“Looking in a distorting mirror”

The case of Gilbert Radulovic in the Stasi records
“LOOKING IN A DISTORTING MIRROR”
THE CASE OF GILBERT RADULOVIC IN THE STASI RECORDS

The Ministry for State Security (MfS) collected and processed numerous details about individuals who had attracted its attention. The present booklet of documents shows how this information found its way into records and the profound consequences this could have for the individuals concerned.

Further information is presented in the permanent exhibition on the Stasi Records Archive “Access to Secrecy” („Einblick ins Geheime“), which takes a closer look at the case of Gilbert Radulovic.

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# TABLE OF CONTENT

## INTRODUCTION

1. PRELUDE
   - 8 — Overview of the OPK "Kopernikus"
   - 10 — Instruction to archive
   - 12 — Captain Willi Marquardt
   - 13 — Lieutenant Colonel Hans Buhl

## THE “SCHREIBER” CASE

2. The “Schreiber” Case in the Pretrial Detention Centre
   - 16 — Captain Gerd Staedtler
   - 17 — The border station Gutenfürst
   - 18 — Overview of the OPK "Schreiber"
   - 20 — Search request and operational information
   - 21 — The central persons index card F 16 on Gilbert Radulovic
   - 22 — The central case index card F 22 for the OPK "Schreiber"
   - 23 — The codename index card F 77 on "Schreiber"
   - 24 — Action plan for the OPK "Schreiber"
   - 28 — Photo report on "Schreiber"
   - 32 — Detention report

3. In the Pretrial Detention Centre
   - 36 — Committal notification
   - 40 — Arrest warrant
   - 42 — Pretrial detention centre Berlin-Hohen-schönhausen
   - 43 — Major Wolfgang Mascher
   - 44 — Sketch of hidden documents
   - 46 — Photo report of an apartment search
   - 52 — Piece of evidence - typewriter
   - 54 — Excerpt from the comparison of typed samples
   - 56 — Detailed photos of the typewriter
   - 58 — Punk in East Berlin
   - 60 — Confiscated booklets

## THE CONVICTION

4. The Conviction
   - 64 — Statement by the accused Radulovic
   - 68 — Final report on the OPK “Schreiber”
   - 72 — Conviction
   - 74 — The prison in Cottbus

## EPILOGUE

5. Annex
   - 81 — Further literature
   - 83 — Stasi Records Archive
   - 86 — Sources and picture credits
“Reminder of a youth movement: Punk” is the title of a booklet that the East German Gilbert Radulovic put together in the mid-1980s. He wanted to pass it on to friends inside and outside East Germany for their personal use. An only seemingly harmless endeavour. In the GDR (German Democratic Republic) this was enough to attract the attention of the State Security Service (in short Stasi).

After the end of the Second World War, the GDR had emerged as the second German state alongside the Federal Republic of Germany in the West. In the Communist one-party dictatorship in the eastern part of Germany, the party in power sought to control all areas of life. Nothing that could be seen as a rejection or as criticism of the sole rule of the Socialist Unity Party of Germany (Sozialistische Einheitspartei Deutschlands – SED) was to be tolerated in the GDR. In its capacity as the secret police and intelligence service, the Ministry for State Security (Ministerium für Staatssicherheit – MfS) had the explicit task of identifying critics and potential “opponents” of the regime by means of the systematic surveillance of the population, countering their activities and, in this way, securing the existing power of the SED. Besides controlling post and telephone calls, covert surveillance, searches of flats and spying on “suspicious” individuals, the surveillance measures also encompassed psychological “undermining”; the use of informants, the unofficial collaborators (inoffizielle Mitarbeiter – IM) and, above all, the systematic gathering of information and data on individuals. At the same time, the MfS was also responsible for the criminal investigation of alleged enemies of the state.

Declared “enemies” of the SED regime included members of the punk movement, which originated in the USA and the United Kingdom and also spread to East German cities from the beginning of the 1980s. Punks were discredited in the GDR as being “western-decadent” and classified as “enemies of the state”. The state power saw their protest attitude, their rejection of any form of imposed rules and their non-conformist behaviour as a challenge. For these reasons alone it considered Gilbert Radulovic’s recordings of the views of young punks to be a threat that could “harm the interests of the GDR” and could be used “in a defamatory manner against the state”. The situation was compounded by the facts that Radulovic wanted to have the booklet posted without having asked the GDR authorities for permission, and that the recipients in “non-socialist countries abroad” were, in any case, seen as potential enemies of the state.

On 31 January 1985 Stasi staff members launched what was known as a surveillance and control operation (Operative Personenkontrolle – OPK) codenamed “Schreiber”. By means of systematic background searches and surveillance measures, they wanted to find evidence for Radulovic’s alleged “illegal establishment of contact”, namely the contacting of the “class enemy” in the West, and for the political motives behind his actions. They seized every prior irregularity in the private life or work environment of the then forty-year-old in order to clearly identify and to prosecute him as an “enemy of the socialist society.”

The following documents from the Stasi Records Archive testify to the intensity with which the Stasi pursued its relentless collection of data. They provide insight into both the structure and putting together of the Stasi records and the varied nature of the documents. Above all they illustrate, on the basis of one concrete case, how quickly individuals could attract the attention of the Stasi and the profound consequences this could have.
Already during his youth Gilbert Radulovic, who was born in Görlitz in 1945 as Gilbert Kloß, had come into conflict with the political system in the GDR (German Democratic Republic). He frequently expressed his dissenting opinions and openly voiced criticism. After he had repeatedly attracted attention because of his “negative political-ideological attitude”, he was expelled from his philosophy course at Karl Marx University in Leipzig in 1970.

Radulovic then moved from Leipzig to East Berlin, where he took up a position as an insurance officer in 1971. He continued to voice his critical opinions to his friends and family and attended regular discussion groups among his circle of acquaintances. In what was known as the “Thursday Circle”, he met with about 10 individuals to exchange views on literature, arts, science and politics.

The Stasi kept a critical eye on this circle and classified it as a “hostile-negative group”. It identified Radulovic as “one of the most negative individuals” in this group, which was suspected of engaging in “anti-state agitation”. In the GDR this accusation could be used to criminalise and punish the voicing of almost every critical opinion according to Section 106 of the Criminal Code.

In 1979 Department 2 of Main Department XX of the Stasi, which was responsible for investigating and combating crimes of this nature, launched the surveillance and control operation (Operative Personenkontrolle – OPK) “Kopernikus” against Radulovic. The objective was to collect detailed information about Radulovic in order to verify the suspicion of “subversion”. The main details of the procedure are recorded in the “overview of the surveillance and control operation”, which is normally to be found at the beginning of every OPK file. Captain Willi Marquardt took over the case.

Despite extensive investigations, the Stasi could not prove that Radulovic had committed a crime. In 1980 the OPK “Kopernikus” was closed without Radulovic himself having noticed the surveillance measures. For the time being, the Stasi had lost interest in him. The Thursday Circle no longer existed at this point in time. The Stasi had successfully “undermined” it by infiltrating and intimidating the group.
Because of his participation in the “Thursday Circle” in which socio-political topics were discussed, the Stasi began its intensive surveillance of Gilbert Radulovic at the start of 1979. To this end, it launched a surveillance and control operation codenamed “Kopernikus”. This overview sums up the most important information. In addition to the personal details of Radulovic, it gives the names of the official Stasi staff members, Captain (Hauptmann – Hptm.) Marquardt who was in charge of the case, and his superior Lieutenant Colonel (Oberstleutnant – OSL) Buhl. The reason given by the Stasi for the surveillance of Radulovic was his suspected anti-state activity. According to Section 106 of the Criminal Code (Strafgesetzbuch – StGB) of the German Democratic Republic, the voicing of almost every critical opinion could be punished on such grounds as these of “subversion”. The Stasi wanted to investigate this initial suspicion and collect evidence of a crime.
However, surveillance of Radulovic did not furnish sufficient evidence for a crime. In 1980 the surveillance and control operation (Operative Personenkontrolle – OPK) “Kopernikus” was closed. With this instruction, the corresponding Stasi staff member directed his colleagues to archive the OPK file. In the meantime the Stasi had successfully “undermined” the Thursday Circle by infiltrating and intimidating the group. Radulovic had already left the circle before its dissolution.
Willi Marquardt

Willi Marquardt (born in 1930) was an experienced staff member of the Ministry for State Security (MfS). 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", Captain Marquardt was in charge of the surveillance and control operation (OPK) "Kopernikus" against Gilbert Radulovic. By the end of his career in 1988, Marquardt had advanced to the rank of Major. The Stasi had repeatedly decorated him for "combating the political underground".

Hans Buhl

Hans Buhl (born in 1933) joined the State Security in 1952. During his career with the Stasi, he occupied various leadership positions – between 1974 and 1980 he was in charge of Department 2 of Main Department XX, which was responsible for investigating "subversion". He was the superior of Willi Marquardt and, as such, 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 the rank of Colonel.
In 1982 Gilbert Radulovic got to know a group of young punks through his church contacts. As he was interested in their take on life and their views, he recorded conversations with them. Initially, Radulovic planned to publish the records with a GDR publishing house at a later date. However, he soon realised that the state could have deemed the comments of the punks to be highly critical of the regime, so he abandoned his original project. Two years later he put together the booklet “Reminder of a youth movement: Punks”, using the material he had collected for private purposes.

In January 1985 Radulovic gave his mother the few copies intended for friends in “non-socialist countries” in addressed envelopes. As she was a pensioner, she was allowed to travel to West Germany, where she was to post the eight envelopes. However, the envelopes were discovered at the border crossing point Gutenfurst during a routine control on 17 January 1985. Because the booklet contained non-conformist remarks by punks, it was deemed to constitute a “subversive writing directed against the GDR”. When asked about the author, Radulovic’s mother had to reveal her son’s name. As a result, the machinery of the Stasi was set in motion again.

On 31 January 1985 the Stasi launched a new surveillance case against Gilbert Radulovic codenamed “Schreiber”. This time Department 3 of Main Department XVIII was in charge of the “operational processing and investigation”. It was responsible for “protecting the national economy” in the GDR and, in this context, also for the surveillance of the plant where Radulovic worked. The responsible Stasi officer was Captain Gerd Staedtler.

According to the overview of the surveillance and control operation “Schreiber”, the Stasi pursued the goal of “putting together evidence of the criminally relevant actions of R” and then instigating preliminary investigations in line with Section 219 of the Criminal Code of the GDR. Behind this was the offence of “illegal establishment of contact”. The production and distribution of the punk brochure was likely, in the opinion of the Stasi, to harm the interests of the GDR abroad and should, therefore, be criminally prosecuted.

On 1 February 1985 Captain Staedtler drew up an action plan in which the tasks, responsibilities and processing periods in the “Schreiber” case were laid down. According to this action plan, attention was to focus in particular on Radulovic’s personal background and his circle. 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 the instigation of preliminary investigations was to prove that it was indeed Radulovic who was the author of the punk booklet. He was, therefore, to be the subject of covert surveillance and then brought in for interrogation. After he had been under continuous surveillance for one whole day, four Stasi staff members in plain clothes picked him up from his workplace on the morning of 27 March 1985. “To clarify a matter”, they took him to Magdalenestrasse in the Berlin district of Lichtenberg. This was the location of Stasi detention centre II in the direct vicinity of the headquarters of the Ministry for State Security and the office of the Minister Erich Mielke. The first interrogation of suspects was normally conducted at Magdalenestrasse before they were brought before the committal judge.
Gerd Staedtler

Gerd Staedtler (born in 1949), a trained measurement and control engineering technician from Zeitz, had been a member of the State Security since 1968. He began with a three-year period of service with the MfS “Felix Dzerzhinsky” Guards Regiment in Berlin. As a Stasi staff member, he was sent to study engineering in Zwickau in 1971 in order to equip him with the technical expertise for his future work. After completing his engineering studies, he joined Main Department XVIII in 1975. There he worked on the monitoring of central industrial sectors in the GDR. He was repeatedly decorated for his many years of reliable work, including his “successful” processing of the OPK “Schreiber”. At that time still with the rank of Captain, Staedtler had advanced to the position of deputy head of section with the rank of Major by 1989.

The border station Gutenfürst

The border station Gutenfürst 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 booklet about the punks.
This form provided a basic overview of the surveillance and control operation (Operative Personenkontrolle – OPK) “Schreiber”. The responsible Stasi staff member Staedtler gives, as the reason for surveillance, the suspicion that Radulovic was disseminating writings with “hostile-negative content” in the “non-socialist economic area” (nichtsozialistisches Wirtschaftsgebiet – NSW), i.e. in a country abroad deemed to be hostile by the GDR. The Stasi interpreted this as “illegal establishment of contact”, by means of which Radulovic wanted to supply the “class enemy” in the West with subversive material directed against the GDR. The aim of the OPK was to collect and pass on evidence to corroborate this suspicion. Main Department (Hauptabteilung – HA) IX was then to use this incriminating material in order to instigate preliminary proceedings against Radulovic. As the central investigative body of the Ministry for State Security (MfS), it was responsible for the criminal prosecution of political cases.

The envisaged surveillance measures are also listed in the overview. This is where the codenames of the unofficial collaborators (inoffizielle Mitarbeiter – IM) who were to report on Radulovic are recorded.
To launch the surveillance and control operation (OPK) “Schreiber”, the responsible staff member Staedtler first initiated a search request from Department XII, the access and inquiry department of the Ministry for State Security (MfS). The staff members there checked whether Gilbert Radulovic was already recorded in the central database.

The information they supplied shows that the MfS headquarters in Berlin already kept an OPK-file (AOPK 23732/80) on Radulovic that had been archived in 1980 – the surveillance and control operation (OPK) “Kopernikus”. Furthermore, Radulovic’s name had also cropped up in a case (AOP 174/74) of the Stasi district administration (BV) in Leipzig (Lpz) that had been archived in 1974.

Staedtler could now draw on this information about the person and background of Radulovic.

The central persons index card F 16 on Gilbert Radulovic

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. With the help of these cards the Stasi structured and stored the data it collected, which meant that it had access to this information whenever it wanted.

The persons index card F 16 contains the basic details on the individual Gilbert Radulovic, his full name, birth details, his personal identifier (Personenkennzahl – PKZ) used in the GDR as the identification number, his citizenship, his address and occupational activity. 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 (MfS) in Berlin,
- 1009 → the consecutive number,
- 85 → for the year 1985, in which the case and the index cards were created.
The codename index card F 77 on “Schreiber”

The codename index card F 77 gives the codename “Schreiber”. This belongs to the case that could be found under the same registration number in the case index F 22. Here, too, details are given of the type of case, the surveillance and control operation (Operative Personenkontrolle – OPK), the corresponding competences of the Stasi, Section 2 of Department 3 of Main Department (Hauptabteilung – HA) XVIII as well as the competent staff member Staedtler, and the date the case was created.

In 1988 the date was added on which the case was closed as was the archive number (Archiv-Nr.) of the archived file on the OPK “Schreiber”. The reason for closing the case was added in handwriting: one person faced criminal investigations (Ermittlungsverfahren – EV) with imprisonment and “preventive educational measures” were taken against three other people involved in the case.

The central case index card F 22 for the OPK “Schreiber”

The case index card F 22 that can be found under the same registration number indicates the kind of case created: it involves a surveillance and control operation (Operative Personenkontrolle – OPK) “to investigate criminal acts”. The date on which the index card was created, the competent Section 2 of Department 3 within Main Department (Hauptabteilung – HA) XVIII and the responsible staff member Staedtler are also noted.

However, the correct name of Radulovic is no longer recorded in the case index, just the codename “Schreiber”. This is because, on the grounds of secrecy, the details on the case card alone were not meant to allow any direct conclusions about the person recorded in this case.

When the Stasi archived the documents on the OPK “Schreiber” in 1988, the archive number 1230/88, under which the corresponding file could be located, was added to the index card.
As part of the surveillance and control operation (OPK) “Schreiber”, the competent Stasi staff member Staedtler drew up this action plan at the beginning of February 1985. In order to identify the “suspect” Gilbert Radulovic beyond any doubt as the author of the “subversive” punk brochure, all incriminating information was to be collected.

The measures were closely coordinated with the investigative body of the Stasi, Main Department (Hauptabteilung – HA) IX. It was to take over this case and instigate criminal proceedings against Radulovic on the basis of the evidence already processed.
The planned measures that are listed were, for instance, the search of Radulovic’s workplace, the criminal-technical examination of the confiscated envelopes and copies of the punk booklet, or the investigation of the background of Radulovic’s mother and any individuals he had wanted to send his brochure to. The intention of the Stasi was in particular to elaborate “a comprehensive evaluation of the personality” of Gilbert Radulovic. All activities were listed with details of timeframes and the name of the responsible Stasi staff member to ensure that the “achieved results of the investigation” could be compiled in a timely manner and then passed on.
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 staff members 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 staff members not only had him under surveillance, but they also took covert photos and painstakingly recorded their observations about Radulovic, who was only referred to here by the codename “Schreiber”.

Photo report on “Schreiber”

- Page 30: 26.03.85 4.45 p.m. “Schreiber” in front of REWATEX – collection point Sredzki str. corner Kollwitzstr.
- Page 31: 26.03.85 4.58 p.m. “Schreiber” loading the trailer at the collection point Sredzki str. corner Kollwitzstr.
- Page 31: 26.03.85 5.10 p.m. “Schreiber” in front of the residential building Schwedler Str. 5.
THE "SCHREIBER" CASE

Bild 1

26.03.69 16.45 Uhr "Schreiber" vor der BRWAK - Annahmestelle Sudeckistr. Seite Kollwitzstr.

Bild 2

26.03.69 16.48 Uhr "Schreiber" beim Beladen der Anhänger vor der Annahmestelle Sudeckistr. Seite Kollwitzstr.

Bild 3

26.03.69 17.10 Uhr "Schreiber" vor dem Wohnhaus Schmidtstr. 5.
The surveillance activities had supplied the Stasi with the “initial operational indications” that Gilbert Radulovic was suspected of having committed a serious political crime – the attempted “illegal establishment of contact”. Even the attempt could be punished in the GDR with a custodial sentence of several years.

In order to “examine” this suspicion, Stasi staff members picked up Radulovic from his workplace on the morning of 27 March 1985. “To clarify a matter”, he was first taken to the detention centre (Untersuchungsanstalt – UHA II) on Magdalenenstrasse, which was right next door to the Stasi headquarters.
An initial interrogation of Gilbert Radulovic by the Stasi took place in the pretrial detention centre on Magdalenenstrasse on the morning of 27 March 1985. As the suspect, Radulovic was to respond to the criminal acts he was accused of. Immediately he admitted that he was the author of the punk booklet. He also went on record as saying that he wanted to document, out of purely personal interest, “how punks live and think” and did not have the slightest intention of disseminating this material as propaganda against the GDR. However, the fact that he had tried secretly to get the booklets to his friends in the West furnished the Stasi with the decisive grounds to accuse him of the “illegal establishment of contact”.

His “confession” turned the accused Gilbert Radulovic into a strong suspect. His “subversive intentions” still had to be proven through the preliminary proceedings that had now been instigated. Immediately after the initial interrogation, Stasi staff members arrested Radulovic and took him to the central pretrial detention centre in Berlin-Hohenschönhausen. The competent municipal district court Central Berlin issued the warrant for his arrest one day later.

The notorious central Stasi pretrial detention centre was located in the middle of a restricted military zone that only appeared as an empty area in the city maps of East Berlin. 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 the inmates feel powerless and at their mercy.

In the GDR the Ministry for State Security (MfS) was also responsible for criminal prosecution in political cases. Main Department IX of the MfS, in its capacity as the investigative body, 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, whose focus was on investigating cases involving “political underground activities”, took over the Radulovic case. The responsible investigative officer, Major Wolfgang Mascher, initiated extensive action. Radulovic’s employer was asked for assessments, information from his personal circle and on his past was collected, a number of witnesses were interviewed, incriminating material was seized and evaluated, and postal items were monitored.

The focus of the extended investigation was on interrogating the suspect. Gilbert Radulovic was interrogated more than 40 times during his pretrial detention, sometimes three times a day. Again and again, he had to outline his political stance, the reasons for preparing the booklet and the circle of recipients. The prerequisite for the “successful” conclusion of the preliminary proceedings followed by a conviction on the grounds of “illegal establishment of contact” was the accusation that Radulovic had intentionally produced his booklet for the purpose of dissemination abroad. That’s why the Stasi endeavoured to trace connections of Radulovic to former GDR citizens in the West. It repeatedly insinuated that he had planned to pass on his booklet to the media in the West. Its aim was to supply the public prosecution with a gap-free chain of evidence on which it could then build in the ensuing court proceedings.
Immediately after the first interrogation and the “confession” by Radulovic that he had produced the punk booklet, he was formally arrested by the Stasi on 27 March 1985 at around 11.40 a.m. 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 (Strafgesetzbuch – StGB). Based on this section, Main Department IX, the investigative authority for political crimes, was able to instigate criminal proceedings. Radulovic’s status switched from the accused to a strong suspect. With a view to proving his “subversive intentions”, he was now taken into pretrial detention.
An den Staatssicherheitsverwaltung der DDR, Abteilung IV

Es wird betont:

1. Erhalt des richterlichen Haftbefehls gegen den Beschuldigten zu beantragen.
2. Gemäß §§ 108, 109 StPO die Durchsuchung der Wohn- und Nebensäle des Beschuldigten und die Entnehmung aller Gegenstände, die für die Untersuchung von Bedeutung sind, auszurichten.


1. Beschuldigtervernehmung vom 27.3.1985
2. 2. Aussage, getätigt an Person in Frankreich, der DDR und Westberlin, Inhalt: je eine amtliiche Schrift mit dem Titel "Erinnerung an eine Jugendbewegung: "Punk"
3. Erklärung der Mutter des Beschuldigten vom 27.1.1985
4. Erklärung der Mutter des Beschuldigten vom 27.1.1985

In the GDR an act of this kind could be prosecuted as a criminal act of "illegal establishment of contact". Under Section 219 of the Criminal Code (StGB) contacts in non-socialist countries and any attempt to disseminate writings that "are likely to harm the interests of the GDR" were liable to punishment.
After the initial interrogation of Radulovic on the morning of 27 March 1985, the Stasi had 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 Central Berlin issued the arrest warrant. The judge directed the pretrial detention of Gilbert Radulovic on the grounds that the suspect was accused of the “crime” of having made records that could “harm … the interests of the GDR … with the purpose of dissemination abroad”.

Warrant for the arrest of Gilbert Radulovic
Wolfgang Mascher

Wolfgang Mascher from Erfurt (born in 1946) began working for the Ministry for State Security (MfS) at the age of 20. Initially employed in the MfS Guards Regiment in Berlin, he was soon moved to the Main Department for Personal Protection and then to the Main Department for Cadres and Training. In 1970 the trained concrete construction worker began studying criminology at Berlin Humboldt University to prepare for his investigative work. After that, he was taken on as an investigative officer by 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.

Pretrial detention centre Berlin-Hohenschönhausen

After World War II the Soviet occupying power had initially set up a special camp for the internment of political opponents on a former industrial site in the East Berlin district of Hohenschönhausen. From 1946 onwards, this site was used as the central Soviet pretrial detention centre for East Germany. In 1951 it was taken over by the Ministry for State Security of the GDR as its central pretrial detention centre.

With the demise of the GDR in 1990, the prison was closed and all its inmates were released. In 1992 the buildings were classified as a historical monument. Since 1994 a memorial centre at this historical site provides information about political persecution and repression under communist tyranny in Germany.
The suspect Gilbert Radulovic was subjected to innumerable interrogations during his custody in the Stasi pretrial detention centre in Hohenschönhausen. Over and over, he explained his motivation behind the preparation of his punk booklet and the exact circumstances of its production. In order to unearth further evidence for the continuation of the preliminary proceedings, the Stasi repeatedly conducted searches of Radulovic’s apartment and workplace. Staff members seized writings, books, newspapers and anything that seemed suspicious. During one interrogation on 28 March 1985, Radulovic made this sketch. It indicated where in the attic of his residential building he had hidden further records of his discussions with the punks and other notes for his booklet.

Sketch of hidden documents
Based on the statements and the sketch made by Gilbert Radulovic, Stasi staff members searched the attic of his former residential building – just before this Radulovic had moved house – to find further documents about the punk booklet. They took photos to record the location where they were found. To ensure the success of the preliminary investigations, all incriminating evidence against Radulovic was to be compiled.

Page 48: “Search and confiscation in the attic of the old apartment in 1058 Berlin, Husemannstrasse 10 in line with positions 1 and 2 of the search and confiscation protocol”

Page 49: Stasi staff members drew arrows on the photos by hand in order to indicate the exact spots where evidence had been found.

Page 50: After Gilbert Radulovic had learned at the end of January 1985 that the envelopes with the copies of the punk booklet had been seized at the border crossing point, he took the original to his ex-wife’s apartment. He hid additional documents about his recorded discussions with the punks in the attic of his then residential building.

Page 51: The photos taken by Stasi staff members during the search of the attic indicate the exact location and the material found there. What can be seen here are photos of the punks interviewed by Radulovic, photo paper and additional individual copied pages from his booklet on the punks.
The Stasi ordered the seizing of the typewriter it had found during a search of Radulovic’s weekend cottage as evidence. Here Radulovic’s signature confirms that he was shown the typewriter during the securing of evidence: “The typewriter depicted was shown to me on 18 July 1985.” The Stasi suspected that Radulovic had written his material about the punks on this typewriter and instructed its technical investigative unit to perform a forensic examination.

Piece of evidence – typewriter
Experts from the technical investigative unit of the Stasi prepared a report that compared the typed samples from the confiscated typewriter (Page 54 on the right – below) with the typewritten text of the punk booklet (Page 54 on the left – on top).

The comparative analysis revealed identical characteristics of the typefaces. The Stasi could, therefore, prove that the texts had been written on the same typewriter.
The images present detailed photos of the keys of Radulovic’s confiscated typewriter. They were also compared with the text in the punk booklet. The expert report confirmed that Radulovic’s typewriter had indeed been used for the text. The Stasi could, therefore, base its evidence on Radulovic being the owner of the typewriter on which the “subversive” punk booklet had been written.

Detailed photos of the typewriter
In the summer of 1982, Gilbert Radulovic had got to know a group of young punks through his contacts to the protestant church. He recorded discussions with them in order to document their alternative lifestyle. In addition, a colleague of his, Nikolaus Becker took photos of the youngsters. When Radulovic was arrested two years later and Becker feared that his photos were going to be seized, he scratched the faces on the photos to protect the identity of the punks.

Punk in East Berlin in front of the wording: “No-one does what he should – everybody does what they want”
A number of witnesses were interviewed during the preliminary proceedings against Radulovic. They were supposed to make statements concerning what they knew about Radulovic and under what circumstances they had been given a copy of the punk booklet. The Stasi confiscated a few examples for the securing of evidence. This photo shows one of these copied booklets that was compared with the original. Radulovic had produced the original himself and then used it to make around 100 copies. During interrogation he confirmed with his signature that he was the originator of these copies.
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”. It was far more the case that the accused stressed, again in his last response dated 18 July 1985, that he had indeed made and distributed the booklet, but that he had not been aware that his actions could be deemed criminal.

Nevertheless, in his final report, which was normally the basis for the indictment drawn up later by the public prosecutor, Major Mascher expressed the opinion that Radulovic was guilty. In order to present him as an “enemy of the Socialist society”, the Stasi had put together everything that could be used against him. The insinuation that Radulovic had had political motivations for producing his booklet was to be the decisive argument for his conviction.

At the beginning of September 1985, the main court proceedings were opened at the request of the chief public prosecutor’s office Berlin before the criminal court of the municipal district court Berlin-Lichtenberg. The main court hearings were conducted in camera, which Mascher had recommended for “reasons of state security”. However, four Stasi staff members from Main Departments IX and XVIII were present in court. One of them was Wolfgang Mascher himself.

After two days in court, the competent judge sentenced the accused to a custodial sentence of two years and two months on the grounds of “illegal establishment of contact”. When pronouncing sentence she even went beyond the demands of the prosecution. She found Radulovic guilty in addition of the “public defamation of state organs” pursuant to Section 220 of the Criminal Code of the GDR.

This marked the end of both the surveillance and control operation (Operative Personenkontrolle – OPK) “Schreiber” and the ensuing preliminary proceedings against Radulovic. The OPK file ended with the final report of the staff member Staedtler who had originally been responsible for the case. In his report he once again stressed the “questionable” character and the “hostile intentions” of the convicted Radulovic: As 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”.

Gilbert Radulovic was then taken to the prison in Cottbus, Brandenburg to serve his sentence. He had never imagined beforehand that the punk booklet put together by him could have such drastic consequences for him.
Prior to his court case, Gilbert Radulovic gave another written statement on 18 July 1985 in response to the accusations levied against him. He wanted to confirm and add to the statements that he had made in the interrogations during the preliminary investigations.

Statement by the accused Radulovic (1)

Zusammenfassend und in Ergänzung der von mir in den vorangegangenen Verhörunngen gemachten Aussagen ist folgendes zu sagen:


2. Ich bedanke mich, durch diese Leichtfertigkeit die Abhängigkeit der Eliteschicht an, die mir bei der Untersuchung belästigt wurde, und ihres Vertrauens, dass ich nicht eifersüchtig darum war, dass die von mir bekannten Personen andere Aspekte nicht wissen und weiß.

3. Nach wie vor geht es darum, dass diese Broschüre als grobes Karikatur und zusammengestellt wurde, dass also der Bericht eines Teils die Untersuchung aller übrigen Teil in
Radulovic repeatedly admitted in the statement that he had indeed tried to get the punk booklet to friends and acquaintances abroad. However, he stressed that he had not been aware that he could be punished for this. He continued to be of the opinion that the booklet in its entirety was not likely to “harm the interests of the GDR”. Above all, Radulovic expressed his regret that he had caused problems for other people through his actions and had not been able to protect the identity of the punks.
Department 3 of Main Department (Hauptabteilung – HA) XVIII had processed the surveillance and control operation (Operative Personenkontrolle – OPK) “Schreiber”. This was the prerequisite to instigating preliminary proceedings, which ended with the conviction of the “perpetrator” Radulovic. In this final report the responsible staff member Staedtler sums up, once again, the results of the Stasi investigation.

Final report on the surveillance and control operation (OPK) “Schreiber” (1)
According to the report, Radulovic had been proven, in line with the desired outcome, to have attempted to “establish illegal contact”. The concrete accusation levied against Radulovic was that he had sought for “political-ideological reasons” to present the marginal group of East Berlin punks as a mainstream movement. He had not only distributed his booklet amongst his “oppositional” circle of friends inside the GDR, but had also tried to send it to acquaintances in “hostile” countries abroad. Stasi officer Staedtler thought it was important to explicitly point out once again Radulovic’s “negative and oppositional attitude towards the development of societal relationships in the GDR”. By watching and listening to West media since he was a child, he had “already developed this hostile-negative attitude.” According to the logic of the Stasi, Radulovic must have always been aware of the fact that his booklet could be used “for defamatory purposes against the GDR.”
After six months of 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 criminal and illegal establishment of contact” pursuant to Section 219 of the GDR Criminal Code. When pronouncing his sentence, the Court even widened the criminal offence to “the public defamation of state organs” pursuant to Section 220 of the GDR Criminal Code (StGB). Radulovic was handed down a custodial sentence of two years and two months.

The conviction brought to an end both the surveillance and control operation (OPK) “Schreiber” and the preliminary investigations against Gilbert Radulovic. For the Stasi, the case had been “successfully” concluded.
After his conviction Gilbert Radulovic was taken to the prison in Cottbus, Brandenburg in the autumn of 1985. He served his sentence in a cell like this, which is representative of the situation in the 1980s. In April 1986 Radulovic was released early on probation.
When I’m asked during a tour of the memorial centre Berlin-Hohenschönhausen, what the worst thing was about my time in prison, my answer often comes as a surprise, “It wasn’t day-to-day life in prison but the trial!” For me, this was the worst humiliation of my life – the helplessness and lack of rights of GDR citizens, something we managed to ignore in normal everyday life, were cruelly laid bare.

As 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 municipal court Berlin (GDR)

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1 On his second marriage in 1987, Gilbert Radulovic (his surname at birth was Klock) took his wife’s name, Furian.
acquitted me in a kind of late 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.

When I happened to meet my interrogator in the department store on Alexanderplatz at the end of 1990 – the GDR had since disappeared – I didn’t “punch him in the face”, but managed to persuade him to answer my questions. That afforded me far greater satisfaction. I then sat in his flat, I asked the questions and he answered. Clearly he, unlike most of the other members of his “clan”, had the feeling he had something to make amends for. Up until his death, he faced my questioning again and again.

The chance to gain access to my files gave an additional boost to my “processing” just a short time later. The reading room of the Agency of the Federal Commissioner for the Stasi Records (Der Bundesbeauftragte für die Stasi-Unterlagen – BStU) was for me a bit like an intimate cinema in which I could look at my life through the distorting mirror of the once feared and now dethroned secret police. In the beginning I was surprised that this covert “film” already had begun 20 years prior to my arrest – after all I had always seen myself as a “little fish”: not worthy of surveillance. Sometimes I had to laugh out loud at the banalities that had taken on the grotesque appearance of importance by being recorded in the files. The other people in the reading room then shot me accusing glances: how could I laugh about this injustice, that’s what they were probably thinking. Reading the files relieved me of one major worry – that a good friend could be exposed as an unofficial collaborator (inoffizieller Mitarbeiter – IM).

I added to the punk material I had been convicted for disseminating (the original is now on display in the Cottbus memorial prison) by talking to the same individuals in 1999 and published it with the title “In the East they wear West, too”. A late victory over the State Security and a reason, from time to time, for a little indulgence in schadenfreude about the end of the GDR.
FURTHER LITERATURE

Act regarding the Records of the State Security Service of the former German Democratic Republic, Berlin 2013
Bruce, Gary: Firm. The inside story of the Stasi, New York 2010
Dennis, Mike: The Stasi. Myth and Reality, Edinburgh 2003
Gieseke, Jens; Hubert, Doris: The GDR State Security. Shield and Sword of the party, Berlin 2002
Despite the massive destruction of files by the State Security, more than 111 “shelf kilometres” of written documents in total plus numerous photo, film, video and sound documents have been preserved in the archives of the Federal Commissioner for the Stasi Records (Bundesbeauftragter für die Stasi-Unterlagen – BStU). They bear witness to a web of informers, documents about planned injustices and wrongs committed, about conformist behaviour and betrayal, but also offer proof of moral courage and resistance.

The Stasi Records Archive has its headquarters in Berlin. Furthermore, it has branches in 12 former district towns of the GDR: Chemnitz (formerly Karl-Marx-Stadt), Dresden, Erfurt, Frankfurt (Oder), Gera, Halle, Leipzig, Magdeburg, Neubrandenburg, Rostock, Schwerin and Suhl. In Cottbus there is an advice centre.

Irrespective of where they live, private individuals can submit a request to view their files to the central office or to any of the branch offices. Furthermore, visitors can find out more about the work of the Stasi Records Archive and the methods and practices of the Stasi during guided tours of the archive, events and exhibitions.

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p. 12 (BStU, MfS, KS II, No. 271/89, p. 336, picture 5)
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p. 18 (BStU, MfS, AOPK, No. 1230/88, p. 8)
p. 20 (BStU, MfS, AOPK, No. 1230/88, pp. 245-246)
p. 21 (BStU, MfS, Abt. XII, No. 8370)
p. 22 (BStU, MfS, Abt. XII, No. 8376)
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p. 26 (BStU, MfS, AOPK, No. 1230/88, p. 19)
p. 28 (BStU, MfS, AOPK, No. 1230/88, pp. 298)
p. 30 – 31 (BStU, MfS, AOPK, No. 1230/88, pp. 299-300)
p. 32 (BStU, MfS, AU, No. 11980/86, Vol. 1, p. 131)
p. 34 (BStU, MfS, AU, No. 11980/86, Vol. 1, p. 134)
p. 40 (BStU, MfS, AU, No. 11980/86, Vol. 8, p. 10)
p. 42 (BStU, MfS, AU, No. 11980/86, Vol. 1, p. 200)
p. 44 (BStU, MfS, AU, No. 11980/86, Vol. 1, p. 179)
p. 46 (BStU, MfS, AU, No. 11980/86, Vol. 8, p. 45)
p. 48 –51 (BStU, MfS, AU, No. 11980/86, Vol. 4, pp. 46-49)
p. 52 (BStU, MfS, AU, No. 11980/86, Vol. 10, p. 169)
p. 54 (BStU, MfS, AU, No. 11980/86, Vol. 10, p. 160)
p. 56 (BStU, MfS, AU, No. 11980/86, Vol. 10, p. 167)
p. 60 (BStU, MfS, AU, No. 11980/86, Vol. 3, p. 192)
p. 64 (BStU, MfS, AU, No. 11980/86, Vol. 15, p. 148)
p. 66 (BStU, MfS, AU, No. 11980/86, Vol. 15, p. 149)
p. 68 (BStU, MfS, AOPK, No. 1230/88, p. 317)
p. 70 (BStU, MfS, AOPK, No. 1230/88, p. 318)
p. 72 (BStU, MfS, AU, No. 11980/86, Vol. 7, p. 289)
p. 74 Copy of a prison cell from the mid-1980s in the former prison in Cottbus, summer 2017 (Menschenrechtszentrum Cottbus e. V. – Cottbus Human Rights Centre)
p. 77 (BStU, Roos Mulders)
p. 78 (BStU, MfS, AOPK, No. 1230/88, Vol. 1)
p. 82–83 (BStU, Marco Maria Dresen)

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Gilbert Radulovic on an assignment in East Berlin, at the end of the 1970s
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