

Editorial

Apart from fundamental changes of the respective political systems, the (mostly) peaceful revolutions in East Central Europe in 1989 resulted also in a turn of modern contemporary research. Immediately after the end of the process of democratisation or some years later, both the archives of the already disempowered Communist state parties and the file stocks of the political police authorities were available for scientists, publicists and state prosecutors. Access to these files remained one of the most important postulates of many civil rights movements in East Europe, as it was illustrated e. g. by the occupations of the MfS headquarters in Berlin in 1989 and 1990 as well as by the subsequent passing of the German law on Stasi files on 14th November, 1991.¹

The way in which access to the data of inner-party or secret service authorities was guaranteed was different according to each country – depending on the speed and way of political transformation.² However, the goal of being granted access as well as the fundamental topics researchers were dealing with in the course of their research work were the same in all countries. It was about a re-appraisal of the history of Communism as well as about criminal prosecution for the injustice committed between 1944 and 1989. Accordingly, apart from transitional justice policy, most of all home policy was in the focus of scientific interest. Figures provide evidence for this. In the year 2016, 7,000³–16,000⁴ publications were listed which in the course of the previous 25 years had been dealing with the GDR. However, a bibliography on State Security⁵ mentioned only 40 studies on the international connections of the MfS within the Warsaw Pact.

This quantitative discrepancy is comparably easily explained. Research reflected the archive stocks of those institutions as being primarily concerned with home policy. Furthermore, the home-political dimension of secret service activities triggered a lively debate, such as on the actual number of informal collaborators of State Security in East Germany. This is also reflected by this journal.⁶

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- 1 On this in more detail: Christian Booß, Von der Stasi-Erstürmung zur Aktenöffnung. Konflikte und Kompromisse im Vorfeld der Deutschen Einheit. In: Deutschland-Archiv, 44 (2011) 1, p. 79–87.
 - 2 Reiner Schiller-Dickhut/Bert Rosenthal (Eds.), The “European Network of Official Authorities in Charge of the Secret Police Files”. A Reader on the Legal Foundations, Structures and Activities, 2. edition Berlin 2014, p. 5.
 - 3 Ulrich Mähler, Totgesagte leben länger. Oder: Konjunkturen der DDR Forschung vor und nach 1989. Eine Einführung. In: Ulrich Mähler (Ed.), Die DDR als Chance. Neue Perspektiven auf ein altes Thema, Berlin 2016, p. 9–23, here 9.
 - 4 Thomas Großmann, DDR-Geschichte in Forschung und Lehre. Bilanz und Perspektiven: Konferenzbericht: <http://www.hsozkult.de/conferencereport/id/tagungsberichte-3353>.
 - 5 Quot. after Bibliographie zum Staatssicherheitsdienst der DDR: http://www.bstu.bund.de/DE/Wissen/Bibliothek/Auswahl-Bibliographie/auswahl-bibliographie_node.html.
 - 6 Special edition „Stasi konkret? Zur gesellschaftlichen Wirksamkeit der Staatssicherheit“: Totalitarismus und Demokratie, 11 (2014) 2, p. 181–184.

The much increased knowledge of political internal matters of the Communist secret services, which has also been comparatively compiled in multi-lingual standard works,⁷ cannot hide the fact that important aspects are as yet little researched. For example, when it comes to the history of the Cold War there are many topics which have been dealt with only in popular-scientific literature, in most cases by publicists⁸ and sometimes in an extremely subjective way,⁹ while there is a lack of source-based scientific studies. Scientific analyses as they have been published in the Anglo-Saxon¹⁰ and East European countries,¹¹ both as monographs¹² and in compilations,¹³ make one thing clear: most of all the external dimension of the activities of the Communist secret services is worth being dealt with in more detail.¹⁴ In this context it is about the cross-border activities of those services in the classical East-West direction, among others. The here presented edition is supposed to contribute to a certain degree to shedding light on this complex of issues. It presents new research insights on activities of Communist secret services in Western Europe.

This previously unknown territory is explored most of all by the team of authors around Thomas Wegener Friis, by way of researching the activities of Central-East European secret services in the North of Europe. Indeed the Scandinavian states, other than e. g. Germany, were not in the focus of the Warsaw Pact's plans for potential war. But their unclear or semi-neutral position in the context of the East-West confrontation aroused the interest of military (counter-)intelli-

7 See: Łukasz Kamiński/Krzysztof Persak/Jens Gieseke (Eds.), *Handbuch der kommunistischen Geheimdienste in Osteuropa 1944–1991*, Göttingen 2009.

8 See Udo Ulfkotte, *Der Krieg im Dunkeln: Die wahre Macht der Geheimdienste. Wie CIA, Mossad, MI6, BND und andere Nachrichtendienste die Welt regieren*, Altenau 2013.

9 See Reinhard Grimmer (Ed.), *Die Sicherheit. Zur Abwehrarbeit des MfS*, Vol. 1, Berlin 2003, p. 76.

10 For example: Beatrice de Graaf/Ben de Jong/Wies Platje (Eds.), *Intelligence Operations in Germany and the Netherlands in the Twentieth Century*, Amsterdam 2007, p. 3.; Jonathan Haslam/Karina Urbach, *Secret Intelligence in the European States System, 1918–1989*, Stanford 2013, p. 1.

11 This refers e. g. to the Polish edition of the scientific magazine of the Institute of National Commemoration „Pamięć i Sprawiedliwość“ (Remembrance and Justice) of 2014, where the contributions by this institute, which acted as a co-organiser of the conference, were published, with an emphasis on: *Aufklärung und Politik. Ost- und Westperspektiven*, English edition, quoted several times in this edition: Władysław Bułhak/Thomas Wegener Friis (Eds.), *Need to know. Eastern and Western perspectives*, Odense 2014.

12 Wojciech Skóra/Paweł Skubisz (Eds.), *Studia nad wywiadem i kontrwywiadem Polski w XX wieku*, Szczecin 2012 [*Studien über Aufklärung und Spionageabwehr Polens im XX. Jahrhundert*, Vol. II, Stettin 2015].

13 Thomas Wegener-Friis/Kristie Macrakis/Helmut Müller-Enbergs (Eds.), *East German Foreign Intelligence. Myth, reality and controversy*, London 2010.

14 This postulate was also confirmed by the contributions to the 2012 conference of the Dept. of Education and Research of the BSTU: http://www.bstu.bund.de/DE/Wissen/Forschung/Forschungsprojekte/Downloads/forschungsperspektiven_bstu.pdf?_blob=publicationFile.

gence. As the authors are able to show, external conditions such as language barriers were considerable obstacles for operative work. These activities were done even by those Warsaw Pact states which had no maritime borders, however progress was only moderate. Thus, concerning the Nordic countries one preferred "easy solutions", such as the establishment of legal residences and the hiring of sources among groups which, from the security point of view, seemed to be little problematic. Despite all difficulties there were some successes. For example, the signal intelligence of the Nationale Volksarmee was capable of intruding the NATO radio network and, as a result, of intercepting and deciphering telephone conversations.

Christopher Nehring's contribution goes beyond the regional frame of the "Nordic" team of authors. His contribution focuses on the manipulative use of information. For this purpose, since the 1950s at the latest the Soviet secret service developed a fixed structure: Service A of the First KGB Main Administration which was in charge of "active measures". In the following, the Socialist "brother institutions" were urged to carry out similar operations. Nehring presents exemplary operations and sheds light on the reactions by the West. As a conclusion, he discusses the question of how effective and powerful these "active measures" were. His answer is clear: although often the East European services succeeded with making the "West" look bad, only rarely this resulted in improving the reputation of "Real-Existing Socialism" and the Socialist countries. Even worse: among the East Central European societies the "West" became so much attractive that the Communist propaganda measures had hardly any chance of success.

At least, many (young) people in the West were ready to spy for East European secret services. This might result in problems when they founded families and had children. Helmut Müller-Enbergs in his study asks about the role of the children of agents when it comes to the spying activities of their parents. He comes to the conclusion that for the parents the future of their children even in "capitalism" was more important than the benefit for the respective services. If loyalty to the MfS might endanger the professional careers of the children, contacts to the Stasi became less intensive or were even terminated. In so far, the employment of agents' children e. g. in the old Federal Republic was minimal.

Apart from the topical focus of this edition there are two contributions dealing partly with historical, partly with political science issues. The historian Benno Kirsch deals with the controversy about the relation of Stasi victim Walter Linse to the NS system. Linse documented violations of the human rights in the GDR, was kidnapped and executed in Moscow in 1953. The biography by Klaus Bästlein depicts him as a follower of the NS regime and anti-Semite. In his much source-based study Kirsch supports the thesis that in Linse's case there is no proof for anti-Semitic ideas and that the same holds for the claimed malicious treatment of people who were victims of Aryanisation. Indeed, Linse had not been an opponent of the NS regime nor even a resistance fighter. However, he had rather taken distance from the regime.

The team of political science researchers (Aron Buzogány, Rolf Frankenger and Patricia Graf) does not analyse personal fates but the legitimation structures of autocracies by the example of innovation policy. The result of their study may be shortly summarised as follows: in tendency, innovation increases wealth and education, supports social change and the desire of parts of the population for political participation. This again endangers the retention of power. This fundamental theoretical-political science contribution gives impressive evidence to the value of comparative analyses – in the field of the research of dictatorships in general and in that of the history of secret services in particular.

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