minutes 57 seconds

Projection "Interrogation Protocol"

Media installation; BStU/kreativköpfe; Berlin, 2018

"... with the intention of harming the GDR"

Video documentation on the case of Gilbert Radulovic (part 3); production: kreativköpfe/Bodo Brüsehaber for the BStU; Berlin, 2018; time: 3 minutes 47 seconds

Index of Sources and Illustrations in the Exhibition

The majority of the photographs and all documents, reproductions and illustrations of documents shown in the exhibition come from the records of the State Security Service and are registered in the archives of the Federal Commissioner for the Stasi Records of the Former GDR (BStU) under the signatures listed below. We would again like to thank the copyright holders listed here for authorizing the use of all photographs.

Entrance Area

On 15 January 1990 demonstrators sprayed "Where is my file?" on a wall of the Stasi headquarters in Berlin-Lichtenberg. By occupying the offices of the GDR secret police, people also secured their own files which the Stasi had illegally compiled about them. Photo: Andreas Schoelzel, January 1990, detail

View into a repository room of the Stasi Record Archives

Photo: Christian Morgenstern, 10 January 2017

Foyer - Ground Floor

Official Stasi employee working in a surveillance station, around 1980

Photo: BStU, MfS, HA III, Fo, Nr. 313, Bild 4

After storming the Stasi premises on 15 January 1990, demonstrators painted their demand "Enough spying - out now!" on a wall of a Stasi building.

Photo: Andreas Schoelzel, 7 February 1990

Bundles of documents and sacks with various Stasi items that were salvaged after the Stasi headquarters in Berlin was occupied in 1990

Photo: Bundesregierung/Arne Schambeck, 18 March 1992

At the Historical Site - Side Corridor Ground Floor

Aerial photograph of part of the grounds of the Stasi headquarters in Berlin-Lichtenberg from the direction Normannenstrasse / corner Ruschestrasse in 1985

Photo: BStU, MfS, HA II, Fo, Nr. 32, Bild 8, detail

View of the front of the House 1, seat of the Ministry for State Security, early 1980s

Photo: BStU, MfS, BdL, Fo, Nr. 82, Bild 467

Northern view across the parking lot to House 7, photo from 1986

Photo: BStU, MfS, BdL, Fo, Nr. 296, Bild 1

Northern view of the archive building, House 8, taken from Magdalenenstrasse, 1986

Photo: BStU, MfS, BdL, Fo, Nr. 295, Bild 16

View of House 22 from the parking lot, early 1980s

Photo: BStU, MfS, BdL, Fo, Nr. 82, Bild 457

Information on the Archive - Ground Floor

The Minister for State Security, Erich Mielke, (right) welcomes the head of state and party leader, Erich Honecker (left), in front of his ministerial offices, House 1, on the occasion of the 30th anniversary of the MfS, 1980.

Photo: BStU, MfS, ZAIG, Fo, Nr. 885, Bild 158, detail

Stasi employee at a paternoster cabinet with space saving storage of index cards, around 1985

Photo: BStU, MfS, Abt. XII, Fo, Nr. 92, Bild 1

Stasi employee in front of filing shelves in the repository area, where the Stasi kept its archived files, between 1984 and 1989

Photo: BStU, MfS, Abt. XII, Nr. 8408, detail

Stasi employee reading a file, undated

Photo: BStU, MfS, Abt. XII, Nr. 8408, detail

"Never again Stasi! Oust the Socialist Unity Party from power! Germany, United Fatherland!" are the demands of demonstrators storming the Stasi headquarters in Berlin Lichtenberg on 15 January 1990.

Photo: Andreas Schoelzel, January 1990

District administration for State Security Rostock on August-Bebel-Strasse, 1970s

Photo: BStU, MfS, BV Rostock, AKG, Nr. 875, S. 94

Women from the New Forum citizens' movement at a protest vigil in front of the district administration of State Security Rostock, December 1989

Photo: Dietmar Weidler

District administration for State Security Schwerin on Demmlerplatz, 1955

Photo: BStU, MfS, BV Schwerin, AU, Nr. 42/55, S. 54

Inspection and sealing of the Stasi county office Röbel in the Neubrandenburg region on 5 December 1989

Photo: Berthold Meyer

Aerial photograph of part of the grounds of the Stasi headquarters in Berlin-Lichtenberg from the direction Normannenstrasse/corner Ruschestrasse in 1985

Photo: BStU, MfS, HA II, Fo, Nr. 32, Bild 8

On 15 January 1990 demonstrators pour onto the site of the former Stasi headquarters after the gates to the inner courtyard are opened.

Photo: Bundesarchiv, Bild 183-1990-0115-029/photo-grapher: Thomas Uhlemann

Office building of the district administration for State Security Berlin on Strasse der Befreiung (today Alt-Friedrichsfelde) in Berlin-Lichtenberg, around 1985

Photo: BStU, MfS, BV Berlin, Fo, Nr. 876, Bild 3

District administration for State Security Frankfurt (Oder) on Otto-Grotewohl-Strasse (today Robert-Havemann-Strasse), 1980s
Photo: BStU, MfS, BV Frankfurt (Oder), BdL, Nr. 40, Seite 121

Members of civil-rights groups occupy the district administration for State Security Frankfurt (Oder) on 5 December 1989
Photo: Hartmut Kelm/Lizenz CC: BY NC ND/Source: www.wir-waren-so-frei.de

Office building of the district administration for State Security Cottbus "Am Nordrand", undated
Photo: BStU, MfS, BV Cottbus, BdL, Nr. 3513, Bild 1

Disbanding of the district administration for State Security Cottbus. The last remaining employees handed in their keys and staff badges by 12 noon on 16 January 1990 to the criminal police and public prosecutor. "Building occupied by the citizens' committee - building guarded by the DVP (German People's Police)": A banner announces the security partnership.
Photo: Bundesarchiv, Bild 183-1990-0117-016/Photographer: Rainer Weisflog, 17 January 1990

Seat of the district administration for State Security Magdeburg from 1952 to 1980 and from 1980 to 1989 seat of the county office of State Security Magdeburg between Walther-Rathenau-Strasse and Hohefortestrassen, taken in 1982
Photo: BStU, MfS, BV Magdeburg, KD Magdeburg, Fo, r. 14115, S. 56

"This property is guarded by the People's Police on instructions from the governmental commission in coordination with the Citizens Committee" - Occupied district administration for State Security on Kroatenweg in Magdeburg, December 1989
Photo: Bürgerkomitee Sachsen-Anhalt e.V./Rainer Krauß

Main building of the district administration for State Security Halle on Gimritzer Damm, before 1990
Photo: BStU, MfS, BV Halle, BdL, Fo, Nr. 166, Bild 1, detail

Employee of the Halle branch inspecting and safeguarding Stasi records, after 1990
Photo: BStU

"Comrades in arms - class-brothers - together invincible", building of the district administration for State Security Leipzig, known as the "Round Corner", on Dittrichring, 1985
Photo: BStU, MfS, BV Leipzig, Abt. RD, Nr. 762, Bild 7

Occupation of the district administration for State Security Leipzig, 4 December 1989
Photo: Eckhard Otto

District administration for State Security Dresden on Bautzner Strasse, undated
Photo: BStU, MfS, BV Dresden, Abt. IX, Nr. 30710, Bild 21

On 5 December 1989 citizens occupy the building complex of the district administration for State Security Dresden thereby preventing the further destruction of files
Photo: Ronald Lohse

District administration for State Security Karl-Marx-Stadt on Dr. Richard Sorge Strasse on Kassberg (today Hohe Strasse in Chemnitz), 1985
Photo: BStU, MfS, BV Karl-Marx-Stadt, AKG, Fo, Nr. 607, Bd. 1, Bild 8

Storage of preserved files in the emergency command bunker of the district administration Karl-Marx-Stadt in Dittersdorf, 9 December 1989
Photo: Klaus Jedlicka

District administration for State Security Erfurt on Andreasstrasse, undated
Photo: Peter Große

Military state prosecutor, Lieutenant Colonel Horst Weißmantel, seals rooms, archives, computers, shredders and incineration plants of the Stasi district administration Erfurt after citizens' groups occupied the building on 4 December 1989
Photo: Bundesarchiv, Bild 183-1989-1204-024/photographer: Heinz Hirndorf

New building of the district administration for State Security Gera on Klement Gottwald Strasse (today Hermann Drechsler Strasse), January 1990
Photo: Michael Beleites

District state prosecutor Grieder Eisenreich (r), state prosecutor Wolfgang Sybili and Captain Ottmar Zimmermann (m) from the criminal police seal the "shredder" during the investigative work in the district administration of State Security Gera, 5 December 1989
Photo: Bundesarchiv, Bild 183-1989-1205-036, photographer: Jan Peter Kasper

New building complex of the district administration for State Security Suhl, known as the "Stasi fortress", on a hill on Hölderlinstrasse, before 1990
Photo: BStU, MfS, BV Suhl, ZPL, Fo, Nr. 7, Bild 1

Countless citizens demand entry to the old building of the district administration for State Security Suhl, 5 December 1989
Photo: Reinhard Wenzel

Eva-Maria Hagen, Pamela Biermann, Katja Havemann, Jürgen Fuchs and Wolf Biermann inspecting files for the first time in January 1992
Photo: Peter Wensierski, 2 January 1992

View into a repository room of the Stasi Records Archive
Photo: Christian Morgenstern, 10 January 2017

The Card Index System of the Stasi - 1st Floor

Index room in the archive building, House 8, before the refurbishment work began in 2000. A few of the paternoster index cabinets used by the Stasi are visible.
Photo: BStU/Doris Stark, before 2000

One of the refurbished index rooms in House 8 with the modern paternoster index cabinets used by the employees of the Stasi Records Archive today.
Photo: Christian Morgenstern, 10 January 2017

The Stasi used cold vapour devices to open letters and inspect their content. It also used index cards to store and manage the results of postal surveillance.
Photo: BStU, MfS, Abt. M, Fo, Nr. 31, Bild 2

Index room in the archive building that still contained the earlier equipment with Stasi paternoster index cabinets
Photo: BStU/Doris Stark, around 2000

View into an index room today in the Stasi Records Archive with up-to-date paternoster index cabinets
Photo: Christian Morgenstern, 10 January 2017

An employee of Department XII using a paternoster index cabinet which contained index cards of the central persons index F 16, around 1985
Photo: BStU, MfS, Abt. XII, Fo, Nr. 92, Bild 2

An employee of Department XII fills out index cards on a typewriter, around 1985
Photo: BStU, MfS, Abt. XII, Fo, Nr. 94, Bild 1

Index room in the archive building of the Stasi headquarters, around 1985

This is where the persons index cards with the initial letters A-K were stored. The index cards with the initial letters L-Z, including the index card on Lutz Rathenow, were kept on the floor above in a similarly equipped room.
Photo: BStU, MfS, Abt. XII, Fo, Nr. 92, Bild 3

Index card boxes lined up in the Stasi Records Archive

In the central persons index F 16, the Stasi classified cards with the names Möller under Müller because "ö" and "ü" sound similar. Employees of the Stasi Records Archive in Berlin lined up all the Müller index boxes with thousands of index cards in a row to visually depict the scale. Together they formed a 21-metre-long line of files.
Photo: BStU/Stark, around 2000

Persons index card F 16 on Lutz Rathenow

East Berlin, 1980; Photo reproduction
BStU, MfS, Abt. XII, Nr. 8370

An employee of Department XII working on index cards and lists, around 1985
Foto: BStU, MfS, Abt. XII, Fo, Nr. 94, Bild 8

Case index card F 22 on the operational case "Assistant"

East Berlin, created on 18 November 1980, photo reproduction
BStU, MfS, Abt. XII, Nr. 8376

Stasi employee of Department XII processing index cards, around 1985
Photo: BStU, MfS, Abt. XII, Fo, Nr. 94, Bild 5

Codename index card F 77 with the codename "Assistant"

East Berlin, created on 18 November 1980, photo reproduction
BStU, MfS, Abt. XII, Nr. 8390

Stasi employee processing index cards, around 1985
Photo: BStU, MfS, Abt. XII, Fo, Nr. 95, Bild 2

Pre-compressed and search card F 401 on Lutz Rathenow

East Berlin, 1989, photo reproduction
BStU, MfS, HA XX, Nr. 24238

Reference card F 402 on Lutz Rathenow

East Berlin, undated, photo reproduction
BStU, MfS, HA XXII, Nr. 21241

Stasi cabinets sealed with stamps, undated
Photo: BStU, MfS, OTS, Fo, Nr. 36, Bild 60, detail

Pre-printed M 10 form

BStU holdings, photo reproduction

Example of an index card file pocket (M 10 form), in which Department M placed photocopies and filmed results of postal inspections. The data on “suspicious” senders and recipients of inspected letters could be entered into the empty fields.

Operational notice of letter handover

East Berlin, 10 December 1988, photo reproduction
BStU, MfS, AOP, Nr. 1076/91, Bd. 14, S. 261

With this document from December 1988, Department M, on behalf of its head, Major General Strobel, handed over a confiscated postal item to Main Department (HA) XX/9. It had asked Department M to monitor post from and for Lutz Rathenow, whom the Stasi regarded as a suspect from the “political underground”.

Handwritten letter to Lutz Rathenow

Jena, 1 November 1989, photo reproduction
BStU, MfS, AOP, Nr. 26097/91, Bd. 11, S. 39 und S. 41

This letter to Lutz Rathenow dated November 1989 was opened by Department M within the framework of postal surveillance and copied for further use. Department M gave a copy of the letter to the Stasi service unit that had “processed” and collected information on Rathenow.

As the State Security was disbanding and evidence was being destroyed, this document was torn up. It was later possible to reassemble the snippets and have the letter classified into the appropriate file in the Stasi Records Archive.

Employee of Department M opening letters, undated
Photo: BStU, MfS, Abt. M, Fo, Nr. 31, Bild 3

Work station for manually resealing postal items, undated

Photo: BStU, MfS, Abt. M, Fo, Nr. 31, Bild 30

Photographs from Department M of the MfS that show technical devices for opening and sealing letters, around 1984

Already opened letters are placed in a letter sealing machine.

Photo: BStU, MfS, Abt. M, Fo, Nr. 29, Bild 57

Examined letters are reclosed in a letter sealing machine.

Photo: BStU, MfS, Abt. M, Fo, Nr. 29, Bild 63

Employee of Department M placing resealed envelopes in a letter press to remove any traces of postal control.

Photo: BStU, MfS, Abt. M, Fo, Nr. 31, Bild 25

The Stasi’s Legacy - 2nd Floor

View of a corridor inside an old repository room where the Stasi kept its archived files in mobile shelving units

Photo: BStU/Roland Lucht, April 1998

A repository room today with modern mobile aisle shelving units in which the Stasi records can be properly stored in archive boxes

Photo: Christian Morgenstern, 10 January 2017

Technical equipment used by the Stasi to record its tapping activities, 1985

Photo: BStU, MfS, HA III, Fo, Nr. 299, Bild 31

Repository room in the adjacent archive building, House 8, with the very first equipment dating back to 1984 with mobile shelving units

Photo: BStU/Doris Stark, around 2000

View into the repository room of the Stasi Records Archive with modern equipment

Photo: Christian Morgenstern, 10 January 2017

Bag storage facility in Magdeburg where the containers with pre-destroyed material are stored today

Photo: BStU/Jörg Stoye, 2017

Employees of the Stasi Records Archive sort and manually piece together paper snippets that were torn up by the Stasi prior to 1990

Photo: Friedrich Klütsch, 2008

Quality assurance of the virtual reconstruction of Stasi records

In the quality assurance stage, archivists assist in reassembling the snippets by checking whether the puzzle proposals of the software are complete, after which they confirm or reject them. The Stasi Records Archive takes the reconstructed pages, compiles them into files and cases and returns them to the context in which they were created.

Photo: BStU/Karina Jüngert, 2013

Report on a meeting with the IMS (unofficial collaborator used to penetrate and secure the area of responsibility on a politically operative level)

East Berlin, 26 October 1989, photo reproduction
BStU, MfS, AIM, Nr. 9085/91, Beifügung, Bd. 1, S. 1

This report from an IM file documents two meetings between an unofficial collaborator of the Stasi (IM) and his case officer. Shortly after the meeting described in this report took place, Stasi employees tore up the page. It was later reassembled by hand through the manual reconstruction project and assigned to the corresponding case in the Stasi Records Archive.

Repository room in House 8 with mobile aisle shelving units used by the Stasi to store its records, between 1984 and 1989

Photo: BStU, MfS, Abt. XII, Nr. 8408, detail

Stasi employee with the archived Folder 6 of the Operative Case “Acker II” in the repository area of the central archive of the Stasi in Berlin, between 1984 and 1989

Photo: BStU, MfS, Abt. XII, Nr. 8408, detail

Photograph of the repository room of the Stasi Records Archive

The loose pages are tied together into bundles of documents and arranged and indexed according to content so that they can be used for research.

Photo: Christian Morgenstern, 10 January 2017

View into the repository room of the Stasi Records Archive with modern equipment

A repository room today with modern mobile aisle shelving units in which the Stasi records can be properly stored in archive boxes

Photo: Christian Morgenstern, 10 January 2017

Stasi surveillance photos of Ulrike Poppe

East Berlin, 1980s

Photos: BStU, MfS, HA XX, Fo, Nr. 742, Bild 2 und Bild 32; BStU, MfS, AOP, Nr. 1010/91, Bd. 18, S. 21, Bild 4; BStU, MfS, AOP, Nr. 1010/91, Bd. 18, S. 22, Bild 8

Mugshot of Ulrike Poppe after her arrest by the Stasi in December 1983

Photo: BStU, MfS, HA IX, Nr. 22869, detail

Training films and videos of the Ministry for State Security

GDR, between 1974 and 1988, media installation

The Stasi also produced training films for internal use. Some of these training films are presented in the permanent exhibition and are available in their entirety, sometimes accompanied by audio, in the Stasi records online resource (www.stasi-mediathek.de).

- „FIAT II“, 1974
BStU, MfS, ZAIG, Fi, Nr. 37, detail
- “Border Control Point Wartha”, around 1980
BStU, MfS, ZAIG, Fi, Nr. 141, detail

- “Good Afternoon, Passport Control”, 1981
BStU, MfS, ZAIG, Fi, Nr. 142, detail
- “The Anti-constitutional Office for the Protection of the Constitution”, 1983
BStU, MfS, HA II, Vi, Nr. 114, detail
- Revisor – illegal establishment of contact”, 1985
BStU, MfS, HA II, Vi, Nr. 70, detail
- “Border Passages”, 1985
BStU, MfS, ZAIG, Fi, Nr. 140, detail
- “Who is Who?”, 1987
BStU, MfS, HA II, Vi, Nr. 119, detail
- “Forgers” – How escape agents manipulated the stamps in passports, 1987
BStU, MfS, HA II, Vi, Nr. 121, detail
- “Dzierzynski Soldiers”, 1988
BStU, MfS, ZAIG, Fi, Nr. 99, detail

Tangled reels of film from the Stasi before they were catalogued in the Stasi Records Archive

Photo: BStU/Doris Stark, before 2000

“In honour of the 35th anniversary of the GDR and the MfS, in realisation of the class mission of the X. Party Congress – highest Checkist accomplishments for the secure protection of Socialism and Peace!” This photo from the records of the Ministry for State Security (MfS) shows the slogan of honour next to the portrait of head of state and party leader, Erich Honecker, at a festive event of the MfS in 1985. The Stasi had recordings made of events like this, meetings or work conferences to document its own internal workings and to “keep traditions alive”.

Photo: BStU, MfS, HA XX, Fo, Nr. 1691, Bild 16

Surveillance photos taken by Stasi employees with a hidden camera on 27 April 1984 in the vicinity of the Church of the Redeemer (Erlöserkirche) in Berlin-Lichtenberg. Main Department VIII of the MfS, which received its orders from other Stasi service units, was responsible for this type of covert surveillance.

Photo: BStU, MfS, HA VIII, Fo, Nr. 441, Bild 18 und 19

Work area in the Stasi Records Archive where films and videos are processed, digitalised and made usable

One major challenge here is to determine the origin of the individual media and link them to the written records. In many cases, the recordings have been removed from the context in which they were created and accompanying information or technical details are missing. The employees in the Stasi Records Archive must first determine which device a recording can be played on, if at all.

Photo: BStU/Christian Appl, 2017

Various film storage media in the repository area of the Stasi Records Archive

Photo: Christian Morgenstern, 10 January 2017

View of the Siemens 4004 computer system in the central computer centre of the MfS in Wuhlheide, Berlin-Köpenick, around 1975

Photo: BStU, MfS, Abt XIII, Fo, Nr. 1, Bild 6

Placing a magnetic disc on a removable disc device, undated.

Photo: BStU, MfS, Abt. XIII, Fo, Nr. 17, Bild 6

Employee of the index and archive department recording data on an office computer made by Robotron, around 1985

Photo: BStU, MfS, Abt. XII, Fo, Nr. 93, Bild 2

“Looking in a Distorting Mirror” The Case of Gilbert Radulovic in the Stasi Records - 3rd Floor

Mugshots of Gilbert Radulovic after his arrest by the Stasi on 27 March 1985

Photos: BStU, MfS, AU, Nr. 11980/86, Bd. 1, S. 141, Bild 1-3

Surveillance photos taken by Stasi employees during the covert observation of Gilbert Radulovic on 26 March 1985

Photos: BStU, MfS, AOPK, Nr. 1230/88, S. 299-300, detail

Archived Folder 2 of the surveillance and control operation “Kopernikus”

East Berlin, 1980, Photo reproduction

BStU, MfS, AOPK, Nr. 23732/80, Bd. 2

Archived Folder 1 of surveillance and control operation “Schreiber”

East Berlin, 1988, Photo reproduction

BStU, MfS, AOPK, Nr. 1230/88, Bd. 1

Archived Folder 3 of the investigation on Gilbert Radulovic

East Berlin, 1986, Photo reproduction

BStU, MfS, AU, Nr. 11980/86, Bd. 3

Gilbert Radulovic on assignment for the state-run enterprise (VEB) heating system construction plant in East Berlin, late 1970, projection

Photo: BStU, MfS, AU, Nr. 11980/86, Bd. 1, S. 200

Gilbert Radulovic in front of a propaganda poster of the GDR during a short vacation in Pasewalk, 1966, projection

Photo: Private collection of Gilbert Furian

Gilbert Radulovic at his desk in the state-run enterprise (VEB) heating system construction plant in East Berlin, around 1980, projection

Photo: Private collection of Gilbert Furian

Punk in East Berlin in front of the slogan: “No-one does what he should – everybody does what they want”, projection

Photo: BStU, MfS, AU, Nr. 11980/86, Bd. 10, Seite 56, Bild 6 bzw. Nikolaus Becker, 1982

Photo report on “Schreiber”

East Berlin, created on 2 April 1985, photos from 26 March 1985, projection

BStU, MfS, AOPK, Nr. 1230/88, S. 299-300

Report on securing the typewriter as evidence

East Berlin, 18 July 1985, projection

BStU, MfS, AU, Nr. 11980/86, Bd. 10, S. 169

Report on securing punk booklet as evidence

East Berlin, undated, projection

BStU, MfS, AU, Nr. 11980/86, Bd. 3, S. 192

Photo report of a search of the apartment on Husemannstrasse of: Radulovic, Gilbert, ordered by the GDR general state prosecutor

East Berlin, undated, projection

BStU, MfS, AU, Nr. 11980/86, Bd. 8, S. 49

Brief information on Radulovic, Gilbert

East Berlin, 18 April 1979, photo reproduction

BStU, MfS, HA XX, Nr. 6221, Bd. 2, S. 1111-1112

In 1979 the State Security began “the operational processing” of Gilbert Radulovic and instigated, to this end, the surveillance and control operation (OPK) “Kopernikus”. This short information sums up the most important aspects. Besides the personal details of Radulovic, it also contains the name of the Stasi employee in charge, Willi Marquardt, the type of recording in the file category OPK and any measures already initiated like, for instance, the use of unofficial collaborators (IM) as informants.

The reason given by Marquardt for the surveillance of Radulovic was his participation in the “Thursday circle”, a discussion group on politics. The Stasi saw this as a “hostile activity” directed against the state. In the German Democratic Republic almost every critical opinion voiced was liable to punishment pursuant to Section 106 of the Criminal Code (StGB) on the grounds of “subversion”.

Overview of the surveillance and control operation

East Berlin, 11 November 1977, photo reproduction
BStU, MfS, AOPK, Nr. 23732/80, Bd. 1, S. 6

This overview sums up the most important information about the surveillance and control operation (OPK) against Gilbert Radulovic. It gives the names of the official Stasi employees, Captain Marquardt who was in charge of the case, and his superior Lieutenant Colonel Buhl. The justification for and aims of the surveillance show that the initial suspicion of “anti-state activity” according to Section 106 of the Criminal Code was to be examined and evidence of such a crime collected. However, surveillance of Radulovic did not furnish sufficient proof. In 1980 the Stasi closed the surveillance and control operation “Kopernikus” and had it archived.

Hans Buhl, photo from his personal file at the Ministry for State Security, undated

Photo: BStU, MfS, KS, Nr. 3700/90, S. 14, detail

Hans Buhl (born in 1933) joined the State Security in 1952. During his career with the Stasi, he was assigned to various leadership positions. From 1974 to 1980 he was in charge of Department 2 of Main Department XX which was responsible for investigating “subversion.” As Willi Marquardt’s supervisor, he was also responsible for the surveillance of Radulovic in conjunction with the OPK “Kopernikus”. Buhl still held the rank of Lieutenant Colonel at that time; by 1989 he had advanced to Colonel.

Proposed appointment to department head

East Berlin, 2 June 1975, photo reproduction

BStU, MfS, KS, Nr. 3700/90, S. 96

From 1 May 1974 Hans Buhl had been acting head of Department 2 within Main Department XX and, as such, Willi Marquardt’s superior. Buhl had completed his assigned tasks to the satisfaction of his boss, the head of Main Department XX, General Major Paul Kienberg. On the recommendation of Kienberg, Buhl was appointed permanent head of Department 2 of Main Department XX in July 1975.

Recommendation for the award of a gold medal of merit of the National People’s Army (NVA) to Willi Marquardt

East Berlin, 2 June 1976, photo reproduction
BStU, MfS, KS II, Nr. 271/89, S. 109

During his time with the Ministry for State Security, Willi Marquardt received several decorations for his devotion to duty and reliable work. In November 1977 his superior and head of department, Lieutenant Colonel Hans Buhl, recommended him for the NVA (National People’s Army) gold medal of merit. Accordingly, Marquardt had made a major contribution to “combating the political underground” – also through the use of unofficial collaborators and intelligence measures, for instance surveillance and control operations.

Willi Marquardt, photo from his personal file at the Ministry for State Security, undated

Photo: BStU, MfS, KS II, Nr. 271/89, S. 336, Bild 5

Willi Marquardt (born in 1930) was an experienced employee of the Ministry for State Security. The trained locksmith joined the Stasi in 1957 and worked for many years for Main Department XX. Among other things this unit was responsible for “fighting subversion” and, therefore, also for the OPK “Kopernikus” mounted against Gilbert Radulovic. In the rank of Captain at the time, Marquardt ended his career in 1988 as Major.

Gilbert Radulovic on assignment for the state-run enterprise (VEB) heating system construction plant in East Berlin, late 1970

Photo: BStU, MfS, AU, Nr. 11980/86, Bd. 1, S. 200

Gilbert Radulovic in front of a propaganda poster of the GDR during a short vacation in Pasewalk, 1966

Photo: Private collection of Gilbert Furian

The Gutenfürst border checkpoint in Saxon Vogtland

Photo: SLUB (Sächsische Landesbibliothek – Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek) Dresden/Deutsche Fotothek, Ivo Petrik, 1992

The Gutenfürst border checkpoint in Saxon Vogtland was located between the cities of Plauen in the East (GDR) and Hof in the West (FRG). In the course of inter-German travel, passenger trains crossing the border had to stop here. This is also the station where Radulovic's mother underwent routine controls on her trip to West Germany in January 1985. During the controls, customs officials discovered and confiscated her son's booklets.

Gerd Staedtler, photo from his personal file at the Ministry for State Security, undated

Photo: BStU, MfS, KS, Nr. 4962/90, S. 1, detail

Gerd Staedtler (born in 1949), a trained measurement and control engineering technician from Zeitz, had been a member of the State Security since 1968. After completing his engineering studies, he joined Central Department XVIII of the MfS in 1975 where he worked until 1989 on the control of industrial sectors in the GDR. Staedtler held the rank of Captain when he oversaw the "Schreiber" case. He ended his career as deputy head of section with the rank of Major.

Search request and operational information from Department XII

East Berlin, 30 January 1985, photo reproduction BStU, MfS, AOPK, Nr. 1230/88, S. 245-246

To launch the surveillance and control operation (OPK) "Schreiber", the responsible Stasi employee Staedtler first initiated a search request from Department XII, the access and inquiry department of the MfS. The employees there checked whether Gilbert Radulovic was already recorded in the central database. The supplied information shows that the MfS headquarters in Berlin already kept an OPK-file (AOPK 23732/80) on Radulovic that had been archived in 1980 – the OPK "Kopernikus". He had also cropped up in a case (AOP 174/74) of the Stasi district administration (BV) in Leipzig (Lpz), where he had studied. Staedtler was then able to draw on this information about the person and background of Radulovic.

The central persons index card F 16 of Gilbert Radulovic

East Berlin, 1 February 1985, photo reproduction BStU, MfS, Abt. XII, Nr. 8370

With the mounting of the OPK "Schreiber", the central archive and index department, Department XII, assigned a registration number and created the corresponding index cards on the case. The Stasi used indexes to structure and store the data it collected. It could then directly access information at any time.

The persons index card F 16 contains details of Gilbert Radulovic, such as his full name, date of birth, address and occupation. At the top right, the registration number refers to the case created on him in a separate index, the case index F 22. The registration number consists of the following elements:

- XV for the registration area of the headquarters of the Ministry for State Security in Berlin,
- 1009 as consecutive number,
- 85 for the year 1985, in which the index cards and the case were created.

The central case index card F 22 for the OPK "Schreiber"

East Berlin, created on 1 February 1985, closed on 28 January 1988, photo reproduction BStU, MfS, Abt. XII, Nr. 8376

The case index card F 22, which can be found under the registration number that the persons card F 16 contains: XV/1009/85. The F 22 indicates the kind of case created: it involves monitoring, a surveillance and control operation (OPK) for the purposes of "gathering intelligence about criminal acts". The date on which the index card was created, Section 2 of Department 3 in the Main Department XVIII, and Staedtler, the employee in charge, are also noted.

However, the real name of Radulovic is no longer listed in the case card, only the codename "Schreiber". For reasons of secrecy, the case card alone was not meant to allow any direct conclusions about the person recorded in this case.

When the Stasi archived the OPK "Schreiber" in 1988, the archive number 1230/88 used to locate the corresponding files was added to the index card.

Index card F 77 on the codename "Schreiber"

East Berlin, created on 1 February 1985, ended on 27 January 1988, photo reproduction BStU, MfS, Abt. XII, Nr. 8390

The codename index card F 77 gives the codename "Schreiber". This belongs to the case that could be found under the same registration number XV/1009/85 as in the case index F 22. Here, too, details are given of the type of case, the surveillance and control operation (OPK), the corresponding competences of the Stasi (Section 2 of Department 3 of Main Department XVIII as well as Staedtler, the employee in charge), and the date the case was created. In 1988 the date was added on which the case was closed as was the archive number of the archived file on the OPK "Schreiber". The reason for closing the case was added in handwriting: one person faced criminal investigations with imprisonment and "preventive educational measures" were taken against three other people involved in the case.

Photo report on "Schreiber"

East Berlin, created on 2 April 1985, photos from 26 March 1985, photo reproduction BStU, MfS, AOPK, Nr. 1230/88, S. 299-300

In the course of the OPK "Schreiber", the Stasi collected incriminating material against Gilbert Radulovic with a view to clearly identifying him as the author of the "subversive" punk booklet. In addition, he was to be the subject of covert surveillance and then brought in for interrogation.

From the early morning of 26 March 1985 through to the next morning, Stasi employees had the "target individual" Radulovic under continuous surveillance. It prepared a highly detailed protocol of where Radulovic went that day, how much time he spent at each location and exactly what he got up to. Equipped with conspiratorial surveillance technology, the Stasi employees not only had him under surveillance, but they also took covert photos and painstakingly recorded their observations.

Detention report

East Berlin, 27 March 1985, photo reproduction BStU, MfS, AU, Nr. 11980/86, Bd. 1, S. 131

From the Stasi's perspective, its surveillance activities provided the "initial operational indications" that Gilbert Radulovic was guilty of the attempted "illegal establishment of contact", which was considered a serious political crime in the GDR. In order to "examine" this suspicion, Stasi employees picked him up at his workplace on the morning of 27 March 1985. "To clarify a matter", he was first taken up to the detention centre of the State security on Magdalenenstrasse (UHA II) right next door to the Stasi headquarters. Here, he was to respond to the criminal acts he was accused of.

Gilbert Radulovic at his desk in the state-run enterprise (VEB) heating system construction plant in East Berlin, around 1980

Photo: Private collection of Gilbert Furian

Punk in East Berlin in front of the slogan: "No-one does what he should - everybody does what they want"

Photo: BStU, MfS, AU, Nr. 11980/86, Bd. 10, Seite 56, Bild 6 bzw. Nikolaus Becker, 1982

Through his contacts to the Protestant Church, Radulovic got to know a group of punks in the summer of 1982. He recorded his discussions with them in order to document their alternative lifestyle. In addition, his colleague Nikolaus Becker took photos of the youngsters. When Radulovic was arrested two and a half years later and Becker assumed that his images would be confiscated, he scratched the faces in the photos to protect the punk's identity.

Committal Notification

East Berlin, 27 March 1985, photo reproduction BStU, MfS, AU, Nr. 11980/86, Bd. 1, S. 134-135

As soon as he "confessed" that he had produced the punk brochure, Radulovic was formally arrested by Main Department IX of the Stasi on 27 March 1985 around 11:40 am. Only now did the Stasi have sufficient incriminatory material to support the strong suspicion of "illegal establishment of contact", as defined in Section 219 of the GDR Criminal Code. Radulovic's status shifted from accused to strong suspect. With the aim of proving his "subversive intentions", the Stasi moved him to pretrial detention.

Arrest warrant

East Berlin, 28 March 1985, photo reproduction
BStU, MfS, AU, Nr. 11980/86, Bd. 8, S. 10

After the initial interrogation of Radulovic on the morning of 27 March 1985, the Stasi applied for a court warrant for arrest to the public prosecutor's office on the grounds of the strong suspicion of "illegal establishment of contact". One day later the competent municipal district court Berlin issued the arrest warrant. The judge ordered the pretrial detention of Gilbert Radulovic on the grounds that the suspect was guilty of a "crime" that could "harm the interests of the GDR".

Interrogation protocol of Radulovic in accordance with Para. 95 StPO

East Berlin, 27 March 1985, source excerpt
BStU, MfS, AU, Nr. 11980/86, Bd. 1, S. 277

"[...] I would like to reiterate that my 8 acquaintances living in the West had received calendars from me in the past. This was done by post. But given the nature of the content of my booklet I assumed that they might be exempted from postal traffic and not arrive. I informed my mother, who was visiting me in late 1984/early 1985, of my concerns. She, in turn, offered to take the booklets with her on her trip to the BRD in January 1985 and to mail them from there. She did, in fact, take them with her but it should be said that the customs administration of the DDR confiscated all 8 booklets at the border. [...]"

Action plan in the preliminary proceedings against Radulovic, Gilbert

East Berlin, 2 April 1985, photo reproduction
BStU, MfS, AU, Nr. 11980/86, Bd. 1, S. 319-322

From March to September 1985, Gilbert Radulovic was held in custody in the pretrial detention centre of the Stasi in Hohenschönhausen. Over and over again, he was interrogated about the circumstances surrounding the punk booklet.

The investigating officer, Major Mascher, from Department 2 of Main Department IX led the preliminary proceedings. He drew up an action plan to consolidate the gathering of evidence. It envisaged, amongst other things, collecting evaluations from Radulovic's employer, information from his personal circle and on his past,

interviewing a number of witnesses, seizing and analysing incriminating material, and checking postal items. For the Stasi it was important to gain knowledge of all information on the alleged crime, any compounding factors and possible accomplices.

Wolfgang Mascher, photo from his personal file at the Ministry for State Security, undated

Photo: BStU, MfS, KS, Nr. 12460/90, S. 14, detail

Wolfgang Mascher from Erfurt (born in 1946) began working for the Ministry for State Security (MfS) at the age of 20. The trained concrete constructor first worked in different service units of the MfS before he began studying criminology at the Berlin Humboldt University in 1970.

On completion of his degree, Mascher became investigative officer in Main Department IX, the investigative body of the MfS. In this function he led the preliminary proceedings against Radulovic. By the end of his career with the Stasi in 1989, Mascher had advanced to the position of head of section with the rank of Major.

Statement on the proposed nomination of Comrade Major Mascher, Wolfgang [...] to department head and his new status in the remuneration level (VS) XIV with effect on 1.5.1987

East Berlin, 14 April 1987, photo reproduction
BStU, MfS, KS, Nr. 12460/90, S. 107

In 1987 Wolfgang Mascher was put forward by his superiors for promotion to the post of head of section. The employees of the personnel department of the Stasi, the Main Department for Cadres and Training (HA KuSch) agreed to his nomination. According to them, Mascher had always shown himself to be competent and had been prepared, step by step, to assume a function of this kind.

Detailed pictures of the typewriter (picture of keys from a Rheinmetall typewriter Model GS, Machine no. 178225)

East Berlin, 1985, photo reproduction
BStU, MfS, AU, Nr. 11980/86, Bd. 10, S. 167

The Stasi confiscated Radulovic's typewriter as evidence. It suspected that he had written the punk booklet on this typewriter and requested a forensic examination. The technical investigative unit prepared an expert report that compared the typeface samples from the confiscated typewriter and the punk booklet. The detailed photos here present particular keys of the typewriter.

The experts' report confirmed that Radulovic's typewriter had indeed been used for the text on the punks.

Photo report of a search of the apartment on Husemannstrasse of: Radulovic, Gilbert, ordered by the GDR general state prosecutor

East Berlin, undated, photo reproduction
BStU, MfS, AU, Nr. 11980/86, Bd. 8, S. 48-49, details

Being subjected to innumerable interrogations during his custody in the central Stasi pretrial detention centre in Hohenschönhausen, the suspect Gilbert Radulovic had to explain, over and over, his motivation behind the preparation of the punk booklet and the exact circumstances of its production.

To compile all incriminating evidence against him, the Stasi repeatedly searched Radulovic's flat and workplace. During a specific search of his attic, Stasi staff members found additional material related to the punk booklet and took these pictures to record the location where it was found.

Final report on the surveillance and control operation (OPK) "Schreiber", Reg. Nr. XV 1009/85

no location, undated, photo reproduction
BStU, MfS, AOPK, Nr. 1230/88, S. 317-318

Department 3 of the Main Department XVIII had processed the surveillance and control operation (OPK) "Schreiber". This was the prerequisite to instigating the preliminary proceedings that ended with the conviction of Gilbert Radulovic.

In his final report, Staedtler, the Stasi employee who had originally been responsible for the case, once again summed up the results of the Stasi investigation. According to him, Radulovic was proven to have attempted to "establish illegal contact" and court proceedings were initiated in line with the desired outcome. The concrete accusation against Radulovic was that he had sought to present the marginal group of East Berlin punks as mainstream movement. In particular, he was accused of always having known that his writings could be used "in a defamatory manner against the GDR". In accordance with the GDR Criminal Code (StGB), this justified handing down a prison sentence in excess of two years.

Conviction in the Radulovic case

East Berlin, 23 September 1985, photo reproduction
BStU, MfS, AU, Nr. 11980/86, Bd. 7, S. 289

After six month's surveillance, preliminary proceedings and detention, the main trial in the criminal proceedings against Radulovic was held on 19 and 23 September 1985. The municipal district court Berlin Lichtenberg found Gilbert Radulovic guilty of the "illegal establishment of contact" pursuant to section 219 of the GDR Criminal Code and sentenced him to two years and two months imprisonment. The Court even widened the criminal offence to the "public defamation of state organs" pursuant to section 220 of the GDR Criminal Code (StGB).

The conviction brought to an end both the surveillance and control operation (OPK) "Schreiber", and the preliminary investigations. For the Stasi, the case had been "successfully" concluded. Gilbert Radulovic was then taken to Cottbus prison to serve his sentence.

House 7 in 1989 - Side Corridor 1-5th Floor

Horst Kuschel speaking before an assembly meeting, between 1979 and 1985.

Photo: BStU, MfS, HA XX, Fo, Nr. 1691, Bild 9, detail

Photo of Gerhard Neiber from his cader index card at the Ministry for State Security, undated

Photo: BStU, MfS, HA KuSch, Nr. 1567, detail

Paul Kienberg giving a speech at a work meeting of Main Department XX in House 22, around 1986

Photo: BStU, MfS, HA XX, Fo, Nr. 570, Bild 12, detail

Photo of Fritz Busch from his personal file at the Ministry for State Security, undated

Photo: BStU, MfS, KS II, Nr. 3664/90, S. 1, detail

Eberhard Jaekel speaking at an assembly of Main Department XX, between 1986 and 1989

Photo: BStU, MfS, HA XX, Fo, Nr. 1688, Bild 43, detail

Jürgen Notroff at a meeting of Main Department XX, between 1986 and 1989

Photo: BStU, MfS, HA XX, Fo, Nr. 1688, Bild 48, detail

Werner Fleischhauer speaking at an event of Main Department XX, between 1986 and 1989
Photo: BStU, MfS, HA XX, Fo, Nr. 1688, Bild 50, detail

Wolfgang Reuter at an assembly meeting of Main Department XX, between 1986 and 1989
Photo: BStU, MfS, HA XX, Fo, Nr. 1688, Bild 1, detail

Joachim Wiegand at an assembly meeting, between 1975 and 1985
Photo: BStU, MfS, HA XX, Fo, Nr. 1691, Bild 15, detail

Joachim Tischendorf speaking at an assembly of Main Department XX, between 1986 and 1989
Photo: BStU, MfS, HA XX, Fo, Nr. 1688, Bild 35, detail

Photo of Hans Buhl from his personal file at the Ministry for State Security, undated
Photo: BStU, MfS, KS II, Nr. 3700/90, S. 14, detail

Exhibition

Imprint

Access to Secrecy

Exhibition on the Stasi Records Archive

The Federal Commissioner for the Records of the State Security of the Former German Democratic Republic (BStU)

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Roland Handke-Lucht, BStU, Berlin
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Friedrich Klütsch, München
Christian Morgenstern, Potsdam
Roos Mulders, BStU, Berlin
Sächsische Landesbibliothek – Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek Dresden (SLUB)/Deutsche Fotothek, Ivo Petrik
Andreas Schoelzel, Berlin
Doris Stark, BStU, Berlin
Stasi-Unterlagen-Archiv, BStU, Berlin
Jörg Stoye, BStU, Magdeburg
Peter Wensierski, Berlin

Film productions:

Bodo Brüsehaber, Potsdam
BStU, Berlin

Audio recordings:

Kulturaufnahme MV, Erfurt

Restoration:

Dorothee Schmidt-Breitung, Neißemünde

Furniture construction:

Tischlerei Markus Rupprich, Rehfelde

Glass construction:

SZKLO – Zakład Szklarski S.C., Stettin

Metal construction:

Glas- und Metallbau Christian Kronmarck, Rosenwinkel

Printing press:

print, Potsdam

Media technology:

VST GmbH, Saalfeld

Lighting design:

Lumoplan GmbH & Co. KG, Berlin

Electrical engineering:

Hentzschel & Frankiewicz Elektro GmbH, Berlin

Illuminated boxes:

Bohn Werbeanlagen GmbH, Schönöw

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 Cover photo:
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 Front, inside:
 View of a corridor inside an old repository room where the Stasi kept its archived files in mobile shelving units
 Photo: BStU/Roland Lucht, April 1998
 Back, inside:
 View into a repository room of the Stasi Records Archive
 Photo: Christian Morgenstern, 10 January 2017

Contact

The Stasi Records Archive

Access to Files - Preserving Records - Explaining the Work of the Stasi

Despite the huge amount of records destroyed by the State Security, more than 111 linear kilometres of written material as well as numerous photo, film, video and audio documents have been preserved in the archives of Stasi Records Agency (BStU). They testify to an informer apparatus, to planned and committed injustices, to conformism and betrayal, as well as to civil courage and resistance.

The Stasi Records Archive has its headquarters in Berlin. Branch offices operate in twelve of the GDR's former district cities: Chemnitz (formerly Karl-Marx-Stadt), Dresden, Erfurt, Frankfurt (Oder), Gera, Halle, Leipzig, Magdeburg, Neubrandenburg, Rostock, Schwerin and Suhl. There is an advisory office in Cottbus.

Regardless of one's place of residence, it is possible to apply to the central office and to all the branch offices to view personal files. Visitors to the site can also learn about the work of the archive and the methods and impact of the Stasi through guided tours, events and exhibitions.

For more information, visit the website at: www.bstu.de

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Stasi Headquarters. Campus for Democracy

Visitor Centre

House 22
Ruschestraße 103
10365 Berlin
Tel.: 030 2324-6999
Open daily: 10am-6pm

Central Stasi Records Archive

Exhibition "Access to Secrecy"

House 7
Ruschestraße 103
10365 Berlin
Tel.: 030 2324-6699
Fax: 030 2324-7179
besuch@bstu.bund.de
Exhibition hours:
Mon-Fri: 10am-6pm
Sat-Sun: 11am-6pm

For more information, visit the website at:
www.einblick-ins-geheime.de

Stasi Museum

Exhibition "State Security in the SED Dictatorship"

House 1
Ruschestraße 103
10365 Berlin
Tel.: 030 553 68 54
info@stasimuseum.de
Mon-Fri: 10am-6pm
Sat, Sun, holidays: 11am-6pm

For more information, visit the website at:
www.stasimuseum.de

Education Department

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10365 Berlin
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Open-Air Exhibition "Revolution and the Fall of the Wall"

Open around the clock, every day
For more information, visit the website at:
www.revolution89.de

Thanks

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The Project Team

Nicol Püschl (BStU) and Nadja Häckel (formerly BStU)

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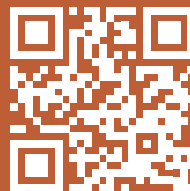
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This exhibition catalogue is part of the public relations work of the Federal Commissioner for the Stasi Records (BStU). It is made available for a token fee of 7 euros. For more information, please visit our website: www.bstu.de.

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The Stasi, the secret service of the GDR, left behind nearly 111 linear kilometres of files, some 41 million index cards, more than 1.8 million photographs, approximately 25,000 film and audio recordings and at least 15,000 bags of torn documents.

For the first time, a comprehensive permanent exhibition is devoted to the vast files left behind by a secret police agency and the archive that preserves them. Thirty years after the Peaceful Revolution in the GDR, the exhibition "Access to Secrecy", presented at the historical site of the former Stasi headquarters in Berlin, shows why the Stasi collected and analysed information on millions of people and how it used this data to monitor and control society.

The new exhibition provides "access to secrecy" by focusing on documents that were created covertly and never intended for publication. The exhibition and this accompanying catalogue make clear why these records, which document human rights violations and deep encroachments on private life while bearing witness to personal fates, courage and resistance, still exist today and how they are useful to us.

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