The Stasi as an Architectural Producer:
Surveillance versus Scientific Management in the East German Built Environment
1961 – 1989

by

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Dedication

To my parents,

Serpil Songül and Necati,

for being my lifeline.

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A dissertation makes many aspects of its journey legible: archival discoveries, books read, scholars inspired by; questions raised, questions answered, and questions that remain. But it does less in speaking to the innumerable sources of care, generosity, and encouragement without which many questions would be left unposed, places unvisited, and inspiration unfound. This dissertation came into being thanks to such influences and, as innumerable as they are, I hope to do justice by them.

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And lastly, my eternal gratitude to my parents, to whom this dissertation is dedicated. It has been a long journey for all of us, and I hope to make them proud beyond their imagination.

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Abstract

This dissertation examines the relationship between architecture and surveillance in the German Democratic Republic (GDR) by uncovering the largely overlooked architectural history of its Ministry of State Security—commonly known as the *Stasi*. It specifically asks: by what means did state surveillance infuse the East German built environment and—in turn—by what means did architectural spaces and processes affect state surveillance and state power?

Exploring the Stasi's three main architectural roles, the dissertation looks beyond representational techniques of governance and studies scientifically justified surveillance and policing measures as they configured the production and use of the East German built environment. The state security apparatus acted as—what I term—a *building agent*, surveilling the GDR's industrial labor force and monitoring the productivity and efficiency of the centrally regulated building economy. The ministry was a *building developer*, which produced prefabricated building technologies and managed construction firms to realize numerous structures for its employees and East German functionaries. The Stasi was also a *building user* that analyzed and reproduced the built environment across media to improve secret policing. As a result, I argue that the Stasi was an important *architectural producer,* and that architecture and surveillance were mutually articulated within the Stasi's networks of knowledge and power between 1961 and 1989.

To interrogate this mutual articulation, I include surveillance agents among the constellation of architects, engineers, administrators, and policy makers partaking in the

production of the East German built environment. I treat surveillance as information collection and a spatial practice, requiring the analysis, reproduction, and reconfiguration of the built environment according to surveillance objectives. And lastly, I examine architectural knowledge obtained through and produced for surveillance, which had ramifications for the organization and use of the East German built environment.

The dissertation intervenes into the historiography of the Stasi and the GDR by investigating architecture not just as the means and site but also the object and subject of state surveillance and state power. While the Stasi acted as a control mechanism overseeing the Soviet-socialist building economy, it grew knowledgeable and critical of the roadmaps devised by the GDR's center of power. The ministry tried to implement its insights in its building industry. Yet, constrained by ideological pressures and economic optimization, efforts to advance building technology and the scientific management of design and construction conflicted with a burgeoning surveillance bureaucracy, which paradoxically confronted with the Stasi's resultant inability to establish supervisory capacities through visual-spatial means. The Stasi's involvement in building production, especially in the 1973 Housing Program, gave it an intimate knowledge of the East German built environment, nonetheless. The Stasi diligently registered and networked architectural spaces according to surveillance objectives, but the replicability of typified structures did not translate into the replicability of policing methods.

Examining these recursive yet incompatible chains of operations between architecture and surveillance in the GDR, the dissertation shows how the Stasi rendered itself indispensable but also became increasingly dysfunctional over time—and what role architecture played in both. This situates the dissertation as an investigation into the architectural pre-history of contemporary

totalitarian police states across Europe, and beyond. The dissertation ultimately advances the study of architecture and politics, demonstrating that mobilizing architecture for repression and control produced a built environment that challenged precisely those forces, confounding political operatives who enlisted it for political ends.

Introduction

Architecture and Surveillance, Mutually Articulated

When I mention that I study architecture and state surveillance in the former German Democratic Republic (GDR), nearly everyone has a story to tell. Over the many years I spent on this project, both my inspirations and sources never ceased to come from the most unexpected persons and places. Just before I left for the field, a history professor at Michigan disclosed— upon the then-vague description of my interests—that the central Berlin flat he lived in during the mid-90s was formerly occupied by the East German Ministry of State Security (*Ministerium für Staatssicherheit – MfS*), commonly known as the *Stasi*. With renewed curiosity and youthful enthusiasm, he added, in a whisper, that his room was used for the secret police's clandestine meetings with its informants, or so the rumor went. Over the years, I have received many such tips from friends, colleagues, and acquaintances who either lived in Germany or were German citizens. In another instance, an old friend of many years, who had just started teaching at a Berlin university, had lectured in the former banquet hall of the ministry's regional administration. Many have related similar discoveries: one whose father was an engineer employed by the Stasi, who eventually refused to talk with me about his past occupation; one born into the GDR who lived his whole life in Berlin's Lichtenberg neighborhood, across from one of the ministry's so-called service units (*Diensteinheit*); yet another whose company building in Frankfurt am Main was previously occupied by the ministry's West German commercial branch (*Kommerzielle Koordination – KoKo*). Even random building sites revealed themselves

as pertinent Stasi objects. A Henry van de Velde-designed building in Weimar, for example, where I attended an international media studies workshop, had become the Stasi's city administration (*Kreisverwaltung*). I was informed of this immediately upon my arrival. An object of architectural pilgrimage, Mies van der Rohe's latest built work in Berlin—the Lemke Haus—was also taken over by the Stasi and used first a kitchen and later as a garage serving the nearby guesthouses and departmental units of the ministry.

While these lucky happenstances (of which I list here a mere fraction) added to my arsenal of knowledge on East German state surveillance architectures, their frequency and randomness were telling. Living, working, and walking across East Germany, one constantly stumbles upon traces of the Stasi in the built environment. Merely crossing the former border in Berlin, something I did on a daily basis on my way from my Kreuzberg home to the Alexanderplatz location of the Stasi Records Archive (*Stasi-Unterlagen-Archiv*), provided a constant reminder of the Stasi's spatial occupation as the border was built and guarded by the ministry from 1961 until 1989. Thus, it became clear through experience, oral history, and archival work that the East German state security apparatus thoroughly infused the built environment. The Stasi also infiltrated East German society, which ostensibly shook both citizens and critics after the *Wende*, when many relatives, friends and colleagues were revealed to be collaborators of the surveillance organization. Yet, while numerous studies are devoted to unearthing and understanding the latter phenomenon, researchers have only recently turned to the study of the ministry's urban and architectural legacies.[1]

Unless otherwise noted, all translations are mine.

[1] See, for example, Helmut Müller-Enbergs' three volume work on the Stasi's informants, known as "inoffizielle Mitarbeiter" or IM. Helmut Müller-Enbergs, *Inoffizielle Mitarbeiter des Ministeriums für Staatssicherheit. Richtlinien und Durchführungsbestimmungen*, 4th ed., vol. 1, 3 vols., Wissenschaftliche Reihe des Bundesbeauftragten für die Unterlagen des Staatssicherheitsdienstes der ehemaligen Deutschen Demokratischen Republik 3 (Berlin: Ch. Links Verlag, 2010); Helmut Müller-Enbergs, *Inoffizielle Mitarbeiter des Ministeriums für Staatssicherheit. Anleitungen für die Arbeit mit Agenten, Kundschaftern und Spionen in der Bundesrepublik*

What was the relationship between architecture and state surveillance in the GDR? This is the central question of this dissertation, which sets out to uncover the forgotten architectural history of the East German Ministry of State Security—a history irreducible to a compilation of building biographies, however vast they may be. Rather than merely investigating how certain structures were designed, constructed, and used by the Stasi, I examine the Stasi's manifold architectural functions and spatial activities within the Soviet-socialist totalitarian regime of the GDR. In short, I argue that the Stasi was an important *architectural producer*: a network of actors that operated within an expanded definition of architecture, encompassing its economy and its bureaucracy, as well as techniques and technologies.[2]

The Stasi was tasked with surveilling the GDR's industrial labor force and with monitoring the productivity and efficiency of the building economy. Initially responsible for overseeing top-secret state building projects, from the 1960s on, the ministry gradually grew into

Deutschland, 3rd ed., vol. 2, 3 vols., Wissenschaftliche Reihe des Bundesbeauftragten für die Unterlagen des Staatssicherheitsdienstes der ehemaligen Deutschen Demokratischen Republik 10 (Berlin: Ch. Links Verlag, 2011); Helmut Müller-Enbergs, *Inoffizielle Mitarbeiter des Ministeriums für Staatssicherheit. Statistiken*, 1st ed., vol. 3, 3 vols. (Berlin: Ch. Links Verlag, 2008); For other comprehensive studies devoted the examination of the MfS' infiltration of East German society via its network of informants: Christian Booß and Helmut Müller-Enbergs, *Die indiskrete Gesellschaft: Studien zum Denunziationskomplex und zu inoffiziellen Mitarbeitern* (Frankfurt am Main: Verlag für Polizeiwissenschaft, 2014); Jens Gieseke, ed., *Staatssicherheit und Gesellschaft. Studien zum Herrschaftsalltag in der DDR* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2007); Christian Halbrock's work on the MfS' Berlin headquarters is the first and only published scholarship on the Stasi's architectural and urban history. Christian Halbrock, *Mielkes Revier: Stadtraum und Alltag rund um die MfS-Zentrale in Berlin-Lichtenberg* (Lukas Verlag, 2010); Christian Halbrock, *Stasi-Stadt - die MfS-Zentrale in Berlin-Lichtenberg: ein historischer Rundgang um das ehemalige Hauptquartier des DDR-Staatssicherheitsdienstes* (Ch. Links Verlag, 2009) The exhibition "Stasi in Berlin," which was on view at the Gedenkstätte Hohenschönhausen between 2019 and 2021, deserves a notable mention for putting the Stasi's urban infiltration on display with an interactive mapping installation.
[2] As Zeynep Çelik Alexander writes, the word technology was adapted from the German word Technik and, whereas Technik "can refer to artefacts or procedures... in English these two possible meanings splinter into the words technology and technique." Thus, in this dissertation, I use to term "techniques" when talking about procedures of architectural and spatial production and refer to "technologies" to connote its artefacts. Zeynep Çelik Alexander and John May, eds., *Design Technics: Archaeologies of Architectural Practice* (University of Minnesota Press, 2020), xii; Furthermore, my use of the term "technique" is indebted to postwar German media theory, more specifically the scholarship on "cultural techniques." As media theorist Bernhardt Siegert writes, "space does not exist independently of cultural techniques for surveying and administering space," and it is with this idea that I discuss the technique of surveying as a distinctly spatial surveillance operation in the dissertation's third chapter. Bernhard Siegert, "Cacography or Communication? Cultural Techniques in German Media Studies," trans. Geoffrey Winthrop-Young, *Grey Room* 29, no. Winter (2008): 30.

one of the largest building developers in the country. It tried to provision its 90 thousand employees with workspace, housing, and schools, and it even developed a ministry-specific housing type. To establish the security of its numerous premises, the Stasi inspected building permits and intervened in planning decisions, running an extensive bureaucratic operation that targeted architectural production. It also devised architectural techniques to document and navigate the built environment so that its domestic surveillance operations could be conducted quickly and in a clandestine manner. Processes, protocols, and techniques of architectural and spatial production hence figured prominently in the Stasi's roster of scientifically determined surveillance and policing activities. I argue that, as a result, architectural production and state surveillance were mutually articulated within the Stasi's networks of power and knowledge between 1961 and 1989. To examine this dynamic, I follow the cue of co-productionist literature and "highlight the often invisible role of knowledges, expertise, technical practices" along with material objects "in shaping, sustaining, subverting or transforming" power relations in the GDR.[3] Ultimately, I explore the ways in which state surveillance influenced the production and use of the East German built environment, and how—in turn—architectural spaces and processes affected the methods and end goals of East German state surveillance and state power.

In this dissertation, I make concrete methodological choices to capture how architecture and surveillance not only converged but were articulated for their mutual advancement. First, I include surveillance agents among the constellation of architects, engineers, administrators, and policy makers partaking in the production of the East German built environment. Second, I treat

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[3] I borrow the concept, or—as Sheila Jasanoff terms it—the "idiom" of co-production from science and technology studies (STS), where it serves as a shorthand for the proposition that the ways in which we produce knowledge are inseparable from the material embodiments of that knowledge. Employing a co-productionist framework for the study of architecture and surveillance, in this regard, enables us to interrogate their relationship as co-constitutive regimes of knowledge, both in the GDR and beyond, while offering us "new ways of thinking about power." Sheila Jasanoff, "The Idiom of Co-Production," in *States of Knowledge: The Co-Production of Science and the Social Order*, ed. Sheila Jasanoff (London: Routledge, 2004), 4.

surveillance as both information collection and a spatial practice, requiring the analysis,

reconfiguration and (re)production of the built environment according to surveillance objectives.

And third, I examine architectural knowledge obtained through the Stasi's surveillance practices

and architectural knowledge produced for the Stasi's surveillance operations, both of which had

ramifications for the organization and use of the East German built environment. This approach

allows me to examine architecture as neither simply an instrument nor a by-product of state

surveillance and state power. Instead, I investigate the ways the Stasi advanced state surveillance

while developing the built environment as the means but also site, object, and even subject of

surveillance.

For the Stasi, architecture deployed scientific-technical knowledge that could be

improved through surveillance, understood as systematic information gathering through

oversight.[4] The pedagogical role of supervision—put differently, of disciplinary surveillance—

was also indispensable to produce the soft power effects needed to discipline workers of the

building industry. Technological and spatial methods for surveillance, this time understood as

secret policing, were scientifically determined and architecturally conceived as well, creating

hard power effects for the subjugation of subjects. The social embeddedness of these practices

meant that the Stasi itself was caught up in the built environment with social actors, some

complicit and others in defiance, requiring—once again—architectural measures to establish the

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[4] Sociologist David Lyon defines surveillance as a set of practices "in which special note is taken of certain human behaviors that go well behind idle curiosity." Surveillance is "focused, systematic and routine attention to personal details for purposes of influence, management, protection or direction." Thus, "surveillance—watching over—both enables and constrains, involves care and control." Lyon specifies military discipline and intelligence, state administration and the census, work monitoring and supervision, and policing and crime control as some of the key sites of surveillance. At these sites, surveillance operates in ways that are woven by five common threads: rationalization (standardization of surveillance techniques), technology (application of science and technology to reinforce rationalization), sorting (classification of groups of people into categories to facilitate their management), knowledgeability (participation and cooperation of those who are subject to surveillance), and urgency (risk aversion and security). David Lyon, *Surveillance Studies: An Overview* (Cambridge, UK: Polity, 2007), 13–45; David Lyon, *Surveillance Society: Monitoring Everyday Life* (Milton Keynes: Open University Press, 2001), 2–3.

security of its surveillance operations. In this dynamic back and forth between architecture and

surveillance, power was ubiquitous but neither uncontested nor fully efficient: whereas

prerequisites for secrecy impinged on processes and objects of building, these very processes and

objects ended up both facilitating and complicating, even challenging state surveillance. This

was not simply a case of reciprocal influence, however, as the concept of coproduction would

suggest. Within this interplay, each set of practices—scientific and political, architectural and

surveillant—went beyond providing a rationale for the other:[5] their measures escalated, with

reaction prompting counteraction that spurred yet another counter-reaction. In the GDR,

architecture and surveillance were conceived and reconceived in recursive chains of operations.[6]

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[5] Here, I am paraphrasing a key argument from William Storey's article on the founding of the Imperial Department of Agriculture for the West Indies, which is introduced by Jasanoff as a key text exemplifying the coproductionist approach to complex scientific, political, and social phenomena. As Storey shows, ruling sugar colonies necessitated not only political and discursive interventions but also scientific ones, specifically in sugar cane breeding. Here, "politics did not simply influence science, and science did not simply influence politics. Science and politics provided a rationale for each other." William K. Storey, "Plants, Power, and Development: Founding the Imperial Department of Agriculture for the West Indies, 1880-1914," in *States of Knowledge: The Co-Production of Science and the Social Order*, ed. Sheila Jasanoff (London: Routledge, 2004), 127; As Jasanoff writes, this interplay lead to the formation of "a powerful institutional form that was copied in agriculture departments throughout the world and provided a template for an emerging imperial politics." Jasanoff, "The Idiom of Co-Production," 8.

[6] I appropriate the term "recursive chains of operations" from German media theory on "cultural techniques," where it connotes material-discursive operations that produce a difference and create what they differentiate. Geoffrey Winthrop-Young, "Material World: Geoffrey Winthrop-Young Talks with Bernhard Siegert," *Artforum International* 53, no. 10 (2015): 324–34; In cultural techniques scholarship, one focus is medial chains of operations, such as reading, writing, and music-making, which always already create a differentiation with every iteration (technical or symbolic) and the created differences, in turn, influence and shape every subsequent procedure both technically and symbolically. Bernard Dionysius Geoghegan, "After Kittler: On the Cultural Techniques of Recent German Media Theory," *Theory, Culture & Society* 30, no. 6 (November 1, 2013): 76; Thomas Macho, "Second-Order Animals: Cultural Techniques of Identity and Identification," *Theory, Culture & Society* 30, no. 6 (2013): 31; Other practices, named "elementary cultural techniques," including harvesting, ploughing, or enclosing are also identified as material-discursive operations that are practiced serially in a mutually constitutive process of differentiation. They are "technical act[s] that bring about a transformation" and, at the same time, "symbolic act[s] that communicate meaning." In close affinity with Actor-Network-Theory, and in direct reference to Bruno Latour's work, cultural techniques conceive of recursive chains of operations as entangled with technical objects, humans and non-human animals who participate in the differentiation of their own coming to existence, conceptually speaking. Bernhard Siegert, *Cultural Techniques: Grids, Filters, Doors, and Other Articulations of the Real*, trans. Geoffrey Winthrop-Young (New York: Fordham University Press, 2015), 11–13; Thus, I employ a methodological approach that "tracks systems and chains of operation while attempting to keep the cultural and technical in tension," as Mary Louise Lobsinger suggests. Employing this approach to architectural history, I avoid "old semiological, content-based hermeneutical readings of representation or the metaphors attached to abstract conceptions of techniques and technologies." Mary Louise Lobsinger, "Architectural History: The Turn from Culture to Media," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 75, no. 2 (2016): 138.

In this institutional history, I examine the machinations of power endemic to the recursive mutual articulation of architecture and surveillance in the GDR by considering Michel Foucault's 1982 study on power relations.[7] Working within the context of European disciplinary societies since the 18th century, Foucault explains that "the exercise of power is not simply a relationship between partners, individual or collective; it is a way in which certain actions modify others… it is a total structure of actions brought to bear upon possible actions."[8] This is why, Foucault contends, that power is a question of governance—of structuring the possible field of actions of others—that can be analyzed through institutions by asking "by what means." Following Foucault, instead of asking how power manifested itself, which might limit our scope to the relationality of architecture and surveillance in the realms of representation and materialization, the dissertation asks: by what means did the Stasi produce and use the East German built environment? I thus analyze the East German state security apparatus from the standpoint of power relations, tracing how acts of architectural production and surveillance—as spatial and knowledge practices—acted upon and modified one another, "impos[ing] their own limits, sometimes cancel[ing] each other out, sometimes reinforc[ing] one another."[9] The dissertation charts the means by which power relations came into being—in systems of surveillance and of architecture—by paying attention to additional points explicated by Foucault as necessary for such study: the analysis of shifts and differences in the processes of production, know-how, and competence, of types of objectives pursued, forms of institutionalization, and degrees of rationalization.[10]

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[7] Michel Foucault, "The Subject and Power," *Critical Inquiry* 8, no. 4 (1982): 785–86.
[8] Foucault, 788–89.
[9] Foucault, 793.
[10] Foucault, 792.

The Stasi was not just an occupant, or a client of buildings designed to accommodate its surveillance organization and fulfill its security needs. I argue below that the East German state security apparatus' relationship to, and investment in, architectural production went much deeper. To qualify the Stasi as an "architectural producer" and attend to the points of analysis listed above, the dissertation locates three main functions of the ministry through which its manifold tasks and roles pertaining to the production and use of the East German built environment coalesced—namely its roles as a "building agent," "building developer," and "building user."

The Stasi acted as—what I term—a "building agent" by functioning as an intercessor between state building combines, local administrations, the party-state, and the society. The state security apparatus collected information, inspected plans, and communicated these insights to the GDR's center of decision making, the SED. At least since 1958, the East German state security apparatus was assigned to monitor the centrally planned building industry of the GDR. From 1964 onward, it reported increasingly on issues such as workers' disputes, material shortages, and failures in fulfilling production quotas; and by the 1980s, it reported on the failures of economic and industrial planning in building production, as well as the workers' and citizens' discontent with their working and living conditions.

The Stasi was also a building developer and a building contractor. In 1954, shortly after its founding, the ministry established the first of its own building production companies, complete with an architectural design office and construction brigades, to undertake projects for the ministry, its cognate organizations, the East German government and its functionaries. Until the ministry's dissolution in 1989—following the fall of the Berlin Wall and in tandem with the German unification proceedings—the Stasi ran a total of five building enterprises, which were

managed by the ministry's architectural departments. From 1968 onward, with the systematic industrialization of the Stasi's own architectural production, these departments—until then responsible for providing administrative oversight on accounting, material procurement, employee recruitment, workplace safety and security—were tasked with devising industrial production plans and scientific management schemes that resulted in new building projects.

Beyond its involvement in the production of the East German built environment, the Stasi was also a user of buildings. It used surveillance techniques, such as counting and watching, to register spatial relationships within the East German built environment, and architectural techniques, such as drawing and mapping, to design and revise its clandestine operations. These were by no means clean-cut categories; rather, the Stasi's roles and functions collided, challenged and changed one another in a sort of chain reaction. Standardization and typification processes defining East German architectural production from the 1960s on, for example, meant that the state security apparatus, which had direct access to the plans and blueprints of centrally devised building schemes, could use these to standardize its own surveillance activities from foot-tracking to the deployment of listening devices. These standardization efforts also meant, however, that high-rise civilian structures sprung up rapidly around the Stasi's administrative spaces, creating unanticipated potential security breaches.

Histories and theories of architecture and surveillance have long focused on the spatial characteristics of monitored buildings, material qualities of the built environment in modern surveillance societies, or symbolic reflections on surveillance's effects on spatiality and subjectivity in art, literature, and film. By concentrating on how architecture responds to surveillance technologies or performs within certain surveillance regimes, such work implicitly defines architecture as epiphenomenal to surveillance. In most of these accounts, architecture is

at worst a vessel materializing the ambitions of mass surveillance as an ideological instrument of social control, and a medium through which the usually sinister workings of surveillance politics can be deciphered. At best, it is a practice—aesthetic, technological, spatial, and socio-political—that nevertheless reacts to surveillance, incorporating its techniques and absorbing its technologies. A similar thread weaves the—albeit limited—scholarly investigations into the buildings produced and used by the Stasi, wherein the built environment is understood to function like a Panopticon, subservient to its disciplining and controlling effects, utilized for subjugation and oppression, or simply representing East German state power. I take a different approach. Instead of cataloging the Stasi's behemoth building stock, I offer an in-depth institutional, architectural, and media-theoretical history exploring "by what means" architecture and surveillance—as knowledge regimes, technical expertise, and spatial processes—were mutually articulated in the GDR. As such, along with the material qualities of buildings produced and used by the Stasi, I examine the immaterial, non-formal modes and strategies that were nonetheless architectural and through which the Stasi exerted power.

This investigation looks into the architectural workings and internal logic of a postwar secret service analogous to the KGB in Russia, the CIA/FBI (and ultimately the NSA) in the United States, and the MIT in Turkey, to name just a few state security operations remnant of the Cold War era. While the latter organizations are still alive and running, the long defunct MfS and its publicly available files offer comparative historical perspectives on architecture's role in the governance of surveillance systems and on the ways state surveillance configures industrial production, architectural planning, and spatial practices of policing beyond the GDR. It unveils the ways police forces render themselves indispensable for the functioning of modern states and societies—and what part architecture plays in that functioning. This situates the dissertation as an

investigation into the architectural pre-history of contemporary totalitarian police states across the European continent, and beyond, providing a glimpse into how states see, control, and produce the built environment beyond representational techniques of governance.

As with any study on architecture and surveillance, this dissertation critically engages Michel Foucault's oeuvre, broadly, and his explication of Jeremy Bentham's design for the Panopticon as an interpretive model for surveillance, specifically. Foucault's key findings on panopticism generated robust scholarly responses that I consider below. I also discuss additional literature on architecture and surveillance that work with and challenge Foucault's findings to varying degrees. In a different register, I consider histories of the GDR and the Stasi addressing architecture. Lastly, I reflect on the particularities of working with the Stasi-Files before I conclude with an overview of the individual chapters of the dissertation.

Architectural and Spatial Histories of Surveillance: Coming to Terms with Foucault

Foucault's influential analysis of Jeremy Bentham's Panopticon is a key interpretive and distinctly architectural model for elucidating the disciplinary mechanisms of modern surveillance societies. Here, it will help situate the dissertation's theoretical approach and serve as a starting point for reviewing architectural scholarship on surveillance, in which Foucault's Panopticon writings have a somewhat hegemonic legacy.

In his groundbreaking work *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, Foucault locates a transformation in the punitive logic of the sovereign in late 18th-century Europe. According to Foucault, this transformation is best exemplified by administrative responses to disease and disorder: specifically, systems for controlling subjects who suffered from leprosy

and the plague.[11] In contrast to responses to leprosy, which relegated the ill to exile-enclosures,

strategies of controlling the plague rested on a surveillance of "permanent registration," whereby

each individual was regularly located and examined in an enclosed, segmented space.[12] This

model of "capillary" power, calling for multiple separations and meticulous tactical partitioning

(as opposed to a binary division between one set of people and another, as in the case of leprosy)

intensified power effects, Foucault contends, as it not only confined but also trained and

corrected, and hence disciplined subjects.[13] From the beginning of the 19th century, "the

psychiatric asylum, the penitentiary, the reformatory, the approved school and, to some extent,

the hospital" became sites of disciplinary power. In these institutions measuring, supervising and

correcting those deemed "abnormal," techniques of disciplinary partitioning were applied to

spaces of exclusion.[14] To Foucault, Bentham's Panopticon prison, with its circular planning and

segmentation of prisoners subjected to an omniscient and seemingly continuous gaze from its

central watchtower became "the architectural figure of this [disciplinary] composition."[15] It is

through this architectural figure that Foucault makes some key observations in regard to the

workings of disciplinary surveillance under conditions of modernity; perhaps the most important

being that surveillance becomes internalized in the subject on whom the effect of a centralized,

uninterrupted gaze is provoked without actually requiring constant supervision.

Scholarly reactions to Foucault's reading of the Panopticon have been manifold, ranging

anywhere from uncritical adoptions to downright rejections, and one of the strongest threads of

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[11] Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, trans. Alan Sheridan (New York: Vintage, 1995), 198.
[12] Foucault, 196–97.
[13] Foucault, 198.
[14] Foucault, 199.
[15] The prisoner of the Panopticon "is seen, but he does not see. He is the object of information, but never a subject in communication." Foucault, 200.

critique has been about the absence of agency and resistance by the surveilled subject.[16] In surveillance studies, a field that emerged after 9/11 and where nuanced interpretations of panopticism can be found, scholars explore ways out of the panoptic conundrum—especially regarding the limits of its applicability to electronic regimes of surveillance—by turning to Foucault's later work.[17] Sociologist David Lyon, for example, interprets panopticism as a spectrum with the prison representing its sharp end, its most extreme, whereas on the softer, subtler end one finds zones of consumption and entertainment, where spectacle and pleasure replaces isolation and punishment, and conforming and docile subjects are more prevalent.[18] To sociologist David Haggerty, Foucault's disregard of the role and importance of "watchers"— namely agents of surveillance—poses another major problem as "myriad manifestations of contemporary surveillance make it abundantly clear that it matters enormously who is actually conducting surveillance."[19] Arguing that the "panopticon is often introduced as a cliché, and in

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[16] For example, Kirstie Ball writes that "discussions of the surveillance society have assumed a limited range of positions for the surveilled subject, reducing the experience of surveillance to one of oppression, coercion, ambivalence or ignorance." To Ball, this reticence "starts to become clear if we consider how the subject appears in the panopticon: as a mere shadow or outline only assumed to be reflexive, internally focused and self-regulating." Kirstie Ball, "Exposure: Exploring the Subject of Surveillance," *Information, Communication & Society* 12, no. 5 (2009): 640–44; For a discussion on the issue of resistance and workplace surveillance in Foucault's work, see: Elia Zureik, "Theorizing Surveillance: The Case of the Workplace," in *Surveillance as Social Sorting: Privacy, Risk, and Automated Discrimination*, ed. David Lyon (London and New York: Routledge, 2002), 31–56; On how resistance occurs under the most stringent panoptic conditions, see: Lorna A. Rhodes, *Total Confinement: Madness and Reason in the Maximum Security Prison* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2004) In this study, Rhodes illustrates how for prisoners under constant surveillance the body becomes a site of resistance, with self-mutilating prisoners discovering that their "body, the very ground of the panoptical relation, is also its potential undoing." .

[17] For a close-up examination on "how far the Panopticon provides a useful model for understanding electronic surveillance," see: David Lyon, *The Electronic Eye: The Rise of Surveillance Society* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1994), 57–79 Here, Lyon suggests that "while it is undeniably illuminating, analysis based upon the Panopticon image also retains some serious disadvantages," in particular because "the Panopticon as a means of exclusion may well be in eclipse, leaving the advanced societies under the superior sway of consumerism, with only a minor role left for the harsher panoptic regimes."

[18] David Lyon, "The Search for Surveillance Theories," in *Theorizing Surveillance: The Panopticon and Beyond*, ed. David Lyon (London; New York: Routledge Taylor & Francis Group, 2011), 4–6; See also: Peter Weibel, "Pleasure and the Panoptic Principle," in *CTRL [SPACE]: Rhetorics of Surveillance from Bentham to Big Brother*, ed. Thomas Y. Levin, Ursula Frohne, and Peter Weibel (Karlsruhe; Cambridge, Mass; London: ZKM, Center for Art and Media The MIT Press, 2002), 207–23; Bernard E. Harcourt, *Exposed: Desire and Disobedience in the Digital Age* (Cambridge, Mass.; London, England: Harvard University Press, 2015), 31–53.

[19] Kevin D. Haggerty, "Tear Down the Walls: On Demolishing the Panopticon," in *Theorizing Surveillance: The Panopticon and Beyond*, ed. David Lyon (London; New York: Routledge Taylor & Francis Group, 2011), 18;

being increasingly reified has nearly exhausted its creative potential as a model for understanding surveillance," Haggerty ultimately makes a case for taking the Panopticon as just a moment within Foucault's wider oeuvre on scopic regimes and politics of visibility, and proposes to shift the focus towards Foucault's conceptualization of governance and governmentality.[20] In a similar fashion, some scholars propose to move beyond panopticism by taking Foucault's ever evolving and refining use of the term "technology," as with the concept "technologies of the self" developed in the *History of Sexuality*.[21] Lastly, in numerous updates to the Panopticon, scholars—in part—seek to account for the changes in the dialectics of seeing and being seen under current surveillance societies. One example is Thomas Mathiesen's "synopticon:" an explanatory model for the inversion of the panoptic gaze from the "few watching the many" to "many watching the few," exemplified by the prevalence of reality TV and digital mass media.[22] Throughout the dissertation, I engage with these insights in different

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Bentham scholars also argue that "there is not one but at least four versions of the Panopticon," while Bentham continued to develop it as an instrument of power. In these plural Panopticons, different considerations of who are watching and from where figure into the design. Anne Brunon-Ernst, "Introduction," in *Beyond Foucault: New Perspectives on Bentham's Panopticon*, ed. Anne Brunon-Ernst (Farnham: Ashgate, 2012), 8; Anne Brunon-Ernst, "Deconstructing Panopticism into the Plural Panopticons," in *Beyond Foucault: New Perspectives on Bentham's Panopticon*, ed. Anne Brunon-Ernst (Farnham: Ashgate, 2012), 27–28.

[20] Haggerty argues that "the emphasis on particular governmental projects also restrains any desire to conceptualize surveillance tout court in favour of examining how particular systems of visibility are deployed in the context of specific governmental ambitions. It allows for a focused consideration of the aims, dynamics and rationalizations of particular surveillance projects. Such a focus can also mitigate the tendency towards forms of dystopian technological determinism that are often apparent in the surveillance studies literature. Combining a normatively ambivalent stance with a focus on particular governmental projects allows for the development of a more refined normative stance towards surveillance." Haggerty, "Tear Down the Walls: On Demolishing the Panopticon," 41.

[21] See: Mark Cole, "The Role of Confession in Reflective Practice: Monitored Continuing Professional Development (CPD) in Health Care and the Paradox of Professional Autonomy," in *Theorizing Surveillance: The Panopticon and Beyond*, ed. David Lyon (London; New York: Routledge Taylor & Francis Group, 2011), 206–7; Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*, trans. Robert Hurley, vol. Volume I: An Introduction (New York: Pantheon Books, 1978); While the issue of the self appeared in the first volume of The History of Sexuality, Foucault envisioned his new project "as 'separate from the sex series... which would be, rather, a genealogy of how the self constituted itself as subject." Luther H. Martin, Huck Gutman, and Patrick H. Hutton, eds., *Technologies of the Self. A Seminar with Michel Foucault* (London: Tavistock Publications, 1988), 4.

[22] Thomas Mathiesen, "The Viewer Society: Michel Foucault's 'Panopticon' Revisited," *Theoretical Criminology* 1, no. 2 (1997): 218–23 Other examples include Mark Poster's Superpanopticon, Didier Bigo's Ban-Opticon, Bruno Latour's Oligopticon, David Lyon's Electronic Panopticon, and Hille Koskela's Urban Panopticon, to name a few.

ways and to varying degrees. In Chapter 2, for example, I consider the surveillance bureaucracy

and feedback loops established over the Stasi's building production as a regime whereby

"everyone inspected everyone." In Chapter 3, I focus on the role and function of the

"watchers"—namely, surveillance agents—and argue that the spatiality of East German domestic

surveillance did not corroborate the economy of power that Bentham prescribes, and Foucault

describes. Ultimately, the dissertation responds to Lyon, Haggerty, and Kirstie Ball's call for

studies that "theorize surveillance as something which is spatially… distributed and which has

productive and constructive effects on the objects it seeks to govern."[23]

Spatial measures constituting, even seemingly perfecting, surveillance systems almost

always engender a host of spatial possibilities for their undoing, as scholars have shown. Perhaps

the most illuminating works in this regard come from scholars of race and space. In a "critical

reinterpretation" of panopticism "through the archive of slavery," Simone Browne discusses the

"lantern laws" in New York in the late 18th century, which prohibited Black and Brown enslaved

people to wander the city's streets without light.[24] While "in Jeremy Bentham's plan for the

Panopticon, small lamps worked to 'extend to the night the security of the day,'" Browne writes,

the lantern laws and their spatial signification of Black bodies could not prevent the "cultural

production, expressive acts, and everyday practices" that "offered[ed] moments of living with,

refusals, and alternatives to routinized, racializing surveillance," such as their participation in the

breakdown dance routines at market places.[25] On a parallel register, Rebecca Ginsburg examines

the movement of enslaved people in the Antebellum South and reveals that, in a "white

landscape" controlled by passes, patrols, and curfews, enslaved people "generat[ed] a network of

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[23] David Lyon, Kevin D. Haggerty, and Kirstie Ball, "Introducing Surveillance Studies," in *Routledge Handbook of Surveillance Studies* (New York & London: Routledge, 2012), 9.
[24] Simone Browne, *Dark Matters: On the Surveillance of Blackness* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2015), 63–82.
[25] Browne, 24, 81–82.

sites of their own making" by paying attention to changes in land, riverbanks, and variations of paths, which allowed them not only to escape but also recognize that "the whites were not omniscient and not omnipotent."[26] Taking the cadastral map imposed on indigenous land as a technology of surveillance and control, Denis R. Byrne shows how Aboriginal people of New South Wales in Australia subverted the grid by tactically using lots reserved for public works, and jumped fences, raided orchards, and fished on the shorelines undisciplined by the map.[27] I am in remote dialogue with these contributions investigating the relationship between physical space, geographical space, and surveillance. I do so, however, by tracing the steps of surveillant agents in the GDR. In Chapter 3, I analyze the East German mass housing types known as *Plattenbauten* as technologies of dwelling *and* of surveillance, showing that they, too, offered a host of spatial possibilities for the refinement and subversion of secret policing.

Within the field of architectural history, scholars complicated Foucault's findings by examining built spaces where surveillant gazes are decentered and multi-directional and hence reproduce power effects more varied and negotiated than the framework of panopticism allows. Luna Nájera, for example, demonstrates that early modern Spanish military architecture facilitated not only the surveillance of approaching enemy forces but also peer-to-peer surveillance between soldiers. Unlike the panopticon, Nájera contends, this space blurred the lines between the observer and the observed while creating a social stratum, nonetheless.[28] In a similar vein, Anna Vemer Andrzejewski argues that religious camps of the late 19th century United States were designed to encourage distributed and interpersonal gazes between campers,

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[26] Rebecca Ginsburg, "Freedom and the Slave Landscape," *Landscape Journal* 26, no. 1 (2007): 37–41.

[27] Denis R. Byrne, "Nervous Landscapes: Race and Space in Australia," *Journal of Social Archaeology* 3, no. 2 (2003): 170–77.

[28] Luna Nájera, "The Social Spaces of Surveillance in Early Modern Military Architecture," *Journal of Spanish Cultural Studies* 21, no. 2 (2020): 149–69.

this time establishing a sense of community and security rather than hierarchy and discipline.[29]

Building on these contributions, I focus on sites and spaces—workplaces, sites of construction

and manufacture, residential settlements, public spaces—where surveillance was distributed and

exchanged for the advancement of both architectural production and state surveillance in the

GDR.

How to account for the practice of surveillance, and its relationship to architecture, when

its spatialization does not adhere to the logic of a centralized gaze? This is also one of the central

questions posed by Susan Flynn and Antonia MacKay, who bring together essays tackling how

identities are created, selves are performed, and bodies are constructed under surveillant systems

framed by architecture.[30] With photography, film, literary fiction, comics, video games, and art

pieces taking center stage as most essays' objects of analysis, the volume is less about surveillant

systems that are "framed" by architecture and more about architecture that is framed via

cameras, installations and comic panels to "depict" surveillance.[31] While the relationship

between subjectivity and surveillance is at the epicenter of this volume examining

"manifestations of surveillance through varying types of space,"[32] in another recent collection,

Annie Ring, Henriette Steiner, and Kristin Veel set out to explore alternate modes of control and

resistance that arise within "various kinds of architecture."[33] Here, too, architecture in the plural

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[29] Anna Vemer Andrzejewski, *Building Power: Architecture and Surveillance in Victorian America* (Knoxville: Univ. of Tennessee Press, 2008), 135–67.

[30] Susan Flynn and Antonia Mackay, eds., *Surveillance, Architecture and Control: Discourses on Spatial Culture* (Cham, Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan, 2019).

[31] As Flynn and Mackay write, "Surveillance, Architecture and Control provides a cultural studies approach to depictions of surveillance shored up in physical space." Tellingly, in their introduction, the authots write of media featuring architecture, architecture as a vehicle for surveillance, the surveillant eye residing within architectural frames, and domestic architecture acting as a perpetuator of the surveilling gaze. Susan Flynn and Antonia Mackay, "Introduction," in *Surveillance, Architecture and Control: Discourses on Spatial Culture*, ed. Susan Flynn and Antonia Mackay (Cham, Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan, 2019), 3–7.

[32] Flynn and Mackay, 5.

[33] Annie Ring, Henriette Steiner, and Kristin Veel, "Architectural Pre-Script," in *Architecture and Control*, ed. Annie Ring, Henriette Steiner, and Kristin Veel (Leiden: Brill, 2018).

largely serves as a surrogate for art works in filmic, photographic, and literary media thematizing

the built environment and for "digital infrastructures" such as CCTV cameras or informational

façades.[34] The editors suggest that architecture appears "fixed," and that changes in the built

environment are traceable and negotiated in aesthetic form, which—in turn—articulates both

control and resistances to it. My dissertation supplements this literature on the representations of

architecture and surveillance through a sustained engagement with architectural analysis.

Considering Francisco Klauser's proclamation that "it is not enough to study, as an end in itself,

the architectural configurations of monitored buildings,"[35] I empirically examine the

spatialization of surveillance in the GDR and explore architecture as an essential actant of

surveillance operations instead of its epiphenomenon. Searching for architectural sites and spatial

means of resistance to surveillance is important for critical reinterpretations of panopticism.

Artistic mediations of architecture certainly make the spatial experience of surveillance visible

and legible, and they offer valuable insights into how the built environment has come to be

shaped around surveillance concerns and how it conditions the lives we lead. Yet, in order to

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[34] To this, only two essays are notable exceptions. Runa Johannessen's article on individual building practices on the occupied territories of Palestine shows how architecture or, more specifically, homemaking turns into a tactical means to negotiate the boundaries—both physical and legal—of the permissible within zones of territorial conflict and military occupation, subverting the ambiguity of borders from a tool of control to one of resistance. Here, the practice of building through "cunning intelligence" grants agency to the disenfranchised. In their account of Albanian communist leader Enver Hoxha's 1968 bunker program, which resulted in the construction of tens of thousands of concrete bunkers across the region, Samantha L. Martin-McAuliffe illustrates how this excessive materialization of self-defense turned Albanian landscapes into anxious topographies of control, which remained functionally useless beyond ominously signifying state power. In both examples, however, the employment of the concept of control is divorced from the Deleuzian framework with which the editing authors introduce the volume. This is due to the centrality of the digital, and therefore immaterial, in Deleuze's conceptualization of control mechanisms underpinning power relations in neoliberal capitalist societies. See: Runa Johannessen, "Probing the Terrain: Architectures of Control and Uncertainty in the Occupied Palestinian Territories," in *Architecture and Control*, ed. Annie Ring, Henriette Steiner, and Kristin Veel (Leiden: Brill, 2018), 87–107; Samantha L. Martin-McAuliffe, "The Hungry Eyes: The Anxious Topographies of Enver Hoxha's Bunker Program in Albania," in *Architecture and Control*, ed. Annie Ring, Henriette Steiner, and Kristin Veel (Leiden: Brill, 2018), 108–27.
[35] Francisco Klauser, *Surveillance and Space* (Los Angeles, London, New Delhi, Singapore: Sage Publications, 2017), 36.

engage Foucault beyond the bounds of the Panopticon, we must interrogate whether frictions and subversions might already exist in the production of the built environment.

Although temporally and methodologically different, this project directly builds upon James C. Scott's, Beatriz Colomina's, Anna Vemer Andrzejewski's analyses of architectural production embedded in surveillance concerns. Here, "architectural production" instead of architecture is a deliberately operative term for pulling in and accounting for how the practice of architecture goes hand in hand with the practice of surveillance. It also accommodates the scalar, functional, and technological diversity of building. Scott, Colomina, and Andrzejewski's works operate within different modalities of the architecture and surveillance axiom. Scott examines building as a means for state simplification and state power; Colomina interrogates how architecture and surveillance are co-constituted from within scientific-technological knowledge; and Andrzejewski explores the ways within which surveillance concerns were incorporated into and conflicted by architectural design. Over its three chapters, this dissertation challenges, expands on, and supplements this literature in myriad ways.

In his landmark study *Seeing Like a State*, James C. Scott has shown how urban and architectural planning are amongst the means employed by modern statecraft to socio-spatially order populations for the state's efficient governance and control over their labor, relations, and way of life.[36] As Scott convincingly demonstrates, from early modern military efforts to map complex, old cities to their single-handed reconstruction beginning in the early 19th century, "state simplification" underwrote much of the developments in mapping and planning across the western hemisphere. This development reached its apex by the mid-20th century in modernist cities built on a tabula rasa. From Soviet Russia to the colonial British rule in Tanzania, modern

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[36] James C. Scott, *Seeing Like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2020).

states ordered natural and social environments in an increasingly standardized, rationalized, repetitive, and hence simplified way, which was to render them more legible to the state's gaze. Scott is careful in delineating the outcomes of such schemes. While administrative ordering of society and nature unlocked achievements in agricultural production, resource and risk management, and bureaucratic functioning in liberal welfare states of the global North, in authoritarian states without a strong civil society, Scott contends, they had "disastrous" consequences, further sharpening the intrinsically discriminatory aspects of "high modernist" ideology, such as political surveillance. Whether the grass was greener in liberal democracies is subject to debate, as societies in these political settings are not monolithic, and the access to, ability to challenge, and effects of state power varies from social group to social group according to race, ethnicity, gender, and sexuality, to name a few. Scott's work is significant for the present study, nevertheless, in that it illustrates how architecture is not subservient to aspirations of state power but, instead, is embedded in processes of world-making. Scott reminds us that, in planning cities, designing buildings, and devising architectural production schemes, what gets produced is not just architectural knowledge but a certain knowledge of the world, which is ordered, filtered, and acquired through architecture. Scott's state theory focusing "on the role of representation, visualization and standardization in constructing political regimes" also bears "important family resemblances" to co-productionist literature and, therefore, is illuminating for this dissertation's theoretical premise building on and cutting against the idiom of coproduction.[37] Furthermore, whereas Scott interrogates the means through which modern statecraft sees and hence surveills social space, I reflect on his findings to explore how the East German state and its surveillance forces moved through and navigated space—specifically the built space of "high modernist"

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[37] Sheila Jasanoff, "Ordering Knowledge, Ordering Society," in *States of Knowledge: The Co-Production of Science and the Social Order*, ed. Sheila Jasanoff (London: Routledge, 2004), 28.

Plattenbauten. Ultimately, in Chapter 3, I challenge Scott by showing that modernist housing schemes did not necessarily render surveillance and policing efficient in the GDR; instead, this new urban and architectural morphology simultaneously facilitated and complicated secret policing.

In thinking through coproduction as an operative term of inquiry for architectural history, I also reflect on Beatriz Colomina's 2019 monograph *X-Ray Architecture*, which examines X-ray imaging as a technology consequential to the development of European modernist architecture and to new forms of surveillance. X-ray's inversion of the body with the inside becoming the outside had repercussions for Western architecture, Colomina writes, which "at least since the Italian Renaissance, has modeled itself on the human body."[38] According to Colomina, the built and imagined glass architectures of Mies van der Rohe, Le Corbusier, Buckminster Fuller, and Philip Johnson absorbed the logic of the X-ray by becoming "an image of an image:"[39] not so much by exposing the interior per se but by "representing exposure," with the glass envelope acting like a screen registering "a ghostly image of the inside" and "exposing the act of looking."[40] This new technology of transparency was almost simultaneously adapted for policing measures, employed at security checks and for health monitoring, Colomina writes. They, too, not only made the body transparent but displayed the intrusive logic of medical and police surveillance while rendering the body to "the site of a new form of public surveillance."[41] In Colomina's account, architecture is not epiphenomenal to surveillance; architecture and

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[38] Beatriz Colomina, *X-Ray Architecture* (Zürich: Lars Müller, 2019), 135.
[39] For the definition of modern architecture becoming "an image of an image" through photographic representation, see: Claire Zimmerman, *Photographic Architecture in the Twentieth Century* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, n.d.), 175, accessed September 7, 2016 As Zimmerman writes, "photographs of buildings cannot represent the spatial experience, or 'essence,' of architecture, which springs from the crystallisation of internal ideas in external form... Moreover, because of the spatial basis of architectural experience... a two-dimensional photograph captures only an image of an image--the external shell of a building whose essence lies in its organic spatiality."
[40] Colomina, *X-Ray Architecture*, 135–47.
[41] Colomina, 142–47.

surveillance are coproduced within the scientific-technological realm as Röntgen's discovery of the X-ray revealed new modes of seeing, surveilling, and living.[42] Experimental glass designs ultimately "formed the basis of everyday building by midcentury" in the United States in the shape of the "ubiquitous picture window of the suburban American house," which endorsed self-staging of families in their living rooms and peer monitoring amongst neighbors.[43] X-ray—as a diagnostic technology for viewing natural phenomena—thus became the basis of an epistemic emergence in both architecture and surveillance. The question of power, however, gets a short straw here. Through several examples, Colomina alludes to how the incorporation of X-ray's logic into architecture, medical surveillance, and policing was underpinned by attempts to discipline the body and behavior of individuals.[44] Yet, where power rests in this disciplinary scheme, who wields it and by what means do not figure into this technologically deterministic history where masterminds are plentiful, and resistances are absent.

To this day, art historian Anna Vemer Andrzejewski's 2008 monograph *Building Power: Architecture and Surveillance in Victorian America* remains the only book-length architectural study exclusively devoted to interrogating how "concerns about surveillance underlie the organization of the modern built environment."[45] Andrzejewski presents a comparative study of a range of buildings—prisons, postal offices, homes, and religious camps—from what the author

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[42] Accordingly, Colomina frames her inquiry as an investigation into "how architecture absorbs the latest communication systems," which fits Colomina's overall intellectual project spanning magazines, photography, and cinema, to name a few. Beatriz Colomina, "Unclear Vision: Architectures of Surveillance," in *Engineered Transparency: The Technical, Visual, and Spatial Effects of Glass*, ed. Michael Bell and Jeannie Kim (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2009), 86.

[43] Colomina, *X-Ray Architecture*, 142; Colomina, "Unclear Vision: Architectures of Surveillance," 81; For a detailed discussion on this, and how the ubiqiutous use of picture windows figured into U.S.-Americans' fear of privacy, see: Bärbel Harju, "Picture Windows: Architecture of Privacy and Surveillance," *E-Cadernos CES* 27 (2017): 48–71.

[44] See, especially, a quote by Edith Farnsworth, the patron of Mies' Farnsworth house, where she discusses how the building does not allow her to do much without considering how it would be perceived from the outside: Colomina, *X-Ray Architecture*, 146.

[45] Andrzejewski, *Building Power*.

terms the Victorian era in the United States, which corresponds roughly to the period from mid

19th century until early 20th century, or until large-scale industrial capitalism significantly

changed the relationship between architecture, surveillance, and modernity, as the author

argues.[46] In *Building Power*, Andrzejewski tests the limits of Foucault's interpretation of

Bentham's Panopticon as the architectural metaphor for surveillance in several ways. Conceiving

of surveillance as "any purposeful act in which information about others is collected for all kinds

of transformative purposes," Andrzejewski nuances different modalities of discipline that are not

punitive in nature and are enforced through architecture. As *Building Power* illustrates, over the

19th and early 20th centuries and in the US, spatial signification of surveillance enforced order

and hierarchy in prisons, whereas lookouts incorporated into the design of postal offices ensured

productivity and efficiency, and domestic architectures of the middle-class allowed visual control

of employees to maintain authority and class hierarchy. Through fine-grained architectural-

historical analysis, Andrzejewski shows how provisions for architecture that targeted the

enhancement of disciplinary surveillance in working, domestic and, indeed, carceral spaces

continuously failed to create uninterrupted visual supervision and hence disciplinary effects

desired. These were not due to failures in design. In prisons, for example, the deployment of a

central tower left blind spots in overseeing exercise yards;[47] at postal offices, the sheer size of

some workplaces prevented much from being seen despite the open layout, and clerks hid from

their supervisors in restrooms or locker rooms.[48] In middle-class households, the division of

spaces between domestic workers and homeowners was to restrict servants' movements, aid easy

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[46] Andrzejewski, 8.
[47] Andrzejewski, 30–31.
[48] Andrzejewski, 89.

monitoring by mistresses, and maintain social order, yet these spatially reinforced class divisions

upheld persisting anxieties about disobedience and revolt, regardless.[49]

Architectural-historical analyses into surveillance regimes such as Andrzejewski's

continue to be urgent and important. Architecture's complicity in structuring power relations

must be nuanced with its potential to facilitate resilient and resistant behavior—even if

unintendedly.[50] In *Building Power*, architecture is evinced to be not a by-product of surveillance

but part and parcel of its practice. As such, architecture and surveillance are shown to be

mutually articulated in Victorian America, with architectural design constantly—perhaps even

recursively—attempting to fine tune its contributions to spatial ordering and supervision. In

Andrzejewski's account, the ceaseless change in the designs of prisons, workplaces, and homes

illustrate that the sought-after totality of visibility was an unattainable goal, with prison wards,

managers, homeowners arriving at the conclusion that architecture alone cannot establish

complete visibility and hence discipline. This dissertation underwrites such findings through the

example of a completely different political and cultural geography—that of the GDR in the mid-

to late 20th century—and expands on them in several ways. First, I explore architectural

planning, design, and construction determined not only by the interplay of clients, architects, and

builders but also through economic, technical, material, and political processes, drawing in other

actors such as administrators and policy makers. Second, the dissertation reorients itself from the

field of vision to the field of production, which itself is intertwined with surveillance practices.

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[49] Andrzejewski, 111–12.

[50] About workplace surveillance, Andrzejewski writes: "Over time owners and managers accepted that the same architectural strategies that they had developed to facilitate supervision, such as the use of glazed partitions and open workrooms, not only made their gazes possible, but also those of the workers towards management." Andrzejewski, 90.

And third, it responds to Andrzejewski's concluding remarks on the need to write not only on the ideology behind surveillance but also on its practice, understanding it as a process.[51]

Histories of Architecture and Surveillance in the GDR

Considering the prevalence of the Stasi's activities and responsibilities within the East German state and society, a history of the GDR can hardly be written without acknowledging the state security apparatus' role and impact. Over its forty-year existence, the Stasi—as the "shield and sword of the party"—assumed many functions, including as a "supplementary public sphere," communicating the needs and disillusionment of East German citizens to the party apparatus.[52] This turned what can be termed "Stasi Studies" into a scholarly field on its own right. Even though histories of the Stasi constitute a remarkable portion of GDR historiography, it is surprising how little research has been devoted to exploring the links between architecture and state surveillance. The publication series of the former Federal Commissioner of the Stasi-Files (*Bundesbeauftragter für Stasi-Unterlagen – BStU*), recently restructured as the Stasi Records Archive of the German Federal Archives (*Bundesarchiv*), alone has over five hundred publications spanning from the 1990s to the present, and only two of these are about the architectural legacies of the Stasi. A discussion on how this dissertation fits into the existing yet scarce literature on the Stasi's architectural activities, therefore, first needs to be foregrounded by a discussion on its far-flung elision.

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[51] Andrzejewski, 168.

[52] As historian Jens Gieseke writes, the MfS acted as a "surrogate or 'ersatz' public sphere" by "keep[ing] an eye on mood swings and the potential for unrest in the population" and informing the SED regime with "secret reports from the grassroots level." These reports "were introduced as daily 'reports from the front' in the cold civil war against the GDR's own population after the uprising of June 1953, and were transformed into a regular series of reports on specific topics in the late 1950s. The reports on 'reactions from the population' varied in number depending on the occasion, with fifteen reports a year being typical." Jens Gieseke, *The History of the Stasi: East Germany's Secret Police, 1945-1990* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2015), 114–18.

Histories of the Stasi and, by extension, of the GDR have thus far taken the "victims versus perpetrators" dichotomy as a central axis in investigating the functioning of the East German state and society. A heavy emphasis on "anti-communist research" continues to taint the historicization of the GDR, whereby the East German state is somewhat uncritically posited alongside the Nazi regime as one of the "two dictatorships" in modern German history—both in popular imagination and in scholarship. Politics of remembrance under unified Germany are rooted in fully discrediting its Soviet-socialist past, which becomes a means to promote the succeeding neoliberal capitalist republic as the only solution for democracy, transparency, and freedom. Yet reconciliation with this past continues to be fundamental to the co-existence of former West and East Germans. It is this tension that feeds into the stark delineation of victims versus perpetrators of the Soviet-socialist totalitarian regime of the GDR—a highly problematic rhetoric getting in the way of German integration. Within this rhetoric, any affiliation with the Stasi is cause for an automatic categorization of concerned individuals as perpetrators. Once understood as such, the architecture of the Stasi is also readily classified as merely representing state power. What is more, in contrast to architectural representations of some authoritarian and totalitarian states in history that evoked fascination and called for scholarly attention, most buildings of the Stasi are not branded with the sort of spectacle that aesthetically communicates power aesthetically. The MfS partly operated within existing structures and, over the 1950s, it built with conventional construction techniques and sober elements. From the 1960s onwards, prefabricated types from centralized mass housing schemes became the norm for building almost any function, from offices and prisons to schools and enclosing walls. This building technology was subsequently termed a mere "cipher" of state power.[53] With the resulting structures

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[53] Christine Hannemann, *Die Platte: Industrialisierter Wohnungsbau in der DDR*, 3rd ed. (Berlin: Verlag Hans Schiler, 2005), 14–18.

leaving—especially from the outside—a mundane impression, and partly blending into the

prefabricated concrete landscape of East German cities, architectures of the Stasi, it seems, did

not invite scholarly curiosity from the removed vantage point of architectural representations.

If the narrowing down of architecture's role in constructing state power to

representations, and of representations to the duality between the rulers and the ruled explicates

one reason for the dismissal of architecture as a useful category of analysis in Stasi research,

another underlying factor can be found in the historiographic omission of the Stasi's architectural

departments and building enterprises. Historians of the Stasi have thus far underestimated the

extent of the Stasi's architectural bureaucracy and workforce. As Chapter 2 of this dissertation

reveals, the second largest operation under the MfS was not *Hauptverwaltung A* (HVA),

responsible for reconnaissance and foreign intelligence activities, but in fact its *Verwaltung*

Rückwärtige Dienste (VRD), which was tasked with the realization, maintenance, and

administration of Stasi structures, along with the management of the ministry's building

enterprises.[54] The misidentification of HVA as the second largest division of the MfS is

consequential not simply due to statistical reasons but rather because of HVA's association with

the ministry's raison d'être and the scholarly attention it has accordingly received. While a vast

number of books and chapters are devoted to the history of the HVA's development and

activities, such aspects as they pertain to the VRD have not yet been the subject of historical

inquiry. Any discussion, and at times even a mention, of the department is notably absent in the

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[54] For the identification of HV A as the MfS' second largest unit, see: Hubertus Knabe, *West-Arbeit des MfS: das Zusammenspiel von "Aufklärung" und Abwehr* (Berlin: Ch. Links Verlag, 1999), 131–32; For a detailed overview of the HV A's origins, development, tasks, and cadres, see: Roland Wiedmann, "Hauptverwaltung A (Auslandsaufklärung)," in *Die Diensteinheiten Des MfS 1950–1989. Eine Organisatorische Übersicht* (Berlin: Bundesbeauftragter für Stasi-Unterlagen (BStU), 2012), 357–99 The ministry's paramilitary Guard Regiment "Feliks E. Dzierżynski" was the largest operation of the ministry, with more than 11 thousand military personnel by 1989.

most comprehensive monographies on the Stasi.[55] If mentioned, then the VRD is described as a

mere "maintenance and service" unit "behind the lines"—or as the "HVB" to the "HVA."[56]

Tackling issues of historiography such as this puts the dissertation in dialogue with recent

scholarly efforts to identify and nuance exaggerations that came to characterize both popular and

academic understandings of the Stasi, such as the over-estimation of informant numbers,

exaggeration of the Stasi's technologically aided listening capabilities, or over-emphasis of

HVA's significance and role.[57]

A similar case of historiographical omission applies to how building enterprises managed

by the MfS are treated in the GDR and Stasi literature. The ministry-run *Volkseigener Betrieb*

Spezialhochbau Berlin, for example, founded in 1975 and grown into the largest building

enterprise of the GDR by the 1980s, is brought up either in between the lines or included as a

footnote. In architectural histories of the GDR, too, where subjects such as planned economy,

industrialization of building production, and the combine reform figure prominently, the building

industry of the East German armed forces, broadly, and that of the Stasi, specifically, have not

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[55] This includes, among others: Gieseke, *The History of the Stasi*; Ilko-Sascha Kowalczuk, *Stasi konkret: Überwachung und Repression in der DDR* (München: C.H. Beck, 2013); Karl Wilhelm Fricke, *Die DDR-Staatssicherheit: Entwicklung, Strukturen, Aktionsfelder* (Köln: Verlag Wissenschaft und Politik, 1989); Mike Dennis, *Stasi: Myth and Reality.* (London; New York: Routledge, 2016); Gary Bruce, *The Firm: The Inside Story of the Stasi* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010); Daniela Münkel, ed., *State Security. A Reader on the GDR Secret Police* (Berlin: Bundesbeauftragter für Stasi-Unterlagen (BStU), 2015).

[56] The translation for VRD as a "Maintenance and Service Department" comes from: Dennis, *Stasi*, 57 The designation of the VRD as the "HV B" to the "HV A" stems from the department's pre-1974 name, Hauptverwaltung B. Some scholars have noted that the department's code name refers to "Bewirtschaftung," which can roughly be translated as "management."; Verwaltung Rückwärtige Dienste is translated as "Behind the Lines Services" in: Münkel, *State Security. A Reader on the GDR Secret Police*, 55, 201 The designation of the VRD as the "HV B" to the "HV A" stems from the department's pre-1974 name, Hauptverwaltung B. Some scholars have noted that the department's code name refers to "Bewirtschaftung," which can roughly be translated as "management."

[57] See, especially Ilko-Sascha Kowalczuk's historiographical revisions in: Kowalczuk, *Stasi konkret*, 9–20, 209–46; Ilko-Sascha Kowalczuk, "Telefongeschichten. Grenzüberschreitende Telefonüberwachung der Opposition durch den SED-Staat – Eine Einleitung," in *Fasse dich kurz! Der grenzüberschreitende Telefonverkehr der Opposition in den 1980er Jahren und das Ministerium für Staatssicherheit*, ed. Ilko-Sascha Kowalczuk and Arno Polzin, 41 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2014), 17–172.

been involved.[58] Responding to these blind spots, Chapters 1 and 2 of this dissertation present

the first systematic and in-depth examination of the Stasi's building industry and its role in the

East German political economy as a building agent and a building developer. My examination of

the Stasi's architectural production and investment in the East German building industry debunks

preconceptions implicit in existing literature, which draw a solely quantitative parallelism

between the Stasi's employment and surveillance capacities and its building production

activities. I return to this point in my conclusion.

This dissertation builds upon recent findings elucidating the Stasi's involvement in

architectural production and use. There are few but important contributions in this area. In

Mielkes Revier: Stadtraum und Alltag rund um die MfS-Zentrale in Berlin Lichtenberg, Christian

Halbrock presents the first study dedicated to the architecture and planning activities of the Stasi

by investigating the history of the state security apparatus' ministerial headquarters in Berlin.[59]

From the Soviet Occupation Zone and the incipience of the MfS (1945-1949) to the peaceful

revolution and the subsequent dissolution of the East German state (1989-1990), Halbrock charts

the history of the so-called "Stasi-Central," which grew from an occupied 1930s building into a

behemoth administrative complex with more than forty structures enclosed in a military

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[58] This includes the publication series of the Leibniz-Institut für Raumbezogene Sozialforschung (IRS), where a dedicated research group investigates the architectural history of the GDR. See: Christoph Bernhardt and Thomas Wolfes, eds., *Schönheit und Typenprojektierung: der DDR-Städtebau im internationalen Kontext* (Erkner: IRS, Institut für Regionalentwicklung und Strukturplanung, 2005); Frank Betker, Carsten Benke, and Christoph Bernhardt, eds., *Paradigmenwechsel und Kontinuitätslinien im DDR-Städtebau neue Forschungen zur ostdeutschen Architektur- und Planungsgeschichte* (Erkner: Leibniz-Inst. für Regionalentwicklung und Strukturplanung, 2010); The Stasi's building production activities are also overlooked by other comprehensive architectural and urban histories of the GDR, whether the focus is industrialized housing or city districts where the Stasi had a large building footprint. Hannemann, *Die Platte: Industrialisierter Wohnungsbau in der DDR*; Sandra Klaus, "Vom Späten Historismus Zur Industriellen Massenarchitektur. Städtebau Und Architektur in Den Nordöstlichen Berliner Außenbezirken Weißensee Und Pankow Zwischen 1870 Und 1970 Unter Besonderer Betrachtung Des Wohnungsbaus" (Ph.D. Dissertation, Greifswald, Ernst-Moritz-Arndt-Universität Greifswald, Philosophische Fakultät Caspar-David-Friedrich-Institut, Bereich Kunstgeschichte, 2015).
[59] Christian Halbrock, *Mielkes Revier: Stadtraum und Alltag rund um die MfS-Zentrale in Berlin-Lichtenberg* (Lukas Verlag, 2010).

restricted zone at the heart of Berlin's Lichtenberg neighborhood. Relying largely on the grey literature of bureaucracy, and thus on intra-ministerial exchanges and those between the ministry and building authorities, *Mielkes Revier* reveals the complexity of building under the patronage of MfS: a state organ purportedly all powerful and all-encompassing. The intricacies, for example, of obtaining building permits or frictions arising from material shortages that Halbrock chronicles portray a building biography that testifies to the limits of top-down state power. The Stasi's bureaucracy of architectural production, interrogated here in Chapter 2, advances Halbrock's findings by including architects, and design and construction brigades working for the ministry.

While most processes of bureaucratic maneuvering and material procurement recounted by Halbrock are resolved to the benefit of the MfS, not all negotiations between state officials and institutions, and other social actors yielded desired outcomes for the state security apparatus. For example, as Halbrock shows through interviews with Lichtenberg residents, the MfS was not able to remove everyone and re-allocate their dwellings to Stasi employees despite aggressive campaigning. Neither was the state security apparatus capable of preventing curious glances from both residents and passers-by peeking into its "city within city." Tensions akin to those in Halbrock's narrative factor into this dissertation, where I examine architectural measures for surveillance and security in and around Stasi structures.

Lastly, this dissertation is indebted to insights offered by Eli Rubin's *Amnesiopolis: Modernity, Space, and Memory in East Germany*, especially its chapter titled *Plattenbau Panopticon*. Rubin's monograph investigates the urban and environmental history of the GDR's largest mass housing development: the "new city" of Marzahn on the outskirts of Berlin. In it, the author explores "what role the Stasi played in the design and construction of Marzahn, and

what the spaces created by Marzahn and other prefabricated housing settlements in the GDR

meant to the Stasi."[60] Rubin highlights three facets of this involvement: the Stasi's monitoring of

the project's construction, its infiltration of the settlement's residents, and mastery of its spatial

organization. Delineating these distinct layers of surveillance activity is important to underline

that East German architecture and surveillance were entangled at various sites (material, social,

spatial) and through different means—an approach reflected in this dissertation's structuring. I

am thus in close dialogue with Rubin's contribution, expanding on some of its findings and

challenging others.

In Chapter 1, I extend Rubin's argument that the Stasi's monitoring of construction was

not merely "a feedback mechanism for the Party"[61] but also "the 'glue' that made sure the

construction teams ultimately did their jobs."[62] I do so by parsing different modes of the Stasi's

economic monitoring of the building industry and discussing their varying degrees of

effectiveness. Confronting what existing literature defines as "useless re-reporting" and

"bureaucratic trivia," I reveal that the Stasi eventually grew critical of building policies and that

its knowledge production through economic monitoring provided feedback for its own building

industry and scientific-management schemes. In Chapter 3, I build on Rubin's interrogation of

"the role of the Stasi in everyday life through the prism of the socio-spatial dialectic."[63] In model

communities like Marzahn, Rubin writes, the Stasi was woven into the social fabric, influencing

political decisions and recruiting informers amongst strata of local organizations.[64] The attempt

to establish surveillance and control had a distinct spatial dimension to it, as well. Examining an

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[60] Eli Rubin, *Amnesiopolis: Modernity, Space, and Memory in East Germany* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), 132.
[61] Rubin, 135.
[62] Rubin, 138.
[63] Rubin, 132.
[64] Rubin, 145–48.

instructional manual on Marzahn created to train Stasi informants and field agents for observation and foot-tracking, Rubin illustrates that the Stasi knew these Plattenbau-types inside and out and argues that this knowledge rendered the secret police "ready to conduct surveillance and espionage anywhere throughout the country." [65] Rubin also contends that the "Corbusian model of 'towers in the park' created the perfect kind of panopticon effect in which there was nowhere to hide."[66] As my comparative discussion on surveillance in Wilhelmine-era *Mietskasernen* and Plattenbauten shows, while the Stasi labored to learn Marzahn, it also "learned" many other housing sites in the GDR. What is more, this knowledge did not endow the Stasi with the Panoptic-power Rubin ascribes: points I make by discussing Plattenbau-types as systems with many local variations instead of monoliths.[67] Nonetheless, this dissertation takes Rubin's formulation that "a new kind of space shaped… new kinds of surveillance" seriously and pursues this thread through an interrogation of the ways architecture influenced the Stasi's methods of surveillance.[68] Furthermore, it searches for overlaps in the social and spatial dialectics of the Stasi's surveillance methods, demonstrating that the selection of persons for recruitment was determined not only due to their social status but also spatial coordinates.

The Archive, Objects, and Terminology

A study on the Stasi cannot be fully elucidated and substantiated without reflecting on the archive that makes such study possible—namely, the Stasi Records Archive—which is a rightful research subject on its own. Made accessible to the public in 1990 after heated public debate and substantial efforts in organizing, the opening of the Stasi files is considered a model for

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[65] Rubin, 138.
[66] Rubin, 133.
[67] Rubin, 138.
[68] Rubin, 132.

transparency.[69] The administrative approach to the archive, however, paints a picture of

opaqueness. German law entitles all to inquire about and see the files kept on their person by the

secret police; for external researchers working on subject matters instead of records on persons,

however, the archive is triple filtered. First, an inventory of the archive's holdings is only

partially accessible to researchers external to the institution. Thus, a complete overview of

folders can only be seen by administrative staff, known as *Sachbearbeiter*.[70] Second, these

folders are inventoried and entered into a database by archivists on the floor, and administrative

staff can search the database by keywords provided by researchers to create a list of available

folders on the subject. Given that these folders, usually consisting of couple of hundred pages,

are titled, outlined, and summarized by archivists, their descriptions are highly subjective,

defining them according to what the respective archivist found significant to mention. And third,

the folders themselves comprise documents colligated together because they were found within

physical proximity of each other at the former Stasi offices, where officers engaged in a

systematic and calculated effort to destroy files amidst the 1989 protests. As a result, this

multiple filtering begets many chance encounters, sometimes revealing what one did not know

existed, while making a tightly targeted and comprehensive research difficult if one is working

within time constraints. Despite its considerable opaqueness to researchers of subject matters, the

Stasi Records Archive, to this day, provides an unparalleled insight into a state security apparatus

of its size.

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[69] See: Klaus-Dietmar Henke, "Zu Nutzung und Auswertung der Stasi-Akten," *Vierteljahreshefte für Zeitgeschichte* 41, no. 4 (1993): 575–87; Klaus-Dietmar Henke and Roger Engelmann, *Aktenlage: die Bedeutung der Unterlagen des Staatssicherheitsdienstes für die Zeitgeschichtsforschung* (Berlin: Links, 1996).
[70] Until the restructuring of the archive as a branch of the Federal Archives (*Bundesarchiv*) in 2020, the institution—functioning as an independent branch of the federal government—had a research department, and the files and their contents were also accessible to researchers appointed here.

Beyond the traditional sources for architectural research, such as plans, sections, sketches, and photographs, the grey literature of bureaucracy and administration takes center stage in the primary sources of this dissertation. In this regard, the study attends to what historian Kimberly Elman Zarecor describes as "untapped historical resources that lay dormant in what one might call the gaps between disciplinary interests," namely government archives, ministerial files, administrative correspondences, employee letters, and surveillance reports.[71]

It must not come as a surprise to the reader that the architectural objects analyzed here are profoundly "unspectacular." From the outside and considerably from the inside, many of the Stasi's administrative buildings looked like any other mass housing structure, its departmental service units like ordinary single-family housing, and its schools like conventional military barracks. This does not mean that aesthetic concerns did not figure into the Stasi's decisions of building. Rather, within the shortage economy of the GDR, the Stasi designed and built close to the overall material realities of architectural production, albeit its access to resources unavailable to the East German market. This further motivates the dissertation's distancing to aesthetic-representational power as a category of analysis: power still existed in the making and use of most unspectacular buildings.

Throughout the dissertation, the institutional body in question will be referred to under different words and phrases: the MfS, the Stasi, the ministry, the state security apparatus, secret police, and surveillance organization. These terms are not used interchangeably but deliberately, depending on what nature and function is being emphasized within a given context. For example, I refer to the "MfS" whenever the governmental institution's structure or policies are pertinent to the discussion at hand and to "the Stasi" when the institution is explicitly understood as a body

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[71] Kimberly Elman Zarecor, *Manufacturing a Socialist Modernity: Housing in Czechoslovakia, 1945-1960* (Pittsburgh, PA: Pittsburgh University Press, 2011), 6.

of people and their practices. I use the terms "state security apparatus" and "ministry" to denote the institution more broadly but write about the "secret police" when tackling policing activities targeting the socio-spatial body (foot-tracking, clandestine observation, technologically aided listening) and distinct from the plethora of other surveillance operations such as mood reporting and in-paper information processing. Similarly, the term "surveillance organization" is used within the context of organized surveillance, which includes—for example—economic monitoring, supervisory or bureaucratic surveillance but excludes policing activities.

As with any study bearing the birthing pains of an unexplored field, this dissertation is not without its own blind spots. While it explicitly focuses on co-constitutive processes of architectural production and surveillance as knowledge regimes and spatial practices, the dissertation does not fully attend to what might be considered "Architecture," namely architectural close readings and building biographies of many structures designed, built, or simply used by the Stasi. The ministry created a vast building portfolio encompassing administrative complexes and remand prisons, housing, schools, hospitals, and sports facilities for its employees, as well as holiday retreats and kindergartens for their families. This portfolio also included military bases, check points, listening posts, and service units for its hundreds of departments and sub-departments. Within this vast building stock—at least 2177 properties totaling a surface area of nearly 12 thousand hectares across the country—thus far only a few have been brought under sharper scholarly focus with several others under way.[72] Architectural

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[72] Christian Adam and Martin Erdmann, *Sperrgebiete in der DDR: Ein Atlas von Standorten des MfS, des MdI, des MfNV und der GSSD*, 1 edition (Berlin: Bundesbeauftragter für Stasi-Unterlagen (BStU), 2015), 24; In addition to Adam and Erdmann's study on the quantity and location of Stasi occupied premises, and Halbrock's work on the ministry's collossal building project in Berlin-Lichtenberg discussed above, research to date focused on spatial technologies of incarceration and subjugation in the Stasi's remand prisons (Untersuchungshaftanstalt - UHA). See: Martin Albrecht, *Die Untersuchungshaftanstalt Der Staatssicherheit in Leipzig. Mitarbeiter, Ermittlungsverfahren Und Haftbedingungen*, BF Informiert 38 (Berlin: Bundesbeauftragter für Stasi-Unterlagen (BStU), 2017); Nancy Aris and Clemens Heitmann, eds., *Via Knast in Den Westen. Das Kaßberg-Gefängnis Und Seine Geschichte* (Leipzig: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 2013); Alexander Bastian, *Repression, Haft und Geschlecht: die*

histories of the production and use of certain building complexes and building typologies

constitute research fields of their own right—some of which were included in the original

research plan of this dissertation but could not come to fruition due to the archival restrictions

imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic. The dissertation, instead, centers the background

mechanisms at work for the realization of these architectural projects, gesturing towards the

importance and urgency for writing their focused histories and contributing to future findings

within this realm. Another important area of inquiry—the question of experience and subjectivity

under surveillance—also does not figure into this dissertation. Social actors such as architects,

engineers, administrators, and policy makers, along with "watchers"—namely the surveillance

agents—are pivotal to the story told here, and I aim to direct my future research endeavors to the

experience of surveillance and to investigations devoted to the biographies of architects working

within the Stasi's networks either willfully or under duress.

Chapter Overview

Over its three comprehensive chapters, the dissertation examines the Stasi's roles as a

building agent, building developer, and building user. Opening with the history of the GDR's

Untersuchungshaftanstalt des Ministeriums für Staatssicherheit Magdeburg-Neustadt 1958-1989, 2012; Johannes Beleites, *Schwerin, Demmlerplatz die Untersuchungshaftanstalt des Ministeriums für Staatssicherheit in Schwerin* (Schwerin: Der Landesbeauftragte für Mecklenburg-Vorpommern für die Unterlagen des Staatssicherheitsdienstes der ehemaligen DDR, 2011); Katrin Blacha et al., *Das Suhler Stadtgefängnis: von der Errichtung als Königlich-Preussisches Kreisgerichtsgefängnis bis zur Auflösung als Untersuchungshaftanstalt des Ministeriums für Staatssicherheit im Bezirk Suhl 1860-1989* (Suhl: Stadtverwaltung Suhl, Kulturamt, 2007); Karl Wilhelm Fricke and Silke Klewin, *Bautzen II Sonderhaftanstalt unter MfS-Kontrolle 1956 bis 1989 ; Bericht und Dokumentation*, 2007; Andrea Herz, *Untersuchungshaft und Strafverfolgung beim Staatssicherheitsdienst Erfurt, Thüringen* (Erfurt: Landesbeauftragter des Freistaates Thüringen für die Unterlagen des Staatssicherheitsdienstes der Ehemaligen DDR, 2000); Andrea Herz and Wolfgang Fiege, *Haft und politische Polizei in Thüringen 1945 - 1952 zur Vorgeschichte der MfS-Haftanstalt Erfurt-Andreasstraße*, 2002; Hubertus Knabe and Sandra Gollnest, *Gefangen in Hohenschönhausen Stasi-Häftlinge berichten* (Berlin: List, 2014); Nadine Meyer, Dierk Hoffmann, and Stefan Creuzberger, *Die MfS-Untersuchungshaftanstalt Berlin-Pankow - Gefängisalltag in der DDR der achtziger Jahre* (Potsdam, 2013), http://nbn-resolving.de/urn:nbn:de:kobv:517-opus-71405; Jenny Schekahn and Tobias Wunschik, *Die Untersuchungshaftanstalt der Staatssicherheit in Rostock Ermittlungsverfahren, Zelleninformatoren und Haftbedingungen in der Ära Honecker* (Berlin: Bundesbeauftragter für Stasi-Unterlagen (BStU), 2012); Gabriele Schnell, *Das "Lindenhotel": Berichte aus dem Potsdamer Geheimdienstgefängnis* (Berlin: Links, 2012).

and the MfS' founding, Chapter 1 charts changes in the East German state security apparatus' leadership and rhetoric to study the ministry's increasing involvement in the surveillance and control of the East German material sphere from the 1950s until the 1980s. The chapter locates three milestones—the 1953 East German uprising, the 1957 appointment of Erich Mielke as Minister of State Security, and the 1961 building of the Berlin Wall—as events consequential to the ministry's refashioning as an institution responsible with both state and national security, the latter of which encompassed tasks in resource and risk management and supplying the nation. As I show, for the MfS' security administration, this prompted an investment in building production and the Stasi started acting as "a building agent" overseeing the efficiency, productivity, and security of the building industry.

To interrogate the MfS' economically motivated monitoring and reporting activities targeting architecture, I first examine industrialization and standardization of building production from the late 1950 until the mid-1970s and the interrelated political, organizational, and technological developments of the period. The chapter specifically focuses on the increasing streamlining of building administration under Ulbricht and the industrial combine reform under Honecker, arguing that they facilitated the MfS' systematic and efficient infiltration and information gathering capacities. The chapter then turns to the ways the Stasi monitored and reported on the East German building industry, especially housing production, over the 1970s and 1980s. I explore the different methods of information collection employed, varying outcomes they yielded, and the Stasi's ability and willingness to critically analyze these results. I conclude the chapter by demonstrating that the significance and influence of the ministry's role as a "building agent" must be comprehended within the context of its activities as a mass producer of buildings.

Chapter 2 traces the Stasi's activities as a "building developer" by presenting the first study of the ministry's architectural divisions and subordinate building enterprises. The chapter shows that the MfS increasingly saw architecture—in its bureaucracy and its form—as a key arena for surveillance and control, and hence as a necessary extension of the security apparatus, which was invested in safeguarding both the national and ministerial building economy and improving the working and living conditions of its employees. The chapter first examines the architectural history of the functionary settlement *Waldsiedlung Wandlitz*: one of the largest and longest running architectural projects undertaken by the Stasi. I show how this project ushered the state security apparatus' evolution from—what I term—a "building commissioner" to a building contractor between 1954 to 1962 and locate the rationale behind this development in a shift from individual oversight to institutional control. The chapter explores the evolution of the MfS' building administration, as well, demonstrating that its bureaucracy of building became increasingly centralized and streamlined over the 1960s and 1970s—a point I discuss within the context of the GDR's planned economy and industrial reform.

With an in-depth financial, legal, administrative, and managerial history of the Stasi's last and largest building enterprise—the VEB Spezialhochbau Berlin (1975-1989)—the chapter finally explores how the ministry started seeing its building industry as a field of scientific-technical development and socio-economic progress by the 1980s. I show that the swift growth and diversification of the Stasi's building capacities led to the bourgeoning of its surveillance bureaucracy, detrimental to the ministry's social, economic, and technological objectives. I conclude the chapter by discussing the reasons behind this bureaucratic expansionism, arguing that it was a measure intended to compensate for the lack of visual supervision as the latter could not be established due to economic exigencies.

Chapter 3 interrogates by what means the Stasi read, registered, and used the built environment for secret policing. Focusing on a particular genre of state surveillance called "operational surveying," the chapter examines the modes and strategies by which East German state power operated through space—specifically, the urban and architectural space of cities. I show how surveys helped the Stasi explore the built environment according to accessibility, visibility, and mobility, deploying the techniques of counting, watching, drawing, and mapping. I illustrate these points through a close visual analysis of various survey media—plans, sections, photographs, and written reports—with which the Stasi maintained the secrecy of its operations, rationalized its observation and interception methods, and tried to render surveillance objective and efficient.

The chapter explores the representational conventions, and cataloging and verification practices for surveying, as well, and investigates how the architectural and spatial knowledge gained became transferrable to and communicable between various surveillance agents. I make these points explicit by examining the instrumentality of surveys for recruiting and meeting with informants. For East German state surveillance, buildings were not passive objects but active constituents of its operations, as I demonstrate through a comparative analysis of the Stasi's surveys targeting old and new housing settlements. I finally discuss the ways East German prefabricated housing both facilitated and complicated methods of state surveillance, ultimately resisting the panoptic aspirations of state power. In conclusion, I argue that the Stasi's infiltration of East German society was both a social and spatial phenomenon and consider the frictions pertaining to this architectural-spatial infiltration by revisiting Michel Foucault's observations on architecture, surveillance, and power.

Chapter 1

Stasi as a Building Agent:

Monitoring and Controlling the Building Industry

"How long does it take to break open a brass double-cylinder keylock by force, if the lock is secured by a pressure-casted zinc rosette?" This was the inquiry headlining a 1981 report by the Stasi's Technical Examination Post (*Technische Untersuchungsstelle*),[1] which examined how efficient the described rosette—produced by the *VEB Sächsische Schloßfabrik*, a state-owned lock factory in Pegau, Saxony—was as a security measure against break-ins.[2] The test was performed as follows: first, "an experimental wooden door" was fitted "expertly, precisely, and without a gap" with a typified mortise lock, brass keylock, and the protective rosette, all acquired from the same factory. The door was then cracked open using conventional home repair tools—a hammer, a chisel, and a pipe wrench, to be exact. The resulting report reflected on the

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[1] The Stasi's Technical Examination Post (Technische Untersuchungsstelle) is an elusive historical subject. The most comprehensive publications on the MfS' structure, fields of activity, and working principles—namely, Siegfried Suckut's MfS-Wörterbuch, Roger Engelmann, Bernd Florath and Helge Heidemeyer's MfS-Lexikon, and Roland Widemann's Diensteinheiten des MfS, a catalogue of MfS departments—do not have dedicated entries about this unit. The only mention of the post is found in the MfS-Wörterbuch, where it is defined as providing "scientific-technical expertise." Siegfried Suckut, *Das Wörterbuch der Staatssicherheit. Definitionen zur "politisch-operativen Arbeit,"* 3rd Edition (Berlin: Ch. Links Verlag, 2016), 149; Archival research to this date has not revealed a document that could shed light on this unit's nature and function. The Technical Examination Post might have been part of the MfS' Institute for Technical Examination (Institut für Technische Untersuchungen), which itself was part of the ministry's so-called Operative-Technical Sector (Operativ-Technischer Sektor – OTS) responsible with developing technical surveillance devices, chemical surveillance methods, and examination of foreign spy technologies, among others. Journalistic reporting supports this derivation. For example, the Technical Examination Post was reportedly involved in the radioactive marking of "suspicious" or "hostile" letters, documents, and money to effectively trace and stop their circulation. The unit was also reportedly involved in inspecting potential explosives. See: Stefan Berg, "Die Spur Der Strahlen," *Spiegel*, March 19, 2000, 12/2000 edition, sec. Politik, https://www.spiegel.de/politik/die-spur-der-strahlen-a-8188040a-0002-0001-0000-000015985956; Samuel Salzborn, "Die Stasi Und Der Westdeutsche Rechtsterrorismus. Drei Fallstudien (Teil I)," *Deutschland Archiv*, April 15, 2016, www.bpb.de/224836.

[2] "Erprobungsbericht," MfS Technische Untersuchungsstelle, Berlin, 5.5. 1981, BArch DH 1/32898, fol. 1.

diligence with which this peculiar test was carried out. The Stasi listed the weight and length of the tools used for further precision and detailed the position of the chisel and the number of hammer blows. How long the entire operation lasted was reported in detail: how many seconds it required to stretch, indent, and break the security rosette, how many seconds it took to remove the keylock, and to pierce and ultimately pick the lock with a skeleton key (*Sperrhaken*). The Stasi also observed how much material trace the effort left behind. With a total of 2 minutes required to "forcefully surmount" the door, and the removal of the rosette taking 70 seconds, the Stasi concluded that the application of pressure-cast zinc rosettes do not exhibit notable security benefits as it "prolonged the time of breaking-in only insignificantly."

In what capacity did the Stasi conduct this study, by what means, and to what ends? Even though the broader purpose of the experiment is not openly stated, by highlighting "security benefits" at its conclusion, the report suggests that the inspected keylock system was considered for application at spaces of state security significance, which could have been the offices of the ministry or other party and state institutions. The keylock—or, more precisely, the security rosette—in question was not developed per the Stasi's order but simply sampled from the indicated factory's production catalogue, to which the report refers at the start. In search for an adequate "security fitting," the Stasi was thus acting as an intermediary: obtaining an existing architectural technology, testing it by mobilizing its expertise (in this case, in lock picking and technical observation) and forwarding suggestions on its use without enforcing it.

With all tools inspected closely, steps observed carefully and even scientifically, and results accounted for painstakingly, this so-called technical examination emblematically illustrates the Stasi's activities as—what I term—a *building agent*: an expert mediator collecting information on architectural processes and artifacts and communicating them between the East

German state and its building industry. In this capacity, the Stasi operated on an axis on which

building practices, surveillance methods, and security concerns intersected in the GDR: an axis

that necessitates careful delineation for the MfS, as a state security and secret police

organization, was intimately involved in the production of the East German built environment.

This chapter interrogates a specific facet of this involvement: the Stasi's economically

motivated monitoring and reporting activities targeting the East German building industry. The

Stasi was tasked with surveilling the GDR's industrial labor force since the early 1950s in order

to keep the pulse of workers and prevent espionage and sabotage cases. From the 1960s onward,

these surveillance and policing measures became more systematic and economically contingent,

and the East German building industry became a key field of control. The Stasi, primarily

through its Main Department XVIII (*Hauptabteilung XVIII*) and its network of informants,

monitored sites of building production and construction to ensure the productivity and efficiency

of the centrally planned building economy. The state security apparatus inspected plan

fulfillment, adherence to building codes and guidelines, and safety measures; it monitored

workers' disputes, kept a tab on the shopfloor atmosphere, and assessed enterprise managers'

and building administrators' job performance. These issues concerned not only state security but

also national security, specifically with the promotion of the building industry to a primary

vehicle for the GDR's socio-economic progress and the commencement of the Housing Program

over the 1970s. In this capacity, I argue that the Stasi acted as a building agent: it regularly

reported the information it collected to the GDR's center of decision-making, the Politbüro of the

SED and the district branches of the party, conveying both successes and failures, and dwelling

on their causes without intervening into administrative or industrial processes. This was

significant because, even though the state security apparatus did not (or could not) act as an

economic steering organ for the state, by the 1980s it was capable of critically assessing the information it received and engage these insights to steer its own building economy.

Over its three sections, this chapter investigates the developments in the MfS' self-conception, fields of activity, and expertise as they correlated with the developments in the industrialization of building production. The first section provides the historical background to the Stasi's self-conception as the guardian of the East German material sphere. I locate three milestones that gradually expanded the state security apparatus from an organization that fought external enemies to one that confronted internal threats: the East German uprising of June 1953, Erich Mielke's appointment as minister in 1957, and the building of the Berlin Wall in 1961. I discuss how these events prompted the MfS to base its legitimacy on performing as a control organ overseeing the economy, which paved the way for its involvement in the building industry.[3]

The second section charts the industrialization of East German building production from the late 1950 until the mid-1970s and the interrelated political, organizational, and technological changes and advancements. I explore how the Khrushchev-era brought about a shift in the significance of architecture from a practice improving living conditions to one that helped scientific-technical development across the Soviets. I trace the ways this new emphasis on the building industry was enacted, first by Walter Ulbricht and later under Erich Honecker, through

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[3] Here, some discursive analysis on the use of the term "control" would be in place, especially to comprehend how the practice of control has historically been understood within the political geography of the Soviets. The Russian use of the term "kontrol" connotes both to "verify"—as well as to check, examine, and audit—and to "observe." Jan S. Adams states that this second meaning of the term "kontrol" denotes the act of superintending, or putting someone's action, work, or operation under surveillance. E. A. Rees adds that the word can also be translated as monitoring, surveying, inspecting, and regulating. It must be acknowledged that such control structures, with all their underlying political-economic purposes, historiographical connotations and discursive burden, have been adopted from the Soviets into the political-economic system of the GDR. Jan Steckelberg Adams, *Citizen Inspectors in the Soviet Union: The People's Control Committee* (New York; London: Praeger Publishers, 1977), 3; E. A Rees, *State Control in Soviet Russia: The Rise and Fall of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspectorate, 1920-34* (Basingstoke; London: MacMillan, 1987), 1.

administrative, policy, and industrial reforms over the 1960s and 1970s. The section specifically focuses on the increasing streamlining of building administration under Ulbricht and the industrial combine reform under Honecker. I analyze the repercussions of these reforms for the MfS' ability to function as a building agent and show that streamlined administrative processes allowed the Stasi to effectively establish a surveillance bureaucracy over a compliance bureaucracy, while the combine reform allowed the ministry to simulate the territorial logic of building production in its own territorial structure. These developments, which facilitated the MfS' systematic and efficient infiltration and information gathering capacities, were complemented by the standardization and typification of housing production—the crown jewel of the GDR's socio-economic program—as it helped the Stasi also standardize inspection and control of plan fulfillment, manufacturing guidelines, and building codes.

In the third section, I turn to the ways the Stasi monitored and reported on the East German building industry, and specifically on housing production, over the 1970s and 1980s. Following an overview of the ministry's Main Department XVIII, under which these activities were carried out, I first specify four different modes of information collection and assessment— namely, bureaucratic surveillance, technical observation, supervision, and mood reporting. Through specific case studies, I show that these methods yielded different outcomes: while, for example, bureaucratic surveillance resulted in re-reporting information already available to the party, through workplace supervision the Stasi acted like a clandestine human resources department. With an in-depth analysis of reports produced by the Main Department XVIII, the section finally discusses the Stasi's ability and willingness to uncover and present problems endemic to the GDR's building administration and planned economy. In doing so, I critically

engage with existing scholarship that define the MfS' economically contingent surveillance activities as useless and trivial.

Scholars examining the state security apparatus' role in and impact on the GDR's centrally planned economy and industrial production focus on chemical, energy, and microelectronics sectors. In these analyses, which refer to the Stasi's activities as "economic surveillance" or "industrial management," the Stasi's manifold control functions pertaining to building production has not been considered. This chapter ultimately responds to this historiographical gap and concludes by revisiting the concept of "building agent." I argue that the ministry's oversight of the building industry must be understood within the context of its activities as a mass producer of buildings, which elucidates the former's influence and significance, specifically because the Stasi did not produce plastics or energy, but it managed the largest building enterprise of the country.

Guardian of the East German Material Sphere, 1950 - 1964

An architectural history of the Stasi cannot be told without understanding the state security apparatus' function within the East German material sphere, and "the Stasi's interests were traditionally strong in the area of the economy," as Jens Gieseke states.[4] The notion of "national economy"—or "people's economy," as it was referred to within East German state terminology—was synonymous with "ideology," and the fight against ideological subversion— the founding premise of the MfS—was intrinsically understood as a fight to protect socialist political economy. This was not simply a structural feature of Soviet socialism but gained additional significance under the specific political conditions of the GDR. Instated by the Soviet

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[4] Gieseke, *The History of the Stasi*, 102.

forces following postwar occupation, the socialist single party-state, led by the Socialist Unity

Party (*Sozialistische Einheits Partei Deutschlands*), or the SED, needed to rest its legitimacy

largely on being the egalitarian and just alternative to capitalism. Within the duality of Cold War

Germanies, establishing and defending the GDR's top-down Soviet-socialist political-economic

system was thus a matter of state security.

A brief pre-history of the MfS shows that political motivations underlying its founding

were linked with national-economic concerns before the ministry's inception. The MfS is argued

to be the direct descendant of two organizations created by the Soviet Military Administration in

Germany (*Sozialistische Militäradministration in Deutschland – SMAD*): the K-5, a branch of

criminal police established in 1947 that focused on political persecution; and its short-lived

successor, the Main Administration for the Protection of National Economy (*Hauptverwaltung

zum Schutz der Volkswirtschaft*), formed in May 1949.[5] While the main task of K-5 was to fight

anti-communist political activity across the Soviet Occupation Zone (*Sozialistische

Besatzungszone – SBZ*), the subsequent administration put additional emphasis on espionage and

sabotage prevention to fight "enemies of the state."[6] With the founding of the GDR on October

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[5] Soviet authorities created the K-5 "to monitor officials in sensitive branches of the embryonic East German state apparatus," as Gary S. Bruce writes. While the K-5 was directly controlled by the Soviet Military Administration, its successor, the Main Administration for the Protection of National Economy, reported directly to the German Central Administration of the Interior, bypassing the police. Yet, as Bruce cites Wilhelm Zaisser, the GDR's first minister of state security, the organization was "extremely small... only thirty employees, 'including the cleaning ladies.'" For a detailed account on the long history of the MfS' founding, see: Gary S. Bruce, "The Prelude to Nationwide Surveillance in East Germany: Stasi Operations and Threat Perceptions, 1945-1953," *Journal of Cold War Studies* 5, no. 2 (Spring 2003): 3–9; It must be noted that there are conflicting dates regarding the establishment of the Main Administration for National Economy. According to Bruce, it was May 1949, where as Ilko-Sasha Kowalczuk specifies it as October 1949, and Jens Gieseke as with the founding of the GDR. Ilko-Sascha Kowalczuk, *Stasi konkret: Überwachung und Repression in der DDR.* (München: C.H. Beck, 2013), 59; Jens Gieseke, *Die hauptamtlichen Mitarbeiter der Staatssicherheit: Personalstruktur und Lebenswelt 1950-1989/90* (Berlin: Ch. Links Verlag, 2000), 49. Even though the dictionary translation of Volkswirtschaft is "national economy," its literal translation is "people's economy," as Bruce also refers to it. For the East German Soviet-socialist state apparatus, the term Volkswirtschaft carried the double meaning of "state economy" as "people" and "state" were theoretically comprehended as one and the same body.

[6] This emphasis on espionage and sabotage can also be drawn from the administration's naming as an organ for the protection of people's i.e., national economy. Historian Ilko-Sascha Kowalczuk suggests that, internally, the organization was called "Administration for the Protection of People's Property" (Haupverwaltung zum Schutz des

7, 1949, the Main Administration for the Protection of National Economy shortly became part of the newly formed Ministry of the Interior (*Ministerium des Innern*), and four months later, on February 8, 1950, it was dissolved and the Ministry of State Security was founded.

The decision to form the state security apparatus as a standalone executive department was already laden with economic rhetoric. The Minister of the Interior, taking the floor of the provisional *Volkskammer* on the day of the MfS' founding, highlighted "repeated bombings of late… in national industries and on state farms," which he argued were orchestrated by "the Anglo-American imperialists and their henchmen."[7] He cited reports on "fires, especially in the countryside, seemingly due to negligence, but… really caused by wealthy peasants who were out to harm… all the beneficiaries of land reform," and "terror and espionage organizations… blowing up production sites under the orders of the British and American intelligence services." These reports were already feeding a frenzy across state chambers and news outlets prior to the Volkskammer meeting.[8] Implications were clear: there needed to be increased measures to safeguard the young socialist state's material sphere from spies and saboteurs, both at home and abroad.

The MfS was modeled after the Soviet intelligence service KGB; thus, it was conceived as a branch of the East German armed forces and organized militarily. Operating independently from other East German state organs and directly answering to the Politbüro, the ministry coalesced various functions. It gathered foreign intelligence through espionage and reconnaissance. It was tasked with domestic secret policing and carried out criminal

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Volkseigentums). Kowalczuk, *Stasi konkret*, 59; Historian Jens Gieseke, however, contests this finding, noting that the latter designation belonged to a completely different unit and the parallels drawn are an error due to similarities in their name. Gieseke, *Die hauptamtlichen Mitarbeiter der Staatssicherheit*, 65.

[7] Gieseke, quoting the meeting minutes from the tenth session of the provisional Volkskammer of the GDR, in: *The History of the Stasi*, 11.

[8] Gieseke, 11–12.

investigations on political activities, establishing a network of remand prisons for those accused of political crimes. Lastly, the ministry incorporated a military branch—namely, the *Feliks Dzierzynski* Guard Regiment (*Wachregiment*). Despite the strong economic rhetoric prompting its founding, in its early years, the MfS was largely focused on conventional functions of a political secret police and intelligence service. The "sweep of economic arrests" carried out by the ministry's Main Department III (*Hauptabteilung III*) during these years suggest that crimes against nationalized property were already understood as political crimes. Over the next two decades, the MfS became increasingly invested in the protection of East German national economy and, by extension, its building industry. To understand how safeguarding the East German material sphere became not only in rhetoric but also in practice an important extension of the MfS, three milestones must be highlighted: the East German uprising (*Volksaufstand*) of June 1953, the appointment of Erich Mielke as minister in 1957, and the building of the Berlin Wall in 1961.

1953: The East German Uprising

The East German uprising of June 17, 1953, marked by sweeping strikes and protests, was the culmination of a years-long struggle between industrial workers and the East German "workers' and peasants' state" (*Arbeiter-und-Bauern-Staat*) as to how, or whether, the Soviet socialist system would change the logic of production relations in a war-ridden and disillusioned society.[9] Since the late 1940s, the Soviet occupation regime and its successor, the East German state, had been pushing for a Taylorist mode of industrial management to increase labor input

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[9] As Gareth Dale and others have written, the 1953 East German uprising was not a one-day affair. While it reached its apex on June 17, the uprising spread between June 16 and 21, during which "1 and 1.5 million people, 6 to 9 percent of the total population, participated in strikes, demonstrations and rallies. Over 700 towns and villages were affected, and at least 0.5 million workers in well over 1,000 workplaces stopped work." Gareth Dale, *Popular Protest in East Germany, 1945-1989* (London, United Kingdom: Taylor & Francis Group, 2005), 9.

and meet production quotas.[10] This was regularly met with resistance from the workers.[11] To the experienced and skilled industrial workforce of Soviet ruled Germany, piecework and productivity wages—along with other hallmarks of Taylorism, such as norm setting, stopwatches, and time and motion studies—were familiar means of capitalist exploitation and hence ran against the egalitarian ideals propagated and promised by the socialist regime. In May 1953, the SED-regime called for an additional increase in work norms by 10%, which "translated into longer hours in the factory for the same wages."[12] This was the last straw and caused an immediate upheaval amongst the East German working class. Over the next month, the SED's efforts to diffuse the situation proved ineffective, and what started as a seemingly moderate demand for the reduction of work norms for factory workers quickly erupted into a nationwide uprising against the party, the Soviet regime, and overall political oppression, until it was infamously suppressed in a bloody battle accompanied by Soviet tanks.[13] Once the uprising was under control, both the MfS and the People's Police (*Volkspolizei*) swooped in with mass arrests.[14]

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[10] On Soviet Taylorism, see: Mark R Beissinger, *Scientific Management, Socialist Discipline and Soviet Power* (London: I.B. Tauris, 1988).

[11] East Germans were re-introduced with piecework by 1947 under the Soviet Military Administration (SMAD), which was immediately met with forms of resistance. Jeffrey Kopstein writes that "given the presence of the Soviet Army, the forms of resistance... remained largely amorphous and disorganized—shirking, grumbling, work to rule, dissimulation, and other weapons of the weak. Such weapons, however, apparently proved to be quite effective" with workers resisting to receive piecework and productivity wages. Foremen, for example, "could not be stopped from putting all the piecework tickets into a common urn in order to ensure equality of reward." Jeffrey Kopstein, *The Politics of Economic Decline in East Germany, 1945-1989* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997), 29.

[12] The suggested increase in work norms started causing strikes the same month, and "900 workers at the iron and steel pouring works in Leipzig marched out of the factory." Bruce, "The Prelude to Nationwide Surveillance in East Germany," 24–25.

[13] Although the MfS was directly ordered not to use lethal force, at least twenty protestors were killed after Soviet intervention. See: Gieseke, *The History of the Stasi*, 41; Bruce, "The Prelude to Nationwide Surveillance in East Germany," 27.

[14] Within two days, "the MfS and the Volkspolizei arrested 1744 people in East Berlin alone." Bruce, "The Prelude to Nationwide Surveillance in East Germany," 27; Over the next month, the number of arrestees increased gradually, reaching over six thousand people in July, a large portion of which was released after a short time. Gieseke, *The History of the Stasi*, 41.

Publicly, the uprising was immediately blamed on extraterritorial fascist provocation. Yet, within the inner circles of the SED it was deemed a fiasco of internal affairs. As Jeffrey Kopstein writes, the uprising "crippled the regime on the shop floor," with the First Secretary of the SED Walter Ulbricht coming to fear his own working class.[15] The uprising put the single party-state under heavy scrutiny from the Soviet leadership, as well. The MfS activities were ultimately questioned within this context. To the SED, the state security apparatus was ineffective in accurately assessing the mood amongst East Germans and in taking preventive measures against a domestic unrest of this magnitude. In reality, the Stasi was equipped neither to foresee the events of June 1953 nor to suppress them.[16]

Here, the MfS' condemnation must further be understood within the specific context of political transition in the USSR. The power vacuum that emerged after Stalin's death only three months earlier put various Soviet officials in fierce competition for the new leadership. Under its director Lavrentiy Beria, the KGB had accumulated extraordinary influence, rendering Beria as one of the frontrunners for this post. In a move to cease power, Nikita Khrushchev not only accused Beria of treason—which consequently led to Beria's execution—but also successfully campaigned to strip the KGB of several of its fields of activity, ultimately subordinating it to the Ministry of the Interior.[17] Braced in a concurrent political rivalry with the East German Minister of State Security Wilhelm Zaisser, Ulbricht saw the uprising as an opportunity to discredit his

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[15] Kopstein, *The Politics of Economic Decline in East Germany*, 37.

[16] Leading up to June 17, the SED ordered daily reports on the mood of the population, Bruce writes, yet these were based on information from the party's district leaders and not the Stasi, which testifies to the Stasi's "inability to maintain close surveillance of the GDR population during the early years of the GDR." The Stasi was also "unprepared for the scale of the upheavals of 16-17 June 1953, especially outside East Berlin." To Bruce, this "unpreparedness" was due to the MfS' focus of its "resources on Western targets, giving them precedence over internal surveillance." Bruce, "The Prelude to Nationwide Surveillance in East Germany," 26, 31.

[17] See: Christopher Andrew, *The Sword and the Shield: The Mitrokhin Archive and the Secret History of KGB* (New York, USA: Basic Books, 2001), 2–3; KGB was closely associated with the Ministry of State Control (Goskontrol) in the Stalinist Soviet Russia and one of Khrushchev's reforms entailed delinking the two ministries and decentralizing the Ministry of State Control. Adams, *Citizen Inspectors in the Soviet Union*, 46–47.

opponent, as well. In July 1953, Zaisser—coined "German Beria"—was dismissed as minister and expelled from the Politbüro, and the ministry was restructured as a state secretariat and subordinated to the Ministry of Interior.[18]

The post-Stalinist era brought about similar changes to the state security apparatuses across the Soviets. After Stalin's death and following Khrushchev's politics of relaxation, secret-police organizations in Poland and Czechoslovakia passed their prime and never again attained the same size or status.[19] Quite the opposite happened in the GDR. The Stasi's inability to predict and suppress the uprising led, instead, to a rethinking of the state security apparatus with a broader field of responsibility and a larger workforce. In the founding years of the GDR, the main threat to the new socialist state was perceived as mainly coming from "the criminal acts (espionage, diversion, sabotage, etc.) of imperialist secret services" and other subversive acts of the class enemy orchestrated by the West.[20] The June 1953 uprising, however, shifted the East German state's focus towards the "'threat from within,' which took the shape of personnel shortcomings, technical and organizational inadequacies, and structural deficiencies."[21]

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[18] Kopstein writes: "In the weeks immediately preceding and following the June strikes, Ulbricht squared off against several of his most important Politburo colleagues, including Interior Minister Wilhelm Zaisser and Rudolf Herrnstadt, the editor of Neues Deutschland, who insisted that Ulbricht had led the party astray by calling for the rapid construction of socialism. In a long and emotional nighttime Politburo meeting on July 7, 1953, nine members voted for Ulbricht's removal as general secretary and only two (Erich Honecker and Hermann Matern) supported him. But in a strange twist of events, Ulbricht was able not only to stay in office but, with the assistance of the Soviet Military Administration, in the following weeks managed to turn the tables on his opponents, forcing many into silence and removing the most ambitious from power altogether. Indeed, with Moscow's assistance, he emerged stronger in the SED than ever before." Kopstein, *The Politics of Economic Decline in East Germany*, 37; For a brief discussion on Zaisser and his successors, Ernst Wollweber and Erich Mielke, see: Daniela Münkel, "The Ministers for State Security," in *State Security. A Reader on the GDR Secret Police*, ed. Daniela Münkel (Berlin: Bundesbeauftragter für Stasi-Unterlagen (BStU), 2015), 24.

[19] The "Bezpieka" of Poland, Gieseke notes, "passed its peak as a violent agent of transformation by the mid-1950s. (...) Even the Soviet KGB, the mother of all Communist secret-police organizations, with its approximately 500,000 employees at the end, had a considerably lower ratio of agents in proportion to the overall population." This ratio was 1 to 595 in the USSR, compared to 1 to 867 in Czechoslovakia, and 1 to 1,574 in Poland. In the GDR, however, there was one MfS employee for every 180 East German citizen. Gieseke, *The History of the Stasi*, 48–49.

[20] For an official description of how the MfS defined its "main tasks," see: Fricke, *Die DDR-Staatssicherheit*, 14.

[21] Franz-Otto Gilles, "The Rationale of Muddling Through. The Function of the Stasi in the Planned Economy," Political History (Berlin: Freie Universität Berlin, Forschungsstelle Diktatur und Demokratie FB Politische Wissenschaft, May 1997), 7.

Discontent amongst the workforce, demonstrated by the reluctance to participate in the campaign economy or to oblige with guidelines of shop floor discipline, were now considered to be displays of dissident behavior and hence internal threats. The solution to the GDR's "workers' problem" was to create "a more complete system of monitoring and controlling"—in other words, of mass surveillance.[22]

Later the same year, what had now become the State Secretariat for Security (*Staatssekretariat für Staatssicherheit*), or SfS, started establishing information groups sourcing unofficial informants to keep the pulse of the population.[23] The goal was not just to "weed out" saboteurs, spies, and diversionists but also to compose non-scientific "mood reports" to assess the discontents, demands, and mood swings of East Germans.[24] With "threats from within" defined on economic terms and as an aggregate of passive internal acts as opposed to active and targeted outside forces, sites of production became one of the centerpieces of improved monitoring efforts.[25] Not only workers but also managers and administrators were put under the radar of the SED and the MfS, and in 1955 the Stasi started the systematic inspection (*Überprüfung*) of managerial and administrative cadres, ranging from ministers to the directors

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[22] Bruce, "The Prelude to Nationwide Surveillance in East Germany," 28–29.

[23] "These information groups collected and evaluated reports of informants from the general population. The SfS was careful not to repeat the mistakes of the past, when reports from party members tended to present an inaccurate assessment of the public mood. In instructions outlining the procedure for collecting information, Heinz Tilch, the head of the new information service (Informationsdienst) called for the use of unofficial informants rather than 'official sources' such as factory party chairmen, because 'real enemies do not usually show their true colors to functionaries.'" Bruce, 28–29.

[24] These mood reports were based on what the operatives and informants "picked up among their coworkers and neighbors at club meetings or waiting in line at the store," as well as at public events and tackled themes including responses to supply shortages and social policy —topics about which "East Germans could express their opinions relatively freely." Gieseke, *The History of the Stasi*, 116.

[25] "Unlike Directive 21/52 of 1952, which emphasized obtaining informants who could penetrate Western organizations," the Politbüro's September 9, 1953 resolution "focused on widening the informant network in important economic and administrative sites throughout the GDR." Bruce, "The Prelude to Nationwide Surveillance in East Germany," 30.

of significant industrial enterprises.[26] This fell under the responsibility of the state security apparatus' "national economy" department: the Main Department III.

Despite the widening of its informant network, over the next four years and under the leadership of Ernst Wollweber, the state security apparatus saw a brief suspension period regarding its employment numbers. The reason for this halt was Wollweber's alignment with de-Stalinization policies fiercely announced by Khrushchev in 1954, also known as the Khrushchev Thaw. Wollweber—who, with the restoration of the SfS back to a ministry in 1955 became a minister—defended a "relaxation of repression," and "aimed to reduced staffing levels by 10 to 20 percent."[27] His approach was unfavored by Walter Ulbricht, and the 1956 Hungarian Uprising strengthened only the latter's hand. In 1957, Wollweber resigned from his post and his deputy Erich Mielke was promoted to his place.

1957: Erich Mielke's Appointment as Minister

Mielke's appointment as the Minister of State Security, a position he held until 1989, was the second significant shift shaping the state security apparatus' function within East German national economy. Mielke put an end to Wollweber's relaxation objectives and resuscitated the ministry by resuming its growth over the following three decades. As Gieseke puts it, Mielke transformed the ministry from a security force shadow boxing "the image of the enemy as omnipresent imperialist forces threatening with encirclement" to a "widely ramified, barely transparent security bureaucracy with manifold tasks."[28] The sustenance of the MfS was partly owed to Mielke's success in adapting the organization to the shifting image of the enemy by

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[26] Maria Haendcke-Hoppe-Arndt, *Die Hauptabteilung XVIII: Volkswirtschaft* (Berlin: BStU, 1997), 21.
[27] Dennis, *Stasi*, 29; Gieseke, *The History of the Stasi*, 46. It must be mentioned that at this point, the MfS was no small organization: it had already amassed 17 thousand employees.
[28] Gieseke, *The History of the Stasi*, 48.

understanding state security, industrial production, and national economy as co-constitutive

affairs. It was, after all, Mielke, in his capacity as the head of the Main Administration for the

Protection of National Economy (1949-1950), who had urged for the founding of the MfS by

emphasizing material losses at industrial sites, farms, and transportation lines. He was familiar

with the success of this line of reasoning. What is more, Mielke was personally interested and

invested in overseeing the architectural activities of the ministry. As Wollweber's first deputy, he

inspected and approved of building projects for the MfS, even though this was not part of his

field of responsibilities.[29]

1961: Building of the Berlin Wall

A third milestone for the MfS' heightened focus on industrial production, workers'

issues, and national economy came with the building of the Berlin Wall in 1961. In a sense, the

erection of the Wall was the reification of Mielke's economic and state control vision and,

perhaps, its ultimate manifestation. The "anti-fascist protection" Wall, so the propaganda went,

was to prevent Western imperialist-capitalist influence and interference. This function of the

Wall was to render one of the major tasks of the Stasi—that of preventing foreign enemy

infiltration and activity—virtually obsolete. Yet, in the post-1961 period, the ministry's

responsibilities and budget saw a paradoxical increase. The Berlin Wall was neither a reactionary

gesture of isolationist politics nor was it merely a preventative measure against the ever-

increasing number of East Germans leaving the GDR for its Western counterpart.[30] Even though

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[29] For Mielke's involvement in the architectural production of the MfS, see: Chapter 2, 125-126.
[30] Between 1949 to 1961, 2.6 million people left or escaped the GDR. Measures were already taken since 1952 to close the inner German border and control this mass exodus, known as *Republikflucht*. As Corey Ross writes, between 1956-1957 "a temporary liberalization in the issuing of visas to West Germany… was abruptly halted… after recognition that over half of all cases of illegal emigration resulted from people legally visiting West Germany and failing to return." After 1957, the only route of escape was from Berlin to West Germany. Over the twelve years the border was not yet permanently closed, yearly an average of 200,000 people left East Germany. This number was especially high in 1953, with over 300,000 people escaping. See: Monika Tantzscher, *Die verlängerte Mauer:*

these considerations figured into the SED's decision to build the Wall, the core rationale was

more economic than ideological: it was to prevent the outflux of skilled workers much needed

for the fulfillment of the socialist-industrial revolution of the GDR.[31]

Between 1958 and 1961, at the height of the Cold War rivalry between East and West

Germanies, the GDR's primary economic mission was to overtake the Federal Republic of

Germany's (FRG) per capita consumption in hopes of making East Germany a favorable place to

live.[32] Material shortages, inefficiency of production and supply flows, and shortcomings in

capital investment notwithstanding, the GDR was battling to keep its labor force—arguably its

most valuable resource—in the country, as evinced by the exponentially rising numbers of East

German citizens migrating to the West. This constituted a problem for architectural production,

as well. Not only were builders but also newly trained architects were leaving the country in

great numbers. As Simone Hain writes, in 1956, the migration of architects to the Federal

Republic "had peaked. Out of thirty-six graduates of one cohort from Weimar architecture school

only four had stayed in the GDR."[33] East Germans were primarily leaving for the West because

of the seemingly irremediable disparity of overall living conditions between the two countries.

Systematic political repression, amplified by the suppression of the 1957 uprising, ensuing mass

arrests, and the scarcity of both adequate housing and consumer goods were fueling people's

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Die Zusammenarbeit der Sicherheitsdienste der Warschauer-Pakt-Staaten bei der Verhinderung von "Republikflucht," Analysen und Berichte 1/1998 (Berlin: Bundesbeauftragter für Stasi-Unterlagen (BStU), 1998), 3; Corey Ross, "Before the Wall: East German, Communist Authority, and the Mass Exodus to the West," *The Historical Journal* 45, no. 2 (June 2002): 459, 462; For year by year statistics of Republikflucht, see: Statista Research Department, "Übersiedlungen Zwischen Der DDR Und Der Bundesrepublik Deutschland 1949-1990" (Statista, December 31, 2002), https://de.statista.com/statistik/daten/studie/248905/umfrage/uebersiedlungen-zwischen-der-ddr-und-der-bundesrepublik-deutschland/.

[31] "The 'economically ruinous' population movement and the 'terrific consequences for the economy and society' threatened to 'bleed the GDR dry.'" Ross, "Before the Wall," 459–61; Also see: Peter C Caldwell, *Dictatorship, State Planning, and Social Theory in the German Democratic Republic* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006).

[32] Kopstein, *The Politics of Economic Decline in East Germany*, 43.

[33] Simone Hain, "Baugeschichte. Industrialisierung Des Bauens in Der DDR," *Db Deutsche Bauzeitung* 9 (2000): 42.

disillusionment with the socialist state's goals and promises.[34] Here, the SED officials found themselves in a double-bind: for the pace of production to meet the demand and improve living conditions, East German enterprises needed as many workers as possible; but as the production and demand gap was not closing, workers were continuing to leave. In permanently closing off the borders, the SED found the perfect solution to its workers problem, which inherently was a problem concerning national economy. The Berlin Wall, in this regard, symbolically embodied an ideological position while providing a practical solution to an economic dilemma.

As foreseen, the permanent closing of the East-West border "helped lower expenses for internal and external security," prompting a general budget cut to East German armed forces, with which economy was to be relieved.[35] Confronting the MfS' downsizing and the potential minimization of its significance, Mielke argued that "imperialism ha[s] to be defeated in the 'material sphere,' through increases in productivity and the accompanying improvement in overall living conditions."[36] According to the Stasi-Chief, the MfS was the only organizational body able to facilitate this. The proposed program of mass surveillance, economic influence, and state control elicited criticism, but Mielke's new operational logic for the MfS was in full correspondence with the operational logic of the Wall. As a result, the ministry was first left unscathed from the security cuts of 1963 and, only one year later, its budgetary and personnel expansion kick started, peaking in the 1970s and lasting well into the 1980s.

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[34] Jeffrey Kopstein shows that the wages in the GDR were higher relative to productivity rates throughout the 1950s. Thus, the discontent amongst East Germans with their state was not based on low wages or long working hours compared to the FRG. Kopstein, *The Politics of Economic Decline in East Germany*, 38.

[35] Gieseke, *The History of the Stasi*, 55.

[36] The chairman of the Central SED Party Control Commission, Hermann Matern… "criticize[d] Mielke's agenda of general control. The MfS should not be putting a large circle of citizens under surveillance, he said, just as it should not be trying to influence the state and economic apparatus. Its main task was to fight those who were organizing state crimes against the GDR out of hostility to the state," Gieseke writes. It was, however, Matern himself who had taken the opposite stance in the aftermath of June 1953. Urging to "hit hard and ruthlessly," Matern had "reminded his Stasi cadre--as if nothing happened--that the 'strengthening of state power,' and thus State Security... was still the 'main instrument' for creating the foundations of socialism." Gieseke, 43, 55.

On the one hand, the Stasi continued pursuing symbolic tasks, such as preventing imperialist-capitalist forces' penetration into the thought processes of East Germans or fighting against real and imaginary enemies of the state. On the other hand, the Stasi's practical raison d'être became overseeing the state and its economy in an effort to secure economic and political compliance and stability—in other words, to establishe conditions for certainty, as connoted by the many meanings of *Sicherheit*. To help increase productivity and secure the fulfillment of economic plans, the Stasi started monitoring the number of sick employees and warehousing practices, oversaw cost reduction at production plants and construction sites, and monitored the observance of regulations concerning production and plant security, among others. These activities were carried out by the ministry's "national economy" department: the Main Department III, restructured and renamed as Main Department XVIII in 1964. The Stasi also occasionally intervened in contract negotiations between domestic factories and capitalist firms, and increasingly got interested in finance and account control as well as the raw material supply industry. The state security apparatus even designed measures to evade economic embargoes, and drafted economic proposals, which then became the basis of the directives of the Council of Ministers, and even of the Politbüro.[37] Thus, throughout the relatively liberal and relaxed period of the Khruschchev Thaw, as well as the following détente years, the Stasi maintained its legitimacy by successfully pleading to function as the guardian of the material sphere. This had considerable repercussions for the East German building industry, especially housing production, due to its rising significance in the GDR's material and economic progress from the mid-1960s until the 1980s—a period that coincided with the MfS' exponential growth.

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[37] Gilles, "The Rationale of Muddling Through. The Function of the Stasi in the Planned Economy," 8, 11.

Industrialization of Architecture and its Economic Significance, 1954 – 1973

Between 1950 and 1958, the Stasi's economy driven interests mostly lay in basic industries such as raw material production and energy supply. From the late 1950s onward, the state security apparatus became gradually invested in another highly specialized branch of industrial production—namely, building production. There were three correlated factors that intensified the Stasi's involvement in the building industry as part of its function as the guardian of the material sphere: first, the post-1954 emphasis on industrialized, standardized, and typified methods of architectural production introduced by Khrushchev as part of his de-Stalinization agenda, subsequently coined "change of course" (*Kurswechsel*) in Germany; second, the introduction of Ulbricht's New Economic System (*Neue Ökonomische System*) in 1963, which designated architectural production as a motor of economic progress; and third, Erich Honecker's promotion of housing production as the centerpiece of his socio-economic program (*Wirtschaft- und Sozialpolitik*) in 1971.

1945-1954: From Stalinism to Khrushchev's Kurswechsel

From the years of Soviet occupation until the mid-1950s, architectural production across East Germany—as elsewhere in the Soviets—was largely carried out with conventional methods of construction.[38] They used regionally available building resources and expertise as the basis of building design and implementation. There were endeavors to create typified schemes, specifically for housing, schools, and hospitals, to help accelerate the process of rebuilding war-torn East German cities. However, such types—designed by local architectural brigades—used

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[38] The immediate postwar years of the Soviet Occupation Zone (Sowjetische Besatzungszone – SBZ) were retrospectively termed the period of *Enttrümmerung* —literally meaning 'removal of the rubble'— as war relief, rehabilitation and restoration of war-torn cities constituted the majority of architectural activities from 1945 to 1949. The founding of the GDR in 1950 was registered as the start of the *Aufbau* process.

non-industrial construction techniques and showed a great level of variation with every iteration. Despite the reluctancy with which "discourses on industrialization, standardization, prefabrication, and typification were followed" during the early 1950s, this period also saw the first large-scale efforts in this area.[39] The "first socialist city" of the GDR—the steel mill town of Stalinstadt (built between 1951 and 1957, since 1961 Eisenhüttenstadt)—for example, followed typified housing schemes for industrial workers.[40] Conceived in tandem as another model of a socialist city, the Stalinallee (renamed Karl-Marx-Allee) urban development in Berlin experimented with large-slab and skeleton construction systems.[41] These early projects, however, prioritized aesthetics over technics by complying with the Stalinist politico-aesthetic regime of socialist realism, which led to material shortages and long construction processes.[42]

After Khrushchev's seize of power in 1953, reforming the building industry carried both symbolic and economic significance for the new Soviet leader's de-Stalinization agenda. One of

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[39] Werner Durth, Jörn Düwel, and Niels Gutschow, *Architektur und Städtebau der DDR* (Frankfurt; New York: Campus, 1998), 466.

[40] Planned in 1950, Eisenhüttenstadt was to inhabit "a population of twenty-five thousand residents living in an area of roughly 308 acres." Samantha Fox, "The Socialist Bratwurst: East German Urbanism and Its Reemergence in the Present," *Journal of Urban History* 48, no. 3 (2022): 542. Between 1965 and 1987 the city continued its growth, with new housing complexes (Wohnkomplex - WK) in large-slab and panel construction. For the first comprehensive building history of the Eisenhüttenstadt, see: Ruth May, *Planstadt Stalinstadt: Ein Grundriss der Frühen DDR, aufgesucht in Eisenhüttenstadt*, Dortmunder Beiträge zur Raumplanung (Dortmund: IRPUD, 1999); For the most recent work chronicling the architecture of Eisenhüttenstadt, see: Martin Maleschka et al., *Architekturführer Eisenhüttenstadt: Stalinstadt*, Architekturführer/Architectural Guide (Berlin: DOM Publishers, 2021).

[41] "The GDR government and planning authorities developed Stalinstadt, in parallel with Stalinallee... as the model of a socialist city according to the 'Sixteen Principles of Urban Development.'" Jörn Janssen, "Stalinstadt/Eisenhüttenstadt: A Milestone in Twentieth Century Urban Design in Europe," *The Journal of Architecture* 5, no. 3 (2000): 307–14.

[42] In addition to the series of type-houses produced for new industrial cities such as Eisenhüttenstadt, the Institute for City- and Highrise- Building (*Institut für Städtebau und Hochbau*) of the Ministry of Construction developed in 1950 prototypes for multi-family housing. The Housing Research Institute of the German Building Academy (*Forschungsinstitut für Wohnungsbau der Deutschen Bauakademie – DBA*) was responsible for "regionalizing" these housing types, and some residential projects for Brandenburg and Ostsee regions from 1953-1954 were the result of such historicized adaptive redesign. There were other individual and small-scale residential projects, specifically in Berlin-Friedrichshain and Berlin-Johannistal, which were based on large-slab prefabrication and skeleton-construction. These structural solutions were, however, disguised under traditionalist prefabricated cladding elements due to stylistic concerns.

the means of denouncing Stalin's legacy was by pronouncing its economic failures, and

architecture was one of the realms where such failure was most visible and tangible. Speaking at

the All-Union Conference for building industry professionals in Moscow on November 30, 1954,

Khrushchev stated that current building methods and the design of cities in "monumental

monolithic concrete" was wasteful in terms of both human labor and material resources. Instead,

he championed complex mechanization of building processes, including the rapid development

of prefabricated reinforced concrete elements and techniques of on-site assembly, which would

decrease construction time and cost while increasing productivity and improving quality.[43]

The Khrushchev-turn of the mid 1950s ensued gradual but fundamental shifts within the

GDR's building economy and industry, marked by new legislation, restructuring of existing

architectural institutions and founding of new ones.[44] In 1955, Ulbricht officially announced the

East German "industrial turn" at the first Building Conference (*Baukonferenz*) of the GDR, and

by 1956, with the SED's Second Five-Year Plan taking effect, processes of "modernization,

mechanization, and automation"—as the party slogan suggested—were legally put into

operation.[45] Their realization happened slowly but steadily. From 1955 to 1958, East German

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[43] "Better, cheaper, faster" was Nikita Kruschchev's call at the 1954 Soviet building professionals conference and was previously used by GDR head of state Walter Ulbricht in 1952 during the re-development of Stalinallee. Andreas Schätzke, *Zwischen Bauhaus Und Stalinallee: Architekturdiskussion Im Östlichen Deutschland, 1945-1955* (Braunschweig & Wiesbaden: Vieweg Verlag, 1991), 70. Khruschchev's slogan "people do not need beautiful silhouettes, they need houses" also illustrates this point. As such level of mechanization required complete rationalization of architectural systems from design and manufacture to implementation, the Khrushchev-turn signaled a return to interwar architectural functionalism denounced by Stalin.

[44] One of these undertakings was the founding of the Office of Type (*Bureau für Typung*, after 1957 *Institut für Typung*) and the appointment of Gerhard Kosel as its director. In December 1954, only three weeks after Khrushchev's speech, Kosel presented his first report on the "methods of type-production" in official capacity.

[45] Ulbricht announced the "industrial turn" not only by underlining the economic advantages of integrated industrial building systems; his stance was carefully framed as a demotion of some of the stylistic concerns embedded in socialist realism. By asserting that "the further development of traditions has been understood incorrectly," and "in most of the cases has been associated with the external decoration of buildings," Ulbricht only implicitly endorsed de-Stalinization. In contrast to Khrushchev's announcement from the previous year campaigning against notions of monolithic monumentality and excessive adornment, Ulbricht's speech did not propose an explicit and complete rejection of traditionalism. Instead, as Virág Molnár notes, he "continued ambiguously to advocate 'architecture of national traditions.'" Molnár maintains that Ulbricht's initial move only condemning what can be termed as 'façade-architecture' and not socialist-realism in general, was a calculated means to sustain the ground of legitimization for

regions erected their own model construction sites and re-worked existing social housing plans

from the early 1950s to develop their own ground plan-based type projects. These regional

schemes could not fully comply with the goals set by the Second Five-Year Plan for they

hybridized conventional construction techniques with industrially manufactured type elements.[46]

The introduction of the GDR's very first housing type-systems L4 and Q3 by the German

Building Academy (*Deutsche Bauakademie*) in 1958 was the first concrete step towards

rationalization and standardization of industrialized building production across East Germany.[47]

The same year, the Ministry of Reconstruction (*Ministerium für Aufbau*) was restructured and

renamed as the Ministry of Building (*Ministerium für Bauwesen* – MfB).[48] Discursively, the

adoption of the term "Bauwesen" instead of "Architektur" signified the East German state's

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some of the GDR's contemporary 'prestige projects'—such as Stalinallee and Stalinstadt—which started around 1952-3 and were still underway by 1955. Hence, the transition the Kurswechsel proposed required a bureaucratic detour from socialist realism to modernist formalism, which came to characterize the slow but steady reorientation efforts between the years 1955 – 1958. Virág Molnár, *Building the State: Architecture, Politics, and State Formation in Postwar Central Europe*, 1 edition (London: Routledge, 2013), 56–57.

[46] See: Thomas Hoscislawski, *Bauen zwischen Macht und Ohnmacht: Architektur und Städtebau in der DDR* (Berlin: Verlag für Bauwesen, 1991), 163.; Ulrich Koenitz, "Wohngebäude in Montagebauweise - Geschichte und Perspektive am Beispiel der Wohnungsbauserie 70" (Dresden, Technische Universität Dresden, 2007), 64–65.

[47] These types were large-slab building systems (Großblockbauweise) with one different yet essential feature: the loadbearing wall. The L4 used loadbearing walls across its longitudinal axes (hence the code L), whereas in Q3 transverse walls were load bearing (hence the code Q). The load-bearing longitudinal walls of the L4, Hoscislawski argues, presented "flexibility of interior planning by enabling different room widths across the ground plan." Thomas Hoscislawski, *Bauen zwischen Macht und Ohnmacht: Architektur und Städtebau in der DDR* (Berlin: Verlag für Bauwesen, 1991), 163. Q3, on the other hand, proposed a significantly more rigid ground plan as the width of rooms were now determined by prefabricated elements, which were not produced in variety for economic reasons. Q3 stood out as the more economically feasible solution to typification for the use of concrete limited to the transverse walls meant a decrease in material costs. Although, in Q3, the façade was no longer a loadbearing element and hence could be built out of lightweight elements and with more freedom in design, the prefabricated ceiling/roof spanning elements were produced only in two sizes (2,4 meters and 3,6 meters according to the 1,2 meters raster) for the sake of reducing the range of different standard elements, and this ultimately resulted in the limitation of room size variables, adding further internal rigidity to the Q3 type-system. ; Until 1969, only in Berlin 30 thousand housing units were built after the Q3 type-project. Roland Enke and Ulrich Giersch, *Plattenbauten in Berlin: Geschichte, Bautypen, Bauprojekte, Kunst, Propaganda* (Berlin: Bien & Giersch, 2013), 54.

[48] This name change can be read equivocally as the move away from "Aufbau" coincides with the closing of the *Aufbau* period within the GDR historiography. Literally meaning "reconstruction" or "building up," the period of 1949-1955 is coined "Aufbau" to signify the introduction and establishment of socialism. The later period is known as *Ankunft* with the so-called arrival of socialism.

outlook on the primary tasks awaiting the ministry: to pave the way for a scientifically

determined architectural production.

One of the most significant consequences of the *Kurswechsel* was its modification of how

the relationship between architecture and industrial progress was understood in the GDR. From

1950 to 1955—a period marked by efforts of rebuilding and shaped by the GDR's first Five Year

Plan—pushing for a quantitative increase in architectural production, especially within the

context of urban development and housing, was believed to lead to industrial development.[49] Put

differently, providing productive powers better spatial conditions was to improve their industrial

input. Thus, during the first half of the 1950s, the political economy of the East German building

industry focused largely on providing the working class in industrial districts with housing.[50] The

Kurswechsel transformed this linear causality between architectural production and industrial

progress to one of reciprocity. Architecture came to be understood not only as a praxis that

improved living conditions but as a scientific-technological field that benefitted the GDR's

overall technical-industrial progress. Advancements in industrialized production over the 1960s,

from methods of rationalization to processes of mechanization, contributed to this shift.

Ultimately, with economic exigencies replacing aesthetic concerns, East German building

industry was promoted as one of the principal vehicles behind the GDR's economic progress.

This newly attributed economic significance put architectural production under the radar

of the MfS' expanding economy-oriented activities starting with 1958. Yet, the ministry was far

from being able to exercise the kind of ubiquitous control it was seeking for two reasons. First,

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[49] This period is termed as the *Aufbau* within GDR historiography, which means "construction" and can be literally translated as "building up."

[50] As Christine Hannemann points out, Ulbricht's announcement of the GDR's first Five-Year-Plan in 1950, where he proclaimed building must be "for the industry by the industry," was not about the industrialization of building production: rather, it implied that "pushing for housing construction will lead to industrial development," not as a scientific-technological field but by satisfying the needs of industrial workers who would be encouraged to satisfy the needs of national economy. Hannemann, *Die Platte: Industrialisierter Wohnungsbau in der DDR*, 58.

as discussed above, the MfS' economic reorientation was a process that lasted until 1964. Second, by the late 1950s, East German building industry—in its administration, management, and technological-material base—had not yet reached the level of centralization and standardization necessary for a systematic and "efficient" state control and monitoring. The period between 1958 and 1965 changed this. Three examples from the bureaucracy, technology, and manufacture of architecture will help explain the trajectory of these changes.

1958-1965: Streamlined Bureaucracy and Industrialization of Building Production

In 1958, a new state regulation was put in place that removed the task of "quality control of building production" from design offices and construction sites, declaring building control to be "the duty of the state government."[51] The governmental unit assigned with this task was State Building Control (*Staatliche Bauaufsicht*), or StBA: a state agency structurally not part of the Ministry of Building but answered directly to its minister. The founding of the StBA signaled two shifts in the organization of the GDR's architectural production. First, what is termed "building control" was now reformulated as "state building control," linking this activity inextricably to centralized state regulation. Second, the inspection of architectural production was categorized as a task separate from its design, planning, and implementation. Initially, the StBA was tasked with inspecting the accordance of architectural planning and construction with the legal provisions and technical codes determined by the German Building Law (*Deutsche Bauordnung*). In 1960, however, the agency's responsibilities were expanded.[52] Now, it was to inspect and approve architectural projects on the basis of their conformity to centrally mandated standards and types, influence architectural projects in regard to their economic and

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[51] See: "Zur Organizationform der Prüfstellen der Staatlichen Bauaufsicht," dateless, ca. 1959, BArch DH1/15212, fol.1.

[52] See: "Zur Durchsetzung der 3. Verordnung über die Staatliche Bauaufsicht," ca. 1960, BArch DH1/15386a, fol. 1.

architectural-technical solutions, devise measures against material waste and work loss at

construction sites, and oversee the consistency of building construction with relevant building

plans.[53] In short, the StBA became a "central control organ for the state-led management of

architecture (*Bauwesen*) towards the technical and economic preparation and implementation of

building measures."[54] As this example illustrates, between the late 1950s and early 1960s, the

East German state enacted policies and established institutions separate from other fields of

architectural practice (design, planning, manufacture, and construction) to centralize and

streamline bureaucratic control over the building industry.

Structural changes such as this were justified on two fronts: as efforts to avoid the

duplication of responsibilities amongst East German architectural institutions, and as measures to

suspend the influence of the industry on building control.[55] Politically, however, they were

responses to Khrushchev's failed mission to dismantle top-down bureaucratization as part of his

de-Stalinization agenda. Across the Soviet space, the years between 1953 and 1958 were marked

by efforts to decentralize the bureaucratization of the state apparat.[56] Nonetheless, after 1958, in

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[53] "Die Hauptaufgaben der Staatlichen Bauaufsicht im Ministerium für Bauwesen," 2.10.1963, BArch DH1/15386, fol. 1.

[54] As formulated in: "Verantwortung und Aufgaben der Deutschen Bauakademie bei der Mitarbeit an den Aufgaben der Staatlichen Bauaufsicht," dateless, BArch DH1/15386, fol.1.

[55] In this sense, the StBA was one of the "interdependencies" established by the State Planning Commission, which worked towards creating measures and regulations that would "reject the interests of individual partial spheres that might run counter to the macroeconomic—but often politically determined—priorities" of the controlled economic fields. André Steiner, *The Plans That Failed: An Economic History of the GDR* (New York & Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2013), 4.

[56] One of the most important missions of Khrushchev's de-Stalinization agenda was to dismantle the top down bureaucratization of the Soviet state control machinery for it was seen as anti-Leninist in nature and had helped Stalin establish total power over state operations. In an effort to organize control from the "bottom-up," (with the party seen as the baseline of society) Khrushchev decentralized the Soviet Ministry of State Control (Goskontrol) in 1957 and, between 1958 and 1961, widened the economic role of the party by "making party officials directly responsible for production results and compliance maintenance." Decentralization of control systems further instructed party officials "to use their own initiatives only to tailor control tasks to local conditions." Here, "local conditions" meant conditions within the Soviets republics. However, the period of 1958-1961 was also marked by heavy criticism in regard to the ineffectiveness of the newly instituted measures due to their incoherency, discoordination, and parallelism, especially between central and republic party commissions of control. By June 1961, the chain of command between party control units were strengthened, and local organs of state control were made responsible to their respective union-republic control commissions. In 1962, with the transformation of the Central Control Commission to the Party-State Control

the USSR as well as in the GDR, problems with decentralization—and, specifically, decentralization of the compliance establishment—convinced the political elite that a centrally regulated industrial reform cannot take effect without an accompanying and equally centralized control structure overseeing productivity and efficiency of industrial production.[57]

Ulbricht's New Economic System (*Neue Ökonomische System*), launched in 1964, can be understood within this context. Acknowledging that piecework reform was negated once and for all with the June 1953 uprising, the GDR turned towards managerial solutions. Ulbricht's new system introduced a technocratic reform that decentralized economic responsibility to increase profitability;[58] but at the same time, it streamlined bureaucratic control over the economy instead of eliminating it.[59] Put differently, while allowing enterprises a certain level of autonomy in their management and encouraging them with incentives, Ulbricht's reform simultaneously strengthened top-down control to maintain the compliance establishment. This approach was to make planning and control more efficient by taking "crisis management" off the plates of state organs and place it in the hands of producers.[60] These developments put the MfS, with its ever-

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Commission, the control structures across the Soviets were—once again—fully centralized. *Citizen Inspectors in the Soviet Union: The People's Control Committee* (New York; London: Praeger Publishers, 1977), 46–54. Even though the GDR was not a Soviet republic but one of its satellite states, the political-economic route shown by the Soviets remained influential on the direction the GDR would take in reforming its economic bureaucracy, and the StBA was one of many institutions the East German state formed to streamline its bureaucratic control over the economy.

[57] Control structures were key components of Soviet-type socialism, where "all political systems operate[d] a multiplicity of control levers to regulate the state machine," as E. A. Rees notes. This was a crucial feature of both central economic planning and the party-state structure. By creating duplicate and even multiple feedback mechanisms running parallel to the state, the Soviet authorities sought to resolve compliance issues within the economic and administrative bureaucracy. Rees, *State Control in Soviet Russia*, 1.

[58] Dolores L. Augustine writes that "the New Economic System (NÖS, in force from 1964 to 1967), and its successor, the Economic System of Socialism (ÖSS, 1967–1971) were primarily economic reforms aimed at decentralizing economic responsibility and decision-making. Enterprises were to become profitable, manage their own expenses and income, and contribute to the planning process from below. Incentives were created that were supposed to motivate employees, factories, and socialist corporations to higher achievement and plan fulfillment." Dolores L. Augustine, *Red Prometheus: Engineering and Dictatorship in East Germany, 1945-1990* (Cambridge, Mass.; London, England: MIT Press, 2007), 94.

[59] Kopstein argues that this "'in-system' economic reform," which attempted to simulate market through administrative measures, ended up streamlining bureaucratic control over the economy to make it more efficient. Kopstein, *The Politics of Economic Decline in East Germany*, 46, 49.

[60] Kopstein, 50.

expanding informant network and infiltration of management cadres, in a suitable position to act

as a supplementary state control organ for the economy and, as illustrated before, was leveraged

by Mielke as such. What is more, Ulbricht's economic system posited "industry and building"

(*Industrie und Bauwesen*) as leading fields for East German economic progress. Within this

constellation, the Stasi could act as a building control structure functioning parallel to another—

namely, the StBA. In other words, it was to become a surveillance bureaucracy overseeing a

compliance bureaucracy.[61]

    A fully streamlined surveillance and control could not only rely on streamlined

bureaucratic apparatuses, however. The second step was the standardization of building

technologies. Over the 1960s and the early 1970s, East German architectural production saw a

higher degree of centralization and typification, specifically as they pertained to housing

production. As Florian Urban correctly notes, in the GDR "the evolution of mass housing

developments largely reflected social and political configurations… before the apartment

buildings were erected."[62] While the technological-industrial developments in housing were

direct responses to the country's chronic housing shortage, they also enabled a streamlined

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[61] Jan S. Adams identifies three types of control segments functioning as part of the Soviet "compliance establishment:" first, bodies of the Soviet government apparatus keeping checks and balances of their subordinate inter- and intradepartmental units; second, specialized and technical state, i.e. "people's" inspectorates; and third, the party. In the GDR, the first category included—among others—the MfS, the Ministry of Finance, and the State Planning Commissions (*Staatsplanungkommission – SPK*), while the second category included both the StBA alongside other specialised control units like the Workers' and Farmers' Inspection (*Arbeiter- und Bauern Inspektion – ABI*). André Steiner writes that SPKs were an "outstanding part of the state's economic bureaucracy." The planning commission "had to work out the plans and be responsible for them; it had to establish the interdependencies of the various controlled economic fields." Adams, *Citizen Inspectors in the Soviet Union*, 3; Steiner, *The Plans That Failed*, 4. The original Russian counterpart of ABI was Rabkrin, or People's Commissariat of Workers' and Peasants' Inspection, which existed between 1920 to 1934. Adams notes some historical ambiguities endemic to the Soviet implementation of control mechanisms that may be helpful to shed light on this tripartite control mechanism also present in the GDR party-state machine. The author writes that the Bolsheviks had intended for workers' control over production yet, as workers did not possess the managerial skills required to turn observation to problem solving, the idea was reverted by Lenin to entail workers' supervision without any executive authority to implement change. Thus, within the Soviet-type socialist systems, what separated a manager from an inspector has become their access to power, and "only careful supervision of the inspectors' activities could assure that this line was not transgressed."
[62] Florian Urban, *Tower and Slab: Histories of Global Mass Housing* (London; New York: Routledge, 2013), 174.

bureaucratic control (and surveillance), which was impossible to achieve within the heterogenous

production landscape of the 1950s. In 1961, the German Building Academy introduced its first

typified panel building system (*Plattenbausystem*) P1. In contrast to the preceding types in large-

slab construction (*Großblockbauweise*) such as L4 and Q3, which still required masonry work

and ample human labor on site, the P1 proposed complete standardization of design,

prefabrication of all components, and fully integrated industrial assembly.[63] As Harald Engler

notes, with P1, "for the first time, the traditional ground plan schema was abandoned, and a truly

new design incorporated into East German industrial housing construction was achieved."[64] The

Plattenbau-system also allowed shorter construction times for a comparatively smaller cost. It

could not be implemented uniformly across East German regions, however, due to the varying

production capabilities of regional building plants at this time.[65] As a result, the cost of P1's

production remained relatively high, and the East German economy struggled to finance this

building technology.[66] This first generation Plattenbau-system designated the path for further

development of panel-housing in the GDR, nonetheless. The transition from earlier large-slab

systems to panel types was projected to "decrease construction time by 27% and the total

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[63] The ground plans of the GDR's very first industrialized housing types for mass application—the L4 and the Q3—were partially based on traditional housing schemes. Succeeded by Q6 in 1960, and Qx in 1961, these early attempts at industrialization and standardization could not find expansive use. Drawing its ground plan solutions on the large-slab system Q6, the P1 was characterized by longitudinal "loadbearing walls and floors assembled from large, factory-made elements of medium-weight or gravel concrete." Mikel van Gelderen, "Unabashed Shamelessness. Plattenbau, Relic of the Past?," in *Ideals in Concrete: Exploring Central and Eastern Europe*, ed. Cor Wagenaar and Mieke Dings (Amsterdam; Rotterdam; New York: Fonds BKVB and NAi Publishers, 2004), 125.

[64] Harald Engler, *Wilfried Stallknecht und das industrielle Bauen: Ein Architektenleben in der DDR* (Berlin: Lukas Verlag, 2013), 31.

[65] Christopher Nickol argues that the P1 was "simply too expensive and from an urban planning perspective inefficient." Christopher Nickol, "Das Zentrale Baukastensystem Der DDR," in *WBS70 Fünfzig Jahre Danach*, ed. Tomasz Lewandowski (Leipzig: Sphere Publishers, 2020), 10; Centrally developed and prescribed types were altered at the design offices and manufacturing sites of individual districts, which lead to the frequent and vast retrofitting of the type norms. Mareen Trusch, "Studie Plattenbau 69 - Von Der Serie P2 Zur WBS70," in *Entwerfen Im System - Der Architekt Wilfried Stallknecht*, ed. Anke Kuhrman and Harald Engler (Erkner: IRS: Leibniz-Institut für Regionalentwicklung und Strukturplanung Erkner, 2009), 17.

[66] Sara Hainrich, "Wohnungen Aus Baukasten: Die Raumzellenbauweise," in *Entwerfen Im System - Der Architekt Wilfried Stallknecht*, ed. Harald Engler and Anke Kuhrmann (Erkner: IRS: Leibniz-Institut für Regionalentwicklung und Strukturplanung Erkner, 2009), 19.

manufacture-to-implementation time by 62%."[67] The pursuit to develop an economically more

feasible prefabricated housing system thus continued throughout the 1960s into the early 1970s.

In 1965, a second generation Plattenbau—the P2—was introduced, bringing a higher

degree of standardization and rationalization.[68] The P2 reduced production costs by decreasing

the average housing unit size and reducing the array of variable prefabricated elements.[69] It also

became the first housing type to find widespread mass application across the GDR—thirty times

more than its forerunner.[70] The P2's extensive implementation was owed to its centralized

production: it was the first housing type manufactured entirely under the auspices of the East

German housing combines (*Wohnungsbaukombinate*). What is more, the GDR's combine reform

further facilitated the Stasi's surveillance and control activities targeting the building industry.

1964-1973: Combine Reform and the Housing Program

The combine reform of East German industrial production was the third and concluding

step towards the centralization of architectural production relations in the GDR. Building

combines (and combines in general) existed since the 1950s, yet—until the late 1960s—they

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[67] Hoscislawski, *Bauen zwischen Macht und Ohnmacht*, 170–71.

[68] P2 was developed by Willfried Stallknecht, Herbert Kuschy, and Achim Felz under the assignment of the German Building Academy (Deutsche Bauakademie). Stallknecht was previously responsible with developing the cell-room construction (Raumzellenbauweise). Contemporaneously to the P1-system, Stallknecht's cell-room building method aimed towards full prefabrication and assembly of housing units in the factory, allowing for faster montage and finish at the construction site. Complete prefabrication and pre-installation of units was expected to compensate for the material expenditure the larger units of this type necessitated. In 1961, the first implementation of the cell-room principle in the industrial town of Hoyerswerda revealed an unforeseen problem, however. The cost of transporting the heavy room-units and their on-site installment exceeded the financial resources spared by fully integrated prefabrication and pre-montage of rooms. See: Hoscislawski, 171; Hainrich, "Wohnungen Aus Baukasten: Die Raumzellenbauweise," 19; Engler, *Wilfried Stallknecht und das industrielle Bauen*, 40–42.

[69] The P2 practically "fitted a three-bedroom apartment into the area of a two-bedroom apartment" of P1. Peter Richter, "Der Plattenbau als Krisengebiet die architektonische und politische Transformation industriell errichteter Wohngebäude aus der DDR am Beispiel der Stadt Leinefelde" (Hamburg, Universität Hamburg, 2006), 38.

[70] In comparison to the 12 thousand units built in P1 between 1958 and 1970, by 1990 more than 360 thousand housing units across the GDR were produced with the P2 type-system. Mareen Trusch, "Studie Plattenbau 69 - Von Der Serie P2 Zur WBS70," in *Entwerfen Im System - Der Architekt Wilfried Stallknecht*, ed. Anke Kuhrman and Harald Engler (Erkner: IRS: Leibniz-Institut für Regionalentwicklung und Strukturplanung Erkner, 2009), 17. From Berlin to Brandenburg, from Saxony to Thuringia, the highly standardized P2-series pervaded East German city spaces, becoming the epitome of the East German built environment of the 1960s and 1970s.

were not a unifying industrial unit.[71] Prior to the combine reform, East German industrial

production at large followed what Kopstein calls a "three-tier hierarchy:" there were individual

enterprises (*Volkseigene Betriebe* or VEBs), which were part of production associations

(*Vereinigung Volkseigener Betriebe* or VVBs), which were then overseen by their respective

ministries.[72] Within these scheme, production associations grouped enterprises horizontally and

acted as supervisory units. The GDR's industrial reorganization around combines between the

1960s until the 1980s established, instead, a two-tier hierarchy. Enterprises of industrial

production were integrated (even merged) vertically, with the director of the combine serving as

the superordinate manager of the entire industrial-economic unit. This reorganization promoted

combines to self-sufficient units with administrative flexibility and a greater degree of autonomy

in planning and management. The GDR's combine reform was to efficiently divide and

distribute labor amongst multiple enterprises and encourage collaboration instead of competition

between them. It was also meant to fast-track the incorporation of the latest scientific and

technological innovations top down. Finally, the combine reform intended to shorten the flow of

information exchange between enterprises and their relevant ministry, ultimately streamlining

industrial production.[73] For the East German building industry, where the "productive powers"

were largely channeled into housing production, the combine reform meant a more centralized

production management and a more uniform production outcome.

By 1964, with the end of Khrushchev's reign and the start of the Brezhnev-era, the

strived for yet ill-fated decentralization efforts across the Soviets were shelved once and for all.

Almost concurrently, the entirety of the GDR's new housing production was legally bound to

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[71] The VEB Wohnungsbaukombinat Neubrandenburg was founded in 1953. Hannemann, *Die Platte: Industrialisierter Wohnungsbau in der DDR*, 90.

[72] Kopstein, *The Politics of Economic Decline in East Germany*, 96.

[73] Manfred Melzer, "Combine Formation in the GDR," *Soviet Studies* 33, no. 1 (January 1981): 89.

housing combines "to avoid fragmentation of the state administration."[74] In a process that peaked

over the mid-1960s but lasted at least until 1978, housing combines (*Wohnungskombinate*) were

structured as territorial entities, meaning that all enterprises engaging in aspects of housing

production within the region were subordinated to a single combine.[75] The logic of this territorial

reorganization ran parallel to the Stasi's so-called "line-principle" (*Linienprinzip*), within which

ministerial departments—including the "national economy" department XVIII that monitored

industrial production—bifurcated into regional (*Bezirk*) and district (*Kreis*) branches of the state

security apparatus. This gave the Stasi an additional advantage: territorial combines, which

managed housing production across a multitude of enterprises, could now be effectively

monitored by the economy desk of regional administrations (*Bezirksverwaltung für*

Staatssicherheit), while those of district branches (*Kreisverwaltung für Staatssicherheit*) would

monitor enterprises within their jurisdiction. In a way, the MfS was already simulating the

GDR's new industrial-organizational logic.

From the mid-1970s onward, the Stasi became more and more concentrated on

monitoring the progress of territorial housing production. The state security apparatus oversaw

its various dimensions, such as civil engineering (*Tiefbau*), structural engineering (*Hochbau*),

prefabrication (*Vorfertigung*), and assembly (*Montagebau*).[76] There was an architectural and

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[74] Hannemann, *Die Platte: Industrialisierter Wohnungsbau in der DDR*, 88.

[75] "In the late 1970s, the GDRs industrial enterprises were organized into 127 central combines with an average of 20000 employees, linking factories in related product fields across East Germany, and into 95 regionally managed combines with an average of 2000 employees in the industrial branches along with 21 central and 31 regionally managed combines in the construction sector. The methods of direction have been repeatedly reorganized in the 1980s, and the combines are now being given more authority in investing their profits, provided they fulfil their plan targets." Fred S. Oldenburg, "Correlations between Soviet and GDR Reforms," *Studies in Comparative Communism* 22, no. 1 (Spring 1989): 90.

[76] For a report focused on civil engineering, see: "Information über den Stand der Durchführung des Politbürobeschlusses vom 27.3.1973 hinsichtlich der Vorbereitung und Durchführung der Vorlaufmaßnahmen des komplexen Wohnungsbauprogrammes," Berlin, 21.03.1974, BArch MfS BV Bln AKG 985, 3-4. On prefabrication, see: "Information über die Situation im Wohnungsbau der Hauptstadt der DDR, Berlin," 29.10.1976, BArch MfS AKG 1143, p. 4.

economic emphasis on housing production since the late 1950s, but it was amplified with Erich

Honecker's rise to power in 1971. Ousting Ulbricht as the General Secretary of the SED and

becoming the leader of the party-state, Honecker declared housing as the locus of his "unity of

economic and social policy" (*Einheit von Wirtschafts- und Sozialpolitik*), which promised to

solve the "housing question as a social problem" by 1990. The launch of the Housing Program

(*Wohnungsbauprogramm*) in 1973 consolidated the primacy of housing production for the East

German building industry, with the prefabricated panel system WBS70—introduced in 1971—

becoming its "cipher."[77] In keeping with Honecker's policies, from the 1970s into the 1980s, the

Stasi gradually expanded its focus from sites of building manufacture to home delivery

ceremonies and inspection of turnkey units, mobilizing its surveillance forces to report on

housing as both economic and social phenomenon.

The Stasi's monitoring of the building industry must lastly be understood within the

context of economic policy and assessment of enterprise performance. In the absence of free

markets, the East German state continuously struggled to encourage and motivate industrial

cadres to output higher production volumes. This was exacerbated by other factors, as well, such

as employment guarantee (and the correlated absence of unemployment) and stagnant wages.[78]

Since the crisis of 1953, the SED was extremely wary of reintroducing industrial norms to push

for higher industrial performance. Ulbricht's new economic system of 1964 tried to solve this

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[77] I borrow this definition from Christine Hannemann, who describes Plattenbau-technologies as ciphers, through which the complex relationship between the GDR state's ideology and East German society can be examined. Hannemann, *Die Platte: Industrialisierter Wohnungsbau in der DDR*, 15–18; In comparison to previous housing types in panel construction, the WBS70 (Wohnungsbausystem) was characterized by a more unified production catalogue with a smaller range of different building elements and reduced number of type variants. Presenting the "peak" in the rationalization and standardization of East German housing production, the WBS70 was widely applied across the GDR. By 1989, twice as many structures had been built in WBS70 than in P2, with the former constituting 42% of all housing production. Bundesministerium für Raumordnung, Bauwesen und Städtebau, "Leitfaden für die Instandsetzung und Modernisierung von Wohngebäuden in der Plattenbauweise: WBS 70 Wohnungsbauserie 70 6,3 t" (BBSR Bonn, 1997), 3.

[78] Kopstein, *The Politics of Economic Decline in East Germany*, 158–59.

dilemma through an industrial price reform that went hand in hand with the promotion of "profit as the primary production indicator" for the evaluation of enterprises. This plan failed, however, as the logic of profit proved itself to be irreconcilable with a socialist planned economy plagued by serious material shortages, and "some enterprises reported profits far out of proportion to their true performance, while others quickly accumulated debts despite being genuinely more profitable."[79]

In contrast, under Honecker's reign, plan fulfillment instead of profit became the chief marker to assess economic progress. Hence, the Stasi's surveillance operations, specifically its economic monitoring activities targeting housing production, were devoted to overseeing the advance in production, projecting these findings to reflect on the probability of plan fulfillment, and determining the causes of both failure and success. The Stasi did so by observing workers' disputes, material damages, supply shortages, hidden reserves, and erroneous reporting, to name a few. The reports prepared by the MfS' national economy department were not for the eyes of the GDR's architectural-industrial bureaucracy: they were for the higher ranks of the East German party-state apparatus, namely the Central Committee (*Zentrale Kommission – ZK*) of the SED.[80] These reports were intended to counterbalance the information provided by production cadres, which often reported inaccurate numbers. Fulfillment of quotas determined the enterprises' access to resources in subsequent plan cycles, including investment, production materials, bonuses, and other means of material compensation. This pushed managerial cadres to continue working along "soft plans:" a widespread feature remnant of Stalinist economic

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[79] Kopstein, 50.
[80] This is demonstrated by the MfS district reports, which are almost without exception addressed to specific members of the Central Committee.

planning, that lasted well into the 1980s.[81] By hoarding labor and materials, managers sought to balance out their performance within the East German shortage economy, where the demand was (and remained) greater than the supply. "Party secretaries were constantly told to discover new 'reserves' in enterprises, which the center knew managers hoarded for the day they might be needed for production or barter trade," as Kopstein writes.[82]

The Stasi created detailed reports even when a building production plant met the set criteria, however, to inform the Central Committee of the SED on the 'how's while remaining critical of the results. For instance, in a 1988 report, the Stasi mentioned that the Berlin Housing Combine (*Wohnungsbaukombinat – WBK*) fulfilled its first quarter production quotas and immediately went on to explain that the production facility continued its operations during the weekends.[83] Thus, through its Main Department XVIII, the Stasi carried out a control task, which would have been dispensable in a profit-driven capitalist system of free market competition. This was, nonetheless, a task that could *only* be fulfilled within a streamlined bureaucracy and a centralized production management following standardized technologies. Streamlined bureaucratic exchange between building and planning institutions enabled the Stasi to cross-reference its findings; standardization of architectural technologies helped it familiarize itself with technical requirements and understand defects; and centralization of production relations gave the state security apparatus a bird's nest view over managerial decisions and shortcomings, all of which will be explored in the next section.

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[81] "From the very outset of the Soviet occupation, managers were under pressure to produce as much as possible at whatever cost." Kopstein, *The Politics of Economic Decline in East Germany*, 29, 131.

[82] Kopstein, 148.

[83] See: "Information über die Situation im Wohnungsbaukombinat Berlin," 2.5.1988, MfS ZAIG 19757. The report went on to claim that, at the managerial level of the WBK Berlin, "sloppiness prevails," "no control is exercised," and the actual state of the plan (*Planstand*) is not overseen.

Monitoring Housing Production, 1964 – 1989

Controlling Compliance: The Main Department XVIII

The year 1964 constituted a turning point for the Stasi, and its economically oriented

activities, with the ministry avoiding budget and personnel cuts and starting its steady growth

with expanded fields of responsibility. This point can be further highlighted by the structural

changes the ministry's "national economy" department underwent in 1964 as they anchored

surveillance and control of the East German building industry as one of its main fields of

operation. Founded in 1952 as the Department III (*Abteilung III*), the MfS' national economy

division was initially responsible with protecting newly nationalized property against the claims

of former private owners.[84] The department was also tasked with maintaining security at key

industrial sites, such as chemical plants and uranium mines, through anti-espionage and anti-

sabotage work.[85] As mentioned before, in the aftermath of the June 1953 uprising, the Stasi

started surveilling industrial workers to detect anti-socialist propaganda and underground

activity. It also started assessing the shop floor atmosphere by eavesdropping on conversations

amongst workers and composing "mood reports" (*Stimmungsberichte*). The Stasi's early

surveillance activities at sites of economic significance and influence thus fell within the

categories of classic secret policing and mood reporting; these were not economic activities, per

se. Architectural production was not a focal point of the "national economy" department until the

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[84] The unit was founded as a "department" (*Abteilung*) and promoted to a "main department" (*Hauptabteilung*) only a year later. The inclusion of a "national economy" branch followed the model of the KGB, which also encompassed an administrative unit working for and within the Soviet economy.

[85] One of these "key sites" was the uranium mining operation Wismut, a cooperation with the Soviets, where the Stasi set up its first industry-oriented security office (Objektdienststelle) in 1951. While this was the very first MfS unit devoted to the immediate inspection of an economic "object," after 1957 several others were established, most notably the security offices at Buna and Leuna chemical plants. Since 1969, the industrial security offices of the MfS had the same status as a district-level MfS branch. Haendcke-Hoppe-Arndt, *Die Hauptabteilung XVIII*, 14 In 1982, there were nineteen of such security offices; by 1989 only seven were left with the dissolution of the rest.

mid-1960s, either. At a 1954 meeting, then Minister of State Security Wollweber had called for the main emphasis in fighting sabotage to be placed on the building industry, alleging that "a potential 'fascist putsch' could stem" from here.[86] Yet, it was not until 1958 that the department had a unit specifically targeting building production.[87]

In 1964, in tandem with the ministerial changes unfolding since 1958, the "national economy" department was restructured, and its responsibilities were expanded beyond classic secret policing and mood reporting. Renamed the Main Department XVIII, the division was tasked with "supporting the national economy through measures increasing efficiency and productivity." [88] In keeping with Ulbricht's 1964 New Economic System, which designated industry and architectural production as leading economic fields, the East German building industry became one of the department's main fields of economic activity.

What did "measures increasing efficiency and productivity" of the building industry look like for a state security apparatus? Under the banner of "fighting against domestic enemies of socialism," from the mid-1960s onward the Stasi understood regularly missing work or disagreements and fights between industrial workers as un-socialist behavior. Such behavior caused disruption of workflow, and they were increasingly recognized as economic problems rather than merely social or pedagogical ones. So, to increase productivity and efficiency, the Main Department XVIII was tasked with monitoring and reporting on sick employees and workplace conflicts at building production plants and construction sites. Damages to building structures, materials, and equipment—a prevalent problem of the 1960s—constituted another

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[86] Haendcke-Hoppe-Arndt, 20.

[87] The department's first "building unit" (Referat Bauwesen) was established in 1958. By 1963, the unit became a department (Abteilung 3) under the Main Department III, signifying that building production gained more significance for its surveillance and inspection operations. Haendcke-Hoppe-Arndt, 32–33.

[88] Roger Engelmann, Bernd Florath, and Helge Heidemeyer, *Das MfS-Lexikon. Begriffe, Personen und Strukturen der Staatssicherheit der DDR* (Berlin: Ch. Links, 2012); With these structural changes, a subdepartment solely devoted to the building industry was also formed. Haendcke-Hoppe-Arndt, *Die Hauptabteilung XVIII*, 33.

concern. As a 1964 report showed, crimes against "socialist properties" had seen a steady increase between the years of 1960 and 1963, with crimes related to damages or losses at building sites almost double folding.[89] Such offenses were not perceived as simple criminal behavior and came to be evaluated as economic paradigm, as well. To the East German state, "revealing the reasons and conditions of unlawful activities in the realm of buildings" became necessary to "overcome the obstacles toward the implementation of the new economic system," and the Stasi was called to task.[90]

By the 1970s, following the commencement of Honecker's 1973 Housing Program, the Stasi's economic responsibilities within the building industry was expanded once again, this time with an emphasis on the surveillance and control of administrative and managerial practices. The Housing Program was more than ambitious from the start. The five-year plan for 1976-1980 foresaw the production of more than 550 thousand new residential units and up to 200 thousand refurbishment projects across the GDR. Only in Berlin up to 80 thousand new units and 25 thousand renovations were to be realized.[91] In attempt to aid the fulfillment of these plans, the Stasi declared territorially managed housing production as a focal point of its economic monitoring. "Uncovering plans and intentions of the enemy, which may lead to disruptions in the scheduled realization of the building program" was a task re-iterated ad nauseam throughout the 1970s and 1980s.[92] Yet, the state security apparatus was aware that there was "no empirical

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[89] "Bericht über die Untersuchungen der Inspektionsgruppe und den 2. Strafsenats des Obersten Gerichts über die Wirksamkeit der gerichtlichen Tätigkeit im Wirtschaftszweig Bauwesen, report by the Supreme Court of the GDR, 25.2.1964, BArch DH1/13282, fol. 1.

[90] BArch DH1/13282, fol. 1.

[91] See: Beschluß des VIII. Parteitags, Beschluß von Politbüro und Ministerrat von 27.3.1973, 9. Plenum im Jahre 1973; quoted in: "Erkentnisse und Erfahrungen der operativen Durchdringung eines Schwerpunktbereiches am Beispiel der politisch-operativen Sicherung des Wohnungsbauprogramms 1976 - 1980 in der Hauptstadt der DDR, Berlin," MfS Juristische Hochschule Potsdam, Diplomarbeit, Potsdam, 24.11.1975, BArch MfS JHS MF 3864.

[92] See: "Konzeption zur politisch-operativen Sicherung der Bauvorhaben in der Hauptstadt der DDR, Berlin, entsprechend dem Befehl 16/84 des Genossen Minister vom 9. Oktober 1984," 20.10.1984, BArch MfS BV Bln Abt XIX 11442, 21.

evidence on enemy activity deliberately targeting to disrupt the housing program."[93] The "real enemy" of the housing program, instead, took the form of "delays in building processes, lacking quality in building elements, and shortcomings of policy documents," which were "temporarily disguised" by false information and embellished reports.[94] Numbers of prefabricated elements and assembled housing units, for example, were reported higher than the actual outcome, while building materials were hoarded or sold to third parties and investments were channeled to building projects outside of plans. As a result, the Stasi stated, even though scientific management methods employed during assembly reduced material and time waste "millions of Marks [were] lost" during planning and implementation (*Durchführung*) of building investments.[95] To the East German state and its security apparatus, such practices were nothing short of "enemy activity" and needed to be "fought through the concentrated deployment of the MfS' means and methods:" by building and expanding a network of informants, or—as is referred to in the Stasi terminology—unofficial collaborators (*inoffizielle Mitarbeiter - IM*).[96]

The IM-network was the most important aspect of the Stasi's economic monitoring. The Main Department XVIII was responsible with building and expanding its information and security network by recruiting informants from construction sites, enterprises and combines, as well as state building authorities overseeing them, including the regional building councils (*Bezirksbauamt*), regional planning commissions (*Bezirksplankommission*), and the Ministry of Building. Additionally, full-time MfS employees with necessary expertise were instated as combine directors or high-ranking administrators, serving as so-called "officers in special

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[93] "Erkentnisse und Erfahrungen der operativen Durchdringung," BArch MfS JHS MF 3864, 8.
[94] BArch MfS JHS MF 3864, 8.
[95] BArch MfS JHS MF 3864, 8.
[96] BArch MfS JHS MF 3864, 9.

assignment" (*Offiziere im besonderen Einsatz – OiBE*).[97] The IMs were the eyes and ears of the Stasi on the ground; they were also the channels through which the Stasi accessed documents internal to building combines and planning administrations.

This "unofficial" information and security network functioned alongside other official safety and security structures established by the East German state. As the Main Department XVIII put it in 1984, "establishing order and security within the realm of building projects together with partners of cooperation and the incorporation of societal powers" was one of the department's main tasks.[98] Here, "societal powers" referred to informants, while "partners of cooperation" were security commissioners (*Sicherheitsbeauftragte*) of building combines and regional building authorities, along with inspection and control organs of the Ministry of Building—the State Building Control (StBA) and Building Inspection (*Inspektion*) agencies— and the Technical Oversight (*Technische Überwachung*) unit of the State Planning Commission. The responsibilities of these manifold security structures are difficult to delineate: a point that preoccupied the MfS and its "national economy" department, as well.[99] Some basic differences can be drawn out, nonetheless. The Technical Oversight (*Technische Überwachung*) unit of the State Planning Commission, for example, was tasked with inspecting the structures under which industrial production was taking place, making sure they adhered to building codes and safety protocols.[100] The State Building Control Agency examined individual building projects and

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[97] See: Reports on and from the OiBE positioned at the VEB WBK Cottbus Sitz Hoyerswerda since 1979, who worked as the director of the Inspection unit under the MfB; BArch MfS AOibE 5743/87.

[98] "Konzeption zur politisch-operativen Sicherung der Bauvorhaben in der Hauptstadt der DDR," BArch MfS BV Bln Abt XIX 11442, 21.

[99] "Erkentnisse und Erfahrungen der operativen Durchdringung," BArch MfS JHS MF 3864, 14-17.

[100] "Regelung der Zuständigkeit bzw. der Aufgabenbereiche," letter from the StBA to the GDR State Planning Commission's Central Department for Technical Oversight (*Staatliche Plankommission Zentralstelle der Technischen Überwachung*), 1962, BArch DH1/15212, fol. 1. For further information on the distribution of tasks between the StBA and TÜ, see: "Erste Durchführungsbestimmung zur Verordnung über die Aufgaben und die Arbeitsweise der Staatlichen Bauaufsicht," addendum to the "Verordnung über die Aufgaben und die Arbeitsweise der Staatlichen Bauaufsicht vom 14.5.64," 20.5.1964, BArch DH1/15386, fol.1.

prefabrication processes according to the same criteria. Security commissioners devised security

measures at their respective enterprises and combines to prevent and detect unlawful occurrences

from theft to misdemeanor resulting in loss and damages. In this sense, the Stasi—through its

Main Department XVIII and its network of informants—assumed the role of a parallel security

structure. On the one hand, it functioned as—what the Stasi termed—a "complex control"

mechanism for the feedback generated by other building control organs,[101] with the latter

becoming objects of the Stasi's informant infiltration on their own right. On the other hand, the

Stasi collaborated with security commissioners, mutually sharing findings to determine the

culprits of illegal activity.[102] This collaboration did not necessarily require coercion—often

needed for informant recruitment—as the information amassed was valuable to security

commissioners who presented it to their directors: it was (or could be) a "win-win" situation for

both parties involved in denunciation, the state security apparatus maintained.[103]

The Main Department XVIII bifurcated under the ministry's regional (*Bezirk*) and district

(*Kreis*) offices. This followed the "line principle" of the MfS, within which central-ministerial

departments had branches across all territorial offices of the surveillance apparatus. The Main

Department XVIII sat at the MfS' headquarters in Berlin, and its operatives constituted less than

1.5% of the entire personnel at the ministerial level.[104] This percentage was higher at regional

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[101] "Konzeption zur politisch-operativen Sicherung der Bauvorhaben in der Hauptstadt der DDR," BArch MfS BV Bln Abt XIX 11442, 25.

[102] "Konzeption zur politisch-operativen Sicherung der Bauvorhaben in der Hauptstadt der DDR," BArch MfS BV Bln Abt XIX 11442, 25.

[103] "Erkentnisse und Erfahrungen der operativen Durchdringung," BArch MfS JHS MF 3864, 14-17.

[104] Franz-Otto Gilles and Hans-Hermann Hertle, "Sicherung Der Volkswirtschaft. Struktur Und Tätigkeit Der 'Linie XVIII' Des Ministeriums Für Staatssicherheit Der DDR Dargestellt Am Beispiel Der Objektdienststellen in Der Chemieindustrie," *Deutschland Archiv* 29, no. 1 (1996): 48; There were 645 people working for the Main Department XVIII by 1989. Roland Wiedmann, *Die Diensteinheiten des MfS 1950–1989. Eine organisatorische Übersicht*, Anatomie der Staatssicherheit: Geschichte, Struktur und Methoden (MfS-Handbuch) (Berlin: BStU, 2012), 311.

and district branches.[105] At the average-sized Cottbus Regional Administration for State

Security, for example, 2.75% of employees were assigned to the Department XVIII.[106] In the

exceptional case of Halle—the heart of the GDR's chemical industry—approximately 11% of the

regional administration's employees worked for its "national economy" department.[107] At the

district level, this number was as high as 23%, making economic security the Stasi's largest

operation across Halle.[108] From the 1970s until 1986, chemical and building industries were

monitored by the same unit (*Abteilung/Referat 1*) under the MfS' "national economy" line. It is

unclear from the archival data how much of this unit's workforce was assigned to which industry

during this time. Yet, the Main Department XVIII's employment statistics from 1989 show that,

after the division, the department responsible with monitoring the building industry (*Abteilung 1
– Bauwesen*) and the one monitoring the chemical industry (*Abteilung 13 – Chemische Industrie*)

had approximately the same number of employees at the ministerial level.[109] In both areas, the

Stasi also had the same number of officers in special assignment, who acted as high-ranking

industry managers and administrators while being on the payroll of the Stasi. Thus, one can

safely argue that, at least by the late 1980s, maybe not conducting but certainly managing the

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[105] The ratio between the total number of employees to employees of the "national economy" line was 42% higher in regional administrations. Haendcke-Hoppe-Arndt, *Die Hauptabteilung XVIII*, 113.

[106] Due to its average size, Haendcke-Hoppe-Arndt argues, the Cottbus Regional Administration for State Security serves as a reference point to approximate the size of most national economy departments across other regions. Haendcke-Hoppe-Arndt, 113.

[107] Gilles and Hertle, "Sicherung Der Volkswirtschaft. Struktur Und Tätigkeit Der 'Linie XVIII' Des Ministeriums Für Staatssicherheit Der DDR Dargestellt Am Beispiel Der Objektdienststellen in Der Chemieindustrie," 48.

[108] Gilles, "The Rationale of Muddling Through. The Function of the Stasi in the Planned Economy," 7.

[109] There were 28 full-time employees working for the building industry unit (Abteilung 1), and 30 for the chemical industry unit (Abteilung 30). The employment base for the electronics industry was decidedly higher with 78 employees--an insight that can be corroborated with the Stasi's increasing investment in international espionage in the field of microelectronics. For employment numbers referred to, see: Haendcke-Hoppe-Arndt, *Die Hauptabteilung XVIII*, 11; For the Stasi's activities within the electronics industry, see: Reinhard Buthmann, *Kadersicherung im Kombinat VEB Carl Zeiss Jena. Die Staatssicherheit und das Scheitern des Mikroelektronikprogramms* (Berlin: Ch. Links, 1997); Reinhard Buthmann, "Die Organisationsstruktur der Beschaffung westlicher Technologien im Bereich der Mikroelektronik," in *Das Gesicht dem Westen zu... DDR Spionage gegen die Bundesrepublik Deutschland*, ed. Georg Herbstritt and Helmut Müller-Enbergs (Bremen: Edition Temmen, 2003), 279–314.

surveillance of (and processing economically relevant data on) the building and chemical industries carried similar weight. The ministry's regional branches worked in close contact with building councils and planning commissions, with other dedicated units infiltrating and surveilling the areas of planning and finance (*Abteilung Planung und Finanzen*), and science and technology (*Wissenschaft und Technik*).[110]

What is more, the Stasi's national economy line had a substantially larger IM-network relative to its size: between 6% to 10% of informants were recruited in this area according to current research.[111] The Stasi's district branches regularly composed reports based on IM-feedback and submitted these to their respective regional administrations, with the latter cross-referencing the information received and reporting it to the MfS and the local party secretaries, which explains the larger surveillance force in district branches (and at the ministerial level) than in regional ones.

Surveillance, Inspection, Supervision: Informants and Methods of Economic Monitoring

Informants were the chief means for the Stasi's economic monitoring but, by what means did they collect information? Four methods are identifiable from the Stasi's information leaflets, which brought together cross-referenced information gained through official and unofficial channels to report on the status of the territorially managed building industry. These means— namely, bureaucratic surveillance, technical observation, supervision, and mood reporting—and

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[110] See: "Befehl Nr. 16/84. Politisch-operative Sicherung der weiteren Durchführung des Bauprogrammes in der Hauptstadt der DDR, Berlin," Berlin, 9.10.1984, MfS BV Bln Abt. XIX 11442, 7-17; "Konzeption zur politisch-operative der Bauvorhaben in der Hauptstadt der DDR, Berlin, entsprechend dem Befehl 16/84 des Genossen Minister vom 9. Oktober 1984," Berlin, 1984, MfS BV Bln Abt. XIX 11442, 18-33.

[111] How many informants the Stasi had is a highly contested subject, and here I refer to conflicting results from latest research for an approximation. While, on the high end, the MfS is argued to have had almost 190 thousand informants, Ilko-Sascha Kowalczuk's recent findings suggest that this was an overestimation and the real numbers lay by 110 thousand. For comparison, I use Haendcke-Hoppe-Arndt's estimation on IMs of the "national economy" departments. Based on data available from the MfS' Cottbus and Rostock branches, the author puts the number at 11 thousand. See: Kowalczuk, *Stasi konkret*, 234–36; Haendcke-Hoppe-Arndt, *Die Hauptabteilung XVIII*, 113.

their outcomes require close examination to elucidate the nature, goals, and influence of the Stasi's activities within the building economy.

Through its national economy line, the Stasi carried out what can be termed "bureaucratic surveillance" by gathering and reviewing paperwork from production sites and administrative organs.[112] The procurement and comparison of written reports from enterprises, combines, planning agencies, and building control authorities resulted in what historians correctly identified as "re-reporting."[113] Quantitative questions, such as plan fulfillment quotas, discrepancies between investment and production or in account balancing, completely relied on existing paperwork.[114] What the Stasi's economic monitoring "unearthed" in this regard was thus already available to the numerous control and security agencies and present on the desks of party officials. Some reports published by the Main Department XVIII were also simply summaries of the reports composed by the State Building Control, and "many an industrial minister rubbed his eyes in astonishment when he found on his desk the same well-known confidential reports he had received from his department a few weeks before concerning deficiencies in his area of responsibility, only this time on MfS letterhead and labeled 'top secret.'"[115] In many cases, reports from industry branches were first summarized and then supplemented with additional information gained through informants. A 1988 report on the misuse of building materials at a

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[112] I borrow this term from: Christopher Dandeker, *Surveillance, Power and Modernity : Bureaucracy and Discipline from 1700 to the Present Day* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2003).

[113] Gieseke, *The History of the Stasi*, 110.

[114] See, for example the "monthly assessments on the development of the political-operational situation in the building industry:" "Monatliche Einschätzung zur Entwicklung der politischen-operativen Lage im Bauwesen," September 1987, BArch MfS HA XVIII 26818; March 1989, BArch MfS HA XVIII 26819. Also, for a report "recycled" from another by the Ministry of Building, see: "Information zur Situation bei der Gewährleistung einer qualitätsgerechten Fugenabdichtung im komplexen Wohnungsbau," 24.10.1988, BArch MfS HA XVIII 26723, 2-9.

[115] See, for example: "Schäden im industriellen Wohnungsbau in Berlin, die durch Staatliche Bauaufsicht erfaßt wurden," Berlin, 10.3.1989, BArch MfS HA XVIII 26723, 10-11; "Information zu Betonschäden an Wohnungsbauten," Berlin, 22.9.1989, BArch MfS ZAIG 17287, 1-3. Franz-Otto Gilles and Hans-Hermann Hertle, *Überwiegend Negativ: Das Ministerium Für Staatssicherheit in Der Volkswirtschaft Dargestellt Am Beispiel Der Struktur Und Arbeitsweise der Objektdienststellen in den Chemiekombinaten des Bezirks Halle* (Berlin: Freie Universitat Berlin, 1994), 42; Quoted in and translated by: Gieseke, *The History of the Stasi*, 110.

Berlin supply facility, for example, first quoted the findings of the Ministry of Building on how valuable excess material was deliberately misplaced and "made disappear" from inventories and went on to list "additional examples of disorder known [to the MfS] internally," including the replacement of material assets with scraps bought from third parties.[116] Whether and to what extent such "internal findings" were unbeknownst to the administrative cadres of the building industry is difficult to ascertain. The Stasi communicated them directly to the Minister of Building, nonetheless, and collaborated with the People's Police (*Volkspolizei*) for ensuing criminal investigations. Thus, the Stasi's bureaucratic surveillance of the building industry not only resulted in re-reporting but also prompted criminal investigations, aiding the Stasi's classical secret policing function.[117]

Technical observation was another method of information collection conducted by the Stasi's informants. It helped the Stasi to get informed of technical and material defects at combines and construction sites concurrent with—or even before—they were reported by other control organs. Through its informant network, the Stasi's national economy department was alerted, for example, about sinking cantilever balconies of a housing complex in Berlin-Buch after the units were delivered to their inhabitants.[118] While there is no evidence attesting to the state security apparatus being the "first responder" to this hazard, subsequent reports suggest that it was brought to the attention of the MfS and the Ministry of Building's State Building Control

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[116] "Mißstände bei der Lagerung und Verwendung von Ersatzteilen zur Instandsetzung der Grundmittel im VEB Baustoffversorgung Berlin," Berlin, 15.8.1988, BArch MfS ZAIG 17287, 43-46.

[117] So was, for example, a recycled report on defected prefabricated ceiling elements produced under the auspices of the Housing Combine Dresden the basis for an investigation between the Dresden administration for state security and the People's Police to examine whether faulty ingredient concentrations in concrete manufacture, which were determined as the root cause, were simply human error or premediated hostility. "Information über umfangreiche Schäden an Deckenelementen im Wohnungsbaukombinat Dresden (WBKD)," Dresden, 6.9.1988, BArch MfS ZAIG 17287, 37-39.

[118] "Erstbericht zur Beinträchtigung der Standsicherheit an Loggien in Berlin-Buch Wohnkomplex 4 - Wolfgang-Heinz-Str 40," Berlin, 27.3.1989, BArch MfS HA XVIII 26723, 18-19.

Agency at the same time and likely through the same channel: the "People's Own" Housing

Combine Berlin (*VEB Wohnungsbaukombinat Berlin*).[119] The aspect of "technical observation,"

as part of the Stasi's economic monitoring, is thus categorizable as "parallel reporting:" the Stasi

was not exclusively in the know but a simultaneous partner in learning about technical and

material downfalls of the East German building industry and the built environment.

Through its IMs, the Stasi also supervised managers' and administrators' work ethic,

expertise, and general behavior at the workplace. These were understood to be factors underlying

disruptions in planning and production since the start of Honecker's housing program. In March

1974, the state security apparatus started reporting on a lack of coordination between municipal

planning and building authorities in Berlin.[120] Constant revision of building plans and timelines

was causing an ineffective and inconsistent deployment of workforces across combines. In the

absence of uniform and concrete mid- to long-term plans towards which they could work, the

productive powers were left in the dark, the report argued. This lack of coordination was largely

blamed on the disagreements between administrative cadres at the Regional Building Council of

Berlin, especially "the strong rivalry" between the city's head architect, Roland Korn, and his

deputy.[121]

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[119] The report stated that the StBA is investigating VEB WBK Berlin "to preemptively prevent analogous damages." "Erstbericht zur Beinträchtigung der Standsicherheit an Loggien in Berlin-Buch Wohnkomplex 4 - Wolfgang-Heinz-Str 40," Berlin, 1989, BArch MfS HA XVIII 26723, 18-19.

[120] "Information über den Stand der Durchführung des Politbürobeschlusses vom 27.3.1973 hinsichtlich der Vorbereitung und Durchführung der Vorlaufmaßnahmen des komplexen Wohnungsbauprogrammes," Berlin, 21.03.1974, BArch MfS BV Bln AKG 985, 1-4.

[121] BArch MfS BV Bln AKG 985, 2. For another supervisory report focusing on workplace behavior, see: "Information über die Situation im bezirksgelteiteten Bauwesen und damit verbundenen Problemen der Führungs- und Leitungstätigkeit im Bezirksbauaumt," 30.11.1988, Dresden, BArch MfS ZAIG 17287, 16-20. According to the "employees of the Dresden regional building council," the report argues, its director created a "hostile working environment," especially by displaying vulgar language. The report implicitly ties this comment on professionalism and character to the director's questionable decisions in hiring processes and disagreements with the director of the regional housing combine.

To what ends was this type of interpersonal workplace supervision—highly subjective, difficult to verify, and prone to abuse—utilized by the Stasi? The Stasi was responsible for "providing support to industrial cadres" by "ensuring the employment of trustworthy workforces," as inscribed by Minister Mielke as one of the central tasks of the "national economy" department.[122] This partly meant pushing for people with ties to the Stasi to roles of decision making within the industry. Yet, in this capacity, the state security apparatus also acted like a human resources department, using informant feedback for assessing the job performance of those with decision-making powers. The Stasi was aware that personal gain and vendetta could taint informants' testimonies, yet how this was considered in composing subsequent reports is difficult to ascertain. In many instances, IM-reports were used to explain employee turnover, which was seen as an indicator of poor enterprise performance. In one example, reporting on the Rostock-Grevesmühlen housing enterprise, which "for years belong[ed] to the region's leading district building enterprises," the Stasi first briefly praised its director for his "selfless commitment," to which the enterprise's success was "significantly owed."[123] Yet, the director's "authoritative managerial approach" and refusal to consult "managerial staff, representatives of the working collective, the party, and the factory union (*Betriebsgewerkschaftsleitung*)" was reported to cause problems, inhibiting the "self-reliant, constructive and independent work of… mid-level managers, as well as the creative initiative of workers."[124] Many foremen trained at the factory had resigned and others were considering to

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[122] "Politisch-operative Sicherung der weiteren Durchführung des Bauprogramms in der Hauptstadt der DDR, Berlin," BArch MfS BV Bln Abt. XIX 11442, 7-17.

[123] "Information über einige Probleme im Leitungs- und Reproduktionsprozeß des VEB (K) Bau Grevesmühlen," Rostock, 10.03.1989, BArch MfS ZAIG 17287, 10.

[124] BArch MfS ZAIG 17287, 11.

leave, per the Stasi's informant-sourced insight, creating a vacuum of competent leaders familiar with the enterprise and eligible to rise within the ranks.[125]

In other cases, IM-reports were combined with background checks and inspection of personnel files, and the surveillance organization turned in reports that recommended terms of managers' and administrators' employment. Called "operational information on the unofficial assessment of persons" by the Main Department XVIII, many of these reports fell within the category of classic secret policing as they were mainly concerned with people participating in contract negotiations or taking business trips to West Berlin—put differently, with people whose connections were believed to be prone to espionage.[126] Some of these reports, however, read like performance assessments. A 1989 "unofficial assessment" on the director of the VEB Cement Combine Dessau, for example, praised its subject by stating that he "adds extensive practical knowledge to rich life experience," which "characterizes his managerial activities and beget him respect from the collective" as well as the foreign trade partners he works with.[127] "His health status, age and related decrease in his capacity to take on workload weaken these qualities," the report continued, recommending that the director would be valuable as a consultant to the enterprise.[128]

A fourth mode of information collection focused on workers' grievances and thus fell into the category of mood reporting. The Stasi, beyond its self-positioning as a feedback organization for the problems in the material sphere, had taken on the function of reporting about the discontents, demands, and mood swings of East Germans since the 1953 uprising, as

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[125] BArch MfS ZAIG 17287, 11.
[126] BArch MfS HA XVIII 28234, 4-12.
[127] "Operativ-Information Nr. 02/89 zum Direktor des VEB Zementkombinat Dessau," Berlin, 12.01.1989, BArch MfS HA XVIII 28234, p. 5.
[128] BArch MfS HA XVIII 28234, p. 5.

previously mentioned.[129] These mood reports were based on what informants picked up from

conversations between coworkers and neighbors, people waiting in line or at social events:

conversations on supply shortages and social policy, in short topics about which "East Germans

could express their opinions relatively freely."[130] Actively participating in or just eavesdropping

on factory conversations, informants learned about and informed the Stasi of the opinions and

discontents of the working collective, as well. Crossing between economic monitoring and mood

reporting, the Stasi thus surveilled the East German building industry not only from the bird's

nest view of administrators and managers but also from the shop floor.

In some cases, these mood reports covered discontents of the working collective that

building authorities were already aware of yet failed to take necessary action on. Reporting on

the working conditions at an asbestos-cement work in Leipzig, for example, the Stasi recounted

health concerns amongst employees in detail, especially in the absence of safety measures such

as the installment of air filters and proper ventilation, and provisions for prophylactic and care

treatments for those effected.[131] Neither the Ministry of Building nor factory management had

been responsive to the needs of workers, the report added, which was causing widespread

disappointment. Proposed measures—four care and two prophylactic treatment plans, five health

retreats, and extra five days of vacation time for select employees—were dissatisfactory in

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[129] The GDR was founded through a "revolution from above" and the SED had never reached the kind of popular support that, for instance, brought the National Socialists to power in 1933. Surveying, censuses, and opinion polling were already among the methods the SED employed to generate "a 'scientific-exact' image of the moods of the masses in the GDR," and hence to keep track of the citizens' level of support of the socialist regime. Jens Gieseke, "Opinion Polling behind and across the Iron Curtain: How West and East German Pollster Shaped Knowledge Regimes on Communist Societies," *History of the Human Sciences* 29, no. 4–5 (2016): 89.

[130] Gieseke, *The History of the Stasi*, 116.

[131] "Information über die Stimmung und Reaktion der Werktätigen im VEB Asbestzementwerk Porschendorf (AZW) Betrieb im VEB Kombinat Bauelemente und Faserbaustoffe Leipzig," Dresden, 22.08.1988, BArch MfS ZAIG 17287, 41-42.

responding to the needs of 630 workers of the factory.[132] By contextualizing and detailing such complaints and communicating them to the party, the Stasi acted as what scholars identified as a "supplementary (*Ersatz*) public sphere," which "became crucial for mediating between the public, the economy, and the regime."[133]

The Stasi's mood reports were also used to explain economic phenomena, most notably the prevalent problem of employee turnover at building combines and enterprises. The monotonous and bodily demanding nature of manufacturing prefabricated standardized elements, constant push for overtime to compensate for production and construction backlogs, inadequate lodging and food provisions at construction sites were amongst the most common grievances voiced, which—at almost every turn—were argued to be causing the high rates of employee turnover.[134] It is noteworthy that, other circumstances correlated with employee turnover, such as job guarantee for every East German of age or centrally determined wages and industrial prices—in short, working conditions promised and adhered by socialism—were not consulted as scapegoats to explain this phenomenon. Despite this, the Stasi was no friend to the East German working class, either. Complying with the police's historically consistent function in busting unions and breaking strikes, the Stasi interfered in workers' struggle for self-determination and rights through disobedience and disruption of labor.

On July 21, 1980, motorized vehicle and dredger operators of a Dresden civil engineering enterprise (*VEB Verkehrs- und Tiefbaukombinat*) engaged in a work stoppage during their

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[132] "Information über die Stimmung und Reaktion der Werktätigen im VEB Asbestzementwerk Porschendorf," BArch MfS ZAIG 17287, 42.

[133] Rubin, *Amnesiopolis*, 134.

[134] See: "Information über einige Probleme im Wohnungs- und Gesellschaftsbaukombinat (WGK) Frankfurt (O)," Frankfurt (Oder), 1988, 21-26; "Diskussionen, Meinungen und Stimmungen im Bauwesen des Bezirkes und Darstellung von wesentlichen Erscheinungen zu Ursachen und begünstigenden Bedingungen für die nicht befriedigende Lage im Bauwesen des Bezirkes," Dresden, 1988, ZAIG 17287, 68-77; "Information über die Arbeitsverweigerung im VEB Verkehrs- und Tiefbaukombinat Dresden am 21. Juli 1980," Berlin, 24.7.1980, 83-85.

second shifts. Workers protested their enterprise's new regulation that prohibited them from having a warm lunch at a restaurant and, instead, stipulated that cold meals would be provided during shift break. Reporting on the incident, the Main Department XVIII stated that "the thus far customary warm meal at a restaurant was leading to impermissibly long lunch breaks and an increase of fuel consumption."[135] It also justified the enterprise's regulation as being in line with the decisions of the 7th Building Conference of the Central Committee of the SED, as well as the contract between the workers' union and the party.[136] Posing as an objective mediator between the two parties—the workers and the enterprise—the Stasi closely observed and reported on the work stoppage, only to put the brigade leader, blamed for initiating the strike, under direct surveillance with a process called "operational control of persons" (*operative Personenkontrolle*). With this, the work stoppage was implicitly defined as a "hostile-negative" and a potentially criminal offense.

By the 1980s, the Stasi's national economy department turned its attention from sites of planning and production to sites of dwelling, as I mentioned. The state security apparatus repeatedly reported on discrepancies between the quantity of units counted towards the housing combines' plan fulfillment and the amount of housing units delivered to their prospect tenants. For example, in 1987, 570 housing units reported as part of the Berlin Housing Combine's plan fulfillment were not finished and ready to be moved in.[137] These reports illustrated that most of such deliveries were, in fact, not in "turnkey" condition with architectural finishes—from flooring to roof isolation—still missing. The Stasi further inspected the material, technical, and

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[135] "Information über die Arbeitsverweigerung im VEB Verkehrs- und Tiefbaukombinat Dresden am 21. Juli 1980," BArch MfS ZAIG 17287, 83.

[136] BArch MfS ZAIG 17287, 83-84.

[137] "Information über einige Probleme bei der Realisierung des Bauprogramms im IV. Quartal des Vorjahres in der Hauptstadt der DDR, Berlin, die auch den Plananlauf 1987 beeinträchtigen," Berlin, 6.2.1987, BArch MfS AKG 165, 2. See also: "Information über einige Probleme bei der Verwirklichung des Wohnungsbauprogramms in der Hauptstadt der DDR, Berlin," Berlin, 24.2.1986, BArch MfS AKG 312, 1; BArch MfS ZAIG 20301.

infrastructural problems experienced at East Germany's new housing projects by consulting the East German citizen petitions known as *Eingaben*. In 1985, in the month of October alone and only for Berlin's city district Mitte, "there were 177 citizen petitions about… quality defects in refurbished housing," the Stasi noted.[138] Most of citizens' petitions on their new sites of dwelling were about "corrosion, uninsulated windows, and defect doors."[139] These reports on housing as social problem thus utilized multiple means of observation at the Stasi's disposal: bureaucratic surveillance, technical observation, and mood reporting.

The information leaflets examined here, prepared by the Stasi's regional administrative offices and sent to the SED's regional party secretaries, continuously cited "confirmed and trustworthy" yet anonymous sources to refer to the testimonies of the Stasi's informants. These leaflets display an amalgam of direct and indirect language, combining comparative data into production processes collected from bureaucratic documents with references to oral testimonies of anonymous insiders. Here, we see that neither source of information necessarily had primacy over the other. Sometimes inconsistencies in production numbers were used to justify IM-reports, and other times IM-reports were used to support concrete findings in production problems. The discursive nature of the Stasi's reports on the East German building industry was further characterized by a hybrid of highly specialized technical terminology and ideological speak. A report on the problem of overproduction of prefabricated building elements, for instance, touching upon interruptions in the streamlined assembly processes and damages occurring in storage facilities, could conclude by recommending the strengthening of political-

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[138] "Information über einige Probleme bei der Realisierung des Bauprogramms im IV. Quartal des Vorjahres in der Hauptstadt der DDR, Berlin," BArch MfS AKG 165, 2.
[139] "Information über einige Probleme bei der Verwirklichung des Wohnungsbauprogramms in der Hauptstadt der DDR, Berlin," BArch MfS AKG 312, 4.

ideological influence and the creation of a more "militant atmosphere amongst the working collective."[140]

The pedagogical role of supervision was a key motivator for the Stasi's surveillance of the East German building industry. Many reports, at different points, defaulted to explaining plan unfulfillment, erroneous reporting, and workplace disputes as results of a lack in socialist consciousness or anti-capitalist pedagogical training. To understand these reports (and the surveillance activities that yielded them) merely as vehicles for a socialist pedagogical project, however, would be reductive. As I have shown, the Stasi assessed managers' job performance and recommended terms of employment, learned about and communicated the needs and grievances of the working collective, and functioned as a control establishment overseeing the compliance establishment of the East German building industry. By monitoring, the Stasi also fulfilled classical functions of a secret police organization: it detected parties responsible for theft and sabotage and broke strikes. What is more, over the 1980s, the Stasi started to articulate problems endemic to the GDR's centrally planned building economy in between the lines. This is why, in the next section, I will turn to an analysis of the Stasi's growing ability and willingness to be critical of the policies of the Central Committee of the SED.

Useless Re-reporting? Significance of Economic Monitoring

What was the influence and significance of the Stasi's economic monitoring of the East German building industry, if any? Existing scholarship on the Stasi's involvement in the East German industrial production, while focusing on the chemical, energy, and microelectronics sectors, overlooks the particularities of the relationship between the building industry and state

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[140] "Aktuelle Probleme der Vorfertigung von Betonelementen für den Massenwohnungsbau im VEB Wohnungsbaukombinat "Fritz Heckert" Berlin, Plattenwerk Vogelsdorf," 19.05.1987, MfS BV Bln AKG 5730, 2.

surveillance in the GDR. To Jens Gieseke, the Stasi's "economic surveillance" was only effective in preventing and uncovering cases of sabotage and in pursuing technological espionage—thus, in conventional areas of policing and spying—but not actually in illuminating the deficiencies of East German economy and industry.[141] The only means through which economic surveillance was influential, according to Gieseke, was the Stasi's mood reporting since the surveillance organization's covert network had unprecedented access to public opinion otherwise unavailable to other organs of the party-state.[142] Yet, "being under a certain pressure to deliver positive results," the Stasi "didn't dare to take the critical facts presented in their reports and offer an analysis of the underlying causes, which would have implied a criticism of Party leadership," Gieseke states.[143] The surveillance apparatus refrained from being critical of "the actual decision-making center of economic policy, the SED General Committee," and "instead, it followed the conventional pattern of trying to trace back any problem to the hidden influence of the enemy. If no evidence could be found of deliberate sabotage by Western agents, the theory of 'political-ideological diversion' could always be called upon, tracing the source of the problem back to inscrutable intellectual influences."[144] To Gieseke, the Stasi ultimately lacked the technical expertise necessary to comprehend and reflect on the defects internal to the planned economy and ended up re-reporting information already compiled by directors of enterprises and

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[141] By the 1980s "State Security gave the economy a leg up by acting as an information service. The Science and Technology Sector of the HVA, Main Department XVIII, and the Working Group on the Area of Commercial Coordination made a major contribution to balancing out the structural innovation deficits of the East German economy through technological espionage and the illegal foreign-trade business… as well as to overcoming the balance-of-payments crisis by procuring hard currency." Gieseke, *The History of the Stasi*, 109. See also: Jörg Rösler, "Industrieinnovation Und Industriespionage in Der DDR. Der Staatssicherheitsdienst in Der Innovationsgeschichte Der DDR," *Deutschland Archiv* 27, no. 10 (1994): 1026–40.

[142] Gieseke's "economic surveillance" concept is thus based on two categories of observation: one is targeted observation as a means of direct intervention, as with espionage, and the second is mass observation as blanket information accumulation, as with mood reporting and economic monitoring. But as I tried to establish, the Stasi's methods of information accumulation and processing was more diversified than what this dichotomy acknowledges. Gieseke, *The History of the Stasi*, 109.

[143] Gieseke, 109.

[144] Gieseke, 110, 54.

planning commissions—a point also highlighted by Franz Otto Gilles and Hermann Hertle.[145] The state security apparatus' technical, industrial, and economic reports were, therefore, trivial and thus inconsequential.

Such analyses, which focus on the Stasi's economically oriented activities targeting East German industrial production writ large, certainly touch upon some mutual findings from within the building industry, including the dilemma of re-reporting and fast-tracking to a lack of political-ideological training as the cause of economic-material problems. There are many important nuances to be made, however. First, the implication that the state security apparatus strived to deliver "positive results" within the field of economy is at odds with the outcomes of the Stasi's economic monitoring of housing production, in particular, and building production, in general. From the mid-1970s until 1989, in the countless reports the Stasi issued about the "situation" of the territorially managed building production, those of which account delays, disruptions, shortages, misreports, misconducts, and misdemeanors are not the exception but the rule. "Positive results," across this plethora of reports, are mostly reducible to introductory sentences about how a particular enterprise or combine *was* faring better until the introduction of a new technology or the increase of building quotas, or how they *seemed to* fare better due to manipulations since uncovered.

The assertion that the Stasi abstained from communicating the critical facts and offering an analysis of underlying causes requires a careful discussion here. Were observations of workplace behavior or work performance assessments merely scare crows for explaining away endemic system failures? This was true to a degree. Dwelling on the performance of the Rostock-Grevesmühlen housing enterprise discussed above, for example, the Stasi reported that

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[145] Gilles and Hertle, *Uberwiegend negativ*, 42.

investments intended for the maintenance and repair of facilities and machinery were being used to decrease costs of housing production and declare plan fulfillment. "The real cost of production is being obfuscated," the Stasi noted, not only in terms of enterprise performance but also in the long term as the obsolescence of tools, vehicles, and assembly line was ultimately going to catch up.[146] How the enterprise director's supposed unwillingness to collective decision-making—a point of emphasis in the report—related to this misconduct was left unarticulated, besides the conclusion that the director had no successors to replace him. The Stasi ultimately refrained from critically questioning why "a selflessly committed" manager, albeit his shortcomings in mitigating responsibility, would oversee and even deliberately carry out fallacious reallocation of funds in his enterprise. This question, if seriously posed, would have found its answer in the enormous pressure housing production enterprises were put under for plan fulfillment under the Honecker regime.

Not all reports can simply be categorized as being completely uncritical let alone as merely recycling the cliché narratives of "enemy influence" or "lack of socialist consciousness," however. Writing on the problems in plan fulfillment at an enterprise of the Leipzig building and assembly combine, the Stasi noted that, according to "official expert as well as internal sources" the enterprise's production capacities were dwindling down since 1985 and no course for improvement was foreseen until 1988.[147] The report first took the common talking points on the insufficiencies of management, including the director's lack of qualifications "to keep up with the increasing complexity of tasks," his authoritative approach, and rejection of criticism from

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[146] "Information über einige Probleme im Leitungs- und Reproduktionsprozess des VEB (K) Grevesmühlen," Rostock, 10.03.1989, BArch MfS ZAIG 17287, 13.
[147] "Information über einige Aspekte im Zusammenhang mit der Planerfüllung im VEB BMK Süd, Kombinatsbetrieb Industriebau Leipzig (KBI Leipzig)," Leipzig, 14.6.1988, BArch MfS ZAIG 17287, 50-56.

his team.[148] The familiar thread on plan manipulation described how some projects going over budget were not disclosed and how extra expenses were pushed underneath other projects.[149] In a twist of rhetoric, however, the report quoted enterprise managers saying that the Central Committee of the SED's decision to take gross output instead of net production as one of the main economic indices for enterprise performance was a mistake.[150] The managers' resignation was tied to the rising share of reconstruction projects—in this case, for industrial structures—in plan fulfillment.

Reconstruction required less material but more labor (and hence more time for completion) than new projects, and the existing economic indices based on gross output were simply not attuned to this change in enterprise performance, the report noted. As a result, enterprises neglected reconstruction projects to meet overall production quotas. The report even quoted a counselor of the enterprise without additional commentary: "as long as the director can show plan fulfillment to the Minister [of Building], he is a 'good man,' but if he does not, 'he is kicked out' and there starts the swindling."[151] This statement was cushioned between paragraphs placing the blame on directors, their decisions, and shortcomings, diluting its effect to some degree. Informant testimonies in and out themselves yielded a more impassioned critique of economic planning and industrial management than the reports that filtered and abridged them.[152] The report unmistakably included a critique of the "actual decision-making center of

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[148] "Information über einige Aspekte im Zusammenhang mit der Planerfüllung im VEB BMK Süd," BArch MfS ZAIG 17287, 51.
[149] BArch MfS ZAIG 17287, 52.
[150] BArch MfS ZAIG 17287, 54.
[151] BArch MfS ZAIG 17287, 52.
[152] An IM-testimony from 1989, for example, includes a much more impassioned critique of economic planning and industrial management than any cumulative report examined for this study. Reporting on the problems experienced by the Magdeburg region's building industry, the informant went on the record stating that even though building enterprises are expected to "develop into scientific-technical centers, they are lacking the most basic technical devices," and "great disorder reigns over the introduction of modern computer technologies." BArch MfS BV Mgb Abt XVIII 802, 1.

economic policy, Central Committee of the SED," nonetheless, as this was the organ setting the criteria for building enterprise performance.

Towards the end of the 1980s, enterprise complaints about repair and renovation projects were regularly articulated in the Stasi's economic reports. This was due to the rising significance of urban renewal and historic reconstruction in both East German building policy and collective psyche. Urban renovation laws (*Sanierungsgesetze*) of the 1970s, legislated under Honecker, were "synonymous with the replacement of old buildings with Plattenbauten in order to create as much new housing space as possible."[153] The wave of rapid housing construction ended up partially abolishing the historic building stock across East German towns, and city silhouettes became increasingly characterized by building cranes and Plattenbau high-rises. Discursively and legislatively, this "politics of demolition" was justified through the concepts of life span and obsolescence (*Überalterung*) since the 1950s, arguing that buildings have a limited lifetime and need to be torn down by the end of their presumed life cycle regardless of their condition.[154] Yet, at least since the 1960s, there was a public and professional outcry about the homogenization of urban space by the pervasion of prefabricated mass housing. To the Central Committee, "the spread of this critique from local groups and architecture circles to various populaces and even to central state organs meant that it could evolve into a force" that hindered industrialization from prevailing.[155] In response, throughout the 1960s and 1970s, "the legislative quantitative definition of life cycles of buildings" was gradually prolonged, and by 1979 demolition of

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[153] Georg Wagner-Kyora, "'Die Stadt als Ganzes' - Städtebau-Visionen und der Flächenabriss in der Altstadt Halles (1964 - 1989)," in *Paradigmenwechsel und Kontinuitätslinien im DDR-Städtebau neue Forschungen zur ostdeutschen Architektur- und Planungsgeschichte*, ed. Frank Betker, Carsten Benke, and Christoph Bernhardt (Erkner: Leibniz-Inst. für Regionalentwicklung und Strukturplanung, 2010), 95.

[154] Florian Urban, "Erker im Plattenbau - die DDR entdeckt die historische Stadt," in *Paradigmenwechsel und Kontinuitätslinien im DDR-Städtebau neue Forschungen zur ostdeutschen Architektur- und Planungsgeschichte*, ed. Frank Betker, Carsten Benke, and Christoph Bernhardt (Erkner: Leibniz-Inst. für Regionalentwicklung und Strukturplanung, 2010), 130.

[155] Hoscislawski, *Bauen zwischen Macht und Ohnmacht*, 209.

historic buildings was prohibited by law.[156] This shift was indeed owed to a new public

consciousness and sensibility toward the historic city and the European heritage, whereby the

Leitbild of the city as historical continuity superseded the idea of a continuous and overarching

renewal.[157] As a result, during the 1980s, resources of the East German building industry started

to be partially mobilized to rehabilitate and retrofit Wilhelmine-era housing structures at city

centers, equipping them with basic amenities such as private sanitary spaces, proper ventilation,

and adequate drainage.

Yet, as East German building enterprises continued to prioritize new building projects at

the expense of renovation and repair to meet cumulative plan fulfillment, the Stasi made room in

its reports for more damning (and seemingly less edited) comments. So were "field experts"

paraphrased saying that "it is high time that regional building authorities sit down and properly

face the real reasons why every year two building repair enterprises in Berlin declare plan

deficits, why plan and account manipulations are amplified in this area, and why for years

building repair has been a staple cipher of plan unfulfillment."[158] This sentence was not quoted in

a report internal to the MfS, either. It was included by the Berlin Regional Administration for

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[156] According to Urban, there were two factors facilitating the continous change and ultimate diminishment of the obsolescence principle during this period. First, the pace of reconstruction could not catch up with the lawfully permitted life span of buildings. As a result, "outpacing of aging" (Überholung der Veralterung) constantly remained an unachieved goal. The more reconstruction took time the more buildings aged, and hence the legislature had to be redefined to include buildings that "over-aged" beyond the life span limitations. Put differently, "outpacing of aging" surrendered to "receding of aging." Urban, "Erker im Plattenbau - die DDR entdeckt die historische Stadt," 131–35; Yet, as Wagner-Kyora writes, up until 1978 "the lobbyists of reconstruction of old city centers… successfully argued for the demolition of the Renaissance and Baroque stone masonry building stock and advocated against their preservation, renovation and restoration." Wagner-Kyora, "'Die Stadt als Ganzes' - Städtebau-Visionen und der Flächenabriss in der Altstadt Halles (1964 - 1989)," 98.

[157] Urban argues that, for East Germans, seeing the supposedly "over-aged" or obsolete buildings enduring time and standing tall well after their argued life span endorsed this public consciousness. Urban, "Erker im Plattenbau - die DDR entdeckt die historische Stadt," 131–32.

[158] "Information über einige Probleme bei der Realisierung des Bauprogramms im IV. Quartal des Vorjahres in der Hauptstadt der DDR, Berlin, die auch den Plananlauf 1987 beeinträchtigen," Berlin, 06.02.1987, BArch MfS BV Bln AKG 165, 4-5.

State Security in a document that went directly to the desk of Günter Schabowski, Politbüro member and First Secretary of the SED's Berlin administration.

In addition to criticisms about problems concerning the introduction of repair and renovation projects to production plans, over the 1980s, the Stasi's economic reports on the building industry mentioned predicaments caused by the frequent change in project timelines, deadlines, and tasks, and related insufficiencies in policy documents. In these accounts, the onus was not merely put on production cadres or inscrutable foreign influences but on regional building authorities and hence the East German state itself.[159] Thus, by the late 1980s, the Stasi had grown more insightful and knowledgeable about the administrative, managerial, and technical processes pertaining to building production and more critical of its inherent problems. This competence was not simply accumulated by virtue of having monitored the building industry over two decades, either. It was due to the fact that the Stasi itself had grown into a mass building producer by the 1980s, which set the ministry's involvement in the GDR's building economy apart from its analogous activities in other industries, as I will discuss in the chapter's conclusion.

Before outlining my argument further, however, it must be underlined that not all economic reports of the 1980s included the kind of critical language exemplified above. While a clear trend of carefully employed system critique ventriloquizing informant feedback is observable through archival data, there were still many reports defaulting to the well-trodden explanatory paths of character shortcomings or lack of socialist consciousness as reasons for failures of the building economy. There were countless people involved in the Stasi's economic monitoring of the building industry, from informants and full-time employees to high-ranking

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[159] See: "Einige Probleme bei der Verwirklichung des Wohnungsbauprogramm in der Hauptstadt der DDR, Berlin," Berlin, 24.02.1986, BArch MfS BV Bln AKG 312, 3-4.

officers, all with their own agendas, levels of political allegiance and obedience, and perhaps

slightly differing opinions on the state security apparatus' role and responsibility. This renders

sweeping generalizations on the nature of the Stasi's economic monitoring tricky—and so does

the generalization of the Stasi's economic activities across all East German industries.

Whether or to what extent the abovementioned criticisms prompted reflection amongst

the SED cadres is difficult to ascertain, especially because it might have been too little, too late:

reports including overtly critical voices all come from the very end of the 1980s. Thus, even if

the Stasi eventually developed "the will and the mental equipment to undertake a critical analysis

of the underlying causes of the deficits and problems it uncovered," it ran out of time to put these

in action.[160] A different question still begs our attention, however: what was the significance and

influence of economic monitoring and reporting for the MfS itself? Put differently, what did the

Stasi have to gain from this immense operation of infiltration, data collection, assessment, and

communication besides rendering itself seemingly indispensable and making its presence felt?

I argue that, in order to answer these questions within the context of the GDR's building

industry, we need to reconsider the operative concept through which we address these activities.

Instead of limiting our scope to "economic surveillance," which assumes that the Stasi tried to

act—and hence failed—as a steering organ for the building economy, we need to understand it as

a building agent: an intercessor that examined architectural objects, institutions, and processes,

assessed their efficiency, safety, and security, and communicated its findings to the East German

state. In this capacity, the Stasi did not (or could not) regulate the centrally planned building

industry; instead of correcting course it controlled it by obtaining, cross-referencing, and

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[160] Gieseke, *The History of the Stasi*, 112.

evaluating information. During this process, the knowledge gained became significant to the MfS for another reason, nonetheless: to correct the course of its own building production.

Conclusion

As previously mentioned, scholarship interpreting the Stasi's economic activities have not yet investigated its role within the building industry. The focus has been on the chemical, energy, and microelectronics sectors, which were also of heightened interest to the Stasi and where sabotage prevention and international espionage were on the forefront. The nature of the relationship between architecture and surveillance in the GDR, however, did not comport to these branches of East German industrial production.

On the one hand, the Stasi was a building user: it not only occupied buildings to house its employees or administer its ministerial operations, but strategically used architecture to plan and conduct its domestic surveillance activities. The Stasi examined the built environment to detect auspicious escape routes and determine sightlines for observation, and selected people to recruit as IMs depending on their spatial coordinates allowing the observation of others, as I explore in Chapter 3. Developing a keen familiarity with the products of the East German building industry, specifically with the Plattenbauten, was key to both preventive-passive and active-offensive surveillance activities. For example, the Stasi carefully studied the most widely applied Plattenbau-types, such as Q3, L4, P2, and WBS 70, and inspected the placement of twin outlets between neighboring units, the location of communal antenna cables, elevators, and staircases in them. In doing so, it tried to standardize its phone tapping, aural surveillance, and foot-tracking schemes. The Stasi also plastics and consumed energy, as well, but the products of chemical combines or nuclear power plants were only of economic interest, whereas the products of the

building industry concerned the surveillance apparatus as much as micro-electronics—they concerned the efficiency and method of surveillance.

On the other hand, the MfS did not produce energy or manufacture plastics, but it was a building developer—and in a vast scale, for that matter. As Chapter 2 examines, the state security apparatus ran its own construction companies under which numerous projects of the ministry were designed and built. The MfS also produced micro-electronics, specifically listening devices and imaging technologies under its so-called operational-technical sector (*Operativ-technischer Sektor – OTS*) but first, this was not a mass production scheme and rather a niche field of research and development, and second, manufacturing micro-electronics did not concern the economic and social welfare of the ministry's employment base—it only concerned methods of surveillance. In comparison, the MfS-subordinate building enterprises were tasked with providing Stasi employees with workspace, housing, hospitals, and schools, and their production schemes, building tariffs, and plan fulfillment quotas were determined by the East German building economy. What is more, having grown critical of the centrally imposed economic indices and guidelines, by the late 1980s, the MfS had other plans for the building industry under its management. In 1986, the last of the Stasi's building enterprises of special production—the VEB Spezialhochbau Berlin—developed a ministry-specific prefabricated housing type called WGS88, with the plan that the MfS' building industry would become independent of the GDR's central economic planning. Thus, in comparison to other industrial areas in which it was invested, the state security apparatus harbored an unequivocal expertise in building production and its industrial economy.

This requires us to flip the script, as it were, and ask—as posed above—what the significance of economic monitoring and reporting was for the ministry itself. Conceiving of the

Stasi as a building agent allows us to examine these activities as only one aspect of the ministry's architectural production and hence analyze them in conjunction with the interdependencies between the Stasi's roles as a building developer and a building user.

Chapter 2
Stasi as a Building Developer:
Administering and Managing Building Production

Architecture was a major undertaking of the East German state security apparatus. Over its forty-year existence, the MfS developed into a building developer with a widely ramified bureaucracy and a significant urban imprint. The ministry was involved in large-scale architectural projects since 1954 and worked with construction teams and design collectives under its exclusive contract to build sports complexes, housing for its employees, and homes for East German functionaries. By the 1960s, the MfS was no longer just commissioning building projects, but started to manage construction companies under its own architectural division. From 1962 to 1989, the MfS ran a total of five building enterprises, the last of which—the *VEB Spezialhochbau Berlin*—became the largest construction company in the GDR.

The state security organization's architectural footprint comprised thousands of structures, including administrative and technical buildings, service units, and remand prisons, as well as housing, schools, hospitals, and holiday retreats for Stasi employees. The state security apparatus also realized numerous projects for members of the SED and the Politbüro, most significantly the functionary settlement *Waldsiedlung Wandlitz*. To build, maintain, and secure the myriad Stasi-occupied spaces spread across the country, the ministry ran an extensive building bureaucracy, and the department overseeing these activities—its *Verwaltung Rückwärtige Dienste* (*VRD*)—became the ministry's second largest operation, superseding its

departments for domestic surveillance, military reconnaissance, and counter espionage—in short, the very departments associated with the Stasi's raison d'être.[1]

    This chapter investigates the inception, evolution, and the eventual demise of the MfS' building production activities. I interrogate the nature and significance of these activities for the ministry and their role within the GDR's planned economy, asking: how might we understand architecture, broadly defined, as one of the few operations within a state security organization that contained a larger labor force than its intelligence and security functions? What were the ways through which building production became as integral to state surveillance as, for example,

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[1] The history of the Stasi's architectural departments and enterprises constitutes a blind spot within the historiography of the state security apparatus and the GDR, where the extent of the Stasi's architectural bureaucracy and workforce is conspicuously underestimated. By 1989, the Stasi's paramilitary organization Guard Regiment (Wachregiment) "Feliks E. Dzieržynski" had 11 thousand people in its cadres—a remarkable number. The division responsible for reconnaissance and foreign intelligence—the *Hauptverwaltung A* (HV A)—employed 3829 people and has so far been identified as the ministry's second largest department. Yet, the second largest operation under the MfS was the Verwaltung Rückwärtige Dienste (VRD), which was tasked with ensuring the quality, continuity, and security of the ministry's work predominantly through architectural projects and services. With 3288 people in its immediate staff, the VRD was already a larger undertaking than most divisions conducting the Stasi's security, counterespionage, and surveillance work. The ministry's Hauptabteilung I, for example, which monitored National People's Army (Nationale Volksarmee – NVA) and border troops, had only 2321 employees. This number was 1991 for the Hauptabteilung II – Counter Espionage, 2353 for Hauptabteilung III – Radio Intelligence, 2024 for the Hauptabteilung VI – Passport Control, and 1619 for the Hauptabteilung VIII – Observation and Investigation. By 1977, the VRD had added the Stasi-run building enterprises VEB Spezialhochbau Berlin and VEB Raumkunst Berlin to its fields of responsibility. With 2649 employees, the Spezialhochbau Berlin alone doubled the size of the entire administration, bringing its cadres to almost 5000 people. What is more, architecture was a major undertaking of the VRD and almost ¾ of its staff was working on architecture-oriented tasks.

The historiographical dismissal of and disinterest in the VRD can be understood in several ways. First, the HV A, as with the other MfS departments mentioned, actualized the raison d'être of the Stasi—namely, to protect the GDR from enemies at home and abroad. By contrast, the VRD, with its broadly defined duty to safeguard the material-technical needs of the state security apparatus, was conceived as a mere maintenance and service unit facilitating surveillance's needs—the HV B, as VRD's predecessor was called, to the HVA, as previously mentioned. This would partly explain the plethora of research on the MfS departments responsible for espionage, reconnaissance, and domestic intelligence in contrast to very limited knowledge about the history of the VRD and the building enterprises it managed. Second, while examining the largest operations under the MfS, researchers seem to have focused on lists of full-time employees (*hauptamtliche Mitarbeiter*) of respective departments. In the case of the VRD, the staff of Spezialhochbau has been categorized as "enterprise members" and hence not counted towards the administration cadres, except for Stasi officers occupying key positions within the construction firm's management. Yet, for other departments, civilians, or staff "not under oath" (*nicht attestiert*) are counted, which makes the exclusion of civilian "enterprise members" arbitrary and contradictory, as they were also full-time employees but without the higher security clearance. And third, Spezialhochbau, as well as its predecessors, was a legal entity separate from the ministry's structure. Even though this legal status made the ministry financially independent from its enterprises, it did not restrict its bureaucratic and managerial control, as this chapter will illustrate in detail. All departmental employment statistics based on the final personnel count in 1989; drawn from: Wiedmann, *Die Diensteinheiten des MfS 1950–1989*.

reconnaissance? I argue that the Stasi increasingly saw architecture—in its bureaucracy and its

form—as a key arena for surveillance and control, and hence as a necessary extension of the

security apparatus. Buildings occupied by the ministry and housing representatives of the SED

were of high state security priority. The desired security and secrecy conditions needed to be

reflected in their design and established throughout their construction process. Protecting state

intelligence was thus a matter of both architectural form and building administration.

Architecture also concerned national security as the Stasi was invested in safeguarding the

building economy of not just the state but also its ministry.[2] Architecture was key to improving

the working and living conditions of Stasi employees, to whom the ministry's building industry

catered. As a result, building production provided a field of trial and error for the ministry's

socio-economic planning and scientific-technical development. Architecture, however, did not

merely reify the already manifest logic of East German state surveillance and state power, as this

chapter will show. Instead, architectural production was where this logic was constantly

reformulated and put to test, and where the Stasi's self-positioning within the Soviet-type state

socialism of the GDR became legible to the state itself. It was also a field of operation where the

ministry's social, economic, and security functions collided, and their contradictions were made

visible to a broader public of stakeholders—namely, the tens of thousands of employees working

within the ministry's ranks and occupying its spaces.

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[2] As Katherine Verdery writes, "the definition of security underpinning security practices largely protects governments and their citizens from attack by actual or potential 'enemies,' such as terrorists or criminals." Yet, the dimension of "national security," which concerns "greater dangers" such as "the neglect of infrastructure… and the constantly advancing economic insecurity of the general population," is usually overlooked in security discourses." "'Formerly existing socialism'… as manifest in the Soviet Union and its various client states was concerned among other things with precisely those forms of insecurity:" "forms such as poverty, homelessness, and lack of employment"—in short, with national security problems. Katherine Verdery, "Comparative Surveillance Regimes. A Preliminary Essay," in *Spaces of Security. Ethnographies of Securityscapes, Surveillance, and Control*, ed. Mark Maguire and Setha Low (New York: NYU Press, 2019), 59–67.

Over three extensive sections, this chapter charts the shifts and changes in how the Stasi understood and carried out its building production responsibilities between 1954 and 1989. The first section examines the architectural history of the "forest settlement" Wandlitz, which housed the GDR's political elite from 1960 to 1989. The settlement is no unfamiliar subject, and a series of recent works brought scholarly attention to its history.[3] Contrary to what the existing literature suggests, however, the Stasi's relationship to Wandlitz was neither limited to the protection of state security by supervising building teams and monitoring the site, nor was it merely necessitated by the procurement of resources unavailable to the East German market. As I show, the Waldsiedlung was one of the largest and longest running architectural projects *undertaken* by the Stasi, and the construction of the settlement prominently ushered the state security apparatus' evolution from—what I term—a "building commissioner" (*Auftraggeber*) to a building contractor (*Auftragnehmer*) from 1954 to 1962. I locate the rationale behind this development in a shift from individual oversight to institutional control as building and design teams working on Wandlitz and under legally vague affiliations with the ministry were pulled into the MfS' security administration. This also brought about a change in the means power was exerted as its logic shifted from surveillance to self-surveillance: a logic that found expression first in the urban planning and later in the construction management of the project. In this section, I also present a detailed biographical analysis of the project's leading architects and make several interventions to the historiography of the ministry. I predate the founding of the ministry's first building enterprise—*Aufbauleitung Dynamo*—from 1961 to 1954 and reveal that the ministry

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[3] See: Elke Kimmel and Claudia Schmid-Rathjen, *Waldsiedlung Wandlitz. Eine Region und die Staatsmacht*, 1st Edition, Orte der Geschichte (Berlin: Ch. Links Verlag, 2016); Jürgen Danyel and Elke Kimmel, *Waldsiedlung Wandlitz. Eine Landschaft der Macht*, 1st edition (Berlin: Ch. Links Verlag, 2016); Hans-Michael Schulze, *In den Wohnzimmern der Macht: Das Geheimnis des Pankower "Städtchens,"* 1., Aufl. edition (Berlin: berlin edition im be.bra verlag, 2001).

had its own architectural design office *Entwurfsbüro 110* at least since 1955. These revisions are important, as I show, to understand the state security apparatus' real involvement in building Wandlitz and the development of its building bureaucracy and industry in the project's aftermath.

The chapter's second section explores the evolution of the MfS' building administration, specifically as it was shaped by Erich Mielke. Similar to the centralization of Wandlitz's architectural affairs under the Stasi's purview, from 1957 to 1977, Mielke instituted a series of structural changes to his ministry's architectural divisions and the enterprises overseen by them, increasingly centralizing and streamlining the bureaucracy of building. Perhaps the most significant of these changes was the transformation of the MfS' building enterprises to military contractors governed by the GDR's central economic planning, which strengthened not only their budget and security but also helped the ministry centralize and grow its building industry. I discuss these administrative and managerial trends within the context of the GDR's planned economy and industrial reform over the 1960s and 1970s.

The third and last section focuses on the MfS' last and largest building enterprise VEB Spezialhochbau Berlin (1975-1989). With an in-depth analysis of the enterprise's administrative, managerial, legal, and financial history, I demonstrate that, by the 1980s, the Stasi saw its building industry as a field of scientific-technical development and socio-economic progress in the service of its employees and advancing its security administration. I examine the petitioned but unrealized 1985 plan to transform MfS-subordinate enterprises to MfS-owned entities, discussing its repercussions for the ministry's building industry. I argue that the growth and diversification of the Stasi's building production capacities during this period brought about a

bourgeoning of its surveillance bureaucracy, which became the most consequential impediment to ministry's social, economic, and technological objectives.

I conclude the chapter by discussing this bureaucratic expansionism and argue that it cannot be understood as merely an irrational result of security paranoia. Instead, it was a measure compensating for the inability to instate more efficient modes of visual supervision and surveillance: an inability resulting from to the widespread implementation of centrally devised and prefabricated mass housing types to build structures of administration and production—types that paradoxically were the result of the GDR's technological and economic studies.

Building for the Political Elite: The Stasi and the 'Forest Settlement' Wandlitz

Prehistory of the Project, 1945-1958

The "forest settlement" Wandlitz was built between 1958-1960 to better facilitate the protection of persons of national security significance—specifically members and candidates of the Politbüro of the Central Committee of the SED—by accommodating them in a communal and enclosed environment. Prior to their move to Wandlitz, East German functionaries were residing in Berlin's Pankow neighborhood, with most of them concentrated at a single quartier around the Majakowskiring. This was initially the residential center of power for the Soviet Military Administration (*Sowjetische Militäradministration – SMAD*), and the exiled leaders of the Communist Party of Germany (*Kommunistische Partei Deutschlands – KPD*) were settled as neighbors to the leaders of the Soviet occupation forces upon their return to Germany between 1945 and 1949.[4] After the founding of the GDR in 1949, the functionaries of the SED—formed

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[4] Schulze, *In den Wohnzimmern der Macht*, 36. Majakowski Circle's communist leaders returning from exile included Wilhelm Pieck, Walter Ulbricht, Anton Ackermann, Franz Dahlem and Johannes R. Becher, among others. Danyel and Kimmel, *Waldsiedlung Wandlitz*, 44.

by the unification of the KPD and the SPD (*Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands*) in 1946—continued to reside at the Majakowskiring and its immediate surroundings. This part of Pankow came to be called "little city" (*Pankower Städtchen*) in political jargon due to its "city within city" status owed to high security measures and perceived luxuries in contrast to dire realities of living in war-torn Berlin.[5]

In the mid-1950s, discussions began for the relocation of what had now become the GDR's center of power. In contrast to the widely known and highly accessible Majakowskiring, the Central Committee of the SED sought a location that could be kept confidential and thoroughly guarded off. Pankow's proximity to the East-West border was another concern raised, leading the Central Committee to question whether the communal accommodation of the young state's leading figures could be properly protected from the neighboring Western "enemy" forces in the face of a war threat. The relocation from the low-density yet still urban Pankow, it was maintained, would also ward off curious glances of civilians living in or simply crossing the area, which was contributing to real as well as imaginary security concerns.[6]

The final site of choice was the Wandlitz forest in the district of Barnim, 30 kilometers north of Berlin. Bordered by the Wandlitz and Liepnitz lakes on its northern side and stretching between the historic village of Wandlitz and the towns of Bernau and Schönwalde, the area was well connected to Berlin via an existing road network, which was necessary for its prospective residents' daily commute. Additionally, the surrounding forest was to serve as a "green wall"

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[5] For a list of Majakowskiring residents, see: "Verwendung der freigewordenen bzw. freiwerdenden Häuser der Funktionäre im Regiarungsstädtchen Pankow und außerhalb desselben," Berlin, 8.7.1960, BArch MfS HA PS 5608, 13 – 15.

[6] Pointing out to the scarcity of historic documents on these discussions, Jürgen Danyel and Elke Kimmel state that they "provide only a partial image" of the prehistory of the Waldsiedlung and "the motivations… of the GDR's center of decision-making cannot be fully reconstructed."Danyel and Kimmel, *Waldsiedlung Wandlitz*, 62. The authors' plea requires our attention as it calls for a reconsideration of the real reasonings behind the building of the Waldsiedlung undocumented in written form yet still legible in the built environment that it produced.

shielding the settlement. Yet, given it is highly difficult to militarily secure a forested area from potential spies or soldiers, seclusion instead of security seems to have been prioritized. What is more, governmental buildings the East German functionaries occupied on a daily basis remained at the heart of East Berlin. The relocation was thus motivated largely by the desire to conceal East German functionaries' residences in a place unbeknownst not only to foreign intelligence but also to the public—a secret, semi-utopian place where the politically privileged could find refuge. The privileges ultimately enjoyed by the GDR's political elite in Wandlitz, whether in the otherwise inaccessible imported goods available at their local stores or the provision of private masseurs and multiple housekeepers, further supports this idea.

Once the site for the new functionary settlement was decided upon with a 1956 Politbüro decision, the MfS was called to task.[7] The ministry's Main Department for the Protection of Persons (*Hauptabteilung Personenschutz – HA PS*) was tasked with overseeing the project's realization, maintenance, and security, including the procurement of building materials, monitoring construction activities, and devising security measures around the site. The Stasi was also instrumental in the selection of architects entrusted with the project. Appointed were Heinz Gläske, director of *Sonderbaustab 10* (Special Building Team 10) responsible with the settlement's construction, and Walter Schmidt, director of *Entwurfsbüro 110* (Design Office 110) responsible with its design and planning. Both architects had questionable backgrounds within the context of the German socialist state's pledges to anti-fascism and anti-capitalism. Gläske, on the one hand, was a former prisoner of war who fought for Germany and worked for a US intelligence agency in West Berlin after his release. Walter Schmidt, on the other hand, had

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[7] As part of a protocol from the August 28, 1956 Politbüro meeting where "preparation of measures for a new housing settlement" was declared. "Protokoll Nr. 42/56 der Sitzung des Politbüros," Berlin, 28.8.1956, BArch DY 30/J IV 2/2 496, 8.

worked on prestige projects of the National Socialists in the 1930s. These two points of

engagement were what the MfS' ideological agenda was outspokenly against—namely, persons

with ties to the National Socialist regime and those with contacts to the West. Yet, Gläske and

Schmidt were favored over East German architects with long-standing allegiances to the KPD

before and during the war, nevertheless, as they were already working directly for the state

security apparatus since the mid-1950s. Thus, the planning, design, and construction of Wandlitz

was intricately interwoven with the Stasi's building activities, and in building for the state,

loyalty to its secret service was prioritized over loyalty to the official party line.

Heinz Gläske, Aufbauleitung (SV) Dynamo, and Sonderbaustab 10

Heinz Gläske, born in 1913 as the son of a civil servant, received his vocational training

as a building craftsman between 1930-1933 and graduated from the polytechnic school *Höhere*

Technische Lehranstalt der Stadt Berlin as an architect (*Ingenieur für Hochbau*) in 1935.[8] Until

his deployment by the Wehrmacht in 1939, Gläske worked for many different architects in

Berlin, including Heinrich Streumer and Walter Schlemp, and for the planning office of the city

of Berlin.[9] Having fought the WWII until the very end, the architect was eventually captured by

the Soviet forces in 1945 and sent to a prisoner of war camp in Leningrad, where he stayed until

1949.[10] Here, he went through the "Antifa-School" system ran by the Comintern (*Communist*

International), which targeted the rehabilitation of imprisoned Nazi soldiers as anti-fascist

fighters for their prospective return to Germany.[11] Here, Gläske became a member of the SED

but moved to West Berlin after his release, where he continued working as an architect: first self-

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[8] "Abschlussbericht," Berlin, 23.10.1964, BArch MfS KS Nr. 29388/90 Bd. 1, 95.

[9] "Abschlussbericht. Berufliche Entwiclung," BArch MfS KS Nr. 29388/90 Bd. 1, 12.

[10] "Abschlussbericht. Wehrmacht und Kriegsgefangenschaft," BArch MfS KS Nr. 29388/90 Bd. 1, 14.

[11] For the most comprehensive biography on Gläske to date, see: Elke Kimmel, *West-Berlin: Biografie einer Halbstadt* (Ch. Links Verlag, 2018).

employed and later as a building expert (*Sachverstädiger für Bauwesen*) for the Berlin Senate for

Interior Affairs.[12] In 1951, Gläske officially became an informant of the MfS. Whether his work

for the Berlin Senate, where he stayed less than five months between 1951 and 1952, prompted

his recruitment is unknown.[13] From 1952 until 1954, he continued working for several private

architecture offices in West Berlin, changing workplaces every several months.[14] The architect

was reportedly recruited by the *Gehlen Organisation*—the US intelligence agency active in the

American occupation zones of Germany—and became a double agent.[15] Following his

participation in the alleged abduction of a Soviet dissident from West Berlin to the GDR,[16]

Gläske was retrieved by East Germany in 1954 and awarded a Patriotic Order of Merit in

Silver.[17]

It is also around this time that we find the earliest published mentions on the architect.

For example, a 1954 *Spiegel* article on the abduction affair describes Gläske as "leading projects

for SED buildings in East Berlin."[18] A glorifying 1962 reporting in the East German newspaper

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[12] BArch MfS KS Nr. 29388/90 Bd. 1, 13.

[13] "Aktennotiz Major Gläske," Berlin, 28.4.1977, BArch MfS KS Nr. 29388/90 Bd. 1, 11.

[14] According to his own testimony, from February to June 1952, Gläske worked for the architecture office of W. Dahlke in Berlin-Schöneberg, and from August 1952 to March 1953 for the architect G. Riwalski in Berlin-Steglitz. From April 1953 to August 1954, he was once again self-employed. BArch MfS KS Nr. 29388/90 Bd. 1, 13.

[15] Kimmel, *West-Berlin*.

[16] The alleged abductee was Alexander Truchnovitch, chairman of the anti-communist Russian refugee organization "National Alliance of Russian Solidarists" (*Narodnno-Trudovoj Sojuz – NTS*). The April 26, 1954 edition of *Time* magazine reported the affair as follows: "In Berlin, Red agents pulled off the most spectacular kidnapping of an anti-Red leader since they seized Dr. Walter Linse in broad daylight in 1952. The victim was Dr. Alexander Truchnovich, head of the National Labor Union, a Russian refugee organization. Western officials believed he had been betrayed by a friend, Heinz Glaeske [sic]." Although the SED had refuted these allegations by portraying them as a "Western lie campaign," they were confirmed post-Unification through original research on the Stasi's spying activities. See: Bernd Stöver, "Konterrevolution versus Befreiung," in *Das Gesicht dem Westen zu...: DDR Spionage gegen die Bundesrepublik Deutschland*, ed. Helmut Müller-Enbergs and Georg Herbstritt, 2., korr. edition (Bremen: Edition Temmen, 2003), 153–80.

[17] "Abschlussbericht. Auszeichnungen," BArch MfS KS Nr. 29388/90 Bd. 1, 17. The Patriotic Order of Merit (*Vaterländischer Verdienstorden*) was a national award granted annually in the GDR to persons and institutions with outstanding contributions to the state and society. The order was establihed in 1954, making Gläske one of its first recipients.

[18] The article refers to East Berlin as the "Soviet Sector of Berlin." "Kalter Krieg: Seltsamer Als Ein Roman," *Spiegel*, April 28, 1954.

Neue Zeit also states that "since 1954, the architect is the director of a large construction team [Aufbaustab], which is entrusted with the building of the *Sportforum Berlin* along with other important building projects."[19] This last mention, however, possibly due to its implicit reference to the Waldsiedlung as another "important building project," have been misread by historians as referring to the *Sonderbaustab 10*—the building brigade helmed by Gläske and responsible for the construction of the Wandlitz settlement.[20] Sonderbaustab 10, however, was formed only in 1958 specifically to realize the forest settlement, and in 1954 Gläske was appointed to another "Aufbaustab"—namely, *Aufbauleitung (SV) Dynamo,* the building division of the East German sports club *Sportverein (SV) Dynamo.*

The SV Dynamo—the only national sports organization of East Germany—was officially founded in 1953 as the sports club of the security agencies of the GDR, including the *Volkspolizei* (People's Police), *Amt für Zoll und Kontrolle des Warenverkehrs* (Customs), and the MfS. The "brainchild" of the soon-to-be Minister of State Security Erich Mielke, the club was de-facto run by the state security apparatus, nonetheless, with Mielke serving as its chairman until 1989.[21] Even though the exact date of the Aufbauleitung's establishment is unknown, given that the board decision to build a central sports complex in Berlin came in September 3, 1954, it can be safely argued that the building division was instituted in late 1954.[22] Gläske was

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[19] "Ein 'klassischer Fall' unserer Zeit. Heinz Gläske: Architekt und Künstler," Neue Zeit, October 10, 1962; cited in: Danyel and Kimmel, *Waldsiedlung Wandlitz*, 69.

[20] For example, Schulze writes that "in 1954 Sonderbaustab's management was transfered to [Gläske]." Schulze, *In den Wohnzimmern der Macht*, 147. Danyel and Kimmel also dwell on this assertion, writing that the architect was assigned as the manager of Sonderbaustab 10. Danyel and Kimmel, *Waldsiedlung Wandlitz. Eine Landschaft Der Macht*, 69.

[21] Carmen Fechner, "Die Frühgeschichte der Sportvereinigung Dynamo. Hegemoniebestrebungen, Dominanzverhalten und das Rivalitätsverhältnis zur Armeesportvereinigung „Vorwärts"" (PhD Thesis, Berlin, Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin, 2011), 113. The study also convincingly argues that the SV Dynamo operated explicitly as the sports club of the Stasi.

[22] Roland Wiedmann's comprehensive study on the organizational history of the MfS remains one of the few main sources of information on the Aufbauleitung Dynamo, yet here the construction firm's founding is erroneously dated to 1961. As my research shows, the correct year of its founding was 1954. Wiedmann, *Die Diensteinheiten des MfS 1950–1989*, 226.

appointed as the Aufbauleitung's chief construction manager (*Oberbauleiter*) on November 2, 1954, possibly occupying this position since the division's formation.[23] Coinciding with his retrieval by the GDR, this was also presumably the spy-architect's first gig as an architect in the GDR.
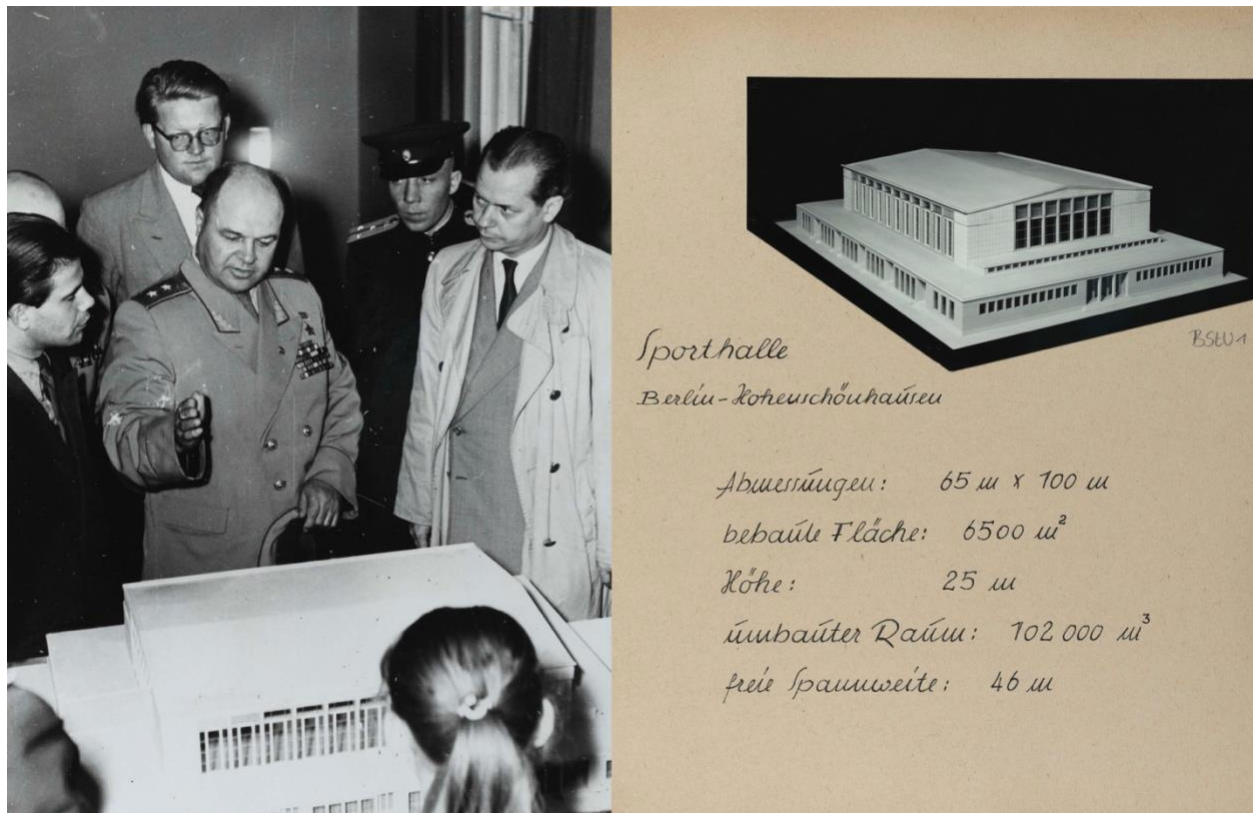
Figure 1 "Fotos aus Anlass des Richtefestes der Sporthalle," Photographs taken for the occasion of the Sportforum's "topping off" ceremony on February 1, 1957. [Left] Photograph from the ceremony, with Gläske (on the right) presenting the model of the sports complex's entrance building to a Stasi general (identity unknown).
[Right] Photograph of the model with building specifications. Both images are from a booklet prepared to comemorate the ceremony and gifted to Erich Mielke. BArch MfS ZAIG Fo 2839, 3,7.

Between 1958 and 1962, in his role as the manager of the Aufbauleitung SV Dynamo, Gläske oversaw the construction of SV Dynamo's central complex *Sportforum Dynamo* (renamed *Sportforum Berlin* in the early 1960s),[24] mass housing projects for members of the club

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[23] "Arbeitsvorträge und Auszeichnungen," BArch MfS KS 29388/90 Bd. 2, 5-8.
[24] Oliver Boyn, *Das geteilte Berlin 1945 - 1990: der historische Reiseführer* (Ch. Links Verlag, 2011), 110. For more on the project, see: BArch MfS SHB 8088, LAB C Rep 110-01 3378, LAB C Rep 110-01 3388.

and employees of the MfS (Figure 1).[25] The architect was responsible for several projects for the GDR's political elite, as well: the reconstruction and interior design of East German functionaries' Pankow residences,[26] their holiday houses on the island of Vilm, and the GDR government's guesthouse in Dölln.[27] Gläske was even tasked with renovating and redesigning the residence of Erich Mielke's mother-in-law per the Stasi-Chief's personal request.[28] For these latter top-secret projects, special building teams, or "Sonderbauaufstäbe," were formed under the Aufbauleitung and Gläske's management. The Sonderbaustab 10, the construction brigade formed in 1958 to realize the Wandlitz settlement, was created within this context. Ultimately, while Gläske's employment at the Aufbauleitung proves to have been tightly connected to his service as an agent for the MfS, his appointment to execute the forest settlement's construction must be understood as a result of his ongoing architectural work for the Stasi. What is more, it was possibly Gläske himself who recommended Walter Schmidt as the head architectural designer for the forest settlement as the latter was already in collaboration with the MfS, Gläske, and the Aufbauleitung since the mid-1950s.

Walter Schmidt and the Entwurfsbüro 110

The son of a Saxon building contractor, Walter Schmidt studied in Dresden under Wilhelm Kreis and, after 1933, practiced under the Berlin architect Werner March. In this position, he participated in architectural design activities for the 1936 Olympic Games and was

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[25] For example, see: "Wohnungsbau Gensler/Werneuchener Str. Berlin-Hohenschönhausen, Antrag auf Standortgenehmigung," Letter from Gläske to Käding (*Leiter der Vorplanung*), Chefarchitekt, Meisterwerkstatt für Städtebau, Vorplanung, 11.11.1954, LAB C Rep 110-01 3388; "Wohnungsbau SV Dynamo 1956," Site Plan, 1.3.1956, LAB C Rep 110-01 3388.
[26] Danyel and Kimmel, *Waldsiedlung Wandlitz*, 71.
[27] A June 1961 letter from Gläske to Mielke, written on behalf of a landscape architect working at Aufbauleitung, mentions that he, as director of the "Buchenwald Kollektiv," worked on the "design of green spaces at Wandlitz, Dölln, and Vilm," suggesting Aufbauleitung's involvement in these projects. See: BArch MfS SdM 1357, 92.
[28] "Bericht," Berlin, 26.5.1962, BArch SdM 1358, 49.

responsible for the realization of the sports field and open-air theatre in Berlin-Charlottenburg.[29]

After the fall of the Third Reich, Schmidt refuged to his home in Saxony, only to be invited back

to Berlin by the influential East German architect and city planner Hermann Henselmann, who

was in search for capable, experienced architects to contribute to the reconstruction of Berlin. In

1952, Schmidt was positioned at Henselmann's *Meisterwerkstätte I*—one of the three "master

workshops" established under the German Building Academy to realize symbolically significant

public works for the reconstruction of East Germany.[30] In this post, Schmidt worked on the

landmark Stalinallee ensemble and the development of the Treptower Park in Berlin, among

others.[31] After the dissolution of the master workshops in 1953, Schmidt followed Henselmann,

who in 1953 was appointed as the first *Chefarchitekt* of the GDR's capital.[32] Soon after, Schmidt

was appointed by Henselmann as the head of his office's *Architekturkontrolle*: a supervising

position to "creatively oversee ongoing projects" in the capital, "to give direction to

collaboration, mutual learning, and to forward arising questions to the Chefarchitekt."[33]

Supervising housing production was a clear emphasis of Schmidt's new role, and the architect

was tasked with preparing proposals on how to advance the development of typified housing,

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[29] Hans-Michael Schulze, *Das Pankower "Städtchen": ein historischer Rundgang* (Ch. Links Verlag, 2010), 30.

[30] The other workshops were led by architects Hans Hopp and Richard Paulick. For more information on the Meisterwerkstätte of the DBA, see: Holger Barth and Thomas Topfstedt, eds., *Vom Baukünstler Zum Komplexprojektanten. Architekten in Der DDR*, REGIO-Doc 3 (Erkner: IRS: Leibniz-Institut für Regionalentwicklung und Strukturplanung, 2000); Andreas Butter and Sigrid Hofer, eds., *Blick Zurück Nach Vorn. Architektur Und Stadtplanung in Der DDR*, Schriftenreihe Des Arbeitskreises Kunst in Der DDR, Band 3 (Marburg: Philipps-Universität Marburg, 2017) For Schmidt's contract with DBA's Meisterwerkstätte, dated 30.4.1951, see: BArch MfS SdM 1265, p. 140-143.

[31] "Treptower Park. Perspektivplan für den Ausbau eines Kulturparkes," 2.8.1953, LAB C Rep. 110-01 04 (Karten).

[32] For Schmidt's work contract with overtaken by the office of Chefarchitekt in 1.12.1953, see: BArch MfS SdM 1265, p. 145. Henselmann became Chefarchitekt in 1953 provisionally, and in 1955 officially. He held this post until 1958. For an overview of Henselmann's life and works, see: Bruno Flierl, "Hermann Henselmann – Chefarchitekt von Berlin," in *Hermann Henselmann. Gedanken – Ideen – Projekte.*, ed. Bruno Flierl and Wolfgang Heise (Berlin: Henschelverlag, 1978), 26–52; Thomas Flierl, *Der Architekt, Die Macht Und Die Baukunst. Hermann Henselmann in Seiner Berliner Zeit 1949-1995* (Berlin: Verlag Theater der Zeit, 2018).

[33] "Kurzprotokoll der Arbeitsbesprechung am 29.9.1954, 15:00-16:45 Uhr, Zimmer 363," 30.9.1954, LAB C Rep. 110-01 25.

among others.[34] It was this new responsibility to work as a project inspector and interlocutor of Henselmann that brought Schmidt in contact with the state security apparatus.

Over the 1950s, the Stasi needed the oversight and approval of Henselmann's office to realize its building projects in Berlin as the overall urban and architectural planning of the capital had to follow certain guidelines devised by the Chefarchitekt. This pertained especially to residential projects for Stasi employees for they needed to abide by the specific housing types and norms set to reconstrue the city quick and cheap. For example, in 1955, the MfS' then architectural division—the *Hauptabteilung Wirtschaftsverwaltung*—contacted Henselmann's office.[35] The Stasi was planning to build a 80-unit housing block in Berlin-Hohenschönhausen (an area reserved for the MfS as a restricted military zone) and asked for masterplans "so that the project can be carried out."[36] In its reply, Henselmann's office advised the department to "seek the confirmation of Architekturkontrolle for a suitable architect before beginning project development."[37] This suggests that Schmidt, as the head of Architekturkontrolle, might have played a role in recommending architects to the ministry. In another correspondence from 1955, this time for a 5-story residential structure in Berlin-Lichtenberg near the Stasi's central

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[34] "Arbeitsplan II, Quartal," 12.4.1954, and "Arbeitsplan III. Quartal," 5.7.1954, LAB C Rep 110-01 25.

[35] The *Hauptabteilung Wirtschaftsverwaltung* (Main Department Economic Administration) was a precursor of the *Verwaltung Rückwärtige Dienste* and was formed in 1951. Between 1950-1951, the ministry realized its building projects under its *Abteilung II – Verwaltung und Wirtschaft – VuW* (Department II – Administration and Economy). In addition to the realization of buildings for the MfS, this department was also responsible with the building of telecommunication systems of the MfS and administering firearms. In 1951, the department was reformed to undertake solely architectural duties. These included the organization, management, and control of the MfS' building production, maintenance and repair of housing occupied by the Stasi, as well as management of MfS-owned properties and land. Non-architectural duties previously assigned to *Abteilung II – VuW* were assigned to the *Hauptabteilung Allgemeine Verwaltung* (Main Department General Administration). Wiedmann, *Die Diensteinheiten des MfS 1950–1989*, 34, 355–56.

[36] LAB C Rep 110-01 3423. At this point, the Berlin-Hohenschönhausen military restricted zone was taken over by the Ministry of Interior (*Ministerium des Innern - MdI*) as the MfS, in the aftermath of the June 1953 East German uprising, was relegated to a state secretariat and subordinated to it the MdI. The State Secretariat for State Security (*Staatssekretariat für Staatssicherheit – SfS*) became a ministry again in November 1955.

[37] LAB C Rep 110-01 3423.

administrative complex, the state security apparatus specified, for the first time, the

Entwurfsbüro 110 as "its own design office" and "the developer of the project."[38]

The timing of Schmidt's initial professional contact with the Stasi also corresponds to his

involvement in the Sportforum project. The architect is widely recognized as having led the

collective responsible for the architectural plans of the Sportforum from 1955 onward (Figure

2).[39] Yet, as a 1963 document issued for the conclusion of construction work reveals, the project

was "the result of an 'idea competition'" announced in September 1954 "for the acquisition of

designs… for the SV Dynamo.'"[40] The exact details and rules for this competition—for example,

whether it was an open or a closed call—could not be recovered from the archival record at this

time. Yet, Schmidt's expertise in the design of sports facilities, stemming from his work for the

1936 Olympics, explains his interest and success in the competition. What is more, Schmidt was

also an insider of the project. Due to his employment at Henselmann's office, the architect

participated in issuing building permits to the Aufbauleitung SV Dynamo and thus sat on both

sides of the table by designing and approving its plans.[41] Finally, in 1958, the year Henselmann's

tenure as Chefarchitekt ended, Schmidt's contract was taken over by Gläske.[42] Appointed as the

head of Entwurfsbüro 110, Schmidt thus became the "suitable architect" he was expected to

confirm three years prior.

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[38] "Magdalenenstrasse 4-10, Lückenschließung in TW58/Q1, 5-geschossig," by *Entwurfsbüro 110*, correspondence from 18. 7. 1955 and project drawing from 14.12.1957, C Rep 110-01 1880. The architects involved in these projects between 1955-1958 are unknown.
[39] Schulze, *Das Pankower "Städtchen,"* 16. This was, however, not *Entwurfsbüro 110* but "Kollektiv Schmidt & Scharlipp."
[40] "Städtebauliche Bestätigung Bauvorhaben 'Sportforum Berlin, Endausbau," 1963, LAB C Rep 110-01 3378.
[41] For the acquisition of the area and approval of the project, see: BArch MfS SHB 8088, 149-151; for the "Standortgehehmigung and Standortgutachten Chefarchitekt," see: LAB C Rep 110-01 3378.
[42] For the contract between Schmidt and Gläske, see: BArch SdM 1265, p. 146.
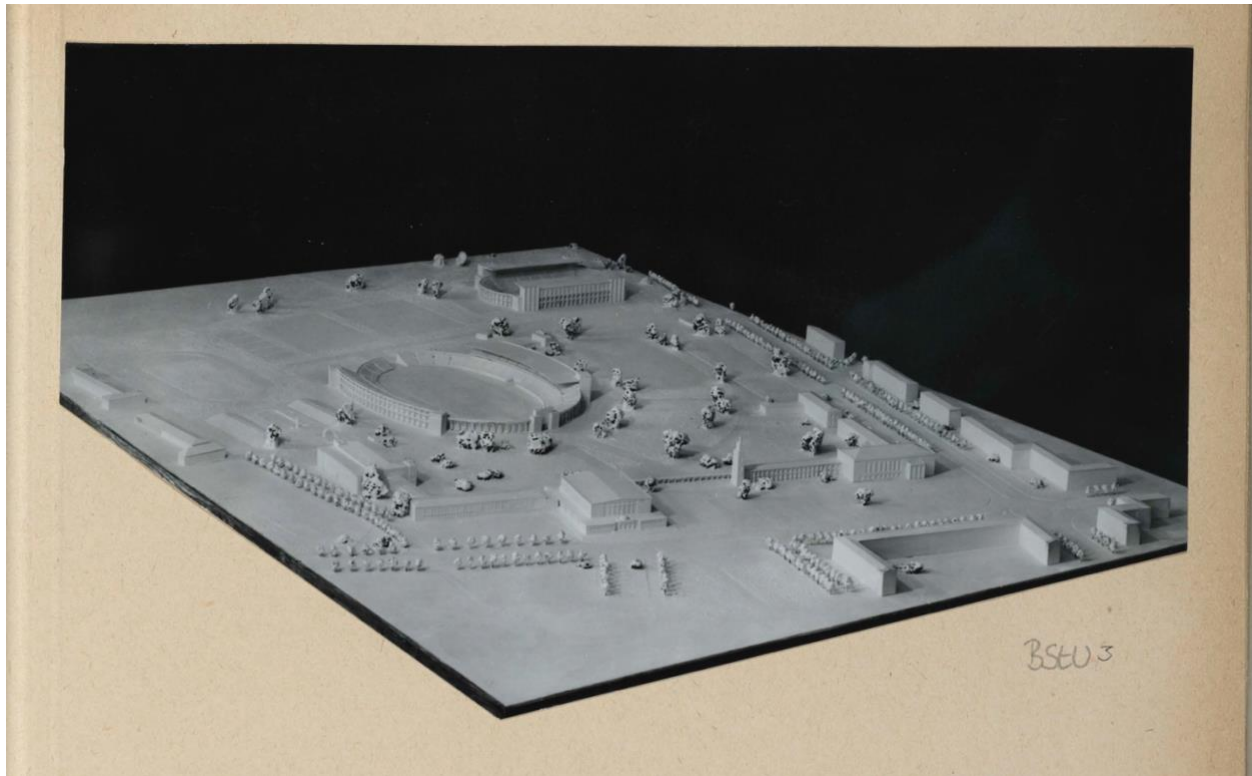
Figure 2 "Fotos aus Anlass des Richtefestes der Sporthalle," Model of the Sportforum complex in Berlin-Hohenschönhausen, designed by Schmidt and prepared for the occasion of the project's "topping off" ceremony on February 1, 1957. BArch MfS ZAIG Fo 2839, 5.

In April 1958, the architects started collaborating on the forest settlement Wandlitz. Schmidt's design office was tasked with the project's urban planning and architectural design, while Gläske's construction team managed all other aspects of the project's realization, including financial planning, material procurement, recruitment of workers, and construction. The same year saw a name and address change for Aufbauleitung SV Dynamo. The designation of the sports club was dropped, and the re-minted *Aufbauleitung Dynamo*—now a semi-independent construction company—moved its offices from the Sportforum site in Hohenschönhausen to Berlin-Prenzlauerberg, co-occupying the space with Sonderbaustab 10 and Entwurfsbüro 110.[43] Both Schmidt's design office and Gläske's building team were thus affiliated with Aufbauleitung

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[43] Compare: BArch MfS SdM 1357, LAB C Rep 110-01 3378, LAB C Rep 110-01 3475.

Dynamo—unequivocally the first building enterprise of the Stasi, as I will show. Schmidt's

involvement in Wandlitz, coupled with his later designs for the GDR government's guesthouse

in Berlin-Niederschönhausen and Honecker's hunting lodge in Berlin-Schorfheide,[44] bestowed

upon his office the "GDR government's architectural office" label.[45] Yet, these projects were

actually carried out under the umbrella of the Aufbauleitung Dynamo. Hence, the Entwurfsbüro

110 must accurately be qualified not as the government's but the MfS' architectural office.[46]

Planning, Design, and Construction of Wandlitz, 1958-1962

The first Politbüro decision regarding the building of the Wandlitz settlement came in

1956, and construction began in 1958, with first residents moving in in 1960. The settlement

created a self-sustaining habitat for its residents by bringing together housing, recreational

facilities, education, and commerce. The 250-acre lot was divided into two plots—an inner and

an outer "ring," as they were called—that separated the living quarters of functionaries from that

of their personnel—over 600 people by 1989 (Figure 3).[47] The inner ring was reserved for the

private houses of the functionaries. Twenty residences lined three streets dividing the inner ring,

with an additional 21st residence—completed in 1964—located at its edge. Separated by green

belts between, the houses were situated at a considerable distance from one another and were not

fenced off. The inner ring was completed with a sports facility, hospital, tailor's shop,

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[44] For Schmidt's architectural report on the reconstruction of the Schorfheide structure into a hunting lodge, see: "Erläuterungsbericht Häterhaus Schornfelde - Umbau zum Jagdhaus," 12.5.1961, BArch MfS SdM 1357, p. 98-107.

[45] "DDR-Regierungsbaubüro," as referred in: Schulze, *Das Pankower "Städtchen,"* 30.

[46] Between the years of 1955 and 1969, *Entwurfsbüro 110* undertook various projects for the state security apparatus, including designs for the ministry's district administration buildings. In these documents of the MfS, the office is referred to as "Entwurfsburo 110," thus in its official name. See for instance: "Vorplanung für Neubau einer Bezirksverwaltung in Neubrandenburg," BArch MfS VRD 9373; and the 1969 *Ausbildungsprojekt Kaulsdorf-Süd*, BArch MfS VRD 7099. The moniker "Design Office Dynamo-Bau" (*Entwurfsbüro Dynamo-Bau*) by Schmidt and his collective is mentioned comes closer but even this appellation, originating from Schmidt's very first contract, was not its official designation and seems to have led historians and researchers to overlook Schmidt's and the collective's intimate involvement with the MfS.

[47] Kimmel and Schmid-Rathjen, *Waldsiedlung Wandlitz*, 25.
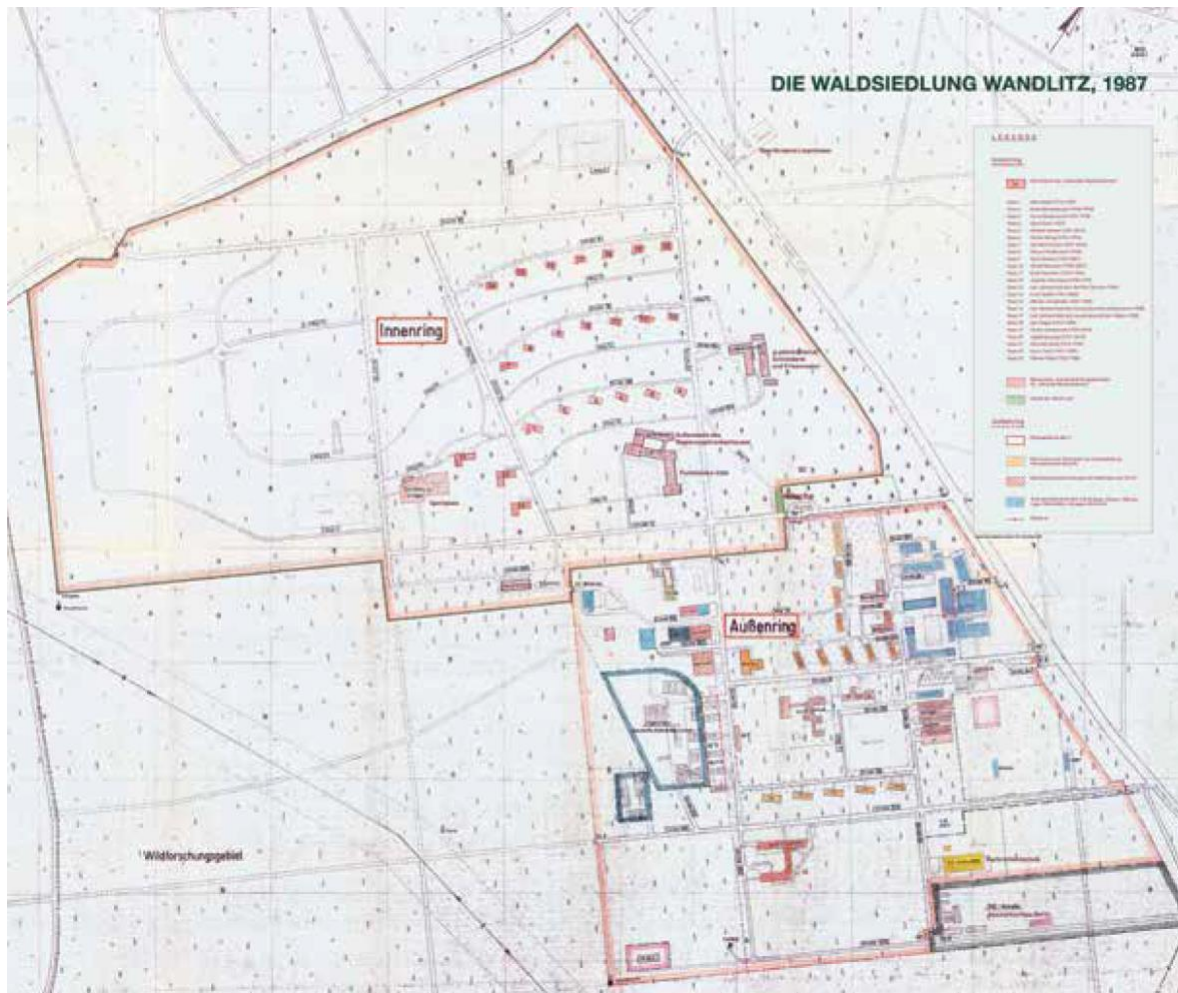
Figure 3 Site plan of the "forest settlement" Wandlitz from 1987, showing the inner and outer rings. Image from the fyler of the "Wende im Wandlitz: 30 Jahre Mauerfall" exhibition at Deutsches Bauernkriegsmuseum Böblingen, 2019.

hairdresser, market, and the cultural center called the "Functionary Club" or F-Club, all for the

exclusive use of East German functionaries. The outer ring—called the "trade and industry

section" (*Wirtschaftsteil*)—brought together service and supply functions, including storage

facilities, garages, laundry, horticulture, and workshops, all administered by the Stasi. This was

also where housing and social facilities for those who worked at the settlement were situated.

Given that the staff working at the settlement—drivers, housekeepers, security details and

alike—were full-time MfS employees, the outer ring was ultimately characterized as the Stasi-section of the settlement.[48]

The dual planning of the forest settlement Wandlitz could be understood in various ways. Such communal living amongst the political cadres and representatives of elite functionaries was both an attribute of Stalinism and an extension of the tightly knit residential community found at the Majakowskiring.[49] The enclosed communal living envisioned and enacted in Wandlitz, however, seems to have had another significant aspect—namely, self-surveillance. The planning of the Wandlitz settlement—from its "green wall" to its unfenced lots and Stasi-employed staff—simulated an environment where not only security but also surveillance was made feasible. This was certainly a remnant of the Stalinist tradition of self-surveilling amongst political circles but, in the post-Stalinist GDR, this policy found a new lease in the urban form of the Wandlitz settlement, only to be amplified by the existence of the MfS cadres as a mirroring counterpart to the "inner ring" of the East German political elite. Hence, the location and planning of Wandlitz was not so much about rendering the GDR functionaries' dwellings and private lives invisible. It was about making them visible *only* to the self-surveilling state.

Over the course of two years, more than 650 people worked on the construction of the site (Figure 4). Part of the labor force had to be recruited from private small businesses in the area in order to complete the project on time,[50] and the rest was either hired from craft and

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[48] The only exception to this divide between functionaries and their staff was the kindergarten located in the outer ring, where all children of Wandlitz were educated together. As an intra-ministerial letter to Mielke states, "many functionaries extended their wish not to isolate the children of the forest settlement from those of its commercial section." "Kindergarten im Objekt 'Waldsiedlung'" Berlin, 12.5.1960, HA PS to Mielke, HA PS 5608, 8-9.

[49] As Jürgen Danyel and Elke Kimmel point out, subjugation of the enemy had not necessarily eliminated threats against the Soviet occupation forces in Germany, as they continued to be largely viewed as foreign intruders. Majakowskiring's communal setting enabling effective security and protection, in this regard, was also an extension of Soviet anxieties in Germany. Danyel and Kimmel, *Waldsiedlung Wandlitz*, 68–71.

[50] Although, this was not the case. The Wandlitz settlement was planned to be completed in 1959 but due to material shortages and transportation difficulties the construction was delayed. See: "Mängel auf der Baustelle Wandlitz,"

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Figure 4 Members of the Sonderbaustab 10 (identities unknown) inspecting the construction site, ca. 1958, BArch SdM 2839, 28.

production cooperatives *(Produktionsgenossenschaften des Handwerks – PGH)* or were

mobilized from amongst the Stasi's building troops (*Bautruppen*).[51] All recruitment and hiring

was done by the Sonderbaustab 10, which occasionally placed job ads in newspapers, in search

of architects, masons, secretaries, and accountants.[52] To what extent the MfS was able to run

background checks of these civilian workers is difficult to ascertain.[53] The confidentiality of the

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report of HA PS, Berlin, 25.8.1958. HA PS 5608. As the report states, "despite delays, in order to finish the project on time, construction managers and former employees of Sonderbaustab 10 are given additional tasks."
[51] On how the recruitment caused competition, see: Kimmel and Schmid-Rathjen, *Waldsiedlung Wandlitz. Eine Region Und Die Staatsmacht*, 17.
[52] Danyel and Kimmel, *Waldsiedlung Wandlitz. Eine Landschaft Der Macht*, 72–73.
[53] There is a lack of evidence regarding the work agreements between hired laborers and the MfS, as Danyel and Kimmel assert. Danyel and Kimmel, *Waldsiedlung Wandlitz*, 73. The implausibility of running intelligence clearance at the speed of hire might have led to the absence of such paper trail.

project, to which the Stasi aspired, could not be achieved, nonetheless, with Western newspapers covering East German functionaries' move to Wandlitz as early as 1959.[54] Yet, the secrecy surrounding Wandlitz was as much for internal control—of those involved in the project, and of East Germans more generally—as it was for protecting state secrets from the West.
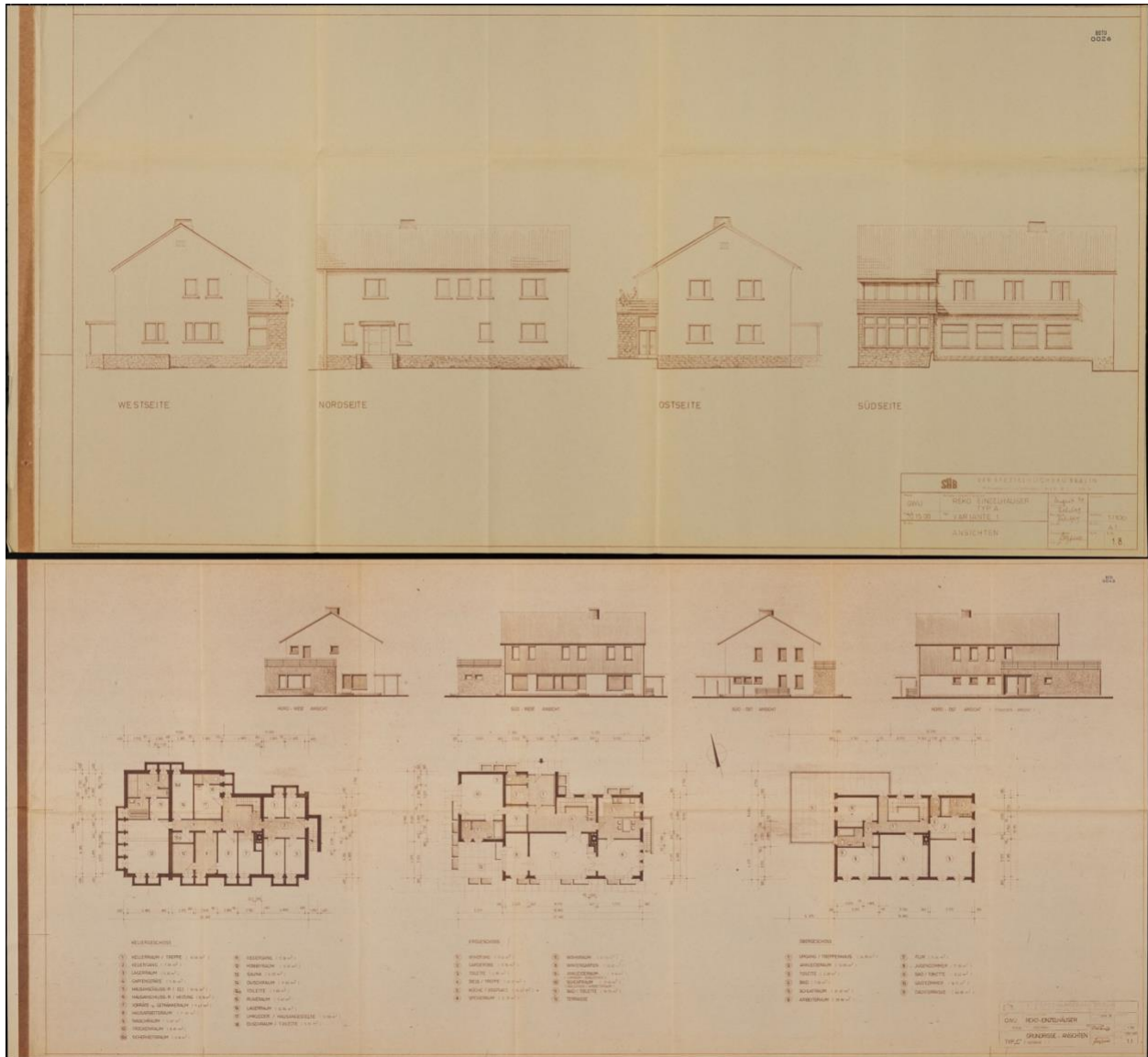
Figure 5 Plans and elevations of two of the three housing types designed by Schmidt and his collective, and built at the forest settlement Wandlitz between 1958-1960. [Above] "Typ A, Variante 1" [Below] "Typ C, Variante 1" Redrawn by the VEB Spezialhochbau Berlin, which worked on the functionary houses' renovations, 1978, BArch MfS SHB 8843, 26, 43.

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[54] For example, as a 1960 Spiegel piece on Wandlitz—complete with a plan of the settlement and a model "functionary home"—demonstrates, attempts at secrecy utterly failed.

For the functionary residences at the forest settlement, Schmidt and his team devised three wooden construction, two-story, single-family house types with basement (Figure 5). These type-schemas were then individually reworked into three variations, according to ground plan and annexes of individual homes as determined by their residents' needs and requests. This approach, of designing types in conventional building methods and type variants based on local context, was in line with the architectural production principles of this era of de-Stalinization, as I discussed in Chapter 1.[55] It also corresponded with the kind of architectural design work Schmidt oversaw under Henselmann. Functionary houses ranged between 90 to 170 square meters with up to 12 rooms and had various additions such as winter gardens and saunas. While the placement of elements such as balconies, windows, and doors varied in all iterations of the type, the designs did not demonstrate much volumetric diversion from the straight, quadrangular box that constituted the elementary schema. Clad in natural materials—stone, wood, and marble—the structures were finished with plaster and a gabled roof covered by curved brick tiles. The architecture of Wandlitz residences thus left a sober vernacular impression that surprised its visitors who expected to encounter grand mansions visibly characterized by luxury and excess.

The lot sizes ranged between 180 to 340 square meters, part of which were used as gardens. On these lots, the residences expanded throughout the 1960s and until the 1980s, with structures added either in response to the changing needs of residents or to comply with the requests of newcomers as Politbüro members changed. The architects working on the Wandlitz

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[55] Over the late-1950s, the institution of "Architekturkontrolle," as it was enacted under the Ministry of Building *(Ministerium für Aufbau)* had a double meaning. On the one hand, it was responsible with devising typified models, which was to help the cheap and fast provisioning of housing. On the other hand, the inspections were to set a fight against formalism and functionalism, à la *Neues Bauen*. Schmidt's former role as the head of Henselmann's *Architekturkontrolle* must be comprehended within this context, and so is his distance to modernism and pact with regionalism.

settlement dealt with every aspect of the residences' furnishings and fittings in minute detail.[56]

What is more, all design, building, and even decoration decisions ran directly through the Stasi-Chief Mielke, as these concerned either the security or the economy of the project. Thus, information on building deficiencies, location of barbed wiring, and even a second set of curtains all found their way to Mielke's desk, who had an affinity with architectural activities of the Stasi.[57] Starting with its appointment as minister in 1957, Mielke saw to a gradual streamlining and centralization—and hence "atomization"—of building administration under his purview, as I will discuss in detail. The Stasi-Chief also atomized all affairs of Wandlitz—from architecture to supply and security—but he was not merely a supervisor: he was also a resident of the settlement. In this, he was also an outlier. All other residents were either members or candidates of the Politbüro, whereas Mielke advanced to candidacy in 1971—eleven years after his move to Wandlitz.[58]

In 1962, an abrupt decision was made to dissolve the Sonderbaustab 10. Gläske was absolved of his responsibilities and the construction team was relegated to a MfS-subordinate "Clearance and Settlement Post" *(Abwicklungsstelle)* with a new director, Günter Klette. In April 1964, this post, too, officially ceased its work. By this time, however, construction at Wandlitz was far from over. In addition to renovation and additions, which continued throughout Wandlitz's life span as a "city of functionaries," some buildings, technical structures, as well as landscaping were not yet completed. Thus, the dissolution of the Sonderbaustab 10 was not the

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[56] For instance, in 1961 the Sonderbaustab 10 was asked to build an aviary in the winter garden of a functionary residence. See: BArch MfS HA PS 5608. As a result, every object in the Wandlitz residences, including kitchenware and curtains, were part of its inventory and thus officially owned by the state.

[57] The extent of Mielke's supervision of everything pertaining to Wandlitz was perhaps best exemplified by an internal document informing the minister about the residents' requests for the acquisition of a "second pair of decorative curtains and stores" for their homes. BArch MfS HA PS 5608.

[58] For the initial residents of Wandlitz see: "Unterbringung der Funktionäre im Objekt 'Waldsiedlung'" Berlin, 7.7.1960, HA PS 5608, 10.

natural result of a finalized project. It was not about a change in architectural teams, either, as Gläske, Schmidt, and Klette continued to work on the settlement over the next decade.[59] Even though the reasoning behind the disintegration was never explicitly stated, the MfS' inspection reports on Sonderbaustab 10's and the subsequent Clearance and Settlement Post's practices, as well as the subsequent transfers of legal and property rights show that this was a move from individual oversight to institutional control.

Dissolution and Restructure: Building for the Stasi after Wandlitz, 1962-1964

In 1962, the state security apparatus formed a control group to examine the inventories and expenditures of the Sonderbaustab 10. Active between 1962 and 1964, the control group's inspections demonstrated questionable trading practices and missing inventories. One of the discoveries was the unauthorized sale of building and furnishing materials, construction machines and equipment to private persons and firms out of the stocks of Wandlitz. This was common occurrence across the GDR's building industry, as discussed in Chapter 1, but for it to happen under the nose of the Stasi must have sent shock ripples across the cadres of state security. What is more, under both the Sonderbaustab 10 and the succeeding Clearance and Settlement Post, provisions reserved for the construction in Wandlitz were sold in large quantities and well below their value. These sales had not only made government property available to the market. As revealed by the investigation, some transactions were made with former employees of building teams, among them the former site manager of Wandlitz who,

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[59] One of these architects, following his work for the Entwurfsbüro 110 and the Wandlitz settlement, was hired by Gläske at the VEB Moderne Kunst. The architect eventually transitioned to VEB Spezialhochbau Berlin and worked here at least until 1978 first as a "group leader" for the renovation of the Wandlitz houses and then as the department chief *(Abteilungsleiter)* of the enterprise's planning and technology *(Projektierung und Technologie)* unit. See: BArch MfS HA PS 8842, BArch MfS HA PS 8843. Others from Schmidt's collective followed the architect, taking up leadership positions at the VEB Dynamo-Bau Berlin and VEB Spezialhochbau Berlin, one of them even replacing Schmidt as Dynamo Bau's Chefarchitekt in 1968-1969 after the latter's departure.

upon his resignation, started his own private building business. Thus, the report of the control

group insinuated that, through impermissible trading practices, members of the Sonderbaustab 10

acquired unjustified financial benefits.[60] With the last investigative report from 1964 unveiling

similar complications as in 1962, the control group maintained that the director of the settlement

post, Klette, "did not draw the conclusions necessary."[61] As this particular wording suggests,

Klette was not explicitly accused of wrongdoing but only criticized for the lack of measures

based on the prior warnings of the Stasi. Another problem unearthed by the Stasi's control group

was missing objects from the inventories of Wandlitz, such as art pieces, rugs, and lighting

fixtures that were found in the acquisition lists but could not be located on site. This raised

concerns regarding Gläske's breadth of power over Wandlitz's project management. In an

implicit reference to the architect, the report advised "the planning, procurement, purchase, sale,

provision, and delivery [of entire furnishings] not be concentrated in the hands of one person so

that thorough control can be established."[62]

The changes in the construction and project management of Wandlitz after 1962 should

be understood within this context of "thorough control." In order to avert the concentration of

decision-making and oversight in any single individual—regardless of their affinities with the

Stasi—the state security apparatus took a series of measures. The most consequential change was

Aufbauleitung Dynamo's 1962 subordination to the MfS' *Hauptabteilung Verwaltung und*

Wirtschaft (HA VuW)—the division responsible with architectural provisions between 1953 and

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[60] "Bericht der Kontrolgruppe zur Überprüfung der Abwicklungsgeschäfte des ehemaligen Sonderbaustabes 10," Berlin, 12.5.1964, BArch MfS HA PS 5608, 81-116.
[61] BArch MfS HA PS 5608, 81-116.
[62] This is how Gläske's field of responsibility is defined in the report: "Gläske functioned as the planner, procurer, purchaser, salesman, provisioner, and deliverer for the entire project." "Bericht der Kontrolgruppe zur Überprüfung der Abwicklungsgeschäfte des ehemaligen Sonderbaustabes," BArch MfS HA PS 5608, 81-116.

1975.[63] The same year, a new director was appointed who was not merely an informant but an attested employee (*hauptamtliche Mitarbeiter*) of the MfS.[64] Between 1963-1964, the company officially absorbed Sonderbaustab 10, first in the Sportforum development and—with the termination of the Clearance and Settlement Post—in the Wandlitz project. Remaining construction materials and equipment were handed over to the Aufbauleitung, and the rest was distributed to relevant MfS units first and introduced to the national economy second.[65] With these developments, Aufbauleitung—and hence the MfS—officially became the client (*Antragsteller*), investor (*Investitionsträger*), designer (*Projektant*), and contractor (*Auftragnehmner*) of the project.[66] This was significant as it meant that all new design and construction requests, coming from the inhabitants of the forest settlement and hence the Politbüro, would be reviewed, approved, financed, managed, and carried out by the ministry, which would also inspect what it implemented, becoming both the developer and controller of its own production. This was a complete concentration and consolidation of all building power under the Stasi and marked the ministry's transition from, what I term, a "building commissioner" (*Auftraggeber*)—an organization that commissioned third parties under its purview to undertake projects for the state and the ministry—to a building developer and

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[63] The HA VuW was partly the successor of the *Hauptabteilung Wirtschaftsverwaltung* and was subordinated to the *Hauptverwaltung B* since 1957, which answered directly to Mielke. Wiedmann, *Die Diensteinheiten des MfS 1950–1989*, 351.

[64] This new director was previously convicted of fraud and espionage and had spent his sentence in one of the MfS' remand prisons between 1953 and 1958. Upon his release, he was employed at the Aufbauleitung Dynamo. Already by 1961, he is said to have been the co-director of the enterprise with Gläske. See: BArch MfS GH 38/73, 120, 183. In 1962, the new director "took over the management of the Aufbauleitung and developed the enterprise." BArch MfS SdM 1358, 1. By 1968, he became the director of the MfS-subordinate building enterprise for special production *VEB Dynamo-Bau Berlin*, which was the successor of Aufbauleitung Dynamo. BArch MfS SHB 8089, 78.

[65] "Bericht der Kontrolgruppe zur Überprüfung der Abwicklungsgeschäfte des ehemaligen Sonderbaustabes 10," Berlin, 12.5.1964, Report from HA PS to Mielke, BArch MfS HA PS 5608, 81-116.

[66] LAB C Rep 110-01 3378.

contractor (*Auftragnehmer)* on its own right, fulfilling both its building needs and those of the GDR state.

Such concentration and consolidation of architectural decisions, tasks, and responsibilities was also reflected in the ministry's overhauled building administration. Formerly operating under the central management of SV Dynamo (1954-1958) and later as a semi-independent entity (1958-1962), the Aufbauleitung's annexation to the ministerial structure interposed mechanisms of institutional control through the establishment of a security bureaucracy within and above the construction company. This differed greatly from the previous engagement, wherein Gläske, as the director of the Sonderbaustab 10, had a plethora of responsibilities without being subjected to an intricate bureaucratic system of checks and balances: it was a linear system of reliability between MfS, Gläske, and his crew.[67] In contrast, the MfS-subordinate building enterprises—with Aufbauleitung Dynamo being the first—created feedback loops with a multitude of management posts overseeing different areas of planning, production, and acquisition. What is more, management positions of Aufbauleitung Dynamo—as with its successors—were filled with Stasi employees as opposed to collaborators of the surveillance organization.

Having become valuable assets for the MfS' security administration, all high-ranking architects involved in the Wandlitz project continued their careers under the Stasi. Yet, they were no longer members of building brigades or design collectives with legally vague connections to the ministry. Schmidt, for example, was named the Chefarchitekt of Aufbauleitung Dynamo in

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[67] How this linear bureaucratic organization looked can be comprehended through the financial relationship between the MfS and Gläske's crew. MfS was already provisioning the Sonderbaustab 10, supplying it with financial and material means. It was, for instance, through the *Hauptabteilung Personenschutz - HA PS* that the team procured building materials and equipment as well as personal vehicles and computing devices. The budget of all such acquisitions came from the Wandlitz Administration (*Verwaltung Wandlitz*) under the HA PS, which was funded by the Politbüro to finance the settlement. Yet, expenditures were billed to Sonderbaustab 10, which also oversaw salaries and inventories.

1963—a post he held until 1968—and his collective was relegated as the design department

(Entwurfsabteilung) of the enterprise, directly working for the superordinate MfS-division HA

VuW.[68] Klette first became the deputy director of Aufbauleitung Dynamo in 1963, and in 1968

he transitioned to the Stasi-subordinate enterprise *VEB Dynamo-Bau Berlin* as its Director for

Economy, becoming a full-time Stasi employee. Ultimately, between 1983-1989, Klette served

as the director of yet another Stasi-run building enterprise, the *VEB Raumkunst Berlin*.[69]

Similarly, in 1963, Gläske became the director of *VEB Moderne Kunst*, an interior design and

furniture production firm working under the contract of the GDR's Ministry of Culture.[70]

According to Gläske's testimony, he helped build this company: a statement backed by the hiring

of several other architects from his Wandlitz crew for VEB Moderne Kunst in 1963.[71] In the

aftermath of Wandlitz, Gläske's prominent status within the MfS' architectural ranks also stayed.

Between 1964 and 1973, the architect received numerous recognitions and orders from the GDR

government and, in 1969, became a full-time Stasi employee.[72] In 1967, he even issued a

"proposal for distinctions" to be awarded to Aufbauleitung employees.[73]

It is important to note that the Wandlitz architects in management positions were never

accused with the theft and pilfering that occurred on site even though they were accountable for

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[68] See: BArch MfS SdM 1357, p. 57-60; BArch MfS SHB 7674, 83. Some contracts, however, continued to refer to the "Entwurfsbüro 110 at Aufbauleitung" over 1963, such as: LAB C Rep 110-01 3378.

[69] See: "Stellenplan der Aufbauleitung Dynamo ab 1.1.1963," 19.10.1962. Also see: BArch MfS SdM 1357, 58-69; BArch MfS VRD 10493, 55; BArch MfS VRD 7263, 1; and BArch MfS GH 38/73, 130.

[70] See: BArch MfS AIM Nr. 174/84, 28. The history of the VEB Moderne Kunst has proven itself to be a difficult subject to recover from the archival data, but my efforts to learn more about this interior design firm will continue.

[71] See: BArch MfS KS Nr. 29388/90 Bd.1, 13. The team working on the interior architecture of Wandlitz houses, referred to as "Kollektiv Gläske," was employed at the VEB Moderne Kunst by 1963. See: "Bericht der Kontrolgruppe," BArch MfS HA PS 5608, 81-116.

[72] Gläske was awarded the Distinguished Service Medal of the National People's Army (*Verdienstmedaille der Nationalen Volksarmee*) in 1967, the Order of Merit of the GDR (*Verdiensttorden der DDR*) in 1978, and the Order of Merit for Services to the State and Society (*Kampforden für Verdienste im Volk und Vaterland*) in 1983, among others. See: BArch MfS KS Nr. 29388/90 Bd.1, 18, 70, 72, 97. After becoming an official employee of the MfS, the architect started working as an OibE for the HA II, first at the rank of Hauptmann and then Major. BArch MfS KS Nr. 29388/90 Bd.1, 96.

[73] "Vorschläge für die Auszeichnungen zum 7. Oktober 1967," signed by Gläske, BArch MfS SdM 1358, 1-2.

it. Instead of demoting or firing them and finding new architects to carry out its top-secret projects, the MfS retained its architect-managers and built additional control mechanisms around them and their work, both by personally surveilling them and through the reinforcement of bureaucratic surveillance—namely, supervisory information gathering capacities via bureaucratic exchange. But why? On the hand, the "loyalty and honesty" of figures like Gläske, as one performance report on the architect reads, was trialed, and confirmed, by their years long service to the state security apparatus.[74] "Despite personal weaknesses and a certain arrogance," Gläske was evaluated as a "true and reliable member of the party."[75] Lengthy observation and surveillance documents composed on Gläske, but also other architects in leading positions for the Stasi's building activities, however, reveals that this was not a relationship of trust. The Stasi seems to have preferred to keep its architects close to the chest, nonetheless, rather than working with people who have not gone through the secrecy trials and have not established at least a certain degree of reliability. On the other hand, removing these architects from positions of power could have exposed the ministry and the East German state to security transgressions fueled by vendetta, causing potential intelligence vulnerabilities. Instead, the MfS opted for drawing the architects managing its projects into its security administration by employing them under attestation. In doing so, the ministry induced the logic of self-surveillance to its building administration—a logic that characterized the inner workings of East German state power and was reified by the built environment produced for those who held that power.

The construction history of the forest settlement Wandlitz demonstrates some key changes in the Stasi's approach to building production administration between 1954 and 1964—changes that also applied to how the MfS fulfilled its own building needs, which went beyond providing

[74] BArch MfS KS Nr. 29388/90 Bd. 1, 14.
[75] BArch MfS KS Nr. 29388/90 Bd. 1, 14.

housing to its employees or constructing sports facilities. The Wandlitz example shows that the ministry's move from a building commissioner to a building contractor was rooted in the establishment of "thorough control" via an administrative structure of checks and balances and a shift from surveillance to self-surveillance. These objectives were not fulfilled by merely assigning superordinate units to enterprises or ministry employees to managing positions, however. As a closer look at the structural evolution of the Stasi's architectural-administrative divisions and the development of its building industry after 1964 will show, they were enacted by a gradual streamlining of building activities and centralization of the bureaucracy overseeing these activities.

Centralization and Streamlining: Administering Building Production, 1953-1977

Architectural Departments of the MfS, 1953-1968

The Stasi was involved in architectural production since its founding; yet, between 1950 and 1953, these activities almost solely focused on the repair and repurposing of existing structures. Financial and material resources needed for new building projects to take off did not exist during this time. In 1953, with the founding of the MfS' Hauptabteilung Verwaltung und Wirtschaft (HA VuW), the ministry established its first department under which new building projects could be carried out. Tasked with "safeguarding the ministry's political operational work through material and technical services and provisions," the HA VuW served a plethora of functions. It acquired and administered vehicles and fire arms, organized events and banquets, and ran a printing house, among others. The department thus supplied and managed resources and equipment necessary to realize and sustain the Stasi's various operations. Yet, the HA VuW's principal focus was architecture, and the department undertook the task of provisioning the Stasi with buildings in several different ways.

The HA VuW acted as the ministry's property manager, project developer, and building controller.[76] As a property manager, the department allocated housing to ministry cadres and supervised relevant housing administrations. It also managed ministry-owned properties and land by preparing plans and contracts for their use and development. In its role as a developer, the department planned the ministry's administrative and detention complexes, sports and educational facilities, and housing for Stasi cadres, among others. For these projects, and specifically between the mid-1950s until the mid-1960s, the department commissioned architecture collectives and building brigades. In Berlin, this largely fell to the Aufbauleitung (SV) Dynamo and the Entwurfsbüro 110. So were, for example, the ministry's Berlin headquarters, technical structures, and various residential complexes designed by the Entwurfsbüro 110 and built by the Aufbauleitung. For other projects in Berlin, such as the Stasi's remand prison (*Untersuchungshaftanstalt – UHA*) in Berlin-Hohenschönhausen, special building brigades were formed under the Aufbauleitung, akin to the Sonderbaustab 10's role for the Wandlitz settlement.[77] Yet, as discussed earlier, while both Aufbauleitung and Entwurfsbüro 110 were under exclusive contract with the MfS, they were not sub-departments of the HA VuW, which only contracted

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[76] By mid-1970s, this wide range of architectural tasks were conducted under four divisions: Department I – Planning and Supply (*Planung und Beschaffung*), Department II – Building (*Bauwesen*), Department III – Real Estate, Service Facilities and Housing (*Liegenschaften, Dienst- und Wohnobjekte*), Department VI – Housing Administration (*Wohnungsverwaltung*). The Department of Housing Administration was formed in 1958, following the restructuring of the Department VI—initially for Health Care—as an independent Department of Medical Services (*Medizinische Dienste*) under HV B. Department VII – Fire Arms and Instruments (*Waffen und Geräte*) was also dissolved from HA VuW and restructured as an independent Department of Fire Arms and Instruments under HV B by 1964. Other divisions under the HA VuW included Department IV – Motor Vehicle Services (*KfZ-Wesen*) and Department V – Provision Services (*Versorgungsdienste*).

[77] The architectural plans for the Berlin-Hohenschönhausen remand prison expansion were drawn by the *Bauverwaltung V* (sometimes referred to as Bauverwaltung 5), which was one of the special building teams formed under the Aufbauleitung. See: "Ost Flügel, West Ansicht," Bauverwaltung 5, 1958, HSH 2007 / 06136.1-1; "Orientierungsplan, Erdgeschoss," Bauverwaltung 5, 1958, HSH 2007/06157.1-1. It is widely known that the new building designs for the Hohenschönhausen prison were initially devised by political prisoners on remand. The relationship between the Aufbauleitung, Bauverwaltung V, and forced labor under Stasi detention is an urgent theme to be uncovered through future research. For Bauverwaltung V's designation as a building brigade formed under the Aufbauleitung, see: LAB C Rep 110-01 3423. Other special construction teams of the enterprise were *Baustab 114* and *Baustab 28*, which—among others—worked on housing projects throughout the second half of the 1950s.

them and provided oversight of their finances, design, and implementation. While its focus was the capital of the GDR, the HA VuW oversaw architectural design and production activities across the GDR as most MfS district branches did not yet have equivalent units under their jurisdiction. Outside of Berlin, the HA VuW commissioned local architecture brigades and local building enterprises to realize the state security apparatus' new structures, including its district administrative complexes (*Bezirksverwaltungen*) in Rostock, Gera, and Neubrandenburg.[78]

Only quick architectural solutions in Berlin and with minimal footprint were undertaken directly by the HA VuW and through its own labor force, such as the building of temporary barracks and warehouses or the maintenance and repair of infrastructural facilities like transformer stations. Yet, the department equipped all Stasi structures with appliances and furniture, devised building measures to secure the premises, and supervised the design and installment of infrastructural elements. HA VuW was also a building controller and conducted the otherwise centrally regulated tasks—the State Building Control and Technical Oversight—pertaining to MfS structures. For several of the ministry's structures outside of Berlin, however, the HA VuW tasked the Entwurfsbüro 110 with inspecting architectural plans.[79] Thus, while the HA VuW had a plethora of responsibilities in provisioning the MfS with buildings, spaces, and structures all of kind, these widespread tasks were distributed between the department and the design offices and building brigades it oversaw, without a clear delineation of authority and accountability.

Erich Mielke was not only hands on regarding all architectural matters of Wandlitz but significantly shaped the way the MfS administered building production after 1957, increasingly

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[78] For 1955 plans for the ministry's Rostock administrative complex, see: BArch MfS Liegenschaften 445, BArch MfS Liegenschaften 446. For the 1958 planning of the Neubrandenburg administration, see: BArch MfS VRD 9373. For 1954 plans to build an administrative addition to the Gera remand prison, see: BArch MfS BV Gera Abt. XIV 579.

[79] See: "Anbau der Haftanstalt Gera. Bauaufsichtliche Unterlagen, Ausfertigung," Entwurfsbüro 110, Berlin, ca. 1955, BArch MfS BV Gera Abt. XIV 579; "BV Rostock Dienstgebäude I. Bauabschnitt. Bauaufsichtliche Unterlagen," Berlin, ca. 1955, BArch MfS Liegenschaften 446.

streamlining and centralizing its bureaucracy of building. Between 1953 and 1957, Mielke—as the first deputy to Ernst Wollweber—was already involved in the architectural activities of the MfS and thus of the HA VuW. Even though the department was not structurally part of his field of responsibilities, it was Mielke who approved significant building projects bypassing the accountable deputy Otto Walter.[80] Ultimately, in 1957, after his appointment as the Minister of State Security, Mielke subordinated the HA VuW to the newly formed *Hauptverwaltung B* (HV B).[81] The HV B brought together the procurement of financial, material, and medical resources and the administration of labor under a single unit.[82] This structural change also atomized Mielke's control over these affairs.[83] As the only administrative unit not overseen by a deputy minister, the HV B answered directly to Mielke.[84] Furthermore, with only two members of staff—the director and its deputy—it functioned rather as a coordination post than an administrative body contrary to what its name signifies.[85] As a result, the Aufbauleitung's subordination to the ministerial structure in 1962 administratively streamlined the building enterprise to the Stasi-Chief, concentrating his power over all dimensions of architectural production, from project development and financing to design and implementation.

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[80] "BV Rostock Dienstgebäude, Wohnung und Erschließung, Bestätigung des Vorprojektes," Rostock, 1.9.1955, BArch MfS Liegenschaften 445.

[81] The "B" here stands for "Beschaffung und Betreuung," namely provision and supervision.

[82] While architecture was the largest undertaking of the HA VuW, the HA VuW became the largest division under the HV B—from 1953 to 1972, the department grew from 382 to 1600 employees. Compare: BArch MfS SED KL 2892, p. 14; Wiedmann, *Die Diensteinheiten des MfS 1950–1989*, 354.

[83] Initially, the Department of Telecommunication and Fire Arms (*Abteilung Nachrichtenverbindung und Waffen – Abt. NuW*) was also under the HV B. By 1960, the department was dissolved, with its fire arms unit joining the HA VuW and the formation of a separate telecommunications department.

[84] The only other administrative unit within the MfS structure was HVA, managed by deputy minister Markus Johannes Wolf. All the other main departments were supervised by deputy ministers except HA VuW.

[85] In addition to HA VuW, HV B oversaw the MfS' Department of Finance (*Abteilung Finanzen*), the Main Subject Area Health Sciences (*Hauptsachgebiet Gesundheitswesen*), and the Department XVI – Security Measures within the Penitentiary System (*Abteilung XVI – Sicherungsaufgaben im Bereich Strafvollzug*), which organized the labor of prisoners supervised by the Stasi and mobilized them for the construction of prisons, housing, and sports facilities. The Department XVI was formed in 1960 and was subordinated to the HV B by 1964, the latest. These prisoners also worked for the maintenance and repair of fire arms and workshops.

Over the next decade, the Stasi's venture into the building industry gained traction with the transformation of Aufbauleitung Dynamo into the MfS-subordinated (*nachgeordnet*) "People's Own" Enterprise (*Volkseigener Betrieb - VEB*) *Dynamo-Bau Berlin* in 1968, and the founding of a second construction firm, VEB *Montagebau Berlin,* the same year.[86] Assuming the role of MfS' main building contractors *(Hauptauftragnehmer)*, Montagebau and Dynamo-Bau Berlin undertook a wide array of construction activities for the ministry. While the former focused on developing administrative and technical structures for the ministry, the latter responded to the Stasi's needs in housing and recreational spaces and resumed production duties at Sportsforum and Wandlitz.[87] Dynamo-Bau carried out other projects for the GDR state and its functionaries, as well, including homes and hunting lodges for members of the Central Committee of the SED, guesthouses for the government, and institutional buildings.[88] Both Dynamo-Bau and Montagebau Berlin were subordinated to HV B with their directors answering to the director of the coordination post. Within this bureaucratic scheme, and in the absence of a superordinate deputy minister, Mielke sustained his position as the overseer of the Stasi's building production activities. Yet, the changes between the late 1950 and 1960s only marked the

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[86] After Dynamo-Bau Berlin's replacement of Aufbauleitung Dynamo, HV B became a coordination post between HA PS and the building enterprise in regard to architectural tasks in Wandlitz. While HA PS—the department responsible with overseeing all aspects of Wandlitz—communicated with Dynamo-Bau firsthand about the details of a given assignment, it was ultimately HV B that contracted Dynamo-Bau to initiate its realization. Within this bureaucratic scheme, Mielke sustained his position supervising decisions pertaining to Wandlitz. Thus, HA PS delivered all documentation to the minister's desk for approval before sending them out to HV B.

[87] While architectural tasks at Wandlitz gradually shifted from new construction to renovation, the Stasi remained the settlement's general building contractor for 25 years, making the settlement the largest architectural undertaking of the ministry, along with the realization of its own central administrative complex in Berlin-Lichtenberg.

[88] See: BArch MfS GH 38/73. A complete list of projects undertaken by the Stasi's building enterprises is difficult to recover from the archival record. The only comprehensive lists could be found in personnel files or surveillance files on persons working for the enterprises. On this surveillance file of a former secretary, who worked for the Sonderbaustab 10, Aufbauleitung Dynamo, and VEB Dynamo-Bau Berlin, projects undertaken by this lineage of construction companies provide a partial but helpful picture. Amongst the institutional buildings mentioned are, for example, the Institute for Radiation Protection (*Institut für Strahlenschutz*) in Karlshorst.

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beginning of Mielke's administrative vision for his ministry's building activities as the process

of centralization and bureaucratic streamlining ensued over the 1970s.

"Building Enterprises for Special Production," 1968-1977

In contrast to Aufbauleitung Dynamo, Dynamo-Bau and Montagebau Berlin belonged to

a group of centrally regulated industrial production firms known as "enterprises with special

production" (*Betriebe mit spezieller Produktion*), which operated exclusively under the contract

of the GDR's armed forces and as distinct legal entities separate from the MfS.[89] The designation

of "special production" furnished these military contractors with legal exceptions intended to

safeguard the economic development of East German national defense.[90] Yet special building

enterprises were not independent of the MfS. Despite their central funding, their financial

planning was regulated by the Department of Finances of the MfS, as was their economic

planning.[91] The MfS thus could internally decide and implement any changes to their production

schemes as long as these adhered to the general guidelines of central military-economic

planning.[92] What is more, while most of their employees were civilian workers, the management

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[89] To this list was added: *Staatlicher Forstwirtschaftbetrieb Neuhaus* (StFB) in 1969. *Institut für Technische Untersuchungen* (ITU), founded in 1970, and *Institut für wissenschaftlich-technische Entwicklungen* (IWTE), formed in 1973, were administered under the same legal statute but were recognized as institutions (*Einrichtungen*) instead of enterprises (*Betriebe*). The Ministry of National Defense (*Ministerium für Nationale Verteidigung – MfNV*) had similar subordinate enterprises of special production—namely, *VEB Spezialbau Bernau*, *VEB Spezialbau Schwedt*, and *VEB Spezialbau Potsdam*. A comparative historical analysis of the GDR's military building contractors under both the MfS and the MfNV constitutes an important direction for future research.

[90] The material and financial resources of MfS' "building enterprises of special production" did not come from the MfS budget but instead were allocated by the East German party-state government from dedicated central funds. For instance, housing for MfS employees was financed by the "People's Own Enterprise" Housing Administration – Architecture (VEB Wohnungsverwaltung – Bauwesen), formed in 1959 under the Ministry of Finance for the purpose of financing housing needs of the East German armed forces.

[91] The Department of Finances of the MfS undertook the budgeting, banking, and revision functions of enterprises managed by the MfS. "Ordnung über die Leitung der VEBs des MfS," BArch MfS OTS 1420, 1983, 1-9.

[92] The production quotas of Dynamo-Bau and Montagebau Berlin were included in the GDR's centrally mandated five-year and yearly economic plans as part of the central military-economic planning, not to be confused with social economic planning. The State Planning Commission, in this regard, provided oversight to ensure the adherence to and integration of these plans into centrally devised plans. "Aufgabe und Pflichten der Kombinate und Betriebe mit spezieller Produktion," BArch MfS Rechtsstelle 843, 1976, 39-53.

cadres of MfS-subordinate firms were appointed directly by the ministry as officers in special

assignment, practically turning the enterprises to production units of the state security

apparatus.[93] Ultimately, with hiring processes administered by an MfS-appointed director of

"Cadres and Education" (*Kader und Schulung*) and key positions filled with unofficial

collaborators with required expertise, all employees of the MfS-subordinate building enterprises

were hand-picked by the Stasi.[94] Thus, the MfS had immediate control over the planning,

management, and hiring of these construction firms and ran them with relatively free reign.

What was the driving force behind the formation of MfS-subordinate enterprises of

special production? By securing additional funds for the ministry's building needs, this legal

standing helped the MfS realize more projects than would be possible within its own

discretionary budget. These exclusive military building contractors were also bound by

confidentiality agreements and were managed under the immediate influence and control of the

Stasi, which helped the safekeeping of architectural plans and details of state security

significance. These reasons beget other questions, however. For example, starting with the

1960s, the MfS saw a significant growth in its funding, and by 1989 state security had become

the third largest state spending item, following the military and social security expenditures.[95]

For a ministry operating on 1.3% of the entire GDR state budget, procurement of extra funds

does not seem to account for the full reasoning behind its enterprises for special production—

neither does protection of state intelligence. To have military contractors operating under

specific legal clauses is commonplace for surveillance organizations, armed forces, and

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[93] Effective on February 1, 1968, more than 20 officers of HA VuW were released of their duties to take over management positions at the VEB MBB. See: Wiedmann, *Die Diensteinheiten des MfS 1950–1989*, 354.
[94] In 1972, at the VEB Montagebau Berlin 4.5% and at VEB Dynamo-Bau Berlin 0.3% of staff were attested MfS employees. "Hinweise zur Vorbereitung auf die Sitzung des Sekretariats der Kreisleitung vom 5.9.1972," BArch MfS SED KL 2892, 14.
[95] Gieseke, *The History of the Stasi*, 49.

institutions of national defense. Therefore, designating state-owned enterprises as military contractors and subordinating them to the relevant bureaucratic structures could be understood as the result of the Soviet-type state socialist system of the GDR. Yet, the MfS did not realize all its architectural projects through its own building enterprises. On the one hand, their capacities never sufficed to cover all building needs of the ministry, and on the other hand, they were active predominantly in Berlin. As a result, even some structures of eminent state security significance were realized by territorial combines and local state-owned enterprises throughout the 1960s and the 1980s. One such example is the listening post "Urian" at Brocken Mountain in the district of Magdeburg, which was designed and built by the *VEB Bau- und Montagekombinat – VEB BMK* ("People's Own Enterprise" Building and Assembly Combine) Magdeburg.[96] I argue that there was a third factor behind the transformation of the MfS' construction firms to state-owned military contractors: the centralization of the Stasi's building industry vis-à-vis the combine reform. The organizational overhaul targeting the ministry's building enterprises and architectural-bureaucratic apparatus by the mid-1970s will help elucidate this point.

In 1974, the HA VuW and HV B were integrated into the newly founded Verwaltung Rückwärtige Dienste (VRD), which resumed HA VuW's roles as the Stasi's project developer, property manager, and building controller.[97] This was one in a series of moves through which

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[96] Here, the MfS' Institute for Scientific-Technical Development (*Institut für wissenschaftlich-technische Entwicklung – IWTE)* Berlin undertook the design and implementation of the radome—the dome housing the radar antennas. Yet, this was due to IWTE's specific expertise. The faraday cage installed in the listening tower was designed and built by *VEB Ausbau Berlin*, which was not a MfS-subordinated firm. Similarly, the MfS' remand prison in Gera, designed and constructed in the early 1980s, was constructed by the VEB Building Assembly Combine (*Baumontagekombinat – BMK*) Gera's enterprise *Ingenieurhochbau Gera*.

[97] Within the MfS's project management scheme, the ministry was the legal entity (*Rechtsträger*), planner (*Planträger*) and investor (*Investräger*) of building projects, whereas the enterprises assumed the role of general contractor (*Generalauftragnehmer* or *Hauptauftragnehmer*), project engineer (*Hauptprojektant* or *Generalprojektant*), and building-technical designer (bautechnischer Projektant). Depending on the project, the VRD was also recognized as the project engineer and designer (*Projektant*). For such designations, see: "Bautechnologische Projekt VEB SHB," Berlin, January 1986-1988, BArch MfS VRD 7541.

Mielke continued to streamline the administrative logic of its ministry's building production. First, with the elimination of HV B as a coordination post, the VRD was annexed to the office of the newly appointed deputy minister Rudi Mittig, who also oversaw the Hauptabteilung XVIII— the department responsible with monitoring and reporting on the East German building industry, among others, as I explored in Chapter 1. Within this organizational scheme, the VRD functioned as an administration adjacent to—as opposed to under—Mittig's field of responsibility with its director serving as the contact point between his department and the deputy minister. This was not a structural re-iteration of the previous arrangement as the director of the VRD was not just a coordinator but an administrator running the entire operation. There was, however, a linear system of reliability between Mielke, Mittig, and the director of the VRD, still. Second, by applying what is called the "line principle," departments of "Behind the Lines Services" (*Abteilung Rückwärtige Dienste*) were formed under the MfS' district branches across the GDR. Third, manifold architectural tasks undertaken by various departments under the HA VuW were unified under the expanded Department of Building (*Abteilung Bauwesen*) of the VRD. And fourth, in 1975 Dynamo-Bau and Montagebau Berlin were merged to found a new building enterprise for special production, the VEB Spezialhochbau Berlin, which absorbed all duties and personnel of the former enterprises into a single operation under the VRD's Department of Building.[98]

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[98] By the mid-1970s, with 806 people in its staff, the VRD's Department of Building was subdivided into five areas: planning and economy, object administration, building repair, technical provisions, and material supply and storage. Within this structure, the MfS enterprises Spezialhochbau and Raumkunst Berlin were subordinated to the Department of Building I – Planning and Economy (*Abteilung Bauwesen, Referat I – Planung und Wirtschaft*). The unit's responsibility was formulated as follows: "to materially-technically safeguard political-operational work through the planning, preparation, and financial balancing of need-based and economical building investments in close cooperation with other fields under the Department of Building; to take on certain functions of the Department of Building as an expert unit; to fulfill certain central tasks of the MfS' building industry; and to carry out the administrative and managerial activities of the MfS' building enterprises." See: "Langfristige Entwicklungkonzeption der Abt Bw/I für den Zeitraum bis 1990," Berlin, 28.2.1983, BArch MfS VRD 1275, 1-3, 82-97.

In 1977, two years after the founding of Spezialhochbau Berlin, a second architectural production firm—*VEB Raumkunst Berlin*—was absorbed by the MfS and subordinated to the VRD to execute interior design projects and to design and manufacture furniture. The VEB Raumkunst Berlin was already working exclusively on MfS contracts since the late 1950s and was run by architects with ties to the ministry at least since 1972.[99] Finally, by the mid-1980s, the linear system of reliability between Mittig and the director of the VRD was eliminated and the administration of the VRD, along with its subordinate building enterprises, was fully concentrated under Mittig's influence and control. This was the concluding step in the state security apparatus' centralization of its building production activities and streamlining of the architectural bureaucracy overseeing these activities.

The structural changes in the Stasi's building bureaucracy between 1957 and 1977, on the one hand, were in line with the trends of the Ulbricht-era New Economic System, which streamlined bureaucratic control over the economy instead of eliminating and decentralizing it, even though these measures continued well after the end of Ulbricht's reign and under the Honecker leadership. On the other hand, the centralization of not only building administration but also management, specifically with the merger of Dynamo-Bau and Montage Berlin, echoed the centralization of industrial production relations across the GDR through combine reform, which took place during the 1970s, as discussed in Chapter 1. Instead of assigning its military contractors to a "mother" combine, however, the MfS created a single large-scale operation for building production. The territorial expansion of industrial production capacities from Berlin to

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[99] This interior design, furniture, and cabinet making firm was founded in 1913 and under the name Siebert & Lehmann. Located in Berlin-Friedrichshain, the firm was working since 1955/56 as a private contractor of the Aufbauleitung (SV) Dynamo and Sonderbaustab 110. By 1969, the company's entire design and manufacture commissions were coming from the MfS, specifically through the Dynamo-Bau Berlin. The firm was nationalized and renamed VEB Raumkunst Berlin in 1972, and in 1977, it was taken over by the MfS as an "enterprise for special production." "Istzustandanalyse 1982," Berlin, 1982, BArch MfS VRD 7263, 15-20; "Grundsatzdokumente VEB Raumkunst – Staatliche Übernahme," BArch MfS SHB 7675.

nearby districts and the development of MfS-specific production plans under the Spezialhochbau Berlin supports this hypothesis further. The expertise and production fields of Spezialhochbau Berlin and Raumkunst Berlin—with the former constructing buildings and the latter building furniture—might have been seen as too disparate for them to be effectively united under a single enterprise. Raumkunst Berlin was converted from a semi-independent contractor to a ministry-subordinate firm, nonetheless, with the VRD becoming its administrator.

The ministry's building enterprises demonstrated a steady growth throughout the 1960s and 1970s. Between 1962 and 1967, Aufbauleitung grew more than fivefold: from 68 to 396 employees.[100] By 1972, the Aufbauleitung's successor Dynamo-Bau Berlin reached 1140 employees, and Montagebau Berlin 1100 employees: a cumulative workforce expansion of over 630% in only five years.[101] By the 1980s, the Spezialhochbau Berlin became the largest building enterprise in the GDR with 2649 employees.[102] During this process, the diversification of architectural tasks and the growth of production capacities and labor force magnified the Stasi's bureaucratic expansionism further, reaching its apex by the 1980s. To inspect, control, and supervise the activities of this large and increasingly complex industrial operation, the MfS once again turned to administrative measures, specifically to bureaucratic surveillance, which complicated—even conflicted—the scientific-technical and social concerns at the forefront of its enterprises.

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[100] Compare: "Auflösung der Projektierungsgruppe," 25.8.1962, Berlin, BArch MfS SdM 1357, 61; "Protokoll der Leitungssitzung," 13.11.1967, Berlin, BArch MfS SHB 8089, 89. The employees were divided under three departments: management and administration (*Leitung und Verwaltung*), design (*Projektierung*), and construction (*Produktion*), the last of which comprised more than 70% of the labor force. "Teilbericht," Berlin, 25.6.1966, BArch MfS SHB 7674, 32.

[101] "Hinweise zur Vorbereitung auf die Sitzung des Sekretariats der Kreisleitung vom 5.9.1972," BArch MfS SED KL 2892, 14.

[102] "Bericht über die Untersuchung im VEB Spezialhochbau Berlin,"report from the Committee for People's Oversight of the GDR (*Kommitee für Volkskontrolle der DDR*), Berlin, 16.1.1990, BStU MfS HA PS 6273, 1-10.

From MfS-Subordinate to MfS-Owned: VEB Spezialhochbau Berlin, 1975-1989
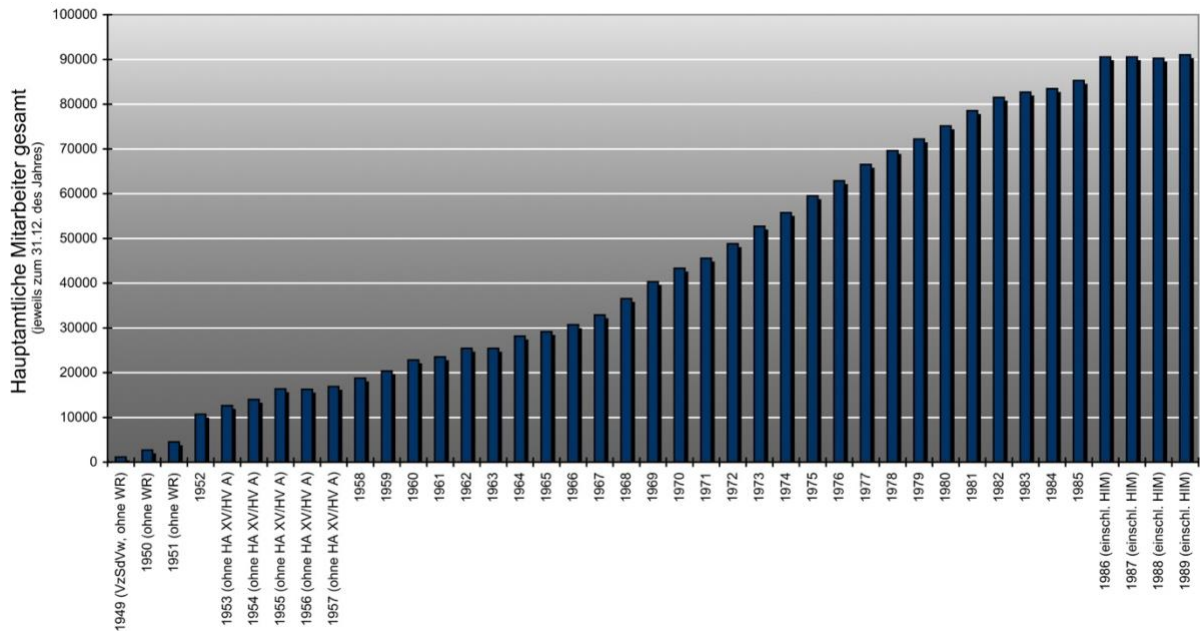
Figure 6 The MfS' workforce between 1949 and 1989. As the graph shows, the ministry's employment base almost continuously grew throughout its existence, with the years between 1968 and 1982 seeing the most increase. Graph found in: Jens Gieseke, *Die hauptamtlichen Mitarbeiter der Staatssicherheit* (BStU, Berlin: 2000), 552-557.

The unprecedented expansion of the Stasi's building production capacities after 1968 was the result of the ministry's approach to its own architectural production as a field of scientific-technical development and of social welfare, as much as it was in response to the ministry's exponentially growing employment and operation base (Figure 6). Over the 1970s and 1980s, *Spezialhochbau Berlin* became a developer of architectural technologies, infrastructures, and social-economic planning. Its production sector expanded from building construction to civil engineering, heavy earth works, and transportation, while its main technology sector started to develop prefabricated building technologies, systems of mechanization, and scientific management plans as well as architectural projects. Hence, with Spezialhochbau Berlin, the Stasi's architectural production activities extended their scope from over-ground to underground, from structure to infrastructure, and finally from technics to technologies. This change of

approach also included an emphasis on the economic and social dimensions of architectural production and labor, and individual departments were devoted to economy (overseeing financial planning and material economy) and social sciences and work (administering education and provisions).

The projects carried out by Spezialhochbau Berlin were largely concentrated in the district of Berlin as the state security apparatus' building needs were most pronounced in the GDR's capital, where most of its employees worked and lived. However, in contrast to building enterprises preceding it, Berlin was not the limit. The construction firm operated significantly in the district of Frankfurt (Oder), and with its "Production Area South" (*Produktionsbereich Süd*), it mobilized its building production for the districts of Dresden and Karl-Marx-Stadt (renamed Chemnitz). It even served the districts of Potsdam and Neubrandenburg, albeit in lesser extent.[103]

In 1985, the MfS put a new strategy into action to transform both Spezialhochbau Berlin and Raumkunst Berlin to MfS-owned (*MfS eigener*) building enterprises. This move intended to reposition the construction firms from constituents of the centrally regulated economic planning under military contract to entities directly governed by the Stasi's own military-economic planning. Put differently, it was about decentralizing the ministry's building industry so it could devise its own economic and production plans and evade the mandates of centralized state planning. This meant that the MfS would no longer capitalize on the statute of "enterprises of special production," but, as discussed earlier, receiving additional state funding for its architectural activities was never the primary driving factor for the ministry. The proposed plan was not about making the enterprise's—and hence the MfS'—resources even more readily

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[103] "Bericht über die Untersuchung im VEB Spezialhochbau Berlin," BArch MfS HA PS 6273, 1-10. In all other districts of the GDR, the Stasi's building needs continued to be fulfilled by regional building combines and local enterprises, which were commissioned by the departments of "Rückwärtige Dienste" under the relevnt district branch of the MfS.

available to the wishes of the GDR's center of state power, either. First, while VEB Spezialhochbau Berlin followed the planning orders of the national economy, it interpreted these regulations rather "generously" when it came to realizing projects for East German functionaries.[104] Second, the financing of the Wandlitz settlement, although hefty, was not allocated from the military-economic investment Spezialhochbau Berlin received—it came from dedicated funds of the Ministry of Finance (*Ministerium für Finanzen – MdF*) of the GDR.[105] The proposed reprofiling—prepared by the VRD—was, instead, a plan to increase the productivity of the MfS-subordinate building enterprises through the implementation of MfS-specific economic and production plans.

Conceived under its so-called "technical politics of architectural production,"[106] the state security apparatus' architectural operations were already focused on learning from the scientific-technical results yielded by the GDR's centrally-planned building industry and on improving them under the auspices of the VRD's Department of Building and the VEB Spezialhochbau Berlin.[107] The Stasi was monitoring the GDR's building industry through its Hauptabteilung XVIII since the 1960s, which provided the ministry with exclusive insider information regarding the scientific management efforts of the Ministry of Building and the Building Academy of the

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[104] "Bericht über die Untersuchung im VEB Spezialhochbau Berlin," BArch MfS HA PS 6273, 1-10.

[105] The Wandlitz settlement's financial toll was significant. Between 1979-1989 alone, a total of 100 Million Marks were channeled through Spezialhochbau Berlin to the project. The proportion of Wandlitz-related expenses were especially high during the years when the MfS cut back its own production due to national economic exigencies: 20% of the overall capacities in 1983, 13% in 1984 and 10% in 1986." Bericht über die Untersuchung im VEB Spezialhochbau Berlin," BArch MfS HA PS 6273, 1-10.

[106] "Technische Politik des Bauwesens des MfS." "Konzeption zur wirtschaftspolitischen Führung des VEB Spezialhochbau Berlin im Jahre 1986 – Führungskonzeption," Berlin, October 1985, BArch MfS VRD 10493, 17-28.

[107] The Stasi was monitoring the GDR's building industry through its *Hauptabteilung XVIII – Volkswirtschaft* (Main Department XVIII – National Economy) since the 1960s, which provided the ministry with exclusive insider information regarding to the scientific management efforts of the Ministry of Building and the Building Academy of the GDR.

GDR.[108] While the Stasi's earlier building enterprises, namely Dynamo-Bau and Montagebau

Berlin, were following scientific management methods for their industrial production and

prefabrication schemes, by the 1980s, the MfS turned to developing these methods instead of

merely importing them from the centrally-devised road maps. This was partly due to the

introduction of the WBS 70 Plattenbau-type into the MfS' architectural production plans.

Deciding to use its "scientific-technical modification capacities under Spezialhochbau Berlin," in

1983 the ministry tasked the construction firm and its superordinate department VRD with

developing "cost-, material- and energy-efficient building technologies based on the groundwork

of the GDR's building sciences."[109] Thus, Spezialhochbau Berlin started to examine existing

building technologies according to their overall efficiency and durability—regardless of their

functional requirements—and proposed specific types for further development to the VRD.

These types were to be modified to create MfS-specific prefabricated building types for on-site

assembly. In 1988, the construction firm developed its own housing-type *WGS 88* as a derivation

of WBS 70 and based on the ground plans of the existing Stasi housing settlement at

Kniprodeallee in Berlin's Weissensee neighborhood (Figure 7).[110] The typification of the Stasi's

service units and lodging structures—such as guest and holiday houses—was also projected as

part of the Stasi's military-economic five-year plan for 1986-1990.[111]

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[108] This point of engagement is what the first chapter of my dissertation tackles. For an overview of HA XVIII and its operations, see: Haendcke-Hoppe-Arndt, *Die Hauptabteilung XVIII*; Gilles, "The Rationale of Muddling Through. The Function of the Stasi in the Planned Economy."

[109] "Langfristige Entwicklungkonzeption der Abt Bw/I für den Zeitraum bis 1990," Berlin, 28.2.1983, VRD Abt Bw/I Leiter Günter Studt, BArch MfS VRD 1275, 1-3, 82-97.

[110] See: BArch MfS VRD 7541; BArch MfS SHB 8626; BArch MfS VRD 7542. It must be noted that the housing type was furnished with loggias and plaster strips, which suggests that both aesthetics and economics were considered.

[111] "Erzeugnisentwicklung 'Dienstgebäude' und 'Unterkunftsgebäude.'" "Konzeption zur wirtschaftspolitischen Führung des VEB Spezialhochbau Berlin im Jahre 1986 – Führungskonzeption," Berlin, October 1985, BArch MfS VRD 10493, 17-28.
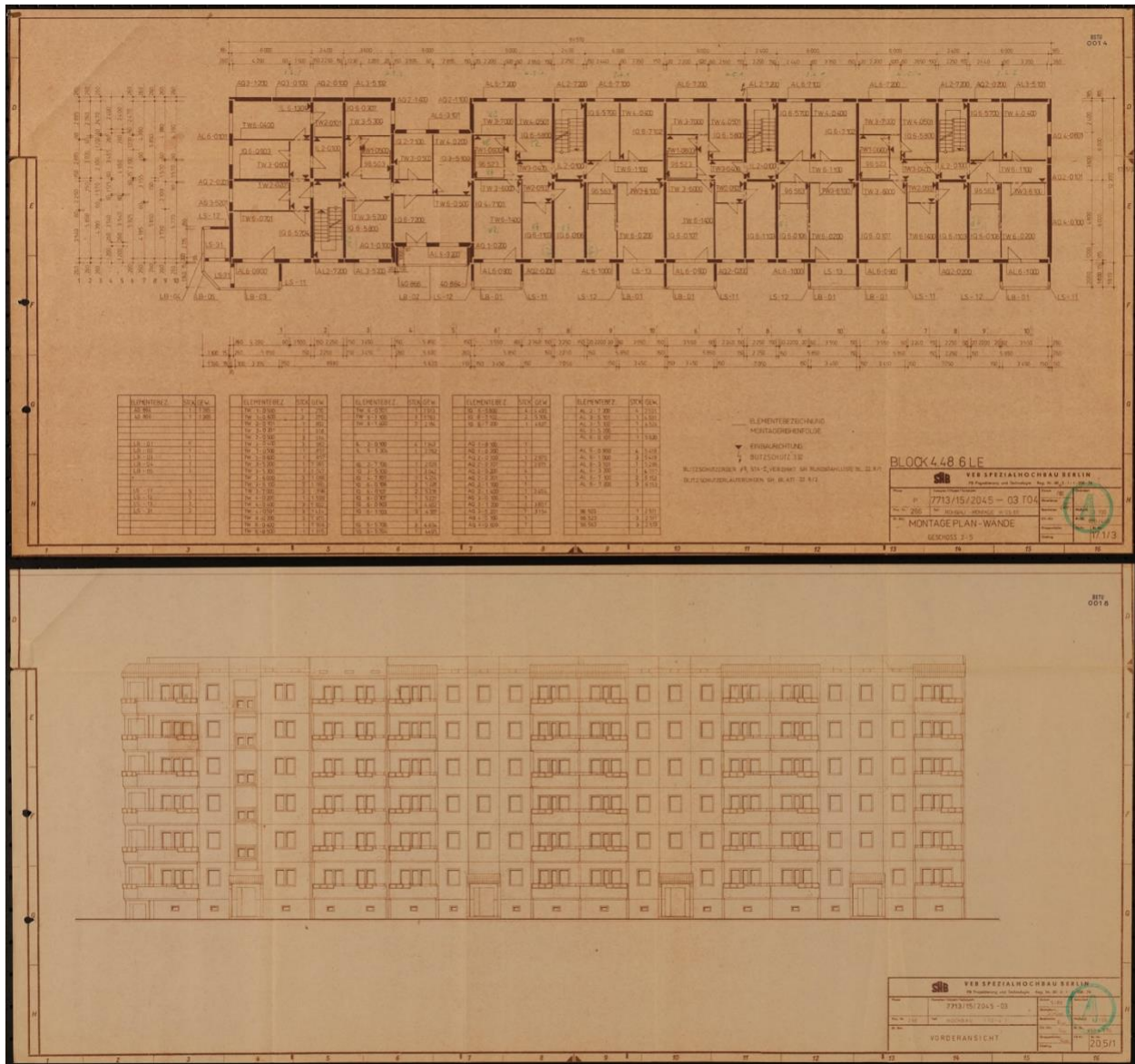
Figure 7 MfS-specific prefabricated mass housing type WGS (*Wohn- und Gesellschaftsserie*) 88, developed by the VEB Spezialhochbau Berlin. The type was a derivation or, as the MfS put it, "advancement" of the WBS 70. In comparison to its precursor, the type's most noticeable characteristic was the addition of bay windows and loggias. BArch MfS SHB 5413, 14, 18.

The "re-profiling of VEB Spezialhochbau Berlin as an enterprise of the MfS," as it was called, was deemed a step towards a "unified technical building policy" within the MfS.[112] This language directly referred to the "unified social and economic policy" of Honecker and thus

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[112] "Konzeption zur wirtschaftspolitischen Führung des VEB Spezialhochbau Berlin im Jahre 1986 – Führungskonzeption," Berlin, October 1985, BArch MfS VRD 10493, 17-28.

carried important connotations regarding the MfS' self-positioning within the East German industry. As "enterprises of special production," the construction firms managed by the Stasi were obligated to abide by the central economic plans of the SED, which—within the context of the East German building industry—determined the sort and the volume of industrialized architectural production. Hence, the MfS was unable to produce and realize its own building technologies through enterprises recognized as state-owned military contractors. The ministry was also unauthorized to develop a building program autonomous of central state planning or to devise building tariffs contradicting those determined by the party-state. The state security apparatus' 1985 petition to the SED to transform the legal status of the building enterprises it managed was thus a move to evade these restrictions and have fuller control over its own architectural production, so it could administer its labor, material, and financial resources differently and fulfill the needs of its employees.

The petitioned reprofiling of MfS-subordinate enterprises to MfS-owned entities ultimately intended to remedy the Stasi's building industry so it can better cater to the needs it was meant to cater—namely, the Stasi employees' living and working conditions. The ministry's building industry did not merely serve the center of the GDR state power even though it was determined by it. From Dynamo-Bau to Spezialhochbau Berlin, the MfS-subordinate building enterprises produced numerous projects in the service of its employees, from housing to recreational facilities, and from kindergartens to holiday retreats. Even ministerial buildings, such as district branches and service units, were not simply a manifestation of repressive state power. Looking at the countless petitions for new workspaces sent to the VRD by Stasi cadres, one realizes that these were requests for better working conditions: for not cramped-up offices, for buildings with better heating, ventilation, or drainage. The MfS was a surveillance

organization and a security administration with coercive power, but it employed over 90

thousand East Germans, a remarkable portion of which were technocrats and blue- and white-

collar staff. The MfS' architectural departments and building enterprises constituted a

considerable segment of such labor base, and they comprised of engineers, draftspeople, heavy-

machine operators, construction workers, and electricians, to name a few.

The reprofiling of the Stasi-run building enterprises into MfS-owned entities entailed

other likely outcomes, with an increase in not just administrative but managerial control being

one. In accordance with the proposal, a restructuring of the VRD's Department of Building was

foreseen for 1989, whereby the department would be divided into three fields supervised by

appointed deputy directors. Within this organizational scheme, the deputy director overseeing

Spezialhochbau and Raumkunst Berlin would not be assigned individual sub-departments as

opposed to other deputies, which suggests that the construction firms were to be treated as

such.[113] The reprofiling thus envisioned to decentralize the Stasi's building industry vis-à-vis the

GDR's centrally planned economy while streamlining managerial tasks even further.

MfS-owned enterprises were also to make surveillance and security measures targeting

architectural production more efficient. While the security bureaucracy of the MfS' building

industry had already grown in complexity over the 1970s and 1980s, its mechanisms of shop

floor observation, supervision, and control barely sufficed to create conditions different from

those found in the centrally regulated building industries of the GDR. For example, a 1981 study

on "criminal activities against socialist property" at Spezialhochbau Berlin demonstrated that,

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[113] One deputy director was to oversee the departments of Object Administration (*Abteilung III*), Building Repair (*Abteilung IV*), and Technical Provisions (*Abteilung VI*), and a second deputy director was to manage the departments of Planning and Economy (*Abteilung I*), Building Control and Technical Supervision (*Abteilung II*) and Material Supply and Storage (*Abteilung V*). The deputy overseeing the enterprises was going to be responsible with devising architectural security measures for Stasi-owned structures, developing mechanization, and supervising technical nomenclature.

while incidents of material damages and theft decreased in quantity by 13% between 1977-1980, the financial losses tied to these incidents increased by 40%.[114] The study, conducted at the MfS' Potsdam-Eiche "spy school," found that only 34% of all known cases were committed by people unaffiliated with the enterprise at unguarded building sites. The rest, including stolen building materials and equipment, discrepancies in inventories, and forged performance reports, were inside jobs. The study nonetheless argued that, in comparison to the 23 combines of the "central building industry of GDR, the VEB Spezialhochbau Berlin occupies the top position in the
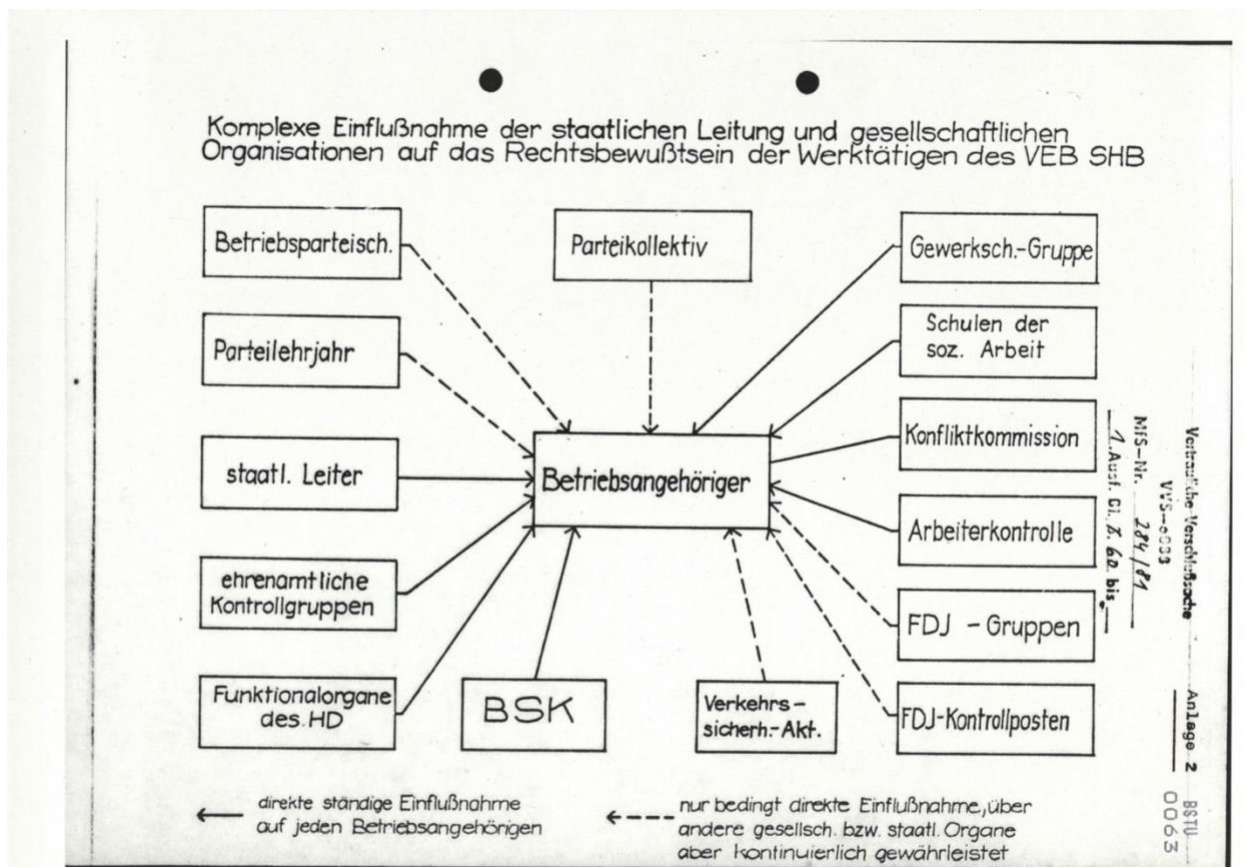
Figure 8 Graphic showing the "complex influences of the state and societal organizations" on the Spezialhochbau Berlin employees' "legal consciousness," 1981, BArch MfS VVS JHS 284/81, p. 63.

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[114] "Ursachen und Bedingungen von Rechsverletzungen gegen der sozialistische Eigentum im VEB SHB Berlin und die Verantwortung und die Möglichkeiten der Leiter zu ihrer Verhütung im Zusammenwirken mit den gesellschaftlichen Kräften," MfS Juristische Hochschule Potsdam, Diplomarbeit, 30.7.1981, BArch MfS VVS JHS 284/81.

decline of offences against socialist property," and associated this result with the "enterprise's

superior socialist education of its cadres." Recruitment activities of the SED and the *Freie*

Deutsche Jugend – FDJ, and influence of manifold state control organs were argued to have

contributed to this "superior socialist education" (Figure 8).[115] Yet, considering the enhanced

security measures at the Stasi-managed building production sites, from the large number of Stasi

officers and unofficial collaborators to the extensive number of security personnel, the results

painted a far less favorable picture. Even the decrease in theft cases, which increased in financial

toll, suggested that pilfering only became more efficient. The MfS continued producing reports

on the "effective infiltration" of Spezialhochbau Berlin and constantly strategized how to

increase its unofficial collaborators, nonetheless.

"Effective infiltration"—in other words, shopfloor surveillance via informants—was a

measure the Stasi took to make security effective through surveillance. Pilfering was considered

an important security liability not only due to the material losses tied to them but perhaps more

so because it potentially exposed the ministry to sabotage and espionage. Yet, the Stasi's

perpetual—and perpetually unsuccessful—attempts at eliminating pilfering at its building

production sites illustrate that tactics of infiltration did not beget the desired results. In this

regard, the ministry's objective to transform its subordinate enterprises into its own construction

firms must also be comprehended as an act to render surveillance efficient. Instead of positioning

more surveillance agents and recruiting more collaborators, the suggested reprofiling of the

Stasi's building contractors would have required all enterprise members to become full-time

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[115] "Ursachen und Bedingungen von Rechsverletzungen gegen der sozialistische Eigentum im VEB SHB Berlin," BArch MfS VVS JHS 284/81, 63. Recruiting employees of MfS-subordinate enterprises to SED membership was a concern since at least the 1970s, or since the ministry's building workforce saw an explosive expansion. In 1972, the Berlin administration (*Kreisleitung*) of the SED prepared a detailed report on this "problem," revealing that only 37.5% of VEB Montagebau employees and 14.2% of VEB Dynamo-Bau employees were party members. See: "Hinweise zur Vorbereitung auf die Sitzung des Sekretariats der Kreisleitung vom 5.9.1972," BArch MfS SED KL 2892, 14.

Stasi employees under oath. This may not have necessarily turned security fully effective but nevertheless efficient by decreasing the need for infiltration and turning surveillance fully to self-surveillance. Yet, decentralized or not, or thoroughly infiltrated or not, the Stasi's building industry was not exempt from the social and economic conditions within which it operated. It devised measures to regulate and control them but was unable to eliminate or isolate them. Thus, despite its continuous efforts to establish economic and bureaucratic hegemony over its own architectural production, the Stasi was far from immune to the problems endemic to the GDR's building industry.

One of these problems was high employee turnover. As production cadres serving the GDR's armed forces, the employees of Spezialhochbau Berlin—as well as those of Raumkunst Berlin—were furnished with special privileges. First, due to municipal agreements on the improvement of the working and living conditions of the military, local state organs were to prioritize both Stasi officers and building enterprise employees in housing allocation and provision of childcare services.[116] Second, uninterrupted one-year employment at these firms was recognized with "additional material rewards." Material compensations of this kind increased with continued labor, and workers were awarded an additional 4-12% of their yearly gross earnings based on the duration of their employment. While such special compensations, in place since 1976, were justified as support for participation in military production, in practice it was a measure to dampen the chronic worker turnover at the Stasi's construction firms, especially at the Spezialhochbau Berlin. In 1985, as yet another precaution to limit and control this phenomenon, the VRD broadened its recruitment criteria and started to offer training to enterprise cadres so they could gain the qualifications they lacked. Plans for additional

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[116] "Aufgabe und Pflichten der Kombinate und Betriebe mit spezieller Produktion," Berlin, 1976, BArch MfS Rechtsstelle 843, 39-53.

"performance stimulating wage regulations for select employee groups" were also developed.[117]

Yet, despite such stipulations, by 1987 Spezialhochbau Berlin was still suffering from employee

turnover at almost the same rate as the GDR average.[118] To the Stasi, this problem inherently

constituted a security liability, and abovementioned measures—along with infiltration and

ideological training—were seen as "steps for increasing security margins."[119]
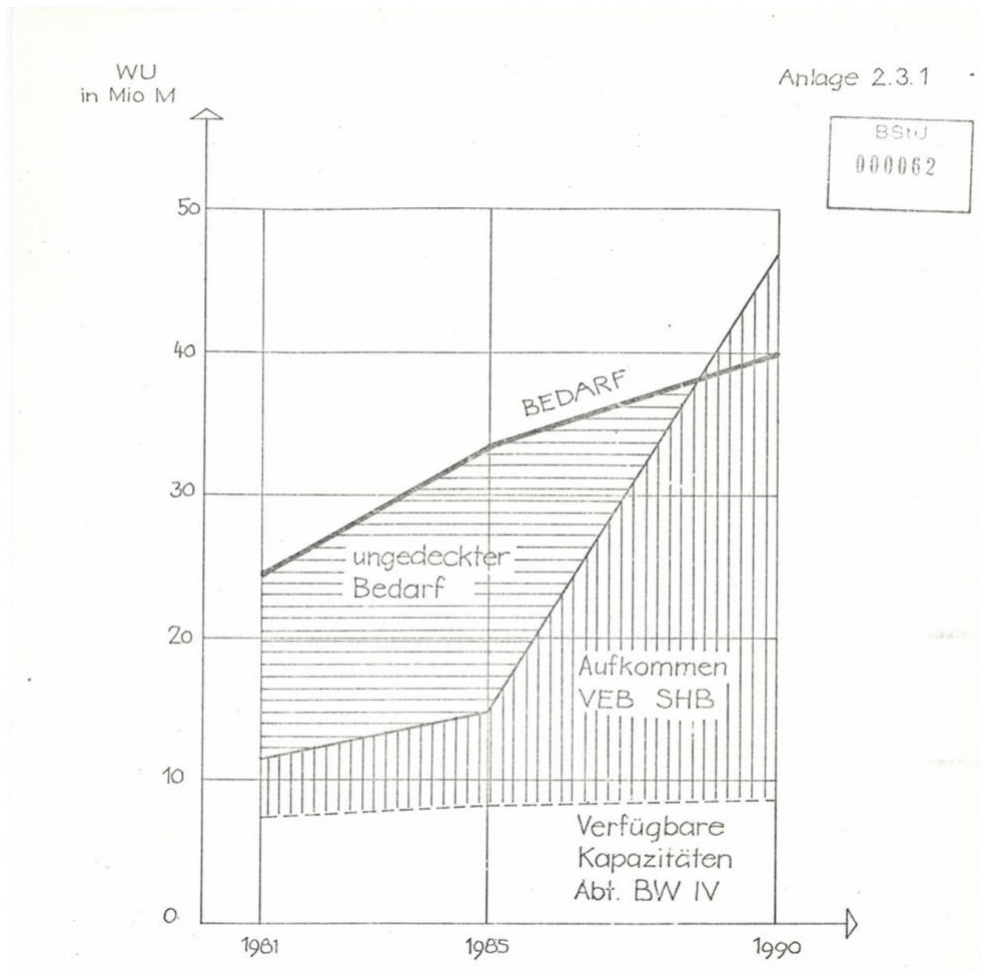
Figure 9 1982 projection of need versus provision of building capacities for the MfS' "service units" for the period between 1895-1990, BArch MfS VRD 1275, 62.

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[117] "Konzeption zur wirtschaftspolitischen Führung des VEB Spezialhochbau Berlin und des VEB Raumkunst Berlin im Jahre 1986 – Führungskonzeption," Berlin, October 1985, BArch MfS VRD 10493, 17-28.

[118] "Untersuchung der Probleme der Fluktuation und die Aufgaben zu ihrer Einschränkung im VEB Spezialhochbau Berlin, Baubetrieb des MfS," Fachschule für Staatswissenschaft "Edwin Hoernle" Weimar, Organisiertes Selbststudium, Betriebsakademie, Magistrat von Berlin, Hauptstadt der DDR, Fachschulschlußarbeit, Hauptmann Rainer Groß, HA Kader und Schulung, Abt Kader 13, Berlin, March 1987, BArch MfS HA KuSch 21164.

[119] "Konzeption zur wirtschaftspolitischen Führung des VEB Spezialhochbau Berlin und des VEB Raumkunst Berlin im Jahre 1986 – Führungskonzeption," BArch MfS VRD 10493, 17-28.

Economic exigencies constituted another major problem for the MfS' building industry. In line with the measures within the East German material sphere, the MfS was looking at ways to cut production costs while preserving production capabilities at Spezialhochbau Berlin at least since 1983. Following Mielke's order to sustain the rate of production with reduced material and financial funds, the VRD devised the building enterprise's 1986-1990 five-year plans on the basis of investment rates from 1983. For this time frame, the firm was projected to maintain its labor force and increase its reconstruction capacities by 30%, while gradually decreasing the volume of its sub-contracts and new projects.[120] Yet, these expectations were far from realistic, as they foresaw an almost 70% total increase in the completion of service units (*Diensteinheiten*) over the course of 1985-1990 to cover and bypass the demand (Figure 9).

By 1989, expenses were indeed lowered by 33%—from 176,7 to 116 Million Marks— which was stated to be "the concrete expression of the Central Committee of the SED's resolutions," even though the "uncovered demand" in ministerial structures was nowhere close to being surpassed.[121] As no additional investment was expected for the 1991-1995 period, the state security apparatus maintained that its architectural needs had to be covered through solutions repurposing the existing building stock. It was declared, "regardless of their urgency, the expansion of service units via new building practices can no longer be carried out, and it seems this will be the case in the foreseeable future."[122] The same held true for housing production.

Obstinate economic exigencies suffered by the East German economy and, in extension, by the MfS' building economy were only one of the factors causing halts on the production of

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[120] Due to centrally mandated reductions, the MfS decided that its own buildings must become the centerpiece of production with the still available funds. "Entwicklung der Kapazitäten des VEB Spezialhochbau und des VEB Raumkunst in den Jahren 1985-1990," Berlin, 28.2.1983, BArch MfS VRD 1275, 50-53.

[121] "Zuarbeit zur Vorbereitung der Beratung der nichtstrukturellen Arbeitsgruppe," Berlin, March 1989, BArch MfS VRD 11050.

[122] "Zuarbeit zur Vorbereitung der Beratung der nichtstrukturellen Arbeitsgruppe," BArch MfS VRD 11050.

MfS-specific architectural types. Even though centralized planning was seen as the primary

impediment to the Stasi's scientific-technical and social-economic goals, in fact, the ministry's

building industry was actually suffering from mismanagement—conceivably the most significant

factor contributing to its economic instability and uncertainty. There were several reasons for

this, but the unclear delineation of responsibilities and a lack of coordination between the VRD's

sub-departments was at the forefront.[123]
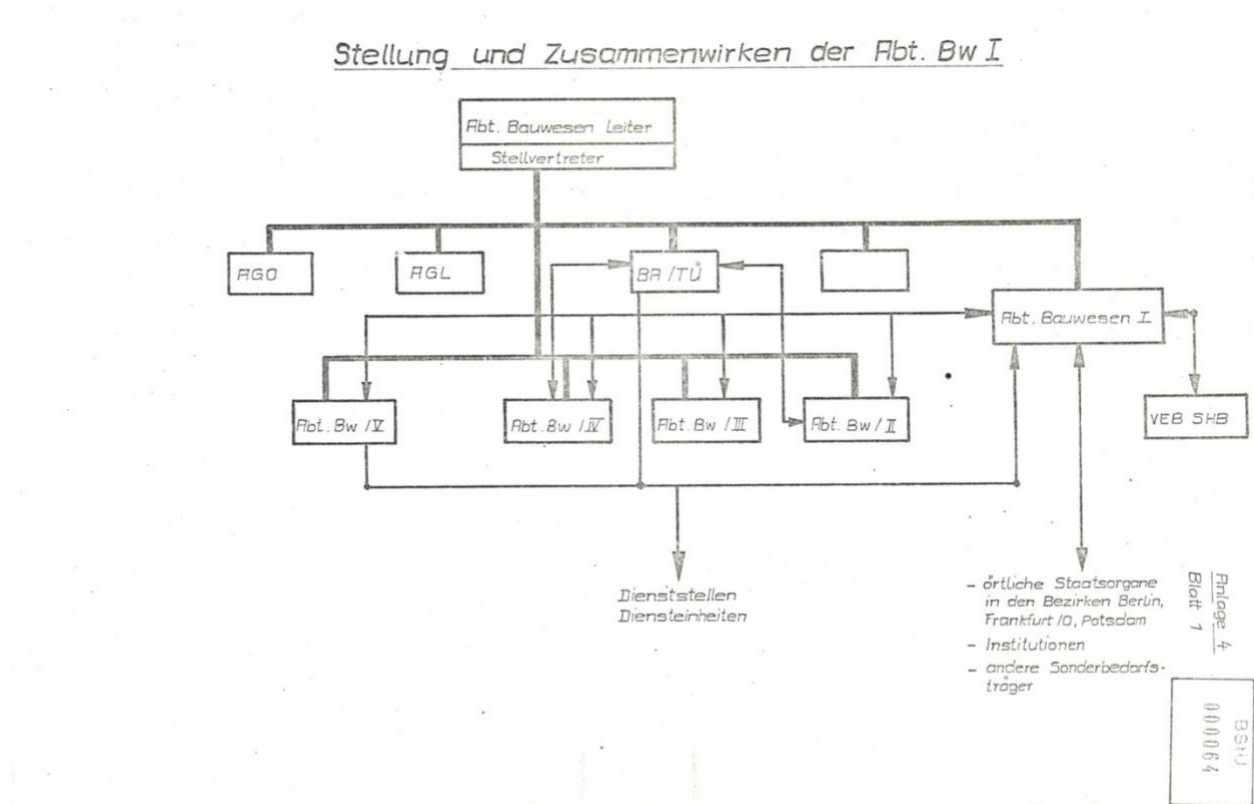
Figure 10 1987 structure plan for the VRD's Building Department, charting the feedback system between various departmental divisions administering the ministry's buildings and building production, BArch MfS VRD 1275, 64.

By 1987, the VRD's Department of Building had five divisions, known as

Abteilungen.[124] *Abteilung I* oversaw the Spezialhochbau Berlin by acting as a coordination post

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[123] "Bericht zur Untersuchung von Problemen in der Vorbereitung und Projektierung von Bauvorhaben des MfS," Berlin, 25.11.1987, BArch MfS VRD 11050, 44-53.
[124] "Erläuterung und Begründung der notwendigen Veränderungen gegenüber dem bisherigen Stellenplan und der Strukturübersicht per 30.3.1988," Berlin, 1988, BArch MfS VRD 11370, 74.

between the enterprise, the VRD, and local state administrations. *Abteilung II* prepared policy documents, planned investments, and devised scientific and technological production schemes, including mechanization, to be carried out by the Spezialhochbau Berlin. *Abteilung IV* reviewed and approved these plans in coordination with the VRD's State Building Control and Technical Oversight units. *Abteilung III* administered MfS "objects," provisioning them with heating, electricity, and cleaning. And finally, the *Abteilung V* worked on the maintenance and repair of existing MfS structures. These fields of duty seemed clear on paper, but responsibilities were duplicated between divisions. For example, both Abteilung III – Object Administration (*Objektverwaltung*) and Abteilung V – Building Renovations (*Baureperaturen*) developed and implemented energy saving technologies.[125] Similarly, Abteilung V and Abteilung II – Project Planning (*Vorbereitung und Projektierung*) worked on issues regarding building maintenance and climate control. Here, instead of avoiding replication of labor, the VRD created additional positions for coordination officers (*Richtungsoffiziere*).[126] What is more, while the division of management, administration, and inspection across units seemed formulaically clear in written form, as a 1987 graph on their cooperation shows, interdepartmental communication was muddled by an intricate bureaucratic surveillance, understood as supervisory information gathering and cross-referencing through bureaucratic exchange (Figure 10). All divisions across the VRD's Building Department were designated feedback loops, which were to exact measures of administrative control within the Stasi's building bureaucracy to protect, as it were, one unit from another or institute the surveillance of one unit by another: it created a bureaucratic surveillance regime whereby everyone inspected everyone. This, however, seems to have made

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[125] Zuarbeit zur Erarbeitung des Planstellennormativs der VRD," Berlin, 1988, BArch MfS VRD 11370, 14.
[126] Zuarbeit zur Erarbeitung des Planstellennormativs der VRD," BArch MfS VRD 11370, 14.

coordination not only difficult but—according to administrator testimonies and expert

examinations—practically impossible.

By the end of the 1980s, bureaucratic expansionism and muddling had diffused into the

Spezialhochbau Berlin's inner workings, as well. By 1986, a whooping 37% of enterprise staff

were working in administrative or clerical positions.[127] The managers at Spezialhochbau Berlin

were constantly overburdened with work, especially by supervisory functions for the ministry's

surveillance bureaucracy, which meant that they had to assume responsibilities outside of their

fields. This resulted in the disruption of their prime tasks, with the enforcement of the

enterprise's technical policies at the forefront. As a 1987 investigative report on the preparation

and planning of the MfS' building projects uncovered,[128] one of the leading factors for

disruptions in production plans was the "unsatisfactory status of scientific work organization"

within the enterprise. Thus, even though Spezialhochbau Berlin was significantly better equipped

than any other enterprise or combine in the GDR, it was "unprofitable" due to high prime costs

despite its higher-than-average capital investment.[129] According to enterprise managers, the

decommissioning of sectors not utilized for the MfS' own building production also impaired the

profitability of the firm. For instance, the heavy earth works sector was laid off between 1987-

1989 with the ministry's halt on new construction, and the enterprise was not authorized to

mobilize its capacities worth 2.9 million Marks through commissions from third parties,

disabling the firm to compensate for its losses.[130]

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[127] "Untersuchung der Probleme der Fluktuation und die Aufgaben zu ihrer Einschränkung im VEB Spezialhochbau Berlin, Baubetrieb des MfS," BArch MfS HA KuSch 21164.

[128] The report was conducted based on interviews with 16 enterprise employees, 18 members of the VRD, and four directors of the MfS expert fields (Fachorganen). "Bericht zur Untersuchung von Problemen in der Vorbereitung und Projektierung von Bauvorhaben des MfS," Berlin, 25.11.1987, BArch MfS VRD 11050.

[129] With almost 89 thousand Marks of investment per employee, as opposed to the 52-55,6 thousand Mark margins of the centrally regulated building industry. "Bericht über die Untersuchung im VEB Spezialhochbau Berlin," BArch MfS HA PS 6273, 1-10.

[130] "Bericht über die Untersuchung im VEB Spezialhochbau Berlin," BStU MfS HA PS 6273, 1-10.

Conclusion

The Stasi's building industry can be seen as an example *par excellence* for the study of bureaucratic surveillance, as it coalesced the "three key institutional sectors of modern societies"—armed forces, policing, and business enterprises—for which bureaucratic surveillance became "the administrative basis for the[ir] effective operation."[131] With one difference, however. The Stasi's building enterprises operated in a Soviet-socialist system of centralized planned economy as opposed to free market capitalism, the latter of which is the focus of Max Weber, Anthony Giddens, and Christopher Dandeker's key investigations into modern bureaucratic schemes. As such, they offer additional insights to these principal texts.

As I have shown, from the early 1960s until the late 1980s, the Stasi's building administration became increasingly centralized, streamlined, and was ultimately characterized by a complex surveillance bureaucracy. The expansion of bureaucratic surveillance across the Stasi's architectural departments and building enterprises was certainly in direct correlation with an increase in the volume and complexity of administrative tasks, but it also was to their detriment. There was also a certain paradox to it: the more centralized and streamlined the Stasi's building industry became, the more its surveillance bureaucracy grew. Was this simply an example of irrational and self-burdening bureaucratic expansion prompted by security paranoia?

I argue that the growth of the Stasi's surveillance bureaucracy, of information gathering and oversight through paperwork, could be understood as a supplementary action to the shortcomings of supervisory capacities in visual surveillance. The structures within which the Stasi administered and managed architectural production did not incorporate architectural-spatial measures for surveillance and supervision, such as lookout posts or open office organization. This

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[131] Dandeker, *Surveillance, Power and Modernity*, 4.

was largely because the MfS needed to use prefabricated and standardized housing technologies—

Plattenbau-types—to build offices, production plants (and even remand prisons) to cut down costs
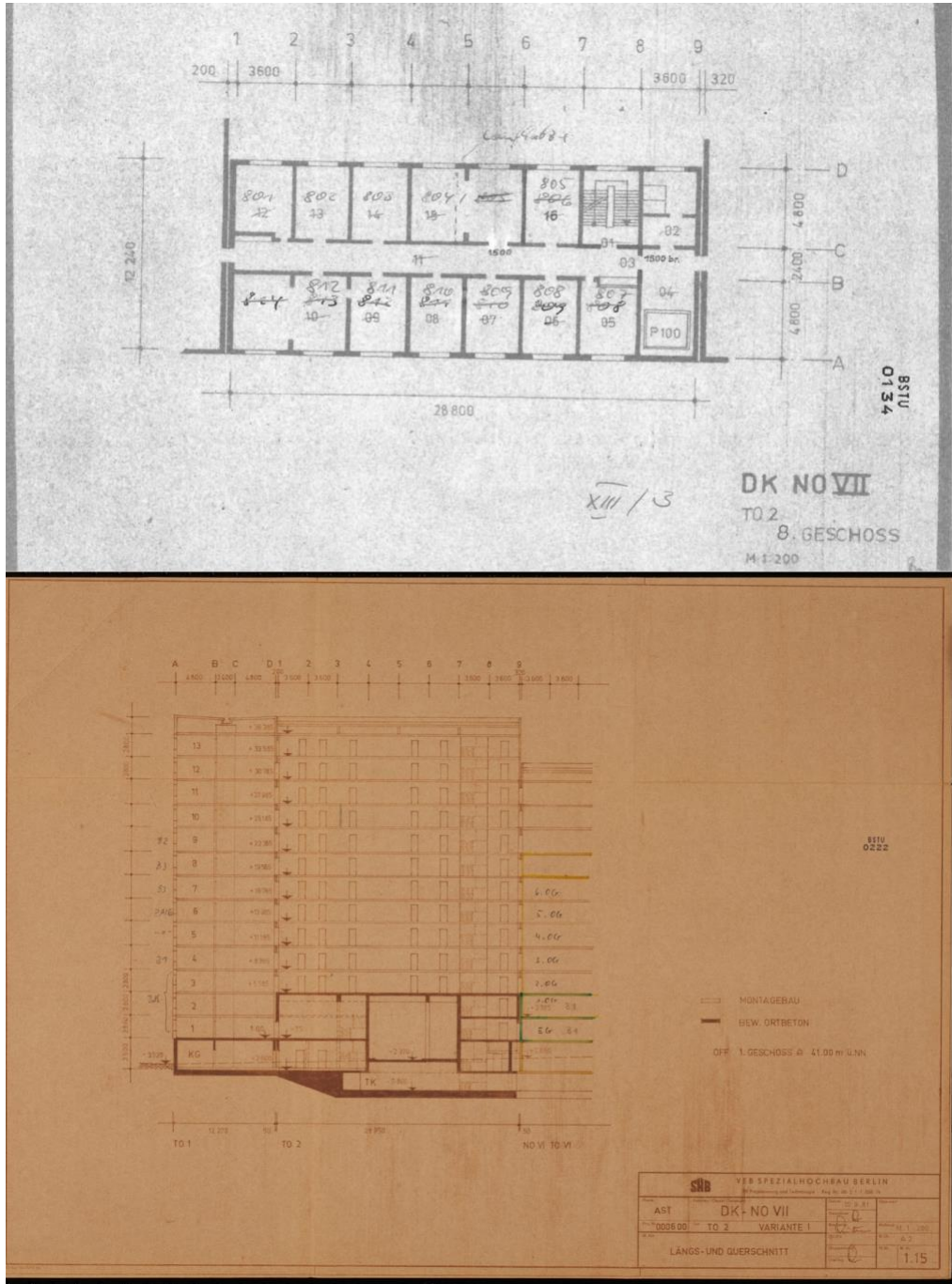
and shorten construction times.

Figure 11 Partial floor plan and section of one of the administrative structures designed and constructed for the MfS' Berlin-Lichtenberg headquarters on Normannenstraße (*Dienstkomplex Normannenstraße – DK NO*). Plans prepared by the VEB Spezialhochbau Berlin in 1981, using the elements of the WBS 70 Plattenbau-type, BArch MfS Abt XIII 5188, 134, 222.

At the ministry's Berlin-Lichtenberg headquarters on Normannenstraße, for example, the ministry implemented the WBS70 Plattenbau-type as the building standard for the construction of office buildings over the 1970s and 1980s (Figure 11). These structures, which also housed the VRD administration, were realized by Stasi-subordinate construction firms.[132] The MfS' new regional administration on Dresden-Bautznerstraße, too, was designed and constructed using the WBS70 type-catalogue. Prefabricated elements were manufactured and shipped to Dresden by the Spezialhochbau Berlin.[133] Even the headquarters of the building enterprise, located on Wartenbergerstraße in Berlin-Hohenschönhausen, was built on the basis of the housing type. Plans for an administration, production, and service complex for the Stasi's building production activities were on the table since 1967. Between 1968 and 1970, Dynamo-Bau Berlin designed two variants, which included an office building, guesthouse, a "center for technical science" (*technisch-wissenschaftliches Zentrum*), along with residences and a community center for enterprise employees.[134] Construction was set to begin by March 1971 but, with estimated costs jumping from 8.5 million to 23 million Marks by the late 1970s, the plans were scraped. The new project, completed in 1972, not only downsized its scale to a single office high-rise surrounded by single-story production and storage facilities. It also replaced former building designs that played with geometry and various materials with quadrangular structures in prefabricated concrete (Figure 12).[135] The main office, constructed in WBS70 elements and clad in glass, became the

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[132] For a detailed history of how the ministry built its Lichtenberg headquarters, see: Halbrock, *Mielkes Revier*, 63–127.

[133] For a recent (and not yet published) work examining the architectural history of the MfS' Dresden regional administrative complex, see: Heiko Neumann, "Ein Ort für 'Menschen mit neuem Bewusstsein:' Lebenswelten hauptamtlicher Mitarbeiter der Bezirksverwaltung Dresden des MfS 1950-1989" (Ph.D. Dissertation, Dresden, TU Dresden, 2023), 490–564.

[134] "Objekt DK-F, Wartenbergstraße 24," Berlin, 1969, LAB C Rep 110-01 3446.

[135] In 1984, the VRD and Spezialhochbau Berlin once again prepared plans for an expansion of the enterprise's complex, specifically to respond to its growing production capacities with new manufacture and storage spaces. These plans, too, went largely unrealized. "Erweiterung des Objektes DK-F," 1984-1985, LAB C Rep 110-01 3449.

Spezialhochbau Berlin's headquarters by 1975. As typified architectural technologies became increasingly inflexible by the 1970s, the VRD staff and Spezialhochbau Berlin personnel occupied spaces where rooms were stacked along long corridors and loadbearing walls were rigidly set by a grid determined by type elements. In these structures, the difficulties in establishing a system of control that relied on visual supervision, which is the hallmark of both scientific management processes and modern workplace discipline, required the Stasi to focus on expanding bureaucratic surveillance.
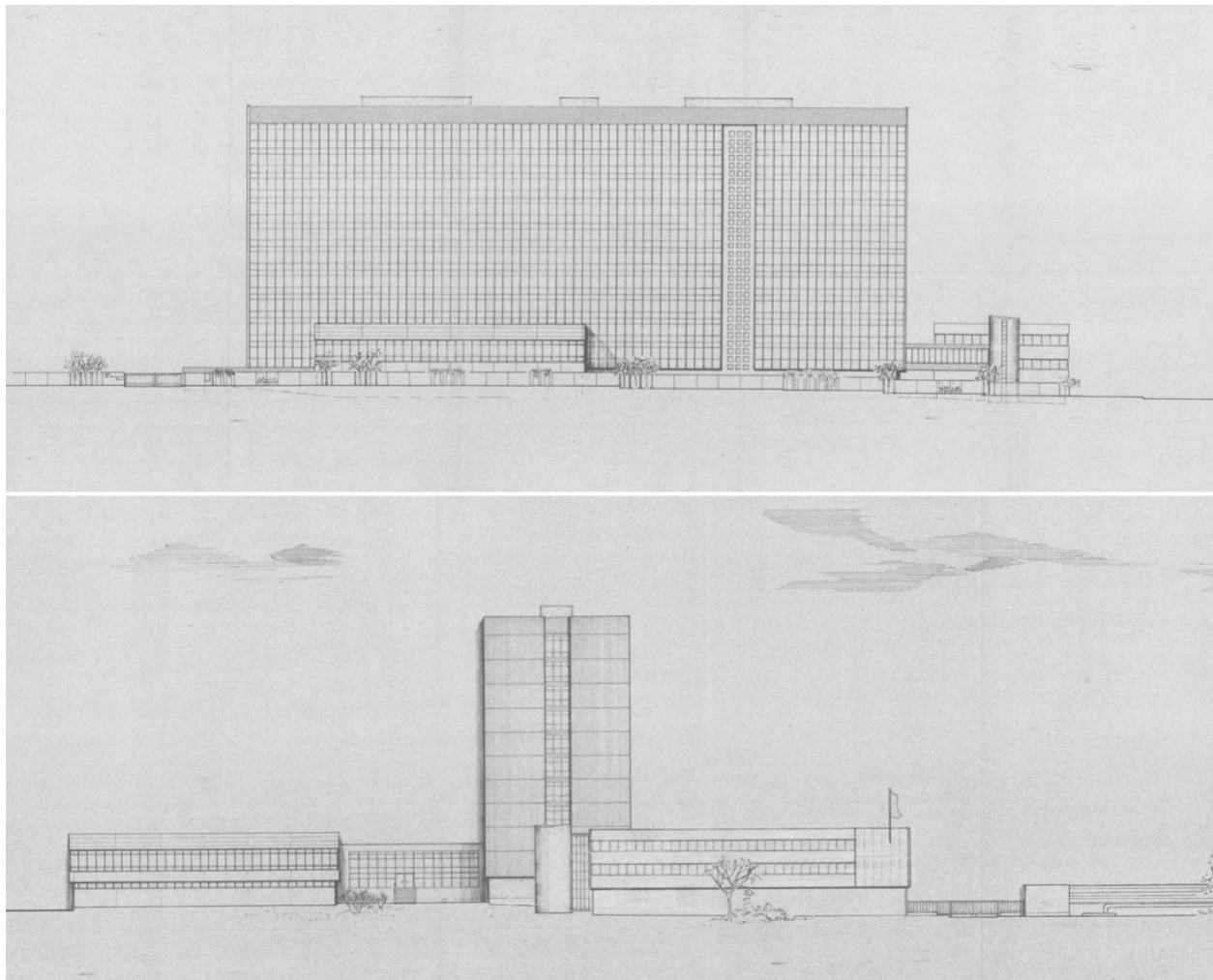
Figure 12 "Dienstkomplex DK-F," Design for the expansion of the management and production facilities of the VEB Spezialhochbau Berlin on Wartenbergerstraße 24, Berlin-Hohenschönhausen. The high-rise is from 1972-1975, and the rest was planned to be built between 1984-1986 but could not be realized. LAB C Rep 110-01 3449.

Here, the use of the terms "surveillance" and "security" requires further nuance to fit the German Soviet-socialist context. On the one hand, the German word for surveillance is *Überwachung*, which literally means "watching over." The GDR and the Stasi used this term to define control and compliance activities at the center of their building bureaucracies, as in *technische Überwachung*. The specific employment of this concept reminds us that surveillance is not just observation or sensorial control, but data collection turned constant and systemic, quantifiable and scientific, and as such, ramifies between activities of inspection and control irreducible to the visual realm. On the other hand, the German term for security—namely, *Sicherheit*—connotes both security and certainty. For the Stasi, attempts at establishing security through bureaucratic surveillance, however, were at odds with that bureaucracy's other functions—namely, ensuring certainty through efficiency and productivity.

Chapter 3

Stasi as a Building User:

Secret Policing and Spatial Production
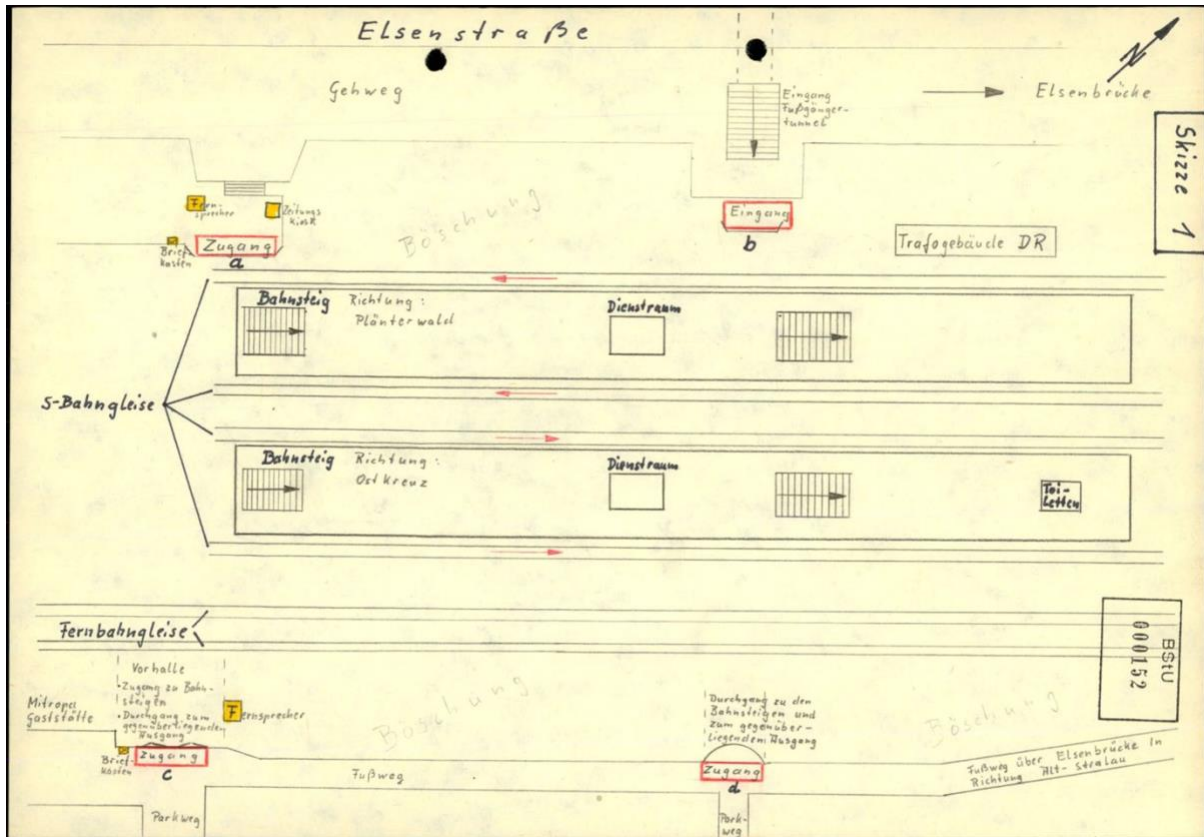
Figure 13 "Aufklärungsmaterial S-Bahnhof Treptower Park," Hand-drawn plan of the Berlin Treptower Park streetcar terminal's platform level, 1985, BArch MfS HA VIII 3623, 152.

In a 1985 document, titled *Aufklärungsmaterial* and consisting of three plates of sketches along with a written report, the officers of the German Democratic Republic's (GDR) Ministry of State Security—commonly referred to as the *Stasi*—inspected East Berlin's Treptower Park mass transit (*S-Bahn*) station, located south-east of the city center.[1] The sketches, hand-drawn

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[1] "Aufklärungsmaterial S-Bahnhof Treptower Park," 2.4.1985, Berlin, BArch MfS HA VIII 3623, p. 151-154.

with the aid of a ruler on non-transparent paper, present a site plan, the plan of the main platform

and of the passageways between the street level and the platform. These are architectural plans

with simple architectural details: staircases, doors, corridors, and walls are all depicted in single

lines, with arrows and annotations supporting their legibility. However simple, the sketches

present a level of skill in architectural representation, nevertheless. They are proportional,

include north arrows, and even differentiate by line weight between things that are closer and

things farther away (Figure 13).
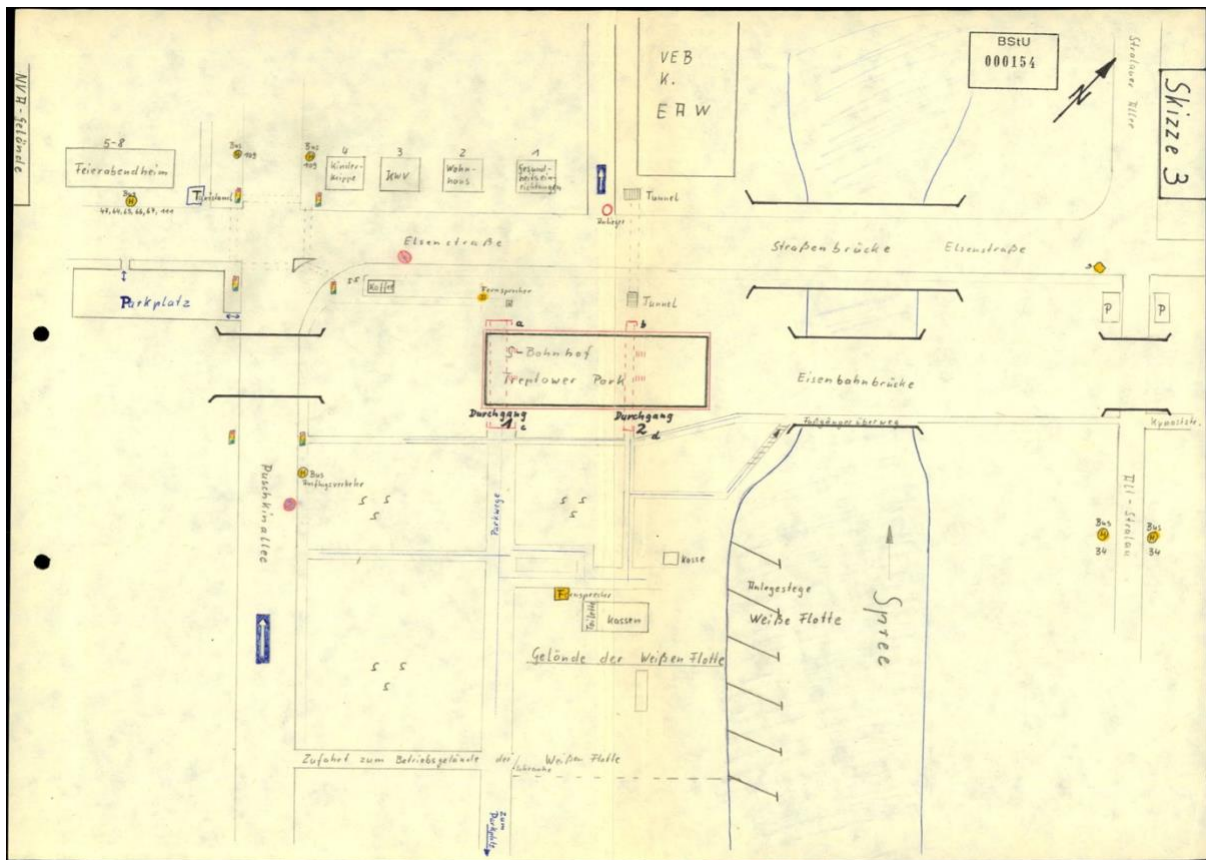
Figure 14 "Aufklärungsmaterial S-Bahnhof Treptower Park," Hand-drawn site plan of (East) Berlin's Treptower Park S-Bahn station, 1985, BArch MfS HA VIII 3623, 154.

These sketches were not merely for the use of the drafter who, as the date of the

document specifies, visited the station and collected spatial information on April 2, 1985.

Instead, they were intended for Stasi agents who may not have had personal and intimate

knowledge of the premises. The use of coloring readily shows what type of spatial and architectural knowledge was prioritized on these plans: entrances and exits, directions of the incoming trains, locations of mailboxes and public phones (Figure 13), as well as traffic lights, nearby public transportation stops, and parking and no-parking zones (Figure 14).
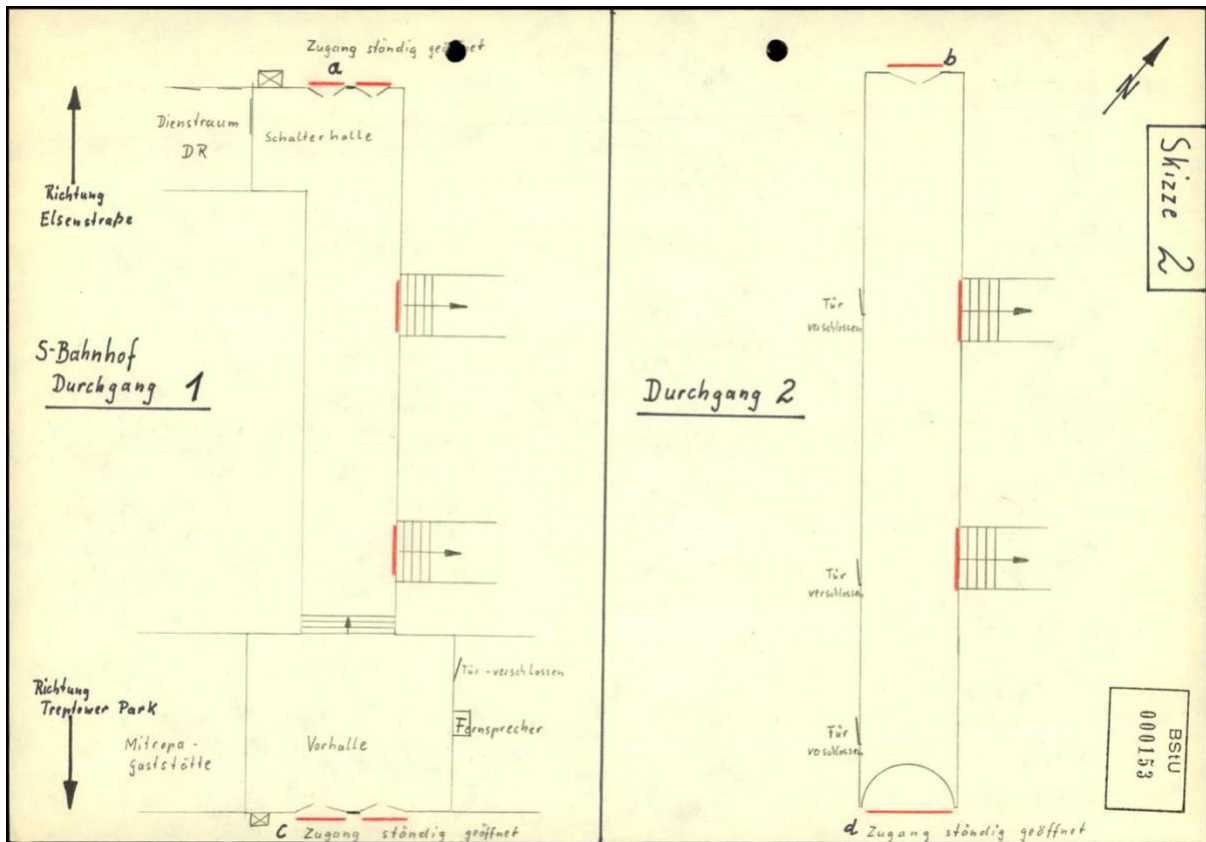
Figure 15 "Aufklärungsmaterial S-Bahnhof Treptower Park," Hand-drawn sectional plans of the Treptower Park S-Bahn station's ground level, specifically of the two passages connecting the station's west (Durchgang 1) and east (Durchgang 2) entrances, Berlin, 1985, BArch MfS HA VIII 3623, 153.

Doors, staircases, passage- and pathways are also annotated to describe where they lead, mapping routes and thresholds of movement (Figure 15). To this, surrounding enclosures and buildings are added, which are labeled according to their function: toilets, service and transformer rooms, and kiosks within the station (Figure 13), a kindergarten, housing block, and a retirement home located across the street (Figure 14). The accompanying report emphasizes sightlines and vantage points from and towards the station, which are left undesignated on the

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sketches. Considered together, the Stasi's objective in preparing this document becomes evident:

to analyze under- and over-ground conditions of mobility, accessibility, and visibility at the

Treptower Park station as these determined covert surveillance operations.

The Treptower Park Station document illustrates a particular genre of East German state

surveillance called *operative Objektaufklärung* or, as I translate it, "operational object survey."[2]

Among the Stasi's methodically diverse surveillance operations, surveys continue to constitute

an unexplored facet of the East German secret policing, and a largely overlooked aspect of the

Stasi's intelligence work under the umbrella term *Aufklärung*.[3] Per definition within the MfS

jargon, the activity of Aufklärung focused broadly on gaining information on "politically-

operationally significant circumstances" and specifically on the relationship between "things"

(*Sachverhalte*) and persons.[4] Within the context of *Objektaufklärung*, as well as with its cognates

Wohngebietsaufklärung (housing district survey), *Handlungsraumaufklärung* (action area

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[2] While "Aufklärung" is a heavily loaded term, its most commonly referred to meaning is "reconnaissance." (f.e. *Aufklärung der Pläne und Absichten des Feindes*). So far, the MfS' department for foreign intelligence and espionage—Hauptverwaltung Aufklärung (HVA)—dominated all historical discussions on the Stasi's so-called "Aufklärungsarbeit." This also applies to the most comprehensive monographs on the Stasi in the English language, where the term is translated as either "reconnaissance," or "foreign intelligence." See: Gary Bruce, *The Firm: The Inside Story of the Stasi* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010); Dennis, *Stasi*; Gieseke, *The History of the Stasi*; Richard Popplewell and David Childs, *The Stasi. The East German Intelligence and Security Service* (London: Palgrave Macmillan UK, 1996); John O. Koehler, *Stasi: The Untold Story of the East German Secret Police* (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1999). Yet, the Stasi used this term for its operations both at home and abroad and not only for active-offensive but also preventive-passive operations. It is this latter distinction, according to Angela Schmole, that differentiates the "Aufklärung" activities of HV A from those of HA VIII, the latter of which conducted operational object surveys discussed in this chapter. See: Schmole, *Hauptabteilung VIII: Beobachtung, Ermittlung, Durchsuchung, Festnahme*, 57.

[3] There are no devoted studies on the activity of "Objektaufklärung" to date. The most comprehensive research on the department conducting these surveys—the Main Department VIII (Hauptabteilung - HA VIII)—only implicitly mentions that sketches, site plans, and photographs belonged to the process of setting observation points. See: Angela Schmole, *Hauptabteilung VIII: Beobachtung, Ermittlung, Durchsuchung, Festnahme*, Anatomie der Staatssicherheit: Geschichte, Struktur und Methoden (MfS-Handbuch) (Berlin: Bundesbeauftragte für Stasi-Unterlagen (BStU), 2011). The MfS dictionary defines object surveys as "exploration of the concrete relationship and circumstances within and nearby objects of significance in an area of operation. […] An object survey maps out the location and external conditions of an object, its significance, functions, and structural composition, politically-operationally relevant persons occupying it, their living habits and thinking patterns, recruitment conditions." Siegfried Suckut, *Das Wörterbuch der Staatssicherheit. Definitionen zur "Politisch-Operativen Arbeit,"* 3rd Edition (Berlin: Ch. Links Verlag, 2016), 260.

[4] Suckut, *Das Wörterbuch der Staatssicherheit*, 60.

survey), and *Regimeaufklärung* (regimen survey), this particularly concerned spatial

relationships. Surveys helped the Stasi strategize its clandestine activities, providing information

on from where to observe people without being seen, how to covertly approach them on the

move, and which routes to use to get away. Surveys were instrumental in selecting persons to

recruit as informants and for creating a network of safe locations to meet with them, as well.

Lastly, through surveying, the Stasi planned for surreptitious entry, house searches, and the

installment of listening devices across neighboring walls and twin outlets. Surveys were thus

architectural, organizational, and technological inspections that reproduced urban-spatial

configurations to "facilitate the implementation of surveillance" and "improve clandestine

work."[5]

    This chapter interrogates the Stasi's surveying activities by exploring the ways the secret

police read, registered, and used the built environment in the GDR. I analyze various media

produced through surveying, such as plans, sections, photographs, and written reports, and

examine the modes and strategies by which East German state power operated through space—

specifically, the urban and architectural space of cities. The chapter first explicates two

analogous genres of Stasi surveillance—namely, operational surveys and, their better-known

counterpart, operational inquiries—parsing their discursive differences as well as the differences

in their methods and outcomes. I show that, while inquiries investigated social bodies of

communities, surveys were investigations into the spatial field occupied by these communities. I

argue that surveys were second-order observations: observations conducted for subsequent

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[5] "'Dokumentation über den Stadtbezirk Berlin-Marzahn.' Erarbeitet von den Jugendkollektiven des Referates 4 der Abt. 3," dateless and authorless, BArch MfS HA VIII 5192, 5. "Clandestine work" (*Konspiration*) was the "ground principle of the MfS' telecommunications and secret policing, which included the incorporation of unofficial forces and other covert means and methods, as well as the broad secrecy of its operations from other organs of the GDR and the SED party apparatus. See: Roger Engelmann, Bernd Florath, and Helge Heidemeyer, *Das MfS-Lexikon. Begriffe, Personen und Strukturen der Staatssicherheit der DDR* (Berlin: Ch. Links, 2012), 192.

observations, therefore thematizing, even observing, other observations.[6] Surveys helped the

Stasi explore the built environment according to accessibility, visibility, and mobility, which

were pertinent to the success of surveillance and policing operations. Reading the built

environment according to these criteria required the deployment of a series of techniques:

counting, watching, drawing, and mapping, which were technical, quantifiable, and scientifically

determined.[7] I illustrate these points through a closer visual analysis of the Treptower Park

survey introduced above. With these techniques, the Stasi maintained the secrecy of its

operations, rationalized its observation and interception methods, and tried to render surveillance

objective and efficient. They also allowed the velocity, density, and frequency of movement to

be recorded, as the East German secret police focused not only on the objects making up the built

environment but also their use.

The chapter interrogates the representational conventions, and cataloging and verification

practices for surveying, as well, and explores how the architectural and spatial knowledge gained

became transferrable to and communicable between various surveillance agents. I make these

points explicit by examining how the Stasi used survey media to recruit and meet with its

informants. Buildings were not passive objects of surveillance but active constituents of the

Stasi's operations, as I demonstrate through a comparative analysis of the Stasi's surveys

targeting Wilhelmine-era *Mietskasernen* and socialist *Plattenbauten*. Revisiting Michel

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[6] In framing surveys as "second-degree observations," I allude to German media theory of cultural techniques, specifically the writings of Thomas Macho, Bernhard Siegert, and Geoffrey Winthrop-Young.

[7] This attribution of scientific observation is not a feat of historical retrospection as the Stasi also understood its activities as such. A series of studies conducted at the ministry's own universities were devoted to developing and—by the 1980s—criticizing the "scientifically grounded surveillance methods." Fittingly, systematized instructions for surveillance were termed "systems," as in Beobachtungssyteme (observation systems), or "science," as in Verbindungswesen (connection science). Here, the MfS' Potsdam-Eiche school is of reference. "Eine ganze Reihe von Diplomarbeiten und Fachschulabschlussarbeiten an der MfS-Hochschule in Potsdam-Eiche" were devoted to this and "darin hinterfragten sie Ende der achtziger Jahre die bis dahin angewandten und 'wissenschaftlich' begründeten Beobachtungsmethoden." Schmole, *Hauptabteilung VIII: Beobachtung, Ermittlung, Durchsuchung, Festnahme*, 25.

Foucault's observations on surveillance, power, and architecture, I discuss the ways modern architecture—specifically housing sites—in the GDR both facilitated and complicated methods of state surveillance, ultimately challenging the panoptic aspirations of state power. I conclude the chapter by discussing how surveys were key to the East German surveillance state's infiltration of the society, recognized as both a socio-political and spatial body.

The idea that surveillance is intrinsically a spatial practice might seem self-evident. And yet, how surveillance and policing are spatially articulated outside of the centralized panoptic regimes and digitally monitored premises has not yet received sustained scholarly engagement grounded in empirical study. I respond to this gap in literature by exploring not only how Stasi agents saw (or heard) but also moved through space at home and abroad. In particular, I respond to surveillance scholars David Lyon, Kevin Haggerty, and Kirstie Ball's call for studies that "theorize surveillance as something which is spatially… distributed and which has productive and constructive effects on the objects it seeks to govern."[8]

Translating and Understanding "Surveys" and "Inquiries"

In order to understand the nature, role, and significance of the Stasi's surveying activities, we first need to cross-examine surveys with the analogous surveillance procedure called operational inquiries (*operative Ermittlung*). The systemic activity of surveying went hand in hand with inquiries, which had the aim of revealing relationships between persons and uncovering "who is who?" (*Wer ist wer?*), sourcing what Dagmar Unverhau calls the "life elixir of the MfS."[9] Inquiring "who is who" was an integral component of the Stasi's so-called

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[8] Lyon, Haggerty, and Ball, "Introducing Surveillance Studies," 9.
[9] Dagmar Unverhau, ed., *State Security and Mapping in the GDR. Map Falsification as a Consequence of Excessive Secrecy? Lectures to the Conference of the BStU from 8th - 9th March 2001 in Berlin*, vol. 7, Archiv Zur DDR-Staatssicherheit (Berlin: Lit Verlag, 2006), 64.

"political-operational work" (*politische-operative Arbeit*) defined along Chekist lines. This phrase, ceaselessly repeated to describe the Stasi's entire field of activity and characteristic of the SED-state rhetoric, is an ambiguation—an abstract phrase coined to obscure the East German state's mass, intrusive and even violent surveillance and policing measures and the intentions behind them. The same linguistic abstraction applied to the way inquiries were formulated. Inquiries were defined as "activities conducted with specific means and methods" and "based on laws and other binding legal regulations" to "comprehensively and effectively support the politics of the party and government's class struggle with imperialism" by "objectively assessing persons, situations, and political-operationally relevant incidents."[10] Reminiscent of what renowned East German author Wolfgang Hilbig formulated as "continuous stringing of genitives until the point of unrecognizability of its point of departure,"[11] this definition obfuscates the real nature of its referent—that inquiries were covert surveillance and policing operations based on peer-monitoring and denunciation, aimed at uncovering the allegiances, attitudes, and subjectivities of East Germans.[12]

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[10] "Handbuch des Ermittlers (konspirative Wohngebietsermittlung)," unknown author, 1976, BArch MfS HA VIII 743, 6. Also see: The binding document for the administration and organization of clandestine inquiries at housing districts: "Instruktion Nr. 1/81 für die Organisierung der operativen Ermittlungtätigkeit in den Wohngebieten durch die Hauptabteilung VIII, Abteilungen VIII der Bezirksverwaltungen / Verwaltung sowie Kreis- und Objektdienststellen des MfS," BArch MfS BV BLN 188. To this end, the Stasi tried to cover a series of "preliminary" questions about every single East German: their occupation, memberships in the party and its organizations, political societal activities and functions within the housing district, political position, character traits, behavioral patterns and reputation, relationships with family, relatives, and neighbors, recreational interests and inclinations, financial and property ownership status, religious tendencies, as well as their social circles and contacts with the West.

[11] Wolfgang Hilbig, *Ich* (Frankfurt am Main: S. Fischer, 1993), 23. As Paul Cooke writes, the protagonist of Hilbig's novel, who is a Stasi collaborator, realizes "the true nature of the Stasi's language and, by extension, the nature of its whole operation. It is language which obfuscates and confines experience, rather than defining and communicating it." See: Paul Cooke, "The Stasi as Panopticon: Wolfgang Hilbig's 'Ich,'" in *German Writers and the Politics of Culture: Dealing with the Stasi*, ed. Paul Cooke and Andrew Plowman, New Perspectives in German Studies (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), 143.

[12] Here, I use the term "denunciation" instead of "sounding out," "spying," "ratting out," "snitching," etc. following: Gieseke, *The History of the Stasi*, 82–85.

The main force behind the Stasi's operational inquiries were unoffical collaborators (*inoffizielle Mitarbeiter – IM*) and informers (*Auskunftspersonen*).[13] Inquiries were led by IMs—more specifically IMs "under special assignment" known as IMEs (*inoffizielle Mitarbeiter für einen besonderen Einsatz*)—who, as Mike Dennis writes, were "deployed for work on difficult assignments and held important positions in the state apparatus, the mass organizations, the economy and other spheres."[14] These "spheres" included social spheres of academics, artists, journalists, and people with contacts to the West, as well as spatial spheres such as specific housing communities or areas by the Berlin border. IMEs covertly obtained information through conversations with informers, who were mostly ordinary East Germans willingly participating in the Stasi's surveillance networks by regularly reporting on "operationally intriguing" behaviors, statements, and occurrences. These could be anything from gambling and substance abuse problems to lack of motivation in the workplace or absence from communal activities. In short,

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[13] The dictionary of the MfS defines "operational inquiry" as the activity of covertly obtaining information through conversations between IMs—specifically by IME or IM under special assignment (IM unter besonderen Einsatz)—and informers (Auskunftspersonen). Suckut, *Das Wörterbuch Der Staatssicherheit. Definitionen Zur "Politisch-Operativen Arbeit,"* 114. The distinction between an IM and an informer here is unclear, and the dictionary does not provide further clues about it. Yet, it is an important one for the purposes of understanding how inquiries worked, how pervasive they were, and ultimately how they interacted with surveys. According to Gieseke, this blurry distinction resulted from a 1968 change in the terminology of East German state security. Until 1968, the class of agents working with the Stasi were categorized either as secret informers (geheime Informanten - GI) who were "to keep their eyes and ears open, gathering information and capturing the mood" or secret collaborators (geheime Mitarbeiter - GM) who "were to carry out 'active' MfS assignments as well." In 1968, these categories were all combined under the name "unofficial collaborator" in an effort to create the perception of the Stasi working with the society in mutual trust and equal partnership. Gieseke, *The History of the Stasi*, 79. Christian Booß also touches upon this overlooked distinction, arguing that in addition to collaborators under official assignment, the state security apparatus had a large network of informers who regularly reported on their neighbors and colleagues. The lists of such informers have been largely destroyed, according to Booß, but recovered files from Rostock sheds some light: almost 18% of the district population were registered as informers of Abteilung VIII by 1989 and upon the Stasi's request reported their inquiries and observations about their neighbors. For further information about "informers," see: Christian Booß, "Auskunftspersonen Als Stasi-Informanten Jenseits Der IM: Gemeinsamkeiten, Unterschiede Und Bedeutung," *Gerbergasse 18. Thüringer Vierteljahresschrift Für Zeitgeschichte Und Politik* 22 (2017): 28–33; Christian Booß and Helmut Müller-Enbergs, *Die indiskrete Gesellschaft: Studien zum Denunziationskomplex und zu inoffiziellen Mitarbeitern* (Frankfurt am Main: Verlag für Polizeiwissenschaft, 2014); Andreas Schmidt, "Auskunftspersonen," in *Aktenkundig*, ed. Hans Joachim Schädlich, 1st Edition (Berlin: Rowohlt, 1992), 173–94.
[14] Dennis, *Stasi*, 93.

social, political, and labor unproductivity were all considered "operationally intriguing" to the Stasi's blanket inquiries.

If inquiries were investigations into the social bodies of communities, surveys were investigations into the spatial field occupied by these communities. To the Stasi, surveys enabled "the question of 'who is who?' to be answered and processed more quickly through clandestine activity."[15] Thus, while inquiries were attempts at explicating "who is who," surveys were attempts at answering "what is where," ultimately helping the surveillance organization figure out "who is where." The specific terminology used by the Stasi to define these two surveillance procedures helps further delineate their inherent distinctions. Even though both words are part of a synonym group for "investigation," the term Ermittlung, on the one hand, means determining through expert or skilled study and connotes the explicit use of a medium (*Mittel*) to do so. Within the context of the Stasi's inquiries, unofficial collaborators can be understood as the surveillant medium of the East German state security apparatus. The term Aufklärung, on the other hand, has multiple meanings—both in German vocabulary and within the Stasi's nomenclature—and hence denies any single, overarching translation. The dictionary of the East German state security, for example, defines the Stasi's *Aufklärungsarbeit* as "political-operational activity to obtain information on politically-operationally significant persons and circumstances," which was "an immanent component of political-operational defense."[16] This definition suggests that Aufklärung was, again, an ambiguous and highly self-referential term within the Stasi jargon that was used to qualify, and even justify, a plethora of activities. As Helmut Müller-Enberg's entry to the *MfS-Lexikon* also specifies, for the Stasi, Aufklärung meant anything from investigations into IM candidates to foreign intelligence and espionage, especially

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[15] "Dokumentation über den Stadtbezirk Berlin-Marzahn," BArch MfS HA VIII 5192, 5.
[16] Suckut, *Das Wörterbuch der Staatssicherheit*, 60.

as it pertained to the activities of the ministry's reconnaissance division *HVA*.[17] Within the

German language, Aufklärung means reconnaissance, along with clarification, exposition, reveal,

bringing to light. Simultaneously the German concept for Enlightenment, the term Aufklärung is

hence imbued with the meaning of visually explicating unknown connections between things.[18]

Thus, for an analysis of the means by which the Stasi spatially-visually mediated and reproduced

urban and architectural spaces, I will refer to Aufklärung as "surveying".[19]

The Stasi's inquiries and surveys differed in their incorporated methods of surveillance as

well as their outcomes. First, inquiries relied widely on modes of auditory surveillance for

information gathering, such as eavesdropping and active listening by the IMs, while surveys

distinctively mobilized counting, drawing, and mapping as techniques of surveillance, as I

discuss in the next section. Second, while both engaged modes of visual observation, surveys

were second-order observations—observations thematizing observation—made by inspecting

premises to determine points and paths of targeted visual surveillance. Put differently, through

surveying, the Stasi agents observed the built environment to make subsequent observations

effective and efficient. And third, inquiries produced predominantly written documents:

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[17] Engelmann, Florath, and Heidemeyer, *Das MfS-Lexikon. Begriffe, Personen und Strukturen der Staatssicherheit der DDR*, 44; The spies of the HVA were referred to as "Aufklärer," literally "enlighteners, sent out into the world" to find out and expose unknown connections between the "Western enemy forces." Gieseke, *The History of the Stasi*, 154.

[18] For a literary discussion on the Stasi and the SED state's understanding of its role in socialist enlightenment, see: Paul Cooke, "The Stasi as Panopticon: Wolfgang Hilbig's 'Ich,'" 139–53. As Gary Bruce also acknowledges, "the German term Aufklärung is difficult to render into English. It is the same term for the historic era 'Enlightenment,' and has the similar meaning of 'to make oneself wiser.'" Gary Bruce, "Aufklärung und Abwehr: The Lasting Legacy of the Stasi under Ernst Wollweber," *Intelligence and National Security* 21, no. 3 (2006): 364–93.

[19] My translation relies on the definition of reconnaissance as "a preliminary survey to gain information." Thus, to analyze "Aufklärung" as an activity of knowledge production pertaining to urban and suburban architectural spaces in both East and the West, I chose to translate it as "survey." This enables me to bypass the military connotations of reconnaissance, as well as those of espionage and foreign intelligence. According to the Cambridge Dictionary, other definitions of reconnaissance include "(the act of making) a study (of land, enemy troops, etc.) to obtain information," and "an inspection or exploration of an area, especially one made to gather military information." In light of this, and to differentiate between the Stasi's myriad terms for methods of obtaining information, such as "Ermittlung," "Aufsicht," and "Prüfung," I chose the word "survey" as the adequate translation for this very specific line of spatial investigative work.

transcriptions of IM testimonies, along with citizenship, employment, and travel records, and family registers, which were occasionally supplemented by photographs such as headshots or distant external photographic documentation of domestic dwellings for identification purposes.[20] Surveys, however, produced diverse and hybrid media: maps, sketches, scaled and unscaled plans, sections, technical drawings, and photographs, to name a few, supplemented by legends, annotations, and charts, collaged and superimposed at times.

Contrary to popular depictions of East German state surveillance, the assumption "that citizens were under some constant form of surveillance by means of technical equipment" is a false one, as Kristie Macrakis writes.[21] Archival findings on the Stasi's surveys confirms this. Most surveys were conducted to plan foot-tracking and observation schemes and for selecting or meeting with informants—examples this chapter will cover in detail. Surveying preceded the implementation of aural and auditory surveillance technologies, such as wiretapping and home bugging, as well. Yet, these surveillance measures were consulted in relatively few instances as they were high-risk and work intensive in the GDR. Telephone tapping, for example, known as "Measure A" (*Maßnahme A*) was practiced only under exceptional circumstances as it required a proper court order. Thus, the Stasi turned to this method only in high profile cases where a brush with the law was deemed worth the compromise.[22] What is more, only a limited number of phones

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[20] See, for example: BArch MfS ZKG 18906. This surveillance file on an engineer working for one the GDR's nuclear power plants includes photographs taken from outside of his single-family dwelling in Berlin, Pankow.

[21] Here, Macrakis proposes a differentiation between observation and surveillance, and defines surveillance as a constant activity whereas observation is "targeted, focused and limited." However, this terminological distinction is problematic as the ambiguity of Macrakis' own utilization of the two concepts show. The author uses the term "observation" for on-foot pursuit of "subjects in question" and their documentation through photography, whereas vehicles equipped with video monitors and installation of video cameras in hotel rooms are coined as "surveillance" even though these were also "targeted, focused and limited-time efforts." Kristie Macrakis, *Seduced by Secrets: Inside the Stasi's Spy-Tech World* (Annapolis, Maryland: Naval Institute Press, 2014), 226–27.

[22] Listening to phone conversations was one of the methods used to collect incriminating evidence yet doing so lawfully required the Stasi to present evidence of criminal activity beforehand, putting the secret police in a bind, as Ilko-Sascha Kowalczuk writes. For an overview of the MfS' phone-tapping activities, see: Kowalczuk, "Telefongeschichten. Grenzüberschreitende Telefonüberwachung der Opposition durch den SED-Staat – Eine Einleitung."

could be simultaneously wiretapped. By the end of the 1980s, technical capacities allowed the simultaneous surveillance of only 4000 phone lines across the GDR, which was around 0.37% of all available lines.[23] Given that only one in six East German households possessed a phone line, this number corresponded to private wiretapping capacities of less than 0.1% across the country.[24] Additionally, in most cases, the period of listening was limited to only 30 days, meaning that only a fraction of the intelligence collected was through wiretapping.[25] Similar restrictions applied to video surveillance, and the Stasi employed video cameras only for limited-term efforts and with a specific purpose in mind.[26]

When it came to acoustic room monitoring, known as "Measure B" (*Maßnahme B*) additional hiccups were at play.[27] Preserving the secrecy of telephone tapping was already challenging, historian Ilko-Sascha Kowalczuk notes, with IMs recruited from the East German postal service (*Deutsche Post – DP*) and tasked with "line-switching" failing to abide by the codes of confidentiality sometimes deliberately but also mistakenly. Acoustic surveillance, in

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[23] The Stasi's listening capacities changed over time with development of new technologies. In the 1960s, as Angela Schmole notes, phone conversations had to be "cut" manually as cassette tapes would otherwise record the line continuously. From 1978 onwards new devices allowed the recording of the conversations only, with the recording starting automatically once the phone was picked up and stopping when it was hung up. The operatives—called Auswerter—were thus spared hours long of waiting by the line. Angela Schmole, *Abteilung 26. Telefonkontrolle, Abhörmaßnahmen und Videoüberwachung*, Anatomie der Staatssicherheit: Geschichte, Struktur und Methoden (MfS-Handbuch) (Berlin: BStU, 2009), 33.

[24] In 1988, there were around 16 million residents and around 6 million households in the GDR, amongst which only around 1 million had access to a private phone line—only one in 15 people. This is, however, a generalized estimation as there were regional differences in access to phone lines. For example, while 8% of the East German population lived in East Berlin, 23.5% of all available phone lines were wired in this city. These percentages also varied in operations outside of the GDR, specifically those taking place in West-Berlin and the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG), where the technical issues mentioned did not exist and wiretapping corresponded to a quantitatively larger portion of the surveillance work. The department responsible for wiretapping in the GDR was Abteilung 26, while outside it was the HA III. For relevant statistics, see: Schmole, 28–29, 48.

[25] A notable exception to this rule was the surveillance of the political opposition and church officials, where it was difficult to predict whether their surveillance would lead to a juridicial prosecution. Kowalczuk, "Telefongeschichten. Grenzüberschreitende Telefonüberwachung der Opposition durch den SED-Staat – Eine Einleitung," 51, 54.

[26] The only exception to this rule was the Stasi's surveillance measures at its own remand prisons (*Untersuchungshaftanstalt – UHA*) for the politically persecuted. In most of the state security apparatus' seventeen detention complexes political prisoners on remand were kept under continuous audio and video surveillance.

[27] Telephone tapping, acoustic monitoring, and video surveillance were all administered by the MfS' *Abteilung 26*.

comparison, was even more susceptible to being compromised. People's private homes were the most commonly bugged sites, and the installation of listening devices frequently relied on cooperation with neighbors through whose twin outlets audio bugs were installed. This led to security breaches because the more people were drawn into a surveillance operation the more it became vulnerable to being exposed. Bugging could also require surreptitious entry, in which case the covertness and hence the success of the operation was, again, endangered by neighbors witnessing the break-in or simply reporting suspicious activity.[28] This is why break-ins for "clandestine searches" (*konspirative Durchsuchung*) were also exceptions rather than rules. They required extensive background checks from the immediate residential surrounding of the person of interest and meticulous planning in order to ensure that neither the resident nor their neighbors became aware of the operation. Planning surreptitious house searches was also time-intensive and required the input of multiple personnel. Hence, they were also conducted only in select, high-profile cases.[29]

By the mid- to late 1980s, the Stasi probed alternative methods for the implementation of acoustic surveillance devices, such as the use of communal antenna cable channels, that would bypass the use of private spaces.[30] Yet, there is no archival or physical evidence that these methods found use. Instead, in addition to blanket postal control and information collection through a

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[28] "The residents time and again observed that strangers accessed their neighbor's house and informed them. In case those suspicious of being bugged wrote 'Eingaben' or placed public ads, this led to considerable complications for the MfS" as the installation of listening devices also followed--more often than not--illegial suits of action on part of the Stasi. Kowalczuk, "Telefongeschichten. Grenzüberschreitende Telefonüberwachung der Opposition durch den SED-Staat – Eine Einleitung," 55.

[29] For an instruction document on how to conduct clandestine searches, see: "Arbeitsmaterial für die Vorbereitung, Durchführung und Auswertung von konspirativen Durchsuchungen," 1978, BArch MfS BV Neubrandenburg Abt. VIII 108, 4-76.

[30] For example, in 1983, the Abt. 26 of the MfS' Karl-Marx-Stadt (today Chemnitz) branch explored the possibility to use communal antenna cable channels in variations of the prefabricated housing type WBS 70 (IW73, IW77) for acoustic room monitoring. See: BArch BV Karl-Marx-Stadt Abt. 26 168, p. 1-25.

network of informants,[31] a significant portion of the Stasi's surveillance work was "leg work," as historian Eli Rubin writes.[32] The Stasi's leg work certainly had a technological counterpart—namely, photography—but this was used for targeted and limited time efforts, and the preemptive activity of surveying was essential for maintaining the secrecy and efficiency of both.[33]

Surveys helped the Stasi explore spatial configurations of urban spaces, transportation hubs, public and semi-public buildings, and housing sites. This was meant to provide familiarity with "specific localities" to the operational observer (*operativer Beobachter*) who could either be a full-time employee or a collaborator of the Stasi.[34] Through the use of survey material, observers were meant to "quickly orient themselves to the situation at hand," devise "the right operational-tactical procedures," and thus "raise the quality of their work."[35] The characteristics of "localities" pertinent to the Stasi's surveying practices concerned mobility, accessibility, and visibility, all of which were integral to orientation and navigation: to quickly find where to hide and from where to watch, how to follow and how to lose a tail, where to meet and anticipate where others could meet. The Treptower Park Station object survey, which opened this chapter,

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[31] On the Stasi's blanket postal control, see: Gerd Reinicke and Jörn Mothes, *Öffnen, Auswerten, Schliessen: Die Postkontrolle des MfS im Bezirk Rostock* (Schwerin: Die Landesbeauftragte für Mecklenburg-Vorpommern für die Aufarbeitung der SED-Diktatur, 2004); Hanna Labrenz-Weiß, *Abteilung M: Postkontrolle*, Anatomie der Staatssicherheit: Geschichte, Struktur und Methoden (MfS-Handbuch) (Berlin: Bundesbeauftragter für Stasi-Unterlagen (BStU), 2005).

[32] Rubin, *Amnesiopolis*, 139.

[33] There are currently around 1.85 million photographs at the Stasi Records Archive, and about one million of them come from the MfS' "observation and inquiry line" HA VIII. As Schmole explains, "this stupendous photo collection comprises shots of GDR citizens, citizens of the Federal Republic, members of military liaison missions and diplomatic delegations, and international correspondents, as well as images from surveillance cameras," among others. Schmole, *Hauptabteilung VIII: Beobachtung, Ermittlung, Durchsuchung, Festnahme*, 11.

[34] IMs specifically assigned to partake in observation schemes were called 'IM-Beobachter" and along with "IM-Ermittler" (who were assigned with operational inquiries) they were part of the recruited agents "under special assignment" (IME). Suckut, *Das Wörterbuch Der Staatssicherheit*, 197–98. In the 1970s, the "observation and inquiry line" (HA VIII) of the MfS worked with around 1000 "operational observers." By the end of 1988, in addition to 4500 departmental employees, the line added 2800 observers to its ranks as a response to the increase of oppositional activity in the country. Schmole, *Hauptabteilung VIII: Beobachtung, Ermittlung, Durchsuchung, Festnahme*, 48.

[35] "Dokumentation über den Stadtbezirk Berlin-Marzahn," BArch MfS HA VIII 5192, 5.

provides concrete insights not only about what these characteristics were but also by what means they were analyzed, articulated, and used.

Counting, Watching, Drawing, Mapping: Techniques of Surveying

Treptower Park S-Bahn Station

The breadth of visual documentation—the three plates of sketches—of the Treptower Park suggest that these were likely drawn after the responsible Stasi officer inspected the premises on April 2, 1985. There are several historical, archival, and visual clues that support this argument. As a secret police organization, the Stasi was constantly wary of being outed, devising extensive guidelines for cover-up stories and disguises.[36] Having templates of maps and plans on-site to scribble on with additional information, let alone drawing everything from scratch on a piece of empty paper, would have attracted curious and unwanted glances, especially at a transportation hub with heavy foot traffic like the Treptower Park station. Unable to inscribe spatial circumstances—the relationship between things—on-site, the Stasi agent preparing the Treptower Park survey must instead have taken extensive notes that instructed the subsequent drawing.[37] The absence of covert photography (a widely used medium for surveying) in this otherwise fully preserved survey folder also supports this derivation.

Whether the surveyor and the draftsperson of the Treptower Park survey were the same is difficult to ascertain. Yet, the consistency in handwriting used to annotate all three plans evinces that a single Stasi agent prepared them. This, coupled with the staggering—and staggeringly complex—amount of information inscribed, makes it safe to assume that this was not the result

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[36] Schmole, *Hauptabteilung VIII: Beobachtung, Ermittlung, Durchsuchung, Festnahme*, 77–79.
[37] While the Treptower Park survey folder does not include any photographs, for similar operations utilizing photographic documentation see the survey of Holbeinplatz S-Bahn station in Rostock; BArch MfS HA VIII 8032, p. 20-23.

of teamwork. Furthermore, the specific date of the survey, along with the accompanying report specifying when the streetlamps turned on or for how long the ticket booth was occupied, suggest that the anonymous Stasi officer in question inspected the premises for an extended amount of time. In a setting like this, being constantly on the move, changing places throughout the day would have been the way to avoid curious glances from incoming and outgoing travelers in flux. What the Stasi's survey notes possibly constituted and by what means they were proactively registered becomes evident through a comparative reading of the stylistic differences in drawing and the supplemental information provided by reporting.[38]

On the site plan (Figure 14), the four buildings lining up the street across from the station—from left to right, a kindergarten, communal housing administration, housing block, and care facilities—are depicted by almost identical squares with similar distances apart. This indicates that, in contrast to the surrounding urban and architectural demarcations of the plan, they were not traced from city maps.[39] The same applies to symbols for traffic lights, bus stops, taxi stands, no-parking zones, and public phones, which are all drawn free-hand and in slightly different proportions. At Treptower Park, the Stasi instead diligently counted the number of mailboxes and public phones within and outside of the station; it counted the connecting public transportation options and listed, in an accompanying report, the schedules of bus, omnibus, ferry, and trains passing by throughout the day, along with their directions. The Stasi counted doors and gateways, commenting on their conditions of openness and enclosure in annotations (Figure 15), and it counted the number of stairs, indicating how to reach them and where they land in red lines and arrows (Figures 13-15).

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[38] In contrast to numerous guidelines describing, systematizing, and even standardizing how inquiries (*Ermittlungsarbeit*) should be conducted, my research thus far has not resulted in similar "protocols" for surveys.
[39] "Aufklärungsmaterial S-Bahnhof Treptower Park," 2.4.1985, Berlin, BArch MfS HA VIII 3623, p. 154.

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All of these technologies of information and mobility must have first been noted down and later drawn on the survey sketches. While counting revealed the kind and amount of technologies available for exchange and mobility, drawing revealed where they were, mapping the spatial relationships between them. The spatial information articulated through counting, drawing, and mapping was further supplemented by the written report, which described spatial and visual conditions that could not be elucidated through these techniques but were discerned through watching. So did the Stasi, for example, count three doors opening to the ticketing booth of the German *Reichsbahn* personnel and added them to its plan of the station's ground floor (Figure 15). The short lines at a slight angle signifying these doors were drawn after the plan was laid out, as evinced by the continuous single line representing the wall of the structure and the overlapping short and thicker lines standing for the doors. In its report, the Stasi wrote that these "multiple doors are constantly locked:" a piece of information that can only be gained through long term or repeated observation instead of a one-time inspection.[40] Similarly, looking from the station outward, from its southwest entrance (*Durchgang C*) towards the pier on the Spree river where the *Weisse Flotte* ferry anchored, "the sightline is hindered insignificantly by trees," the Stasi wrote, as they had "long trunks" (Figure 14, trees represented as "s").[41] If one looked from the southbound platform into the same direction during day time, however, the long trunks casted long shadows, which obstructed the view.[42] In contrast, looking at the station from the telephone booth by the Elsenstraße provided a clear view of the northwest entrance (*Durchgang A*) throughout the day (Figure 14).[43] The only caveat was backlight, the Stasi noted, which rendered

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[40] "Aufklärungsmaterial S-Bahnhof Treptower Park," BArch MfS HA VIII 3623, 155.
[41] BArch MfS HA VIII 3623, 157.
[42] BArch MfS HA VIII 3623, 159.
[43] BArch MfS HA VIII 3623, 158.

the inside of the entrance dark until the afternoon hours.[44] Thus, through surveying, the Stasi reported on which rooms, buildings, and public facilities were accessible and when, which corner or structure presented unrestricted observation opportunities, and when and where these views were hindered by shadows, backlight, or trees—information only available through watching and communicable in written or, as was the case with other surveys, photographic form.

Planning Observation in West-Berlin

Surveys—as second-order observations—helped the Stasi set up posts for anchored and mobile observation (*feste/ständige und mobile/variable Beobachtungsstützpunkte*).[45] These were covert operation points where Stasi agents were either stationed for short or long-term observation or from where they would start following their targets on the move. Observation posts could be any type of enclosure: kiosks, buildings, rooms, vehicles equipped with photo and video cameras, or adequate parking spots for those vehicles. Diplomats and Western journalists, for example, were kept under constant visual surveillance via these anchored and mobile posts. The Stasi knew their places of accommodation and places they frequented, but surveying revealed from where stationary agents would have a clear view—to the naked eye or for a camera—or how surveillance vehicles could successfully follow them around.[46]

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[44] BArch MfS HA VIII 3623, 160.

[45] Observation posts were also categorized according to their specific use within the observation scheme. "Sight posts" (*Sichtstützpunkte*) were from where visual surveillance with or without technical equipment would be pursued. If camera surveillance was going to be carried out remotely, where these cameras were installed would be called "technical posts" (*Technikstützpunkte*). "Stopover posts" (*Aufenthaltsstützpunkte*) were used for consultation between agents or for provisions, such as food. "Command centers" (*Leitstützpunkte*) managed this network of observation posts and supervised relevant surveillance measures. See: "Dokumentation und graphische Darstellung zur Nutzung operative Sicht- und Aufenthaltsstützpunkte in Leipzig-Grünau," Fachschule – Abschlußarbeit, MfS Juristische Fachhochschule Potsdam, 15.12.1986, BArch MfS BVfS Leipzig Abt VIII 367, p. 31-32.

[46] With this combination of anchored and mobile observation representatives of the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) and Western public broadcasters ARD and ZDF, as well as American and British consulates and residential neighborhoods of journalists were kept under continuous surveillance. Termed "main foci of observation," housing neighborhoods of GDR dissidents, city centers, and strategic points of transit traffic were where most anchored observation posts were set up. Schmole, *Hauptabteilung VIII: Beobachtung, Ermittlung, Durchsuchung, Festnahme*, 29, 79.
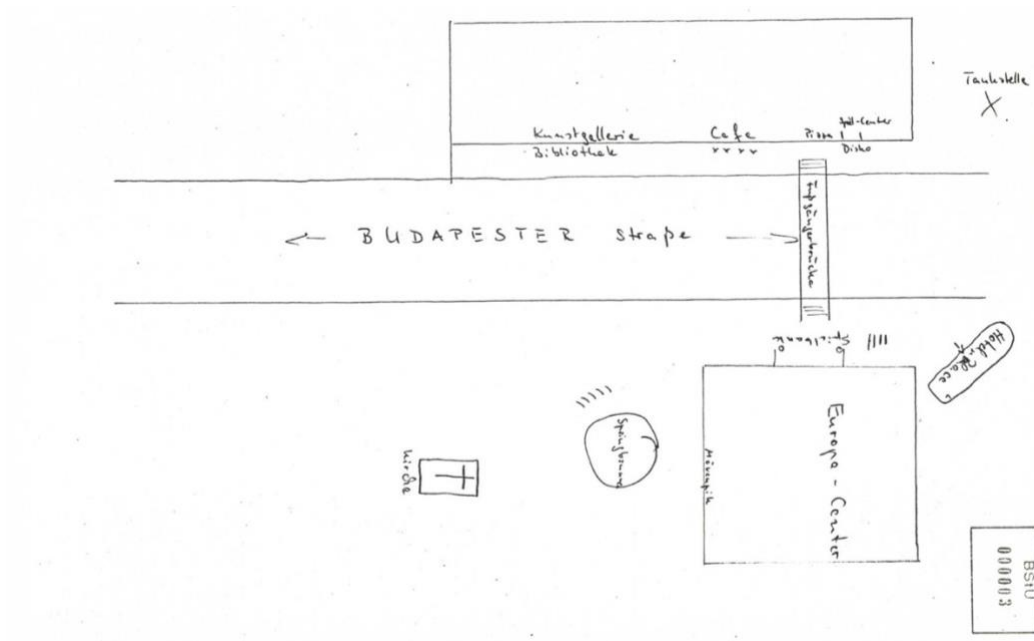
Figure 16 "Objektaufklärung 'Europa-Center,'" Hand-drawn site plan of the commercial building complex Europa-Center in Charlottenburg, West Berlin, 1986, BArch MfS HA II 29872, 3.

In an object survey conducted in West Berlin, for example, the Stasi inspected the *Europa-Center* commercial building complex at the heart of the Charlottenburg neighborhood where a "politically significant meeting" was planned to take place. The objective was twofold: to determine points of covert observation, while simultaneously detecting where foreign secret service agents might be positioned to surveil the meeting. With a site plan, report, and several covert photographs, the anonymous surveillance agent documented sightlines from and towards the Europa-Center and commented on their adequateness for observation. The Stasi reported that the entrance to the *Spielbank* casino, located on the ground floor of the Europa-Center, did not provide "good lighting conditions."[47] As the site plan (Figure 16) and a photograph illustrated (Figure 17), this was due to the cantilever canopy covering the casino's entrance, which casted shadow on the north-facing and thus already dark façade leading to Europa-Center's vestibule.

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[47] "Information Objektaufklärung Europa-Center," 6.8.1986, Berlin, BArch MfS HA II 29872, 2.
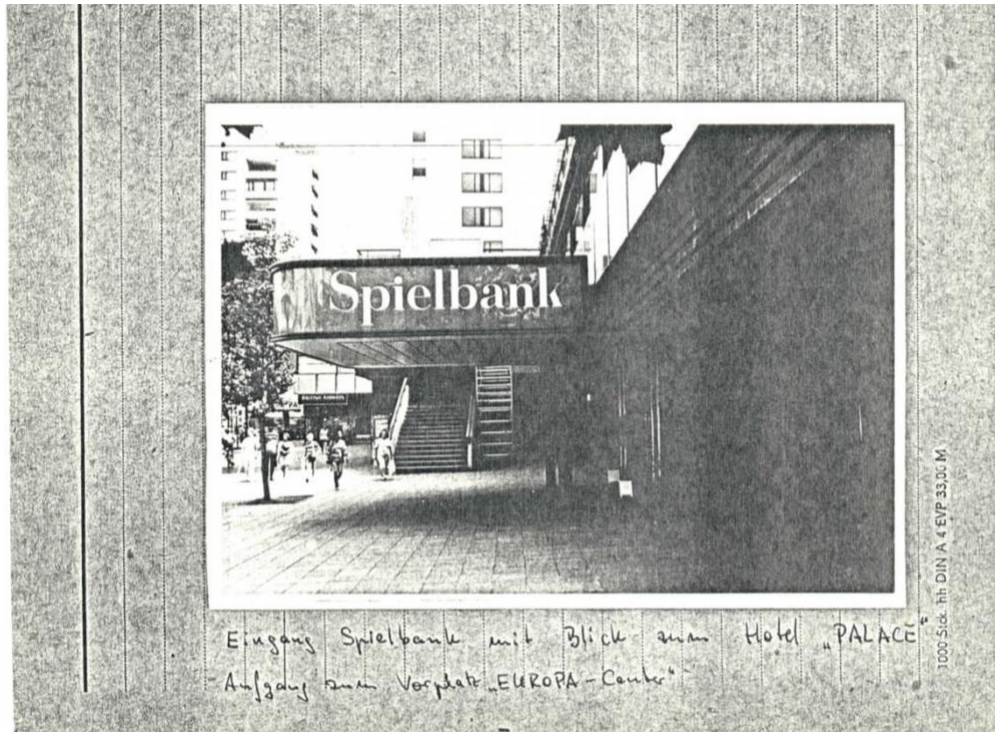
Figure 17 "Objektaufklärung 'Europa-Center,'" Covert photograph taken by the entrance of the Spielbank casino towards the stairs leading to the Europa-Center's vestibule, BArch MfS HA II 29872, 4.
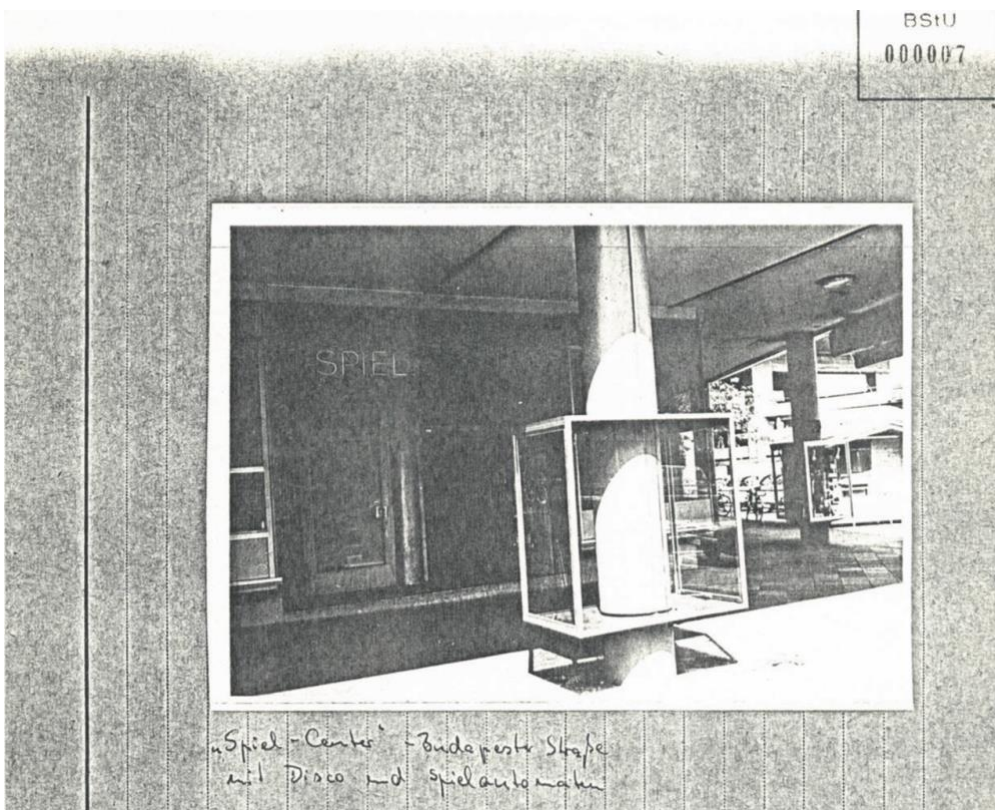
Figure 18 "Objektaufklärung 'Europa-Center,'" Photograph taken from the sidewalk looking at the Spiel-Center, located across the street from Spielbank and the Europa-Center, 1986, BArch MfS HA II 29872, 7.

Being stationed across the street, in front of the *Spiel-Center* arcade, was the better option as the cantilever floor extending over the arcade's entrance only hid the observers from sight— an argument articulated in the report and justified by another photograph (Figure 18). What is more, while the entrance to the Europa-Center was occupied by heavy foot traffic, the foot traffic of the Spiel-Center was "limited and [can be] easily overlooked."[48]

Surveys examined spatialities and temporalities of the built environment by paying as much attention to velocity, density, and frequency as accessibility and visibility. The Stasi studied the density of trees and pedestrians, the frequency of red lights and busses, and even the brightness and distance between streetlamps. At the Treptower Park survey, for example, the Stasi reported that the station's entrances are lighted "by high-pressure mercury-vapor lamps 10 meters apart, which provide enough illumination" after sundown.[49] The East German secret police could document these conditions by counting, drawing, mapping, and watching, all of which were elementary techniques of surveillance and mediated the built environment.

Mapping Movement: En Route in Rostock

Through surveying, the Stasi pre-orchestrated scenarios of movement and observation and generated a map of architectural spaces and technologies superimposed with a network of communication and transportation. Some surveys focused on mapping not only objects but movements between sites/objects, zooming out of the macro-scale of the site plan to connect the dots between sites of anchored surveillance with flows of mobile surveillance. In one such example, the Stasi surveyed transportation options from Rostock's main train station to a specific address in the city's Hansa-Viertel neighborhood. Tasked with devising "observation and

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[48] BArch MfS HA II 29872, 2.
[49] "Aufklärungsmaterial S-Bahnhof Treptower Park," BArch MfS HA VIII 3623, 161.

Figure 19 "Skizze des Verbindungsweges mit Umsteigevarianten," Sketch of public transportation routes with transfer options from Rostock's main train station to Karl-Marx-Straße 45 in the Hansa-Viertel, ca. 1980s. On the map, train stations are marked in brown; transfer options are encircled and annotated as "Variante." Bus numbers are indicated in blue and pink and the two recommended observation points in yellow, BArch MfS HA VIII 8032, 65.

control" measures targeting the address—a housing structure—and one of its residents, an officer of the Stasi's "observation and inquiry line" (*Hauptabteilung VIII*) first reported on the building in vivid architectural detail.[50] Situated on a corner plot, four stories high with an attic floor, and part of a row housing, the "object" was "easily distinguishable," the report went, thanks to retaining walls along its gables and "light colored façade coating." While the rest of the report focused on pedestrian and vehicle traffic conditions and commercial facilities around the plot, it concluded that "there are no operationally adequate locations to be used as secret posts within

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[50] "Bericht über die operative Aufklärung der Adresse 2500 Rostock, Karl-Marx-Straße 45," undated, BArch MfS HA VIII 8032, 51-52.

the immediate surroundings" of the building.[51] This partly explains the absence of survey media such as plans, sections, or photographs documenting the building—the focus was placed, instead, on observing the target on the move, from the main train station (in front of which the Stasi could covertly be stationed) to their site of dwelling.
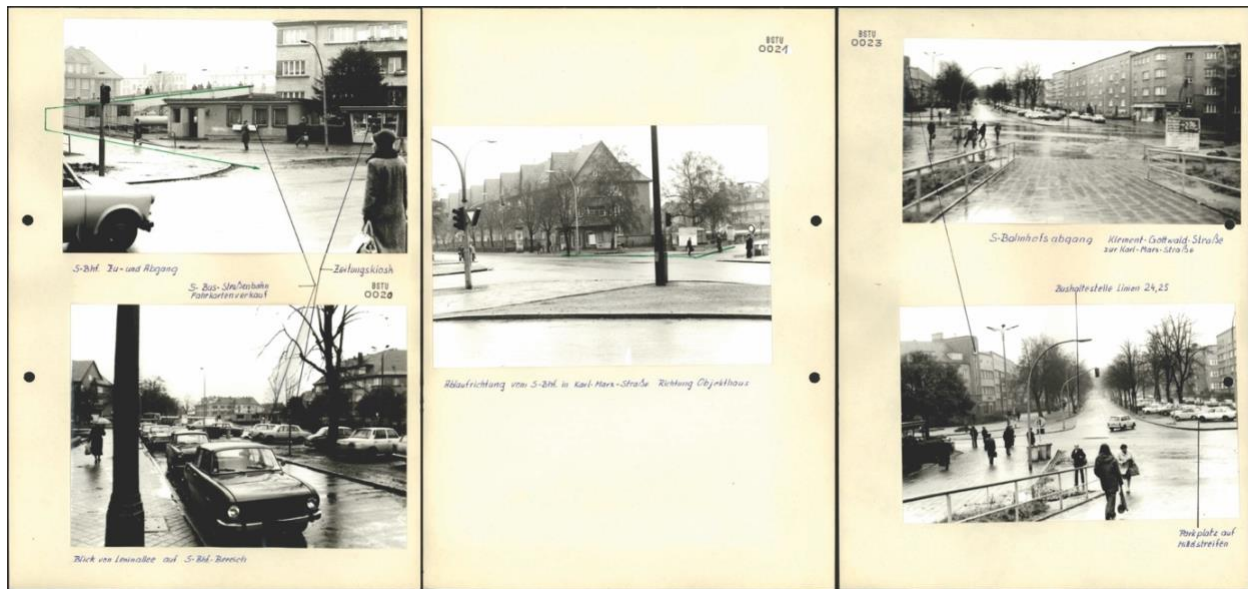

Figure 20 "Operative Aufklärung Rostock, Karl-Marx-Strasse," Survey photographs documenting the Klement-Gottwald-Straße (today Parkstraße) S-Bahn station in Rostock, ca. 1980s. From left to right, the three photographs are taken by looking [1] towards the station and its pedestrian ramp from the surrounding streets, [2] from the station in the direction of the target address (Objekthaus), and [3] from the pedestrian ramp towards the target address and the nearby bus stop, BArch MfS HA VIII 8032, 20-23.

A transit map covering an area of almost two square miles was drawn, showing alternative ways of inner-city travel combining transportation by train, bus, and on foot, color-coding routes and indicating stations and transfer points (Figure 19).[52] The Stasi took these alternate routes—six in total—and reported on them step by step, counting how many stops are passed by in each direction, and the amount of time it takes by vehicle and by foot, from start to finish.[53] The S-Bahn station closest to the target address (Klement-Gottwald-Straße station,

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[51] "Bericht über die operative Aufklärung der Adresse 2500 Rostock, Karl-Marx-Straße 45," 52.

[52] "Skizze des Verbindungsweges mit Umsteigevarianten," undated, BArch MfS HA VIII 8032, p. 65.

[53] The report adds that travel by taxi was not considered. "Möglicher Variantenwechsel vom Hauptbahnhof zur Objektanlaufstelle," undated, BArch MfS HA VIII 8032, p. 53-54.

today Parkstraße station) was photographically surveyed to further help navigation (Figure 20).

These annotated photographs documented what was seen moving away from and towards the

station, marking sightlines, directions, nearby bus stops, pedestrian pathways, and parking lots.

Here, a pedestrian ramp crossing over the station was marked with a green line and hence

emphasized as this could be used as a shortcut or an escape route, either by the operatives or

their target.[54] By surveying mobility options between architectural spaces, the Stasi thus spatially

networked posts and targets of observation, connecting these nodes with alternate edges.

With the help of surveys, the Stasi not only understood better the spatialities within

which it had to operate but also mediated them by making them legible to other Stasi operatives

and collaborators, transmitting this knowledge to other agents. Thus, surveying reproduced

spatial configurations according to surveillance purposes and rendered them communicable, as I

explore in the next section.

Cataloging, Verification, Representation: Transferring Spatial Knowledge

The Stasi's archiving practices pertaining to survey material sheds some light on how this

spatial knowledge transfer occurred. Surveying was not the domain of a singular MfS unit even

though the majority of it was carried out by the ministry's "observation and inquiry line:" the

Main Department VIII (*Hauptabteilung – HA VIII*) and its district branches. In assignment of

other MfS departments, the HA VIII was responsible for the planning and realization of

observation and inquiry schemes, house searches and arrests in and outside of the GDR.[55] The

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[54] Untitled photographic collection documenting the S-Bahn station Klement-Gottwald-Straße (today Parkstraße), BArch MfS HA VIII 8032, p. 20-23.

[55] The assignments (called *Auftragsersuchen*) to observe and pursue specific persons came, as a rule, from other MfS departments such as HA XVIII – National Economy, HA XX – Political Underground, or HA II – Counterespionage, to name a few. Angela Schmole notes that the department received assignments even from the KGB. In this regard, the HA VIII was one of the few departments working exclusively on assignments, along with HA III (Funkaufklärung / Funkabwehr), Abt. 26 (Telefonkontrolle) and Abt. M (Postkontrolle). While its area of responsibility was largely the GDR, the department carried out such tasks also outside of the borders, most notably in West Berlin. The assignments

survey material produced as part of these assignments were not simply put away with their

reference file but compiled for future use. While archival records do not reveal any departmental

guideline on how these documents were catalogued and stored, the composition of surviving

folders provides some clues as to what their future uses were.

Most surveys in these collections are unsigned, but the varying handwriting from survey

to survey readily shows that these were not just stacks of drafts by a single Stasi officer. In

contrast to the surveys discussed above, some surveys also display variations in handwriting

between their plans and the accompanying report, showing that the activity of surveying was at

times conducted by a team of agents. Here, the haphazard fashion with which the Stasi files were

re-assembled after East German citizens stormed the ministry's offices between 1989 and 1990

must be acknowledged.[56] Yet, I argue that the diversity of surveying authors and surveyed places

found in these folders were the result of purposeful collation by the Stasi instead of random

assembling after the ministry's dissolution: surveys were brought together to be re-used for

prospective operations.

For example, one such folder from the 1980s includes what, at first, seems like a random

bundle of survey material: photographs from an unspecified S-Bahn station, studies on

passageways from various East Berlin neighborhoods, two housing district surveys from

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for observation and inquiries specified "why and about whom when and where which" information had to be compiled. Roland Wiedmann, *Die Diensteinheiten Des MfS 1950–1989. Eine Organisatorische Übersicht (MfS-Handbuch)* (Berlin: Bundesbeauftragte für Stasi-Unterlagen (BStU), 2012), 293–99; Schmole, *Hauptabteilung VIII: Beobachtung, Ermittlung, Durchsuchung, Festnahme*, 26; *Das Wörterbuch Der Staatssicherheit*, 63.

[56] On November 4, 1989, about a month after the fall of the Berlin Wall, East Germans stormed the Stasi's district branches in Erfurt, Suhl, Rostock, and Leipzig. The take over was prompted by the suspicion that state security agents were systematically destroying files--a suspicion immediately confirmed upon the protestors arrival. The occupation, however, especially that of the Stasi headquarters on Berlin Normannenstraße, "was a godsend for some Stasi officers and informers," David Childs writes. "Files were destroyed [also] by the demonstrators. This could have been a deliberate ploy with Stasi agents among the demonstrators." David Childs, "The Shadow of the Stasi," in *After the Wall: Eastern Germany Since 1989*, ed. Patricia J. Smith, Eastern Europe after Communism (New York & London: Routledge, 2018), 103 As I learned from my archivist at the Stasi Records Archive, after the offices were wrecked, many folders were composed by preservationists by assembling paper files found within immediate proximity to each other, which--in many cases--resulted in archival folders containing a diverse array of files.

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Dresden, along with the Rostock mass-transit survey examined above, among others.[57] Upon close inspection, however, it becomes clear that these surveys mutually indicate alternate escape and getaway routes across various East German cities: shortcuts, hidden passageways, safe locations to be used as path diversions. This suggests that the HA VIII, the observation and inquiry division, catalogued surveys thematically—more specifically, according to spatial themes. By doing so, the department was able to revisit these documents and recycle them, as it were, to devise new observation and inquiry schemes taking place at previously surveyed premises such as a particular residential area, a transportation hub, or even a specific building.

By cataloguing survey material according to spatial themes, the Stasi was also able to regularly verify them, which was important to their re-use. Surveys were kept up to date according to changing spatial conditions and refined for "objectivity," meaning with the input of multiple agents.[58] This is why, as in the Treptower Park example, most surveys indicate the specific date of "surveying" (*Aufklärungsstand*) so that they could be regularly revisited and necessary changes could be made. This motley collection of architectural media from various cities and buildings, and prepared by various surveillance agents, thus reified the spatial memory of the Stasi in paper form.

Surveys rendered spatial knowledge transferable between departments as well. For example, the Main Department I (*Hauptabteilung – HA I*) also conducted surveys to plan surveillance activities, predominantly targeting members of the National People's Army (*Nationale Volksarmee – NVA*) and the border troops (*Grenztruppen – GT der NVA*), which were

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[57] See: BStU MfS HA VIII 8032, 1-65. This folder was found in the collections of HA VIII's sub-department 6, which—since 1972—was responsible for developing observation and inquiry schemes and devising other surveillance measures within the GDR and West Berlin. The sub-department was divided into units for "observation," "inquiry," "operational measures," and "analysis." Wiedmann, *Die Diensteinheiten des MfS 1950–1989*, 294–96.

[58] As the MfS dictionary also states, "the results of surveying are summarized and assessed in object analyses, regularly verified and refined for currentness and objectivity." Suckut, *Das Wörterbuch der Staatssicherheit*, 260.
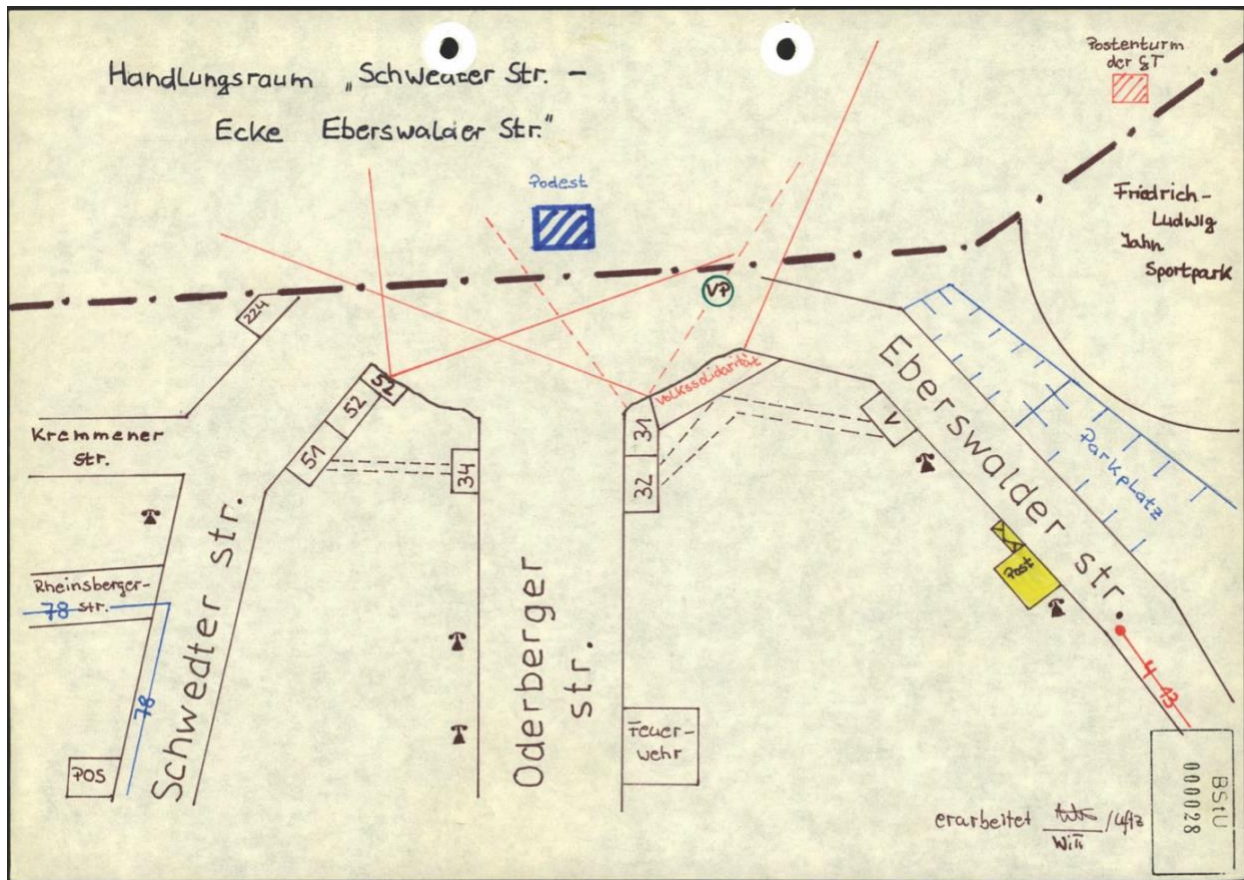
Figure 21 "Handlungsraum 'Schwedter Straße,'" Survey map of the "operation area" Schwedter Straße by the Berlin Wall, prepared by the HA I, ca. 1989. The dash-dotted line shows the Berlin Wall, with the podium on its Western side, where the *Kampfgruppe gegen Unmenschlichkeit* (*KgU*) demonstrated, marked as a blue hatched box. Observation posts and their sight lines are indicated by red lines. The red hatching on the upper right corner specifies the location of the East German border troops' watchtower, BArch MfS HA VIII 6348, 28.

its main areas of responsibility.[59] Yet in 1989, its subordinate unit tasked with surveying (*HA I/8*) was dissolved, and a unit of the observation and inquiry division (*HA VIII/15*) took over this work.[60] As a result, the HA I sent survey documents from active cases across the GDR to the HA VIII so that the latter could build upon them and resume the work.[61] One such example was the survey of the "operation area Schwedterstraße" in East Berlin, where the Western anti-

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[59] For an extensive overview of the HA I's history, see: Stephan Wolf, *Hauptabteilung I: NVA Und Grenztruppen*, Anatomie Der Staatssicherheit: Geschichte, Struktur Und Methoden (MfS-Handbuch) (Berlin: Bundesbeauftragter für Stasi-Unterlagen (BStU), 2005).

[60] For more about this shift, see: Wiedmann, *Die Diensteinheiten des MfS 1950–1989*, 247, 296.

[61] See, for example: "Auftragsersuchen. Beobachtung zu Angehörigen der NVA und Grenztruppen zur Überprüfung ihrer Kontakte in das NSW," BArch MfS HA VIII 3334.

communist alliance "Combat Group against Inhumanity" (*Kampfgruppe gegen Unmenschlichkeit – KgU*) regularly organized demonstrations on a podium from across the Berlin Wall, which the Stasi also regularly observed and documented from anchored posts set up on the Eastern side of the border (Figure 21).[62]

The intended transferability and communicability of spatial knowledge between agents and departments required some degree of a common representational language. While neither methods nor documentation of surveys were codified in guidelines akin to those found for inquiries and house searches, adequate norms and measures for surveying were instructed, nonetheless.[63] The collections of the HA I, for example, indicate that the Stasi prepared "practice surveys," for which the surveillance officers visited different urban sites across the GDR, sketched their plans and developed complementary legends (Figure 22).[64] Practice surveys were fairly standardized, with site plans drawn onto an A4-size paper template that prompted in its letterhead the address surveyed, the date of surveying and its verification, and the scale of the drawing. In contrast to operational surveys, which maintained the anonymity of the officer(s) involved, practice surveys identify the agent who conducted them, possibly for the evaluation of their work. Accompanying legends are thoroughly annotated with explanations of the acronyms used, including MfS-specific ones, such as "SP" for "sight post" (*Sichtstützpunkt*) or "AP" for "stopover post" (*Aufenthaltsstützpunkt*), and commonplace ones, such as "H" for bus and tram stops (*Haltestelle*). These acronyms and their respective icons are found throughout operational

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[62] "Handlungsraum 'Schwedterstraße,'" BArch MfS HA VIII 6348, 28.

[63] See, for example, the centrally binding document for housing district inquiries: "Instruktion Nr 1/81 für die Organisierung der operativen Ermittlungstätigkeit in den Wohngebieten durch die HA VIII, Abt VIII der BVs/Verwaltung sowie Kreis und Objektdienststellen des MfS," Berlin, 30.10.1981, BArch MfS BV Berlin BdL 188, p. 67-129. For an example of a binding document on surreptitious entries, see: "Arbeitsmaterial für die Vorbereitung, Durchführung und Auswertung von konspirativen Durchsuchungen," Neubrandenburg, 1978, BArch MfS BV Neubrandenburg Abt. VIII 108, p. 4-76.

[64] See: "Aufklärungsskizzen zu Übungszwecken der operativen Beobachtung mit Legendeaufbau zu Wohngebieten in Berlin," 1988-1989, BArch MfS HA VIII 6348, 18-58.

surveys, as well, yet with some variation depending on the person preparing them, and their
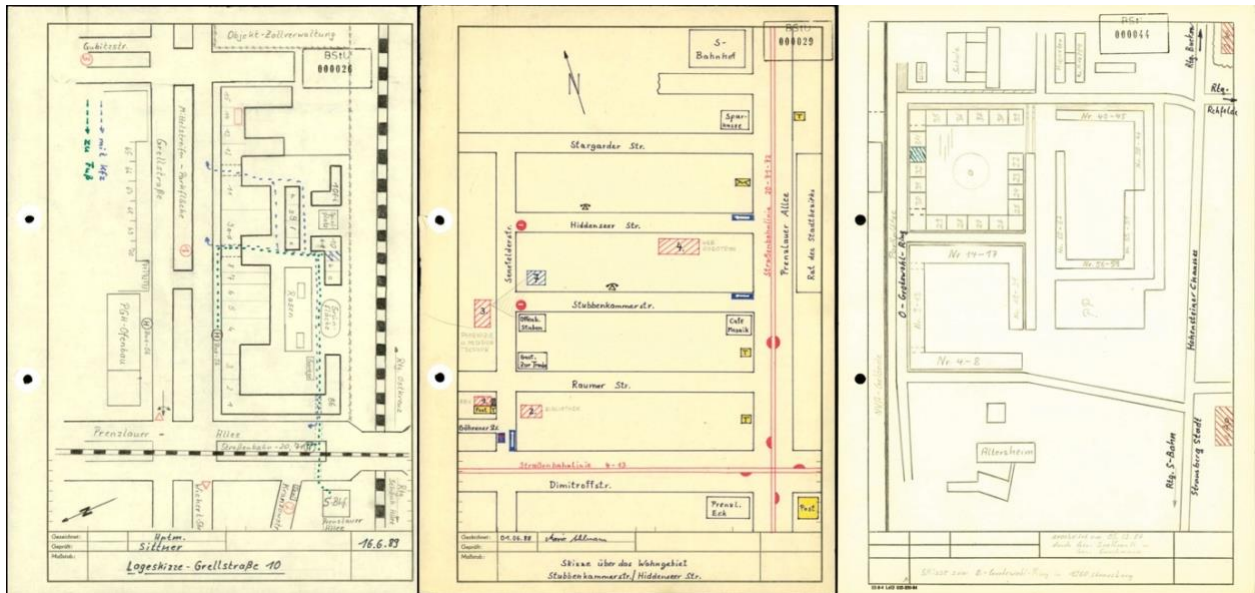
explanations are almost never included.

Figure 22 "Aufklärungsskizzen zu Übungszwecken der operativen Beobachtung mit Legendeaufbau," Examples of the practice surveys conducted by agents of the HA I, the MfS division tasked with surveilling and protecting the National People's Army (NVA) and border troops (*Grenztruppen*), 1988-1989, BArch MfS HA VIII 6348, 26, 29, 44.

The existence of such "educational material," as it was called, suggests that surveyors

underwent departmental instruction before commencing their work on the field. This was

certainly true for employees of the observation and inquiry line, as well. Stasi officers who were

trained to become operational observers took a series of subject-specific courses at the ministry's

own schools.[65] Here, officer-students were educated in cartography along with covert

photography, vehicular pursuit, and disguise, and worked on numerous exercise cases to devise

practical solutions for observation schemes. Students specializing in becoming observation

commanders or supervisors wrote their final theses on case studies deploying observation posts,

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[65] The training school of the HA VIII, located in Roßlau in the Halle district, was recognized as an official school of the East German state security apparatus only by the mid-1980s, until which it was dissimulated as a special school of the National People's Army (NVA). The ministry's law school (juristische Fachhochschule) in Potsdam-Eiche and technical university in Gransee, where new officers received basic training, participated in its curriculum. Schmole, *Hauptabteilung VIII: Beobachtung, Ermittlung, Durchsuchung, Festnahme*, 18, 48–49.

demonstrating their knowledge in "conspiracy through practice."[66] Yet, the absence of

standardized templates for fieldwork—similar to those used for inquiries (*Ermittlungsbogen*) or

practice—coupled with the lack of central guidelines, resulted in surveys with a wide range of

representational variability, nonetheless. Not only the drafters' level of training and skill but also

their subjective comprehension and articulation of the local-spatial conditions most important to

clandestine operations influenced their output. The Stasi's safe house surveys, to which I will

turn now, comparatively demonstrate the diversity of representational techniques, while

providing concrete examples on how the spatial knowledge articulated by surveys was

subsequently used.

Meeting with Informants

The correlation between surveying and inquiring is best understood within the context of

the Stasi's so-called "connection systems" (*Verbindungssyteme*), or what the Stasi jargon

referred to as "connection science" (*Verbindungswesen*). Connection systems were the gamut of

forces, means, and methods that facilitated and safeguarded the East German secret police's

communication with its IMs. The forces operating within this system included a pedigree of

official and unofficial Stasi agents who communicated through diverse means, including in-

person meetings, and phone, postal, and radio channels. The Stasi established this clandestine

network to collect intelligence, place assignments, educate IMs, and share surveillance aids such

as technological devices for communication and documentation.[67] Agents, intelligence, and

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[66] "Nutzung operativer Beobachtungsstützpunkte im Neubaugebiet Leipzig-Grünau," MfS Juristische Fachhochschule Potsdam, Fachschul – Abschlussarbeit, 28.09.1987, BVfS Leipzig Abt VIII 782; "Dokumentation und graphische Darstellung zur Nutzung operative Sicht- und AP in Leipzig-Grünau," MfS Juristische Fachhochschule Potsdam, Fachschul – Abschlussarbeit, 15.12.1986, BVfS Leipzig Abt VIII 367.

[67] Alexander Huber and Erkut Yıldırım, "Die operative Aufklärungs- und Abwehrarbeit des ehemaligen Staatssicherheitsdienstes der DDR. Eine Analyse verfügbarer JHS-Lehrhefte und relevanter HVA-Dokumentationen," Berichte aus dem Fachbereich Wirtschafts- und Gesellschaftswissenschaften (Berlin: Beuth Hochschule für Technik Berlin, May 2010), 12–13.

objects moved within this network, their paths crossing at cover addresses and phones, dead

mailboxes, safe houses and fall back rooms, all of which were provided by the Stasi's network of

unofficial collaborators.[68] Surveying helped the Stasi canvass these contact and connection

points. While contact points (*Anlaufstellen,* or *Anlaufpunkte*) were places used for clandestine

operations such as "rendezvous, drop-offs and pick-ups, safe rooms (*konspirative Wohnung* –

KW) or fall back rooms (*Hinterlegungsstellen*) for missed connections," connection points

(*Verbindungen*) were any place or device by which information could be passed along, anything

from drop boxes, to special phone numbers with answering machines connected, in secret

locations or false addresses.[69] Surveys were integral to not only determining the nods of

exchange within the Stasi's connection systems but also for choreographing movements to and

from them in a systematic, fast, and secure way.[70] This required prior knowledge of localities so

that officers and agents could easily find their destination, move without drawing attention, and

lose their tail if needed. Through surveying, the Stasi thus conceptualized where connection

systems materialize—whether in a telephone booth, a mailbox, or a safe house—and how they

were spatialized.

As components of the Stasi's connection systems, safe houses—also called "conspiracy

dwellings" or "clandestine housing"—were primary sites of exchange between agents and the

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[68] These so-called "connection types" (Verbindungsarten) further included single or double-sided radio transmissions the use of specifically designed signals and signs. See: Suckut, *Das Wörterbuch Der Staatssicherheit*, 385. Collaborators known as "Societal Collaborator for Security" (Gesellshaftlicher Mitarbeiter für Sicherheit - GMS) and "Unofficial Collaborator for the Safeguarding of Clandestine Activity and Connection Science" (inoffizielle Mitarbeiter zur Sicherung der Konspiration und des Verbindungswesens - IMK) "volunteered their apartments as safe houses for meetings between case officers and IMs and served as contact points with cover addresses and telephone numbers." Gieseke, *The History of the Stasi*, 81.

[69] See entries for "Anlaufstellen" und "Verbindungen" in: Suckut, *Das Wörterbuch der Staatssicherheit*, 14, 417.

[70] See the entry on "Verbindungswesen" in: Huber and Yıldırım, "Die operative Aufklärungs- und Abwehrarbeit des ehemaligen Staatssicherheitsdienstes der DDR," 12–13.

IMs under their assignment.[71] The Stasi also used so-called "safe objects" (*konspiratives Objekt – KO*), which were rooms within public facilities with private access.[72] To obtain statements (*Treffberichte*), the Stasi operatives regularly met with their collaborators at these "safe" locations, which either were occupied by people recruited as IMs for this specific purpose or provisioned by existing IMs, all in exchange for financial and material compensation.[73] The Stasi officers responsible for IM recruitment were also tasked with building a network of secret meeting locations. Yet, meetings with a specific IM were not necessarily attached to one single safe house or object; instead, they could be held at any one of the clandestine locations. Hence, the Stasi chose where to meet according to the availability of safe houses at a specific time and in consideration of the IMs' whereabouts prior to the meeting.[74]

Realizing these meetings at different addresses and spaces required a considerable amount of planning. First, where the meeting could take place had to be selected from a map of safe houses.[75] While in 2008 the number of safe houses and objects were estimated to be around

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[71] These could be IMs recruited from the immediate circle of a person under "operational procedure" or IMs tasked with inquiries—known as IM-Inquirers (*IM-Ermittler – IME*). IMEs collected information through covert conversations with informers (*Auskunftspersonen*) in their area of responsibility, which could be a particular housing district, workplace, state institution or organization, or a community.

[72] In his detailed account on the "topography of clandestine housing" in Erfurt, Joachim Heinrich reveals that, out of the 481 secret meeting locations, half of them were residential dwellings. Discussing why private domestic spaces were preferred over commercial or workspaces, Heinrich argues that collaborating with older SED-members or former employees or informants of the MfS must have been the easiest solution to create a network of clandestine meeting locations. While housing, at a first approximation, might seem to pose security liabilities by exposing informants to neighbors, Heinrich maintains that, especially in a small town like Erfurt, the possibility to stumble upon a hotel or enterprise employee, who observes the regular back and forth of the same informants, would have been a far greater risk. Joachim Heinrich, "Zur Topographie des Ministeriums für Staatssicherheit - Konspirative Wohnungen in Erfurt," in *Geheime Trefforte des MfS in Erfurt*, ed. Heinrich Best, Joachim Heinrich, and Heinz Mestrup (Erfurt: Landesbeauftragter des Freistaates Thüringen für die Unterlagen des Staatssicherheitsdienstes der Ehemaligen DDR, 2006), 36–37.

[73] These were mostly existing IMs, former MfS employees, or members of the SED, and their cooperation was financially rewarded. In addition to paying a part of their rent (approximately 20 to 30 Marks), the Stasi also paid for the drinks and pastries served during the meeting and even the furniture used to furnish the room where meetings took place. Heinrich, 13.

[74] As these were spaces where people lived or worked, the Stasi could not enter them anytime of their choosing.

[75] In the district of Erfurt, for example, the map of clandestine meeting locations—titled F78—was destroyed during the events that led to the 1989 revolution. Researchers of the former BStU were able to recover a copy of this map

33 thousand across the GDR,[76] recent research shows the real numbers to be much higher. For example, in the city of Leipzig alone there were at least 1200 safe houses—almost fourfold than what was known to exist by the beginning of the 1990s.[77] These numbers alone demonstrate the possible intricacy of planning clandestine meetings for the Stasi. Second, to find their destination without drawing attention (and to maintain cover) the Stasi officers had to have some knowledge of the chosen premises. This was achieved with the help of survey sketches (*Aufklärungsskizzen*) attached to the folder of the IM providing the safe location. Once the meeting location was decided upon, the Stasi officer would seek out the relevant folder and study the survey documents in preparation of the meeting. An accompanying report would inform (or remind) the officer about the cover story (*Legende*) and cover name (*Deckname*) to be used in contacting the IMs and accessing their premises.[78] These reports, in comparison to those supplementing object surveys, did not go into much detail about the urban and architectural relationships characterizing the meeting site. Instead, survey sketches were prepared to communicate all necessary spatial information self-sufficiently and display a higher proficiency in architectural representation.

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by 2003. Heinrich, "Zur Topographie des Ministeriums für Staatssicherheit - Konspirative Wohnungen in Erfurt," 18–19.

[76] Müller-Enbergs, *Inoffizielle Mitarbeiter des Ministeriums für Staatssicherheit. Statistiken*, 3:83.

[77] Frank Wolfgang Sonntag, "DDR-Überwachung in Leipzig intensiver als bisher bekannt," *Mitteldeutscher Rundfunk*, February 7, 2019, https://www.mdr.de/nachrichten/politik/gesellschaft/friedensgebete-leipzig-revolution-spitzel-100.html. In Erfurt, this number is known to be around 500, showing large variations according to city and district—as was the correlated number of IMs.

[78] These cover names and stories were decided together by the IMKs (unofficial Collaborator for the Safeguarding of Clandestine Activity and Connection Science) and their leading officers (Führungsoffizier). For example, the report for an IMK for clandestine housing (IMK/KW) in Erfurt under the cover name "Garten" instructs the Stasi officers to say that they are former colleagues of the IMK and are "consulting his work experience" if needed when accessing the premises. The report adds that the married couple agreed that his cover story should be convincing to their neighbors. See: IMK/KW "Garten," Erfurt, 07.05.1987, BArch MfS IX 828/87, published in: Heinrich Best, Joachim Heinrich, and Heinz Mestrup, eds., *Geheime Trefforte Des MfS in Erfurt* (Erfurt: Landesbeauftragter des Freistaates Thüringen für die Unterlagen des Staatssicherheitsdienstes der Ehemaligen DDR, 2006), 49–51.
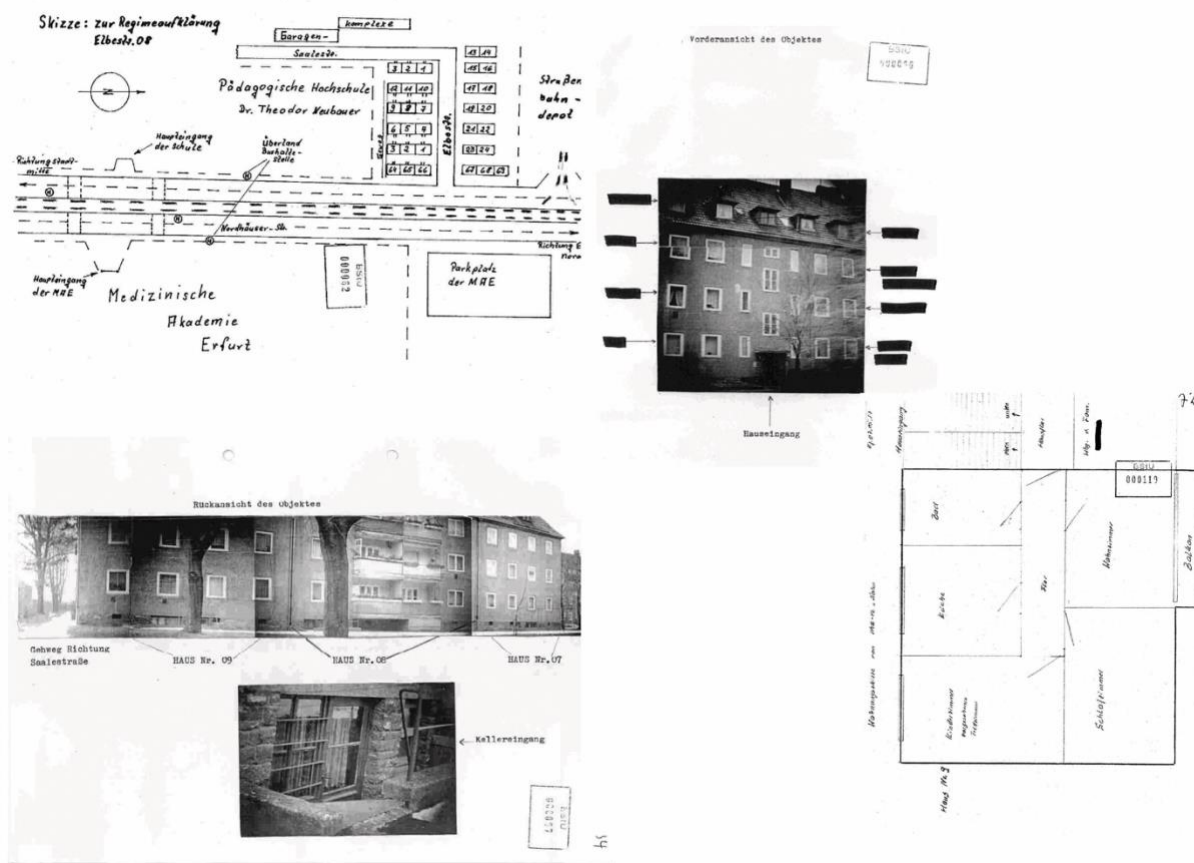
Figure 23 "Sicherung der Konspiration," Survey sketches for a safe house in Erfurt under the title "safeguarding conspiration," IMK/KW "Garten," 1987, BArch MfS IX 828/87, published in: Best, Heinrich, and Mestrup, Geheime Trefforte des MfS in Erfurt, 49, 51.

Inspecting and documenting the area, the building, and its interiors in architectural detail, the survey sketch of a safe house—typically consisting of two pages—includes a site-plan, elevations or sections, a floor plan, along with a plan of the room used as the meeting space.[79] The site plans show the exact position of the safe house in relation to the surrounding building stock, parking opportunities, public facilities, and street network. These plans were intended to help Stasi agents familiarize themselves with the area and plan their movements to and from beforehand. By car, by foot, or by public transportation, for Stasi agents en route to the safe

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[79] See: "Lage im Wohngebiet, Lage der Wohnung im Haus, Lage der kW im Hausflur, Treffzimmer," 16.11.1981, Rostock, BArch MfS BV Rostock 14/93, p. 53-54

house, getting lost or looking like they were searching for some place would have risked their cover. This is why the locus of site plans varied depending on the urban morphology and transportation options of their respective site.

On the survey documents of a safe house in Erfurt, for example, the site plan—aptly titled "regimen survey" (*Regimeaufklärung*)—emphasizes the northbound arterial road stretching from the city center and running through the neighborhood on the immediate periphery of the center (Figure 23, upper left). The two lanes and the line markings of the road, along with the tram line running between them, are carefully—perhaps even exhaustively—inscribed. Both bus and tram stops nearby are indicated with the relevant legend symbol, but the annotation specifies only the name of the bus stop. Vehicle entrances to surrounding public facilities (a medical school, a college of education, and a streetcar depot) are also annotated, but the footprint of these large building complexes is left blank. The focal point of the study—namely, the housing settlement on the west side of the main road, where the safe house is located—is also drawn in detail: every single building is enumerated (and the number of the safe house boldened); their main entrances are marked, and side streets named. The visual emphasis on the main road, along with the specification of parking options nearby, suggests that the agents were encouraged drive to the Erfurt site by car instead of taking the tram and maybe even the bus.

In contrast, the site plan of a safe house in Rostock—titled "position within residential area" (*Lage im Wohngebiet*)—focuses almost only on the prefabricated housing settlement surrounding the target object (Figure 24, upper left). The site plan foregrounds the street network and rows of Plattenbauten that demarcate it, and the only housing row enumerated entirely is the one where the safe house is located (marked by an X). Here, the highway that runs next to the settlement is not included in the drawing. Instead, the emphasis is placed on the nearby S-Bahn

station, indicated on the lower left corner of the plan, suggesting that agents were expected to arrive on site via streetcar. What is more, only the numbers of housing blocks marking the two ends and the corners of Plattenbau-rows are specified as this is the only essential information for a pedestrian's orientation moving from the station towards the safe house.
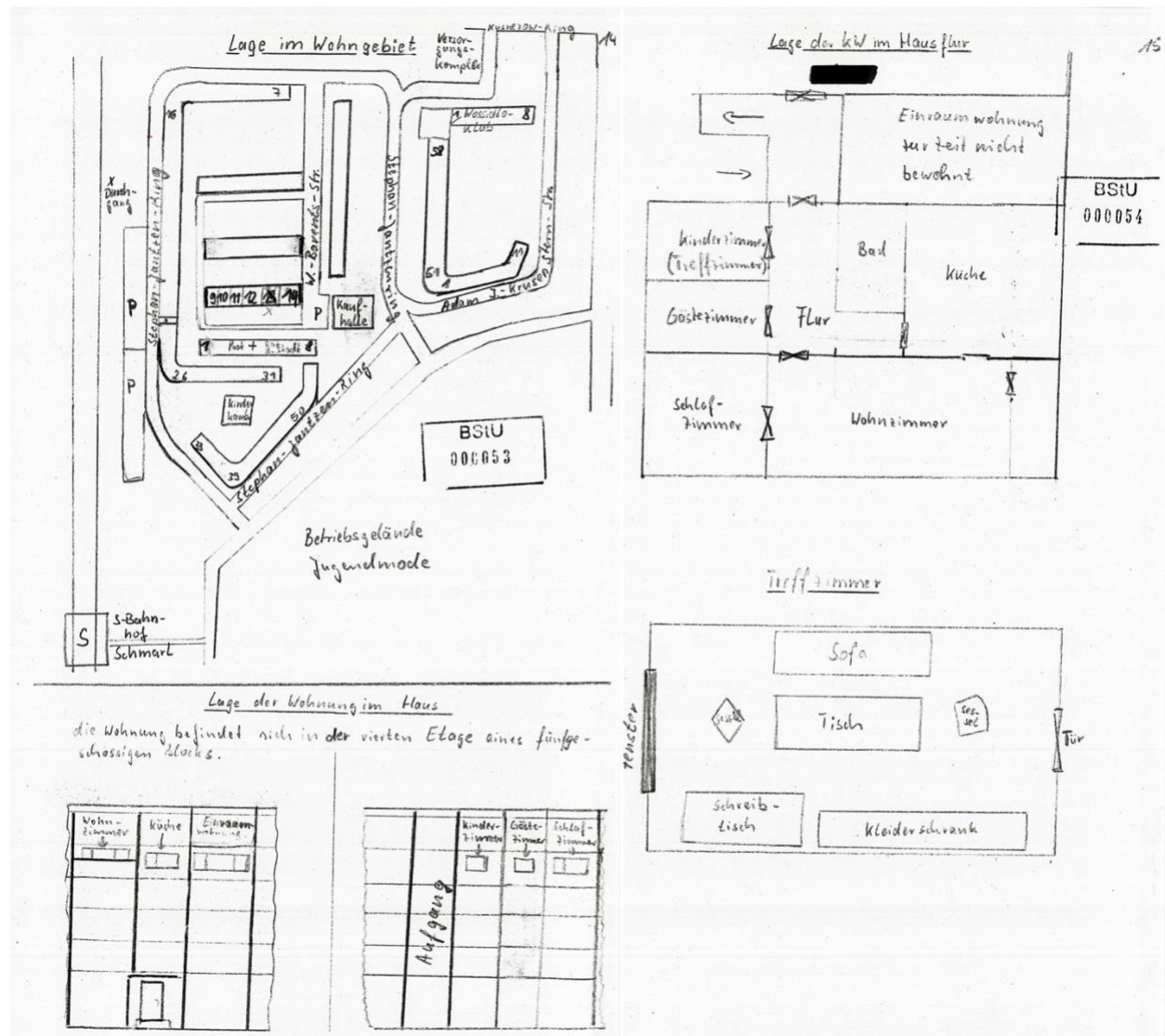

Figure 24 "Aufklärungsskizze," Survey sketches of a safe house in Rostock, BStU MfS BV Rostock 14/93, 53-54

Studying the site plan of a safe house was not enough, however. Once the Stasi agents arrived at the area, they had to continue moving towards the target address with learned

confidence and without drawing attention to themselves.[80] To achieve this, surveys included

annotated elevation sketches or exterior photographs of the structure that housed the safe

location. Bringing survey documents along to meetings would have been risky as the Stasi did

not want to leave the impression of a clueless visitor checking their map along the way.

Elevations were intended to serve as visual memory aids that supplemented the bird's eye

knowledge provided by site plans and textual cues such as the house or floor numbers. As a

result, their representational technique and the information they included differed depending on

what was significant to a given urban and architectural context.

For the survey of the Erfurt safe house discussed above, for instance, the Stasi

photographed the entire façade of the three-storeys high and three blocks wide masonry

residential structure dating to the 1950s and collaged these photographs into a panoramic view

(Figure 23, lower left). The photographs are taken from the discreet footpath on the southside of

the structure and not from the side street. Instead of the main façade where building entrances are

located, the collage illustrates the building's rear façade as this would be the first sighting of the

target structure for an operative walking from the main road towards the housing site.[81] The

image is also annotated to specify the housing block of destination as the one in the middle of the

three-block building sequence, implicitly cuing the agent to turn right and directly walk towards

the main entrance without having to inspect house numbers. The safe house survey example

from Rostock, in comparison, includes elementary sketches of a longitudinally extending P2-

type housing block, showing the front and back façades only partially (Figure 24, lower left).

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[80] For reference, see: "Dokumentation über den Stadtbezirk Berlin-Marzahn," BArch MfS HA VIII 5192, 10, 14. Here, agents are instructed to have a "calm, confident appearance" and warned that how people looking around and asking for directions are immediately perceived as "non-locals."
[81] See: IMK/KW "Garten," Erfurt, 07.05.1987, BArch MfS IX 828/87, published in: Best, Heinrich, and Mestrup, *Geheime Trefforte Des MfS in Erfurt*, 51.

The sketch indicates the main entrance to the building, location of its vertical circulation, along with notes on which rooms of the safe house looked onto which side of the building.[82] Here, the entire façade is not visualized for two possible reasons. First, the building entrance leading to the safe house (marked by an X) is directly visible to the vantage point of a Stasi operative on foot walking from the S-Bahn station toward the target location. Second, even though the façades of most structures look alike in this Plattenbau-settlement, the safe house is located within the first rectangular row-house on the walking path of the agent, which is easy to make a mental note of and subsequently identify. In the Erfurt example, however, the destination row house is part of and in the middle of a housing complex with six parallel and identical buildings and thus requires additional identifying information, provided by the detailed photographic documentation. What is more, on the second page of the Erfurt document, an additional photograph shows the front façade of the target address only. This cropped image serves to indicate who lives where across all three floors and the attic of the residence. Such information is not part of the Rostock survey because the close neighborhood relationships of older housing sites had not yet formed in the newly erected Plattenbauten. Therefore, the Stasi had less reason to identify and be vary of curious neighbors when meeting with its informants.

Their variety in representation and information notwithstanding, both surveys were designed to guide the Stasi agents swiftly and secretly from the street towards the building, its entrance, and to the floor the safe house was located on. In both examples, floor plans show the buildings' main staircase, its direction, and on which side of the landing the safe house is located. These plans demonstrate a veritable knowledge in architectural representation, marking windows in three lines and specifying the opening direction of doors (Figure 23-24). All rooms

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[82] "Lage im Wohngebiet, Lage der Wohnung im Haus, Lage der kW im Hausflur, Treffzimmer," 16.11.1981, Rostock, BArch MfS BV Rostock 14/93, p. 53-54

within the safe house are annotated according to their functions. This was important to the Stasi. During clandestine meetings, residents of the unit were instructed to remain in their kitchen or bedroom in order to avoid coming face to face with other IMs. The Stasi needed to greet their IM at the door and lead them to the room where the meeting would take place. Familiarity with safe houses' interiors was thus key. Floor plans, sometimes complete with drawings of interior furnishings of the meeting room, helped the Stasi learn the spatial organization of the apartment prior to their meeting (Figure 24, lower right). Ultimately, while object surveys sought a broad, inclusive array of spatial information, safe house surveys sought tactical, highly focused information.

As I have shown, the Stasi visualized its connection systems as a spatial network by mapping them and instructed agents in their use by drawing and photographing them. Surveys, however, did not merely visualize existing surveillance networks but also helped conceive and build them. They were instrumental in choosing new IMs to be drawn into specific surveillance operations based on their spatial coordinates, as I explore in the next section.

Selecting Unofficial Collaborators

In 1981, the "observation and inquiry line" jointly canvassed two residential areas: one in Dresden-Striesen, within the vicinity of the Johannes R. Becher Platz (today Stresemannplatz) (Figure 25), and the other located in Dresden's old city center, near Fučíkplatz (today Straßburgerplatz) (Figure 26).[83] The resulting "housing district surveys" first described

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[83] "Wohngebietsaufklärung. Dresden Stadtteil Striesen – Bereich Johannes R. Becher Platz, Objekthäuser Borsbergtr. 16 mit der Objekteinrichtung RFT Filiale und Krenkelstr. 10," Dresden, 1981, BArch MfS HA VIII 8032, 36-49; "Wohngebietsaufklärung. Dresden Stadtteil Mitte – Bereich Fučíkplatz, Objekthaus Comeniusstr. 12," Dresden, 1981, BArch MfS HA VIII 8032, 27-35. Both surveys were carried out by the same officer—as the identical handwriting evinces—and over the same month.
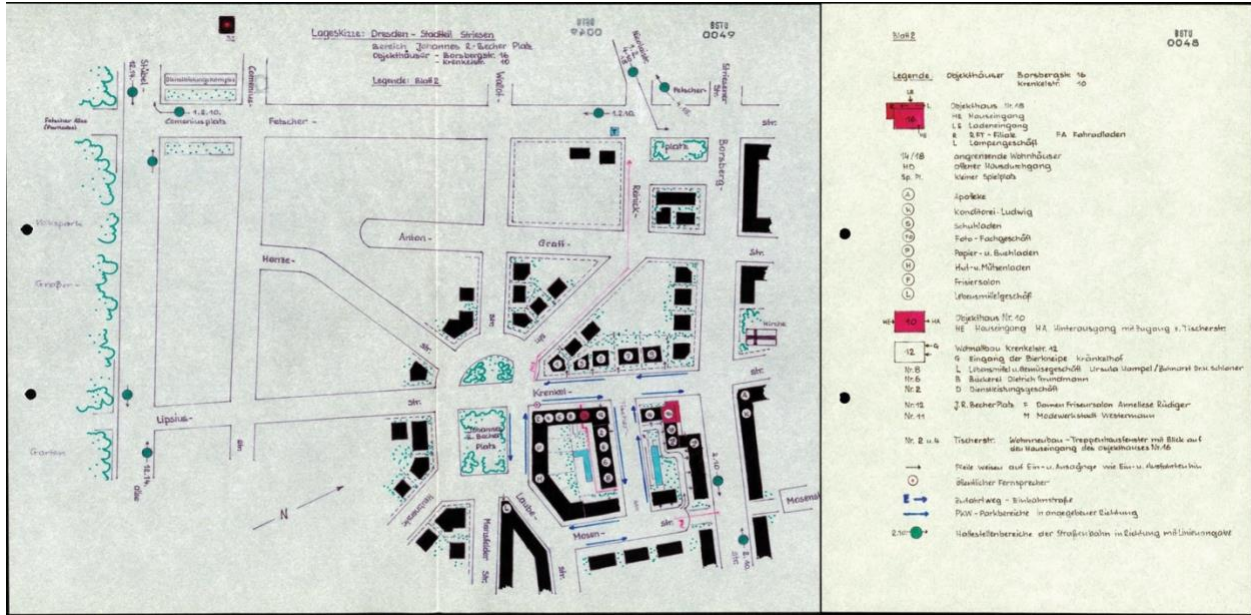
Figure 25 "Wohngebietsaufklärung. Dresden Stadtteil Striesen – Bereich Johannes R. Becher Platz, Objekthäuser Borsbergtr. 16 mit der Objekteinrichtung RFT Filiale und Krenkelstr. 10," Site plan (with legend) of a housing district survey on Dresden Johannes R. Becher Platz and its wider surroundings, BStU MfS HA VIII 8032, 48-49.
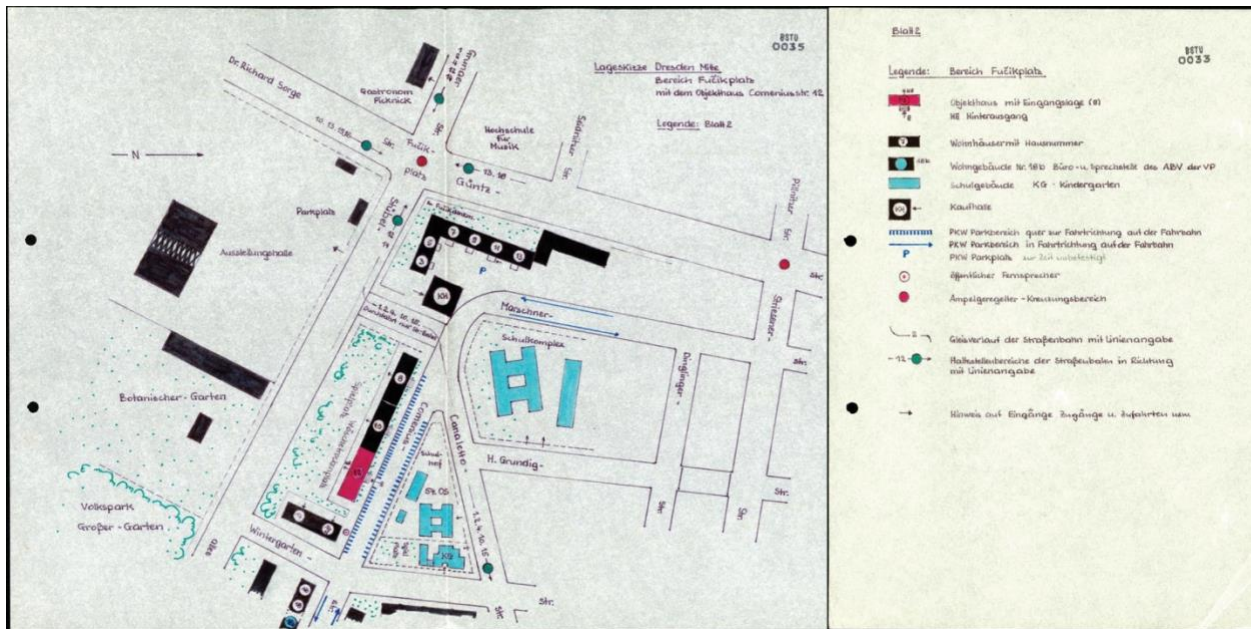
Figure 26 "Wohngebietsaufklärung. Dresden Stadtteil Mitte – Bereich Fučíkplatz, Objekthaus Comeniusstr. 12," Site plan (with legend) of a housing district survey on Dresden Fučíkplatz and its surroundings, BStU MfS HA VIII 8032, 33, 35.

the building stock, demographics of inhabitants, surrounding traffic conditions, to name a few.

They then zoomed in on particular housing structures, inspecting their floor plans and analyzing

their spatial relationships with their surroundings. Yet, as a comparative review of the documents reveals, the target of surveillance initiating the surveying efforts was in neither neighborhood—it was a place in-between them. Located halfway between the two neighborhoods, the primary object of surveillance was the offices of the Dresden Regional and District Committee of the Workers' and Farmers' Inspection (*Arbeiter-und-Bauern-Inspektion – ABI*) (indicated on the upper left corner of Figure 25).[84]

While the surveys jointly yet implicitly reference the ABI offices, their explicitly mutual reference is a branch manager of the state-owned radio and television store RFT (*Rundfunk- und Fernmeldetechnik*) living in the city center and working in Striesen. That the Stasi "selected" the manager as a "target object," as the survey report states, suggests that they were chosen as a potential IM-recruit to surveil the offices, presumably because of their involvement in this institution of people's economic oversight.[85] Once the manager was "chosen," their places of dwelling and work became secondary objects of surveillance and hence subjects of surveying efforts. With the radio and television store being designated as a "target object facility," a resident living above the store was again "chosen" for recruitment as an IM. Their apartment thus became the tertiary object of surveillance, from which the secondary could be observed.

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[84] This is a particularly difficult document to decipher, especially because the surveys jointly yet implicitly reference the offices both in their reports and their site plans without any additional substantiation. There a couple of clues supporting this inference, nonetheless. The reasons for surveying, in typical fashion, were left unspecified as the department received assignments that only mentioned "who" or "where" to watch but never "why" to preserve the cap on secrecy even within the ministry. Yet, as a result, some survey documents such as this one ended up being somewhat cryptic because observers had become the subject of observation and surveys had led to new surveys. I argue that this particular example, which was the outcome of secret chains of operations of this very kind, illustrate how surveys helped the Stasi build spatial networks of people for surveillance purposes.

[85] "Target persons" (*Zielpersonen*) or "target objects" (*Zielobjekte*) were visually surveilled short-term in order to collect insight on their places of residence and work, connections, lifestyles, habits and hobbies. These observation assignments could be placed to produce reports feeding into existing "operational procedures" (*Operativer Vorgang – OV*) or "operational person control" (*Operative Personenkontrolle – OPK*), collecting incriminating evidence to be presented at court. They could also, however, be pursued as part of security checks targeting potential employee hires or IM recruits. This particular case applied to the latter. The manager's convenient access to the premises over their course of daily commute might have reinforced their selection as a recruit.

Another housing unit, situated couple of blocks down, was designated as yet another "object" but, this time, not for observation. This apartment, arguably occupied by an existing IM, was to serve as a "halfway house" (*Durchgangshaus*), which the Stasi could intermittently use along what it marked as an "auspicious escape route" (*günstiger Fluchtweg*).[86]
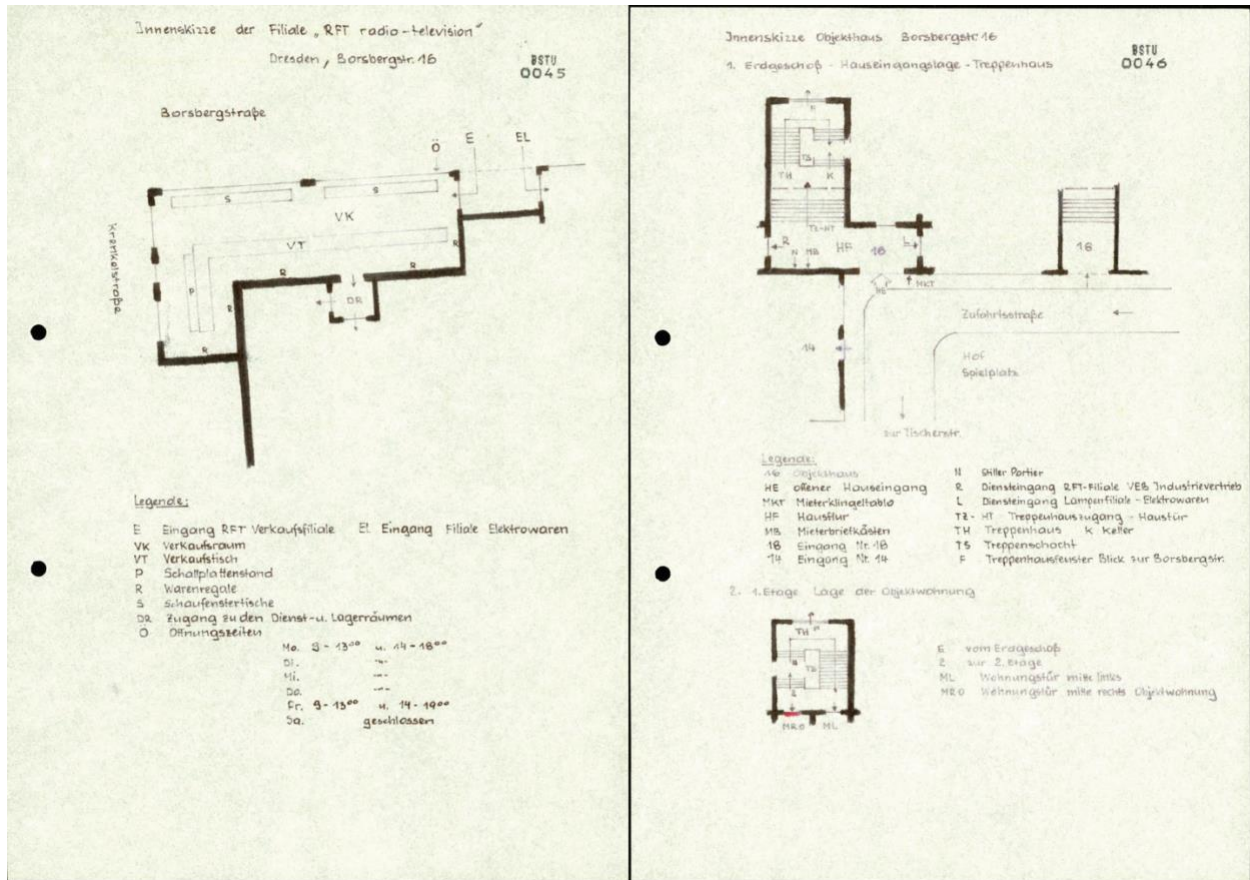
Figure 27 [Left] "Innenskizze der Filiale 'RFT radio-television,' Dresden Borsbergstr. 16," Interior plan of the radio-television store. "E" indicates its guest entrance and "DR" doors to its storage space leading to the service entrance. [Right] "Innenskizze Objekthaus Borsbergstr. 16," Above, the ground floor plan of the housing block rising above the store. "R" stands for the store's service entrance opening to the block's lobby. Below, first floor plan of the housing structure indicating the entrance to the "object housing" as the one to the right. BStU MfS HA VIII 8032, 45-46.

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[86] This last supplementary "object" was not an observation post, which is evinced by the fact that it is not mentioned as part of the Stasi's observation recommendations. All shop windows, commercial or public facilities considered provide sightlines towards the "secondary object." The "halfway house" and its surroundings are analyzed in a similar vein, regardless, and the survey material includes drawings of the building's ground floor and the floor of the "halfway house" to instruct the Stasi on how to use this "escape route."
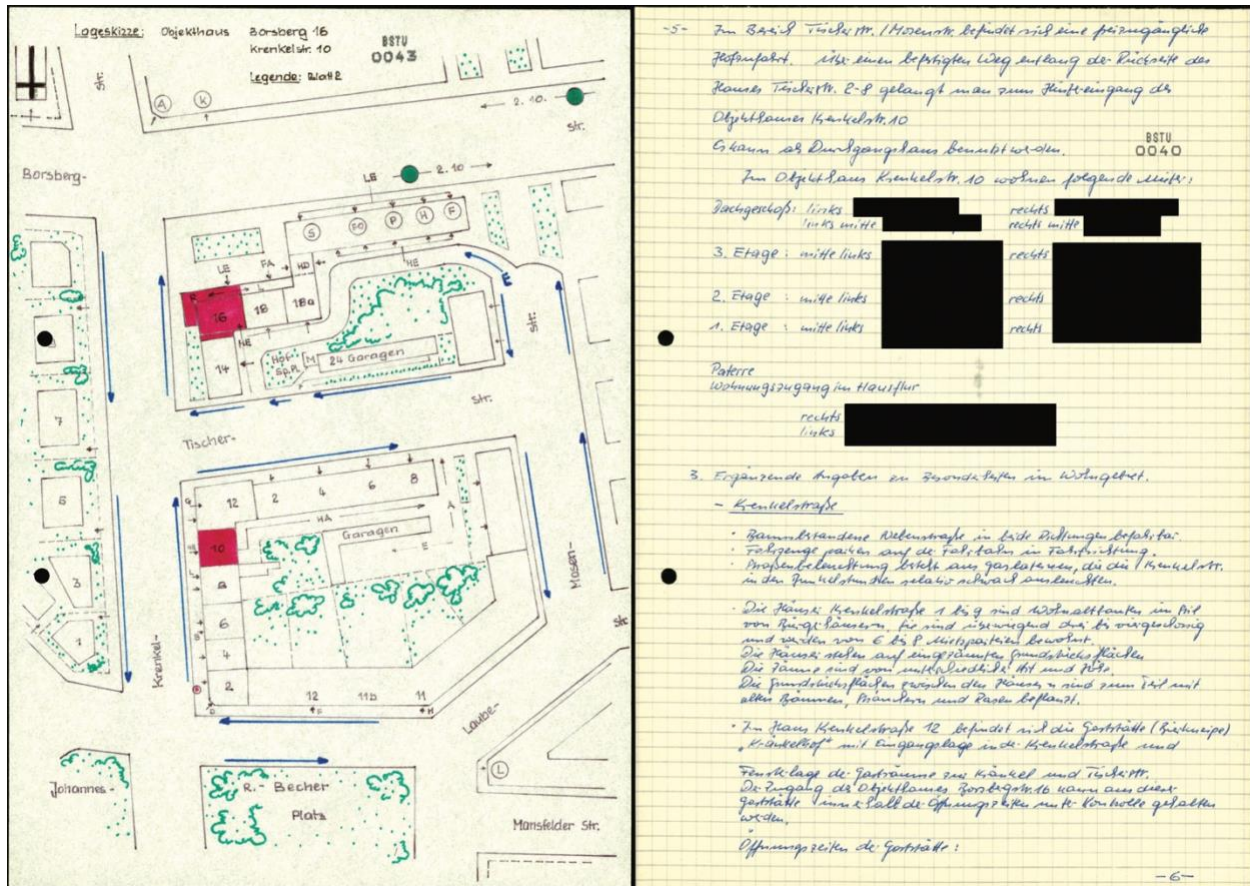
Figure 28 [Left] Close-up site plan of Dresden Johannes R. Becher Platz, with two "object houses" marked in pink. House Nr. 16 is located above the store documented on Figure 27, House Nr. 10 is designated as the "halfway house." "LE" stands for the television store's guest entrance and "HE" for the main entrance to the housing structure. [Right] Excerpt from the accompanying report, with the list of residents living on the right and left wing of the housing structure. BStU MfS HA VIII 8032, 40, 43.

Here, the selection of potential IMs was distinctly prompted by the results of surveying and explicated in the subsequent reports and drawings. For example, the resident chosen to observe the manager was selected after reviewing from where the store could be visually kept under control. Architecturally inspecting the store, the Stasi first paid attention to its spatial organization, entrances and exits (Figure 27, left). The store's guest entrance was from one of the main streets circumscribing the plot and its service entrance opened indoors to the housing block's lobby, leading through the building's main entrance and to a back alley. These findings were inscribed onto the hand-drawn floor plan of the store, ground floor plan of the housing

structure (Figure 27, right), and site plan of the area. As the site plan elucidates (Figure 28, left), only units from the same building offered views of both the store's guest entrance and the housing block's main entrance, requiring an observer to be chosen from this very structure.

What is more, this observer would also have access to the lobby and hence be able to monitor all movement to, from, and through the store. Second, the survey report listed all residents in groups of units to the right and left side of the building, floor by floor (Figure 28, right). This was significant as only apartments to the right of this corner structure (left of the site plan) had windows opening in three directions, two of which looked over to the two main streets demarcating the plot and a third looking over to the back alley. Those to the left (right of the site plan) had instead two blind walls—one demarcating the neighboring unit and the other the adjacent building—and hence comparatively limited view. Thus, the Stasi "chose" a resident living on the right side of the first floor as its "target object," i.e., target for recruitment as an IM-observer.

Only this last step of the selection amongst residents with right-side units over four floors seems to have relied on social rather than spatial criteria. The resident was described in detail—their age, physical characteristics, marital status, clothing, and so on—arguably to help IM-recruiters, who were from another department, with identification. These descriptions were immediately followed by notes on which of their windows looked onto which street or entrance, supporting the argument that the selection here was foremost grounded in persons' spatial-visual access and only secondly in their social and personal qualities. By revealing which window provided unobstructed views of a building entrance or a street, who had access to specific spaces or structures, and whose paths of commute crossed certain places—in short, by uncovering conditions of visibility, accessibility, and mobility available to persons—surveys assisted the

selection of persons to be recruited as IMs as well as of existing IMs to be drawn into specific operations.

In all the surveillance procedures and processes discussed above—inspection of sightlines and determination of observation points, planning and mapping of covert movement, or meeting with and selecting IMs—architecture was neither a mere backdrop to nor a passive object of East German state power. While the Stasi conducted state surveillance as a strategically spatial practice, the built environment became an active constituent of its operations. Yet, in order to understand the spatial exercise of surveillance, it is "not enough to study, as an end in itself, the architectural configurations of monitored buildings or the particular characteristics of monitored areas," as geographer Francisco Klauser writes.[87] The task is, instead, to analyze how surveillance is shaped by the spatial, material, technological, and morphological characteristics of the built environment and how, in turn, surveillance mediates these environments and architectural spaces. The next section will help us do exactly that: to interrogate how diverse urban morphologies and architectural technologies mediated and was mediated by domestic state surveillance, as the Stasi modified its measures for navigating old and new housing sites.

Housing District Surveys

Policing Housing, Old and New

For the Stasi, mass housing was a primary site of mass surveillance.[88] Housing was where people spent a considerable amount of their lives and, in contrast to spaces of work, expressed themselves relatively freely. As one of the "niches" in which East Germans found refuge from

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[87] Klauser, *Surveillance and Space*, 36.
[88] Some findings from this section has been published in: Emine Seda Kayim, "Surveillant Movements: Policing and Spatial Production in East German Housing," *React/Review: A Responsive Journal for Art & Architecture*, no. 3 (2023): 77–95.

the Soviet-socialist surveillance regime of the GDR, the home became a site of the surveillance state's heightened attention.[89] The Stasi set up observation posts in key housing sites to inspect potential deviant behavior, recruited informants amongst residents, and installed listening devices in neighboring walls. Thus, while the East German state security apparatus put almost 50% of the population under some form of targeted surveillance, many of these surveillance activities concentrated within Plattenbauten, where one in every three East German came to live by 1990.[90] To become a resident of any Plattenbau-settlement, including the "new cities" in Berlin-Marzahn or Leipzig-Grünau, citizens had to undergo a diligent vetting process. Their party memberships, contacts with the West and even job performances were subject to the ministry's background checks. The high-density Plattenbau-settlements were—so the Cold War paranoia went—a prime target for "Western enemy forces" threatening with infiltration.[91] Thus, despite its residents' political conformity, being in the know about what goes on in and around these social housing sites remained important to the Stasi. Old residential neighborhoods, this time seen as a hotbed of "unsocialist" behavior, were also under the Stasi's heightened attention.[92] Intellectuals, artists, activists indeed chose to live in *Altbauten*—Wilhelmine-era

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[89] The term "niche society" was coined for the GDR by Günter Gaus and has since been mobilized to argue for the existence of privacy and private spheres exempt from socialist ideology and rule. See: Günter Gaus, *Wo Deutschland liegt: Eine Ortsbestimmung* (Hamburg: Hoffmann und Campe, 1983). For a discussion on Christian subculture and domestic life in the GDR as spaces of this "niche society," see: Paul Betts, *Within Walls: Private Life in the German Democratic Republic* (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2010).

[90] As a distinctly East German building technology, the Plattenbau-system was first introduced in 1961. Over the next three decades, many Plattenbau-types were developed, all of which promised complete standardization of design, prefabrication of all components, and fully integrated industrial assembly. By 1965, the Plattenbau-system came to constitute 30% of all East German construction activities. By 1985, 85% of all housing production in the GDR was conducted with industrial construction methods, and Plattenbauten comprised 75% of it. See: Christine Hannemann, *Die Platte: Industrialisierter Wohnungsbau in der DDR*, 3rd ed. (Berlin: Verlag Hans Schiler, 2005), 23–24.

[91] So were many "academic" studies conducted at the ministry's "spy academy" in Potsdam devoted to developing blanket observation systems for specific Plattenbau-settlements, such as: "Nutzung operativer Beobachtungsstützpunkte im Neubaugebiet Leipzig-Grünau," BArch MfS BVfS Leipzig Abt. VIII 782, 1-11; "Dokumentation und graphische Darstellung zur Nutzung operative Sicht- und Aufenthaltsstützpunkte in Leipzig-Grünau," BArch MfS BVfS Leipzig Abt VIII 367, 19-45.

[92] As Claus Bernet writes, "right up to the last years of the GDR, Wilhelmine districts were viewed as representing capitalism par excellence." Claus Bernet, "The 'Hobrecht Plan' (1862) and Berlin's Urban Structure," *Urban History* 31, no. 3 (2004): 416.

tenements within the vicinity of old city centers—as a sign of their refusal of state social engineering.[93]

Surveilling and policing prewar and postwar housing required different methods due to their distinct morphologies. Wilhelmine housing conditions for the proletariat were characterized by rental barracks (*Mietskasernen*) which emerged as a product of capitalist housing production in an era of rapid industrialization. Even though they adhered to the general guidelines of their respective city plans, in the absence of building regulation and fueled by rampant land speculation, the Mietskasernen were developed as densely as possible by private landlords seeking to maximize profits. Growing from a front house into side wings and a rear house, the Mietskaserne became a tenement type: five to six stories high and circumscribing a residential lot by leaving only a small inner courtyard. Working-class residents had only communal hygiene facilities and little to no sunlight in their one-room accommodations, accessible by narrow hallways and staircases opening into the courtyard. These agglomerations of residential space tightly lined along streets, forming entire blocks with interconnecting courtyards, and hiding what came to be known as wretched quarters (*Elendsviertel*) behind their attractive neo-historicist façades.

Postwar housing production in the GDR aimed to ameliorate endemic housing shortage and the "miseries" of the Wilhelmine housing stock. From the 1960s onward, new structures in prefabricated concrete sprawled across war-torn urban centers, on the peripheries of major East German cities, and at industrial sites. Following a long lineage of social housing solutions within the European modernist tradition, they were rationalized, standardized, and typified. All units

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[93] It is worth noting that bourgeois liberals of the Kaisserreich saw neighborhoods housing the proletariat as "breeding grounds for both radical left-wing politics and moral degeneration," only a century earlier. Rubin, "Amnesiopolis: From Mietskaserne to Wohnungsbauserie 70 in East Berlin's Northeast," *Central European History* 47 (2014): 337.

had access to fresh air and sunlight, with their windows opening to expansive green fields as opposed to narrower streets or courtyards. Plattenbauten were not only social but socialist housing. With their planning, the East German state set forth the programmatic reconstruction of the society, reorganizing both domestic and urban relations anew.

One way the Stasi responded to these different urban-residential environments was by devising so-called "observation systems" (*Beobachtungssysteme*), which choreographed the movements of surveillance agents' foot-tracking and observing subjects of interest. The objective was to orchestrate an interplay of moving and stationed "observers" so that "objects"—namely, pursued subjects—could be kept visually "under control" and their destinations could be determined.[94] Observation systems considered many factors, including population and building density, the width of streets, size of building blocks, and the form of urban planning. For "quiet neighborhoods and uncrowded streets," the East German secret police recommended the use of the "sequenced" (*Reihenvariante*) and "parallel" (*Parallelvariante*) variations. In the sequenced variation, three observers (*Beobachter*) would follow their "object" by forming a straight line while constantly changing their positions (Figure 29). In the parallel variation, they would pursue their object parallel to each other across adjacent streets (Figure 30).[95] The parallel variation was, however, only fitting for garden colonies or neighborhoods of single-family houses on city peripheries, where parallel streets or pathways were not too far apart from one another. For Plattenbau-settlements, where streets were lined by rows of housing blocks and offset in greater distances with green belts in between, the sequencing method was preferred. In these social housing sites, heavy foot traffic occurred only during the morning and evening when people

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[94] "Beobachtungssysteme," BArch MfS HA VIII 8929, 13. The Stasi referred to both human subjects and buildings (*Objekthaus*, *Überwachungsobjekt*) as "objects" of surveillance.
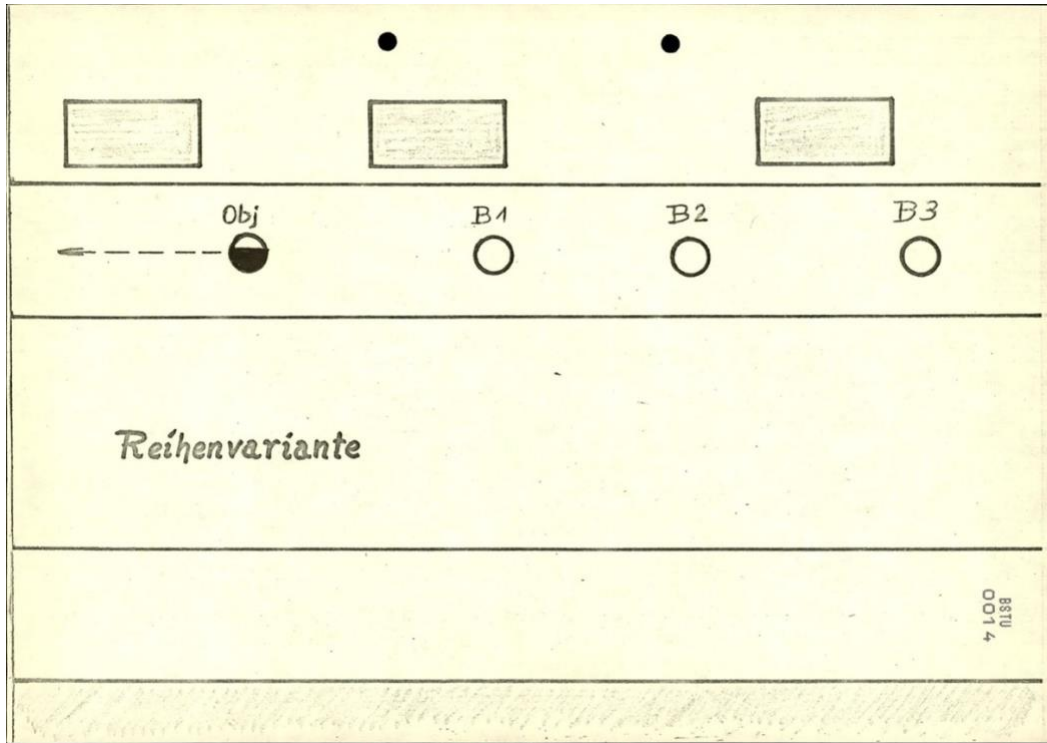[95] "Beobachtungssysteme," BArch MfS HA VIII 8929, 14-15, 17-18.

Figure 29 "Reihenvariante", "Sequenced" variation of the Stasi's observation systems, dateless, ca. 1980s, BArch MfS HA VIII 8929, 14.
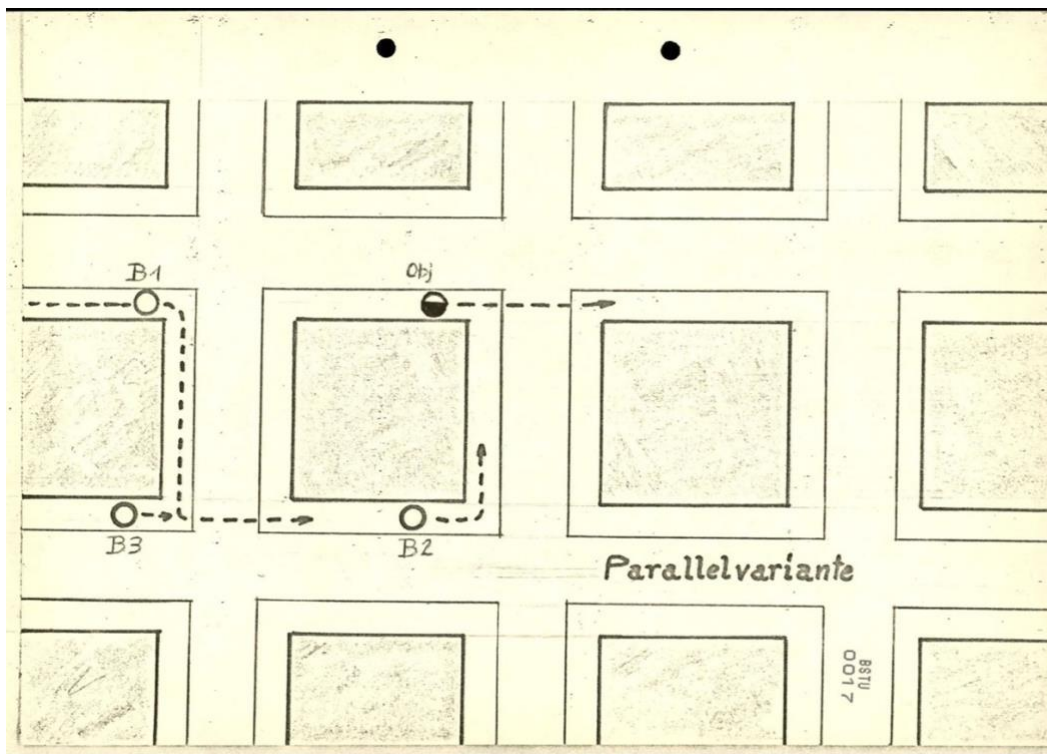
Figure 30 "Parallelvariante," "Parallel" variation of the Stasi's observation systems, dateless, ca. 1980s, BArch MfS HA VIII 8929, 17.

went to and came back from work.[96] The sequencing method promised to make the street "look livelier," diverting the attention of potential "counter-observers"—not just accomplices but passers-by or curious neighbors.
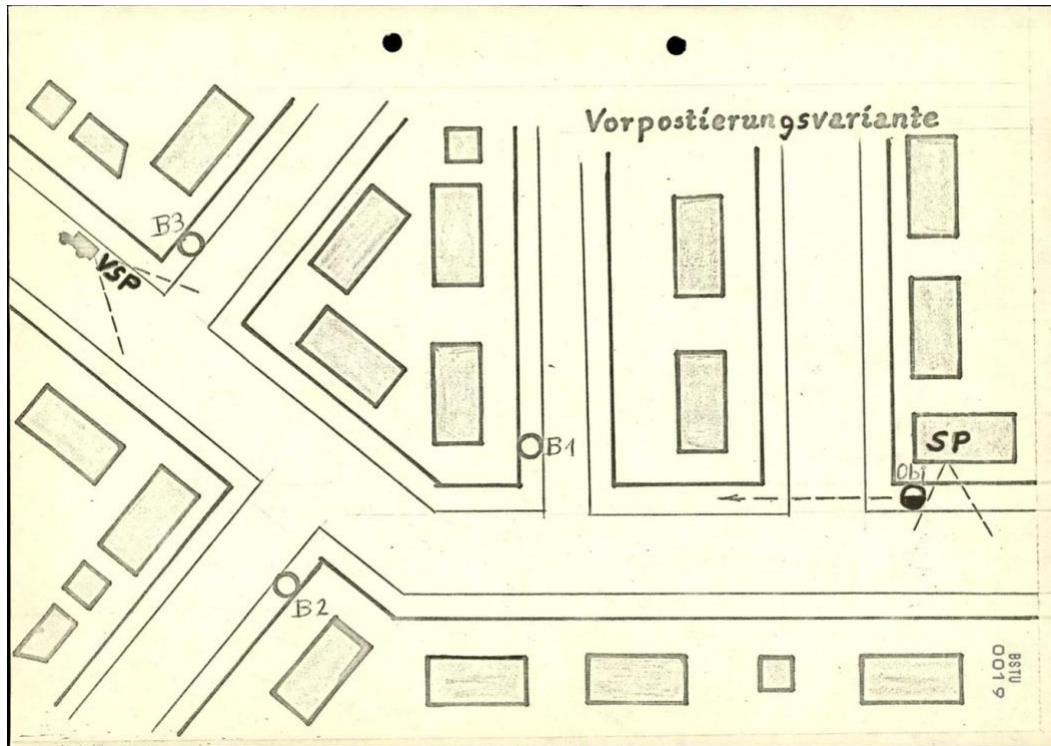
Figure 31 "Vorpostierungsvariante," "Pre-stationing" model of the Stasi's observation systems, dateless, ca. 1980s, BArch MfS HA VIII 8929, 19.

By contrast, in densely built, crowded, and organically planned residential neighborhoods, such as the old tenement quarters, the Stasi urged its operatives to follow the "pre-stationing" model (*Vorpostierungsvariante*) (Figure 31). In this method, one agent was stationed in a building with a clear view (*Sichtpunkt*) of the "moving object." Three agents were positioned on block corners and street intersections towards which the surveilled might

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[96] Writing on the Plattenbau-settlement in Berlin-Marzahn, historian Eli Rubin explains that the settlement "was constructed so that every resident could walk to either work or school or could walk easily to a public transit stop. There were very few who left their building and hopped into a car to drive away, in contrast to the older neighborhoods." Eli Rubin, *Amnesiopolis: Modernity, Space, and Memory in East Germany* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), 141.

approach, and a surveillance vehicle drove towards the target.[97] The Stasi's observation systems

thus suggested that, at least at a rudimentary level, surveillance conducted in old housing districts

might require more elaborate planning and more human power than in new social housing sites.

While observation systems considered urban morphologies, their successful execution

depended on "good collective interplay and prior and extensive knowledge of localities."[98] To

produce the local spatial knowledge needed for tailoring these "systems" to a given site, the East

German secret police had to visit and document them. Passageways between interconnecting

courtyards across old building clusters, for example, were eminent objects of the Stasi's urban-

spatial analysis. As undisciplined spaces occupied by undisciplined bodies, they posed both an

advantage and a threat to secret policing. They were also pivotal for adjusting abstract

observation systems to specific architectural settings. The East German secret police thus

diligently surveyed passageways connecting courtyards and streets by hand-drawing site plans,

marking links and reporting on access points and routes (Figure 32).[99] To help orient observers,

the plans were traced from maps for an accurate representation of scale and proportion. These

tracings were done by ruler, suggesting that the plans were prepared at the office instead of on

site. The drawings were kept simple: they only showed signposts within the area, such as subway

and train stations, parks, squares, and noteworthy buildings. The alternate route offered by the

passageway was drawn in color as the focal point of the study. With this spatial analysis, the East

German secret police prepared for foot-tracking subjects, who—under possible suspicion of their

tail—could take these hidden routes. It also created maps benefitting surveillance agents' covert

approach and getaway. Accompanying written reports described the surroundings step by step:

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[97] "Beobachtungssysteme," BArch MfS HA VIII 8929, 19.
[98] "Beobachtungssysteme," BArch MfS HA VIII 8929, 18.
[99] See: "Durchgangshaus im Stadtbezirk Friedrichshain, Mitte, Prenzlauerberg," BArch MfS HA VIII 8032, 1-17.
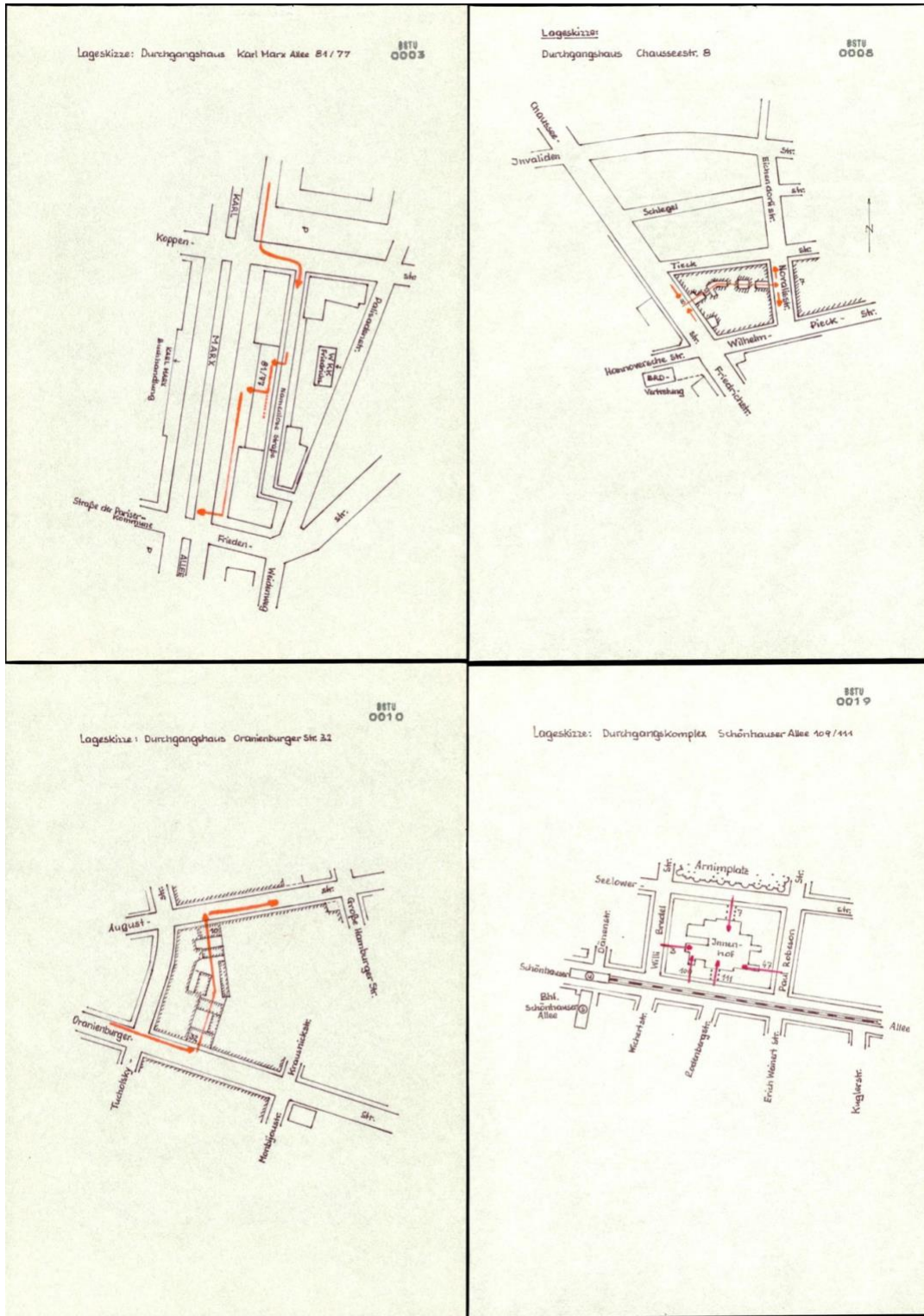
Figure 32 "Lageskizze: Durchganghäuser," Berlin "passageway" surveys conducted by the Stasi, ca. 1981, BArch MfS HA 8032, 3, 8, 10, 19.

how unkempt the greenery of a courtyard is, or the difference in ground elevation from one courtyard to the next. Such environmental and architectural details were not recorded for a subsequent correction of disorder. Rather, they were distinct identifiers of a place with which agents could verify their locations.

Losing Tail and Losing Sight in Plattenbauten

Was it more complicated to surveil and police old housing settlements, as the Stasi's observation systems and passageway surveys suggest? Plattenbau-settlements presented the East German secret police with some advantages. In contrast to old housing structures, designed and constructed through decentralized processes, blueprints of East German prefabricated housing types were easily available to the Stasi's disposal. These blueprints provided the secret police with elementary knowledge of their spatial configurations prior to surveying efforts. The replicability of building types to various sites brought with it a degree of replicability in surveillance measures targeting them, as well.[100] While the Stasi needed to explore the spatial characteristics of old housing structures individually, at Plattenbau-settlements "personal inspection of the area" could be supported by learning "which new building types are prevalent…and what special features they have," features concerning accessibility and visibility within the building type.[101]

In planning surreptitious entry and pursuit of subjects into prewar and early postwar residential structures, the Stasi had to watch and determine time patterns—garbage collection

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[100] Studying the most commonly applied Plattenbau types, the Stasi attempted to develop listening technologies to implement centrally and en masse. See: "Vorschlag über eine neue Realisierungsvariante von oben oder unten in der Wohnungstypen IW 73 bis IW80," BArch MfS BV Karl-Marx-Stadt Abt. 26 168. Other studies included: "Konzeption für den Einsatz der Linie B in Wohnbauten P2 & Q3," BArch MfS BV Karl-Marx-Stadt Abt. Wismut 23; and "Telefonversorgung im Neubautyp QP71," BArch MfS Abt. 26 868, 8-22. There is currently no evidence, however, showing that these plans were realized.
[101] "Dokumentation über den Stadtbezirk Berlin-Marzahn," BArch MfS HA VIII 5192, 11.

schedules, visits of postal workers, and general habits of residents—to find out when a building would be generally accessible.[102] The equipment of industrialized housing types with intercom systems changed the rules of accessibility for the Stasi, giving them another advantage. As the entrance doors automatically closed and locked upon entry, there was no point in systematic observation and determination of patterns as the operatives could randomly ask to be buzzed in. In comparison to old housing structures within city centers where neighbors formed a closely-knit community, in the Plattenbauten hundreds of residents lived together and, while people most probably knew who lived on the same floor as them, they certainly did not know everyone in the building.[103]

Elevators were also considered significant in Stasi surveys, but not necessarily beneficial for surveillance operations. Foot-tracking subjects of interest by the staircase versus the elevator required different approaches. In buildings without an elevator—including Mietskasernen as well as fully industrialized types up to five stories high—the secret police either had to climb ahead, which was difficult to orchestrate as the surveilled entered the premises first, or had to listen to and count their steps to determine their whereabouts within the building. The aural dimension of the staircase communicating information through echo, however, was lost to the elevator. In many housing types, elevators either skipped or stopped between floors, making it impossible to aurally track whether the surveilled was walking upstairs or downstairs thereafter. The staircase shaft of a Plattenbau with elevators—usually ten or more stories high—simply rendered the steps not distinctly audible. For example, in the twenty-stories high WHH GT 18 (*Wohnhochhaus*

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[102] See, for instance: "Wohngebietsaufklärung. Dresden Stadtteil Striesen - Bereich Johannes R. Becher Platz," BArch MfS HA VIII 8032, 36-42.

[103] This point has previously been made by: Rubin, *Amnesiopolis*, 144. As Rubin writes, "it was not uncommon for residents to ring a random bell and ask to be buzzed in because they had forgotten their key or because they needed to use a telephone, which many of Marzahn's buildings had in their lobbies." For further information, see: "Dokumentation über den Stadtbezirk Berlin-Marzahn," BArch MfS HA VIII 5192, 10.
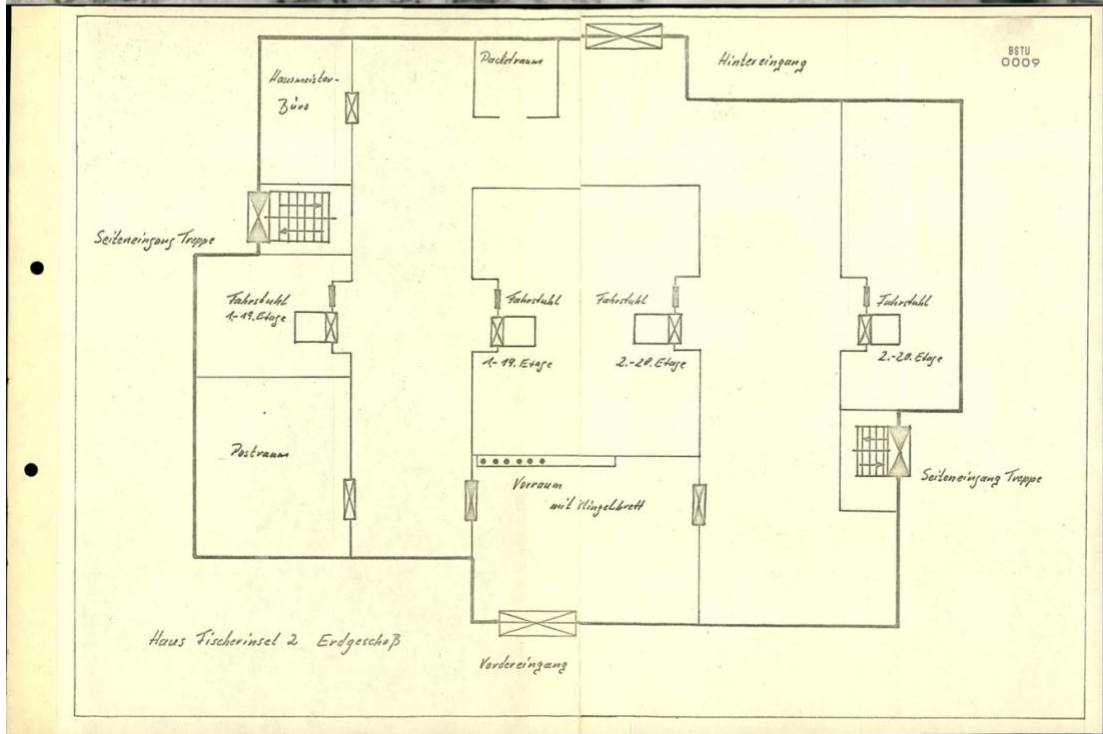
Figure 33 "Aufklärung Fischerinsel 2," Exterior photograph (above) and ground floor plan (below) of the WHH GT 18 type housing on Berlin's Fischerinsel, prepared by the Stasi, BArch MfS HA 8929, 7, 9.

Grosstafelbauweise) type residential towers erected on Berlin's Fischerinsel in the early 1970s, there were four elevators, all accessible from the ground floor. Two of these stopped on floors with odd numbers and the other two on those with even numbers (Figure 33).[104] With twelve units on each floor, all connected via a central staircase, the target could be headed anywhere, regardless of which elevator they took. In the most commonly applied housing type, the WBS 70 introduced in 1971, the elevators stopped at every floor but the uppermost, yet the secret police still had to keep physical proximity to and a visual tap on its subjects to determine their destination as there could be up to eight units per floor.[105] In other types, such as the eleven-story high P2, developed in 1965, elevators stopped only on the fourth, seventh, and tenth floor, making it even more difficult to follow a subject without provoking suspicion.[106]

In former Mietskasernen, too, the Stasi had no way of knowing where its targets might be going. They could take the stairs of the block facing the street (*Vorderhaus*) or advance towards the side wings or the back house (*Hinterhaus*), both of which were accessible only through the courtyard. The solution was to determine observation points within the housing complex as a preemptive surveillance measure. Surveying a prewar housing structure in Berlin, the Stasi operatives photographically documented vantage points allowing for the observation of possible movements across the courtyard.[107] At first, these photographs of a seemingly dilapidated building capture its dark corners: opportune hiding places with exclusive views onto the interior windows of the complex. Yet, paying attention to how the Stasi was able to take these images, it

[104] "Aufklärung Fischerinsel 2," BArch MfS HA VIII 8929, 1-9.

[105] Rubin, *Amnesiopolis*, 144"Dokumentation über den Stadtbezirk Berlin-Marzahn," BArch MfS HA VIII 5192, p. 12.

[106] Other architectural and technological differences between the centrally devised and manufactured Plattenbau-types included the weight of standardized prefabricated elements, dimension of housing units, and principle of load-bearing walls. From the early 1960s until the late 1980s, every subsequent type demonstrated a higher degree of rationalization in design and industrial production.

[107] "Haus Voigtstr. 36/37 Bln.-Friedrichshain," BArch MfS HA II 29913, 9-12.

becomes clear that they were taken from these very corners: from the semibasement leading from the front lobby to the courtyard (Figure 34, left), or from the windows of the side wing's staircase looking onto the courtyard (Figure 34, right). Old housing settlements were crowded and difficult to decipher spatially but helped both agents and subjects to be out of sight.
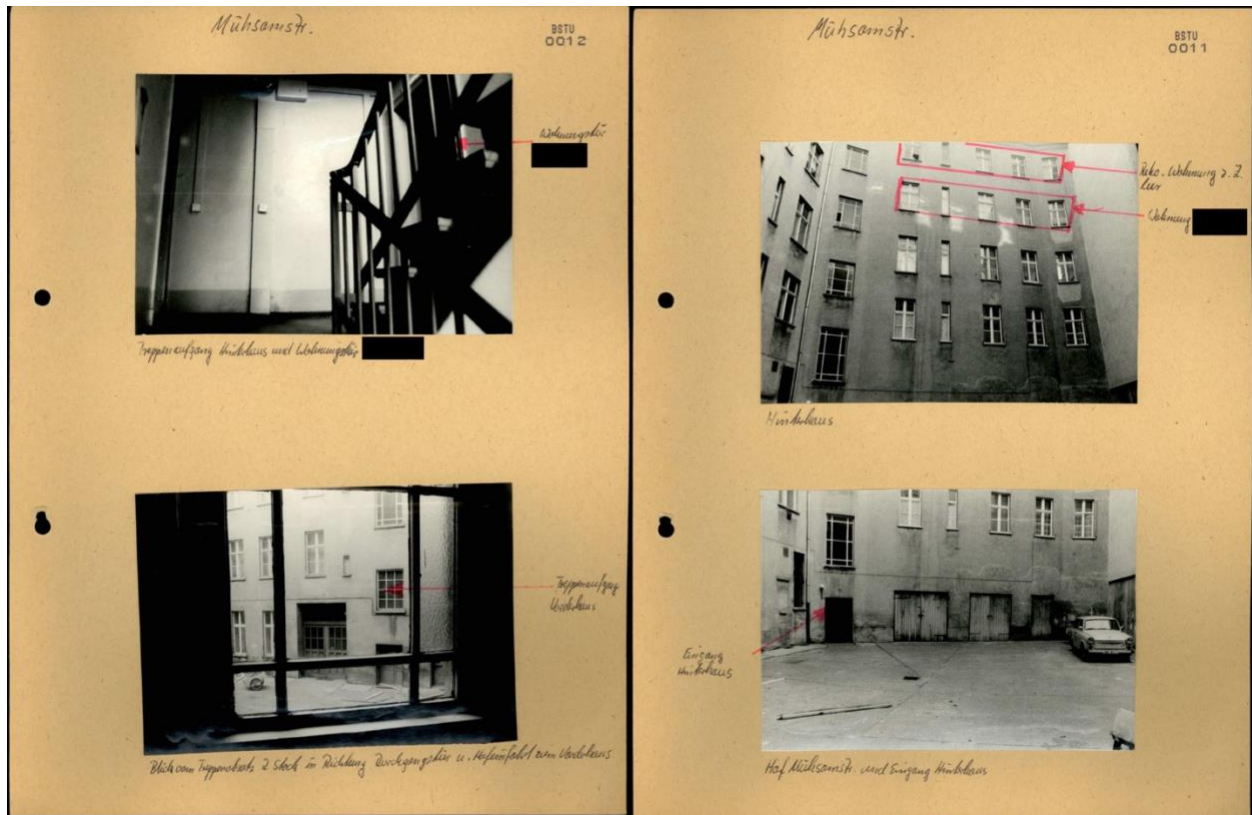
Figure 34 "Haus Voigtstr. 36/37 Bln-Friedrichshain," Photographic documentation of a former Mietskaserne in Berlin-Friedrichshain, surveyed by the Stasi. Image on the left is taken from the staircase of the back house; image on the right taken from the side wing's staircase, looking onto the exit from the front house into the courtyard, date unknown, BArch MfS HA II 29913, 11-12.

In prefabricated housing settlements and complexes, by contrast, it was difficult to hide and there were simply more routes of escape for everyone: for surveillance agents and East Germans under their watch. East German prefabricated housing—by virtue of its planning and design—provided its own hard-to-track spatial connections akin to the back alleys, connecting courtyards, and hidden passages between old building clusters. In addition to multiple entrances, exits, staircases, and elevators, corridors of adjacent housing blocks were linked on two or more

floors. In the eleven stories high variation of the WBS 70 housing type, for example, the

basements and 9th floors of housing assemblages were horizontally connected via throughways

between their corridors; leading up to hallways and vertical circulation, and hence linking floors,

entrances, and exits of chains of buildings. This meant that a target could enter an eleven-storied

WBS 70 type from one block, take the elevator or stairs to reach one of the throughways, and

ultimately exit the structure from several blocks down.[108] In the eleven-stories high P2 type

housing, these connections existed between the twin housing sections and on floors where the

elevators stopped, making it even more difficult to foot-track a suspect alert to being followed.

One could potentially enter the building from one section, take the elevator up, move on to the

other section, climb up or down the stairs to take the elevator again, and exit the section from its

rear door.[109] These were spatial characteristics unique to the new housing stock, and the

Plattenbauten created vertical and horizontal mazes through which the Stasi had to keep physical

proximity to and a visual tap on its subjects of surveillance.

The Plattenbauten rendered the Stasi's clandestine operations requiring orientation and

navigation as intricate an affair as those planned for and enacted within the GDR's prewar

building stock, as I tried to illustrate. This complicates the narrative that modernist solutions to

the social ordering of space—or, in James C. Scott's terms, state simplification—creates

seamless and uniform results for the exercise of state power.[110] Writing on the Plattenbau-

settlement in Berlin-Marzahn, historian Eli Rubin states that the "Corbusian model of 'towers in

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[108] Rubin, *Amnesiopolis*, 144.

[109] "Wohngebietsaufklärung. Dresden Stadtteil Mitte - Bereich Fučíkplatz. Objekthaus Comeniusstr. 12," BArch MfS HA VIII 8032, 29.

[110] Examining how modern statecraft "sees" and hence surveills by rationalizing and standardizing social space "into a legible and administratively more convenient format," James C. Scott formulates these schemes of inspection and control as "state simplification," for which the industrialized, typified, and mass produced projects of "high modernism" provide the faithful architectural template. Scott, *Seeing Like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed*, 3.

the park' created the perfect kind of panopticon effect in which there was nowhere to hide," yet there were plenty routes of escape in Plattenbau-settlements, as I have shown.[111] Rubin also argues that the Stasi "knew every access point, every piece of technology, every sight line, every angle… knew the spaces of Marzahn better than the residents themselves, and this gave [the Stasi] a kind of spatial knowledge that translated, in a Foucauldian sense, to power more complete than any other space in the GDR."[112] Yet, while the Stasi labored to learn new cities like Marzahn inside and out, it did so to learn countless other building sites across the GDR. What is more, this labor—the labor of surveilling people—did not directly translate to the "economy of power" central to Foucault's panoptic model. The panoptic scheme, to Foucault, makes any apparatus of power more "efficient" by assuring its economy in material, personnel, and time and by centralizing surveillance, reducing the number of observers, and standardizing their processes of information collection and reporting.[113] Considering the Stasi's architectural surveys, especially the lengths surveillance agents went to explore, visually mark, and describe the minutia of the built environment in a process of regular verification, the kind of economy of power Foucault predicated does not seem to hold.[114] The architectural and spatial specificities of old housing sites were not available to the Stasi, but the elementary knowledge gained by inspecting Plattenbau types did not eliminate "the need for local knowledge," either. Contrary to Rubin's contention, this elementary knowledge did not render the secret police "ready to conduct surveillance and espionage anywhere throughout the country."[115]

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[111] Rubin, *Amnesiopolis*, 133.
[112] Rubin, 133.
[113] Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, 206, 218–19.
[114] In fact, the Stasi grew in both budget and employment numbers during periods of relative relaxation, such as the détente years, and domestic surveillance became more intense over the 1970s and early 1980s, which coincided with the expansion of the GDR's mass housing landscape. Gieseke, *The History of the Stasi*, 49–51.
[115] Rubin, *Amnesiopolis*, 138.

First, East German housing types were no monoliths, and most standards had at least few

local variations, such as the P2-Halle, WHH 18 "Typ Jena," or WBS70 "Typ Cottbus."[116] These

variations, one can safely argue, were created due to differences in territorial reach, production

capacities, and local needs.[117] Second, typified building methods—regardless of their level of

adherence to any centrally-devised standard—still required adjustment to topographic conditions,

infrastructure, and roadworks during assembly. This led to alterations in the arrangement of

block sequences, interconnecting corridors, and location of back doors, to name a few, all which

effected principles of circulation and vantage points allowing observation.[118] As a result, the

Stasi's elementary knowledge on prefabricated types did not endow the Stasi with the panoptic

power Rubin ascribes.

One of the implications of Foucault's analysis of the Panopticon is that architecture is

epiphenomenal to surveillance as the "physics" of disciplinary power can be architecturally

perfected to create homogenous power effects.[119] In the GDR, the state certainly desired to

establish a panoptic system, attempting to turn "the whole social body into a field of perception:

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[116] Philipp Meuser, *Vom seriellen Plattenbau zur komplexen Großsiedlung: Industrieller Wohnungsbau in der DDR 1953 -1990*, vol. 1 (Berlin: DOM Publishers, 2022), 136–37.

[117] Some features of the centrally devised WBS 70 type, for example, "could not be implemented due to restrictions in production capacities" and territorial "building combines developed regional solutions in consideration of general guidelines and their own material-technical conditions." Bundesministerium für Raumordnung, Bauwesen und Städtebau, "Leitfaden für die Instandsetzung und Modernisierung von Wohngebäuden in der Plattenbauweise: WBS 70 Wohnungsbauserie 70 6,3 t" (BBSR Bonn, 1997), 4. For an overview of the modifications to mentioned types, also see: Bundesministerium für Raumordnung, Bauwesen und Städtebau, "Leitfaden für die Instandsetzung und Modernisierung von Wohngebäuden in der Plattenbauweise: P2 5,0 t" (BBSR Bonn, 1992), 4–11; Bundesministerium für Raumordnung, Bauwesen und Städtebau, "Leitfaden für die Instandsetzung und Modernisierung von Wohngebäuden in der Plattenbauweise: Wohnhochhäuser" (BBSR Bonn, 1993), 3–41.

[118] Outlining tactics for monitoring the Plattenbau-settlement in Leipzig-Grünau, for example, the Stasi determined that some building clusters created "complicated conditions" for the sort of centralized, anchored observation the Stasi was seeking to establish. While some housing structures faced no other building from which their main entrances could be observed, others lined the street in such a way that their entrances visually blocked each other, making a single and clear sightline of observation for the entire row impossible. BStU MfS BVfS Leipzig Abt VIII 367, p. 21. In a prefabricated housing complex built within an existing neighborhood, the entrance floor of one typified housing block lead via its exit to another street level due to the topography of the site, which was inaccessible and unobservable from the vantage point of the other exit. See: "Erläuterungsbericht zum Wohngebiet 1055 Berlin, am Friedrichshain 21a," BStU MfS HA VIII 3334, p. 1-3.

[119] Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, 202.

thousands of eyes posted everywhere, mobile attentions ever on the alert."[120] Yet, the situated

practice of building is much more complex than Foucault acknowledges and, as such, its

complicity in assuring a system of full (in)visibility and surveillance efficiency must be

questioned.

Conclusion: Infiltrating Society, Spatially

How do we make sense of these surveys and the techniques they employed? To what

extent were they significant to East German state surveillance, its functioning principles, and its

influence? Klaus-Dietmar Henke argues that the historically unique feature of the Stasi was not

its methods but "the resulting scale and depth of the penetration of people's private lives as well

as of the institutions of state and society."[121] The numerous studies on the East German secret

police's reach, referencing the tremendous number of subjects upon which the state spied, the

vastness of the data collected by the institution, and the ever-growing numbers of officers and

collaborators throughout the 1960s to 1980s, is in line with this historical fascination. My

contention is, however, that surveillance's scale and depth cannot be grasped without

understanding how the Stasi registered, networked, infiltrated and used space, which requires an

analysis of not simply the Stasi's methods but, more precisely, the techniques and processes

involved. Before outlining my argument further, however, a brief overview of the purportedly

unique scale of Stasi surveillance would be in order.

The Stasi surveilled almost fifty percent of the East German population—approximately

eight million people—most of them ordinary citizens, and indexed their activities in six million

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[120] Foucault, 214.
[121] Klaus-Dietmar Henke, "Zu Nutzung Und Auswertung Der Stasi-Akten," *Vierteljahreshefte Für Zeitgeschichte* 41, no. 4 (1993): 586; quoted in: Mike Dennis, *Stasi: Myth and Reality.* (London; New York: Routledge, 2016), 91.

dossiers that culminated in 180 kilometers of files.[122] In Leipzig alone the files produced by the

Stasi is more than all the archives generated by the entire duchy of Saxony since the 12th century,

as Robert Darnton writes.[123] The total amount is estimated to be greater than "all the files

produced by all the governments in German history since the Middle Ages," as Paul Betts

suggests.[124] Understood within the context of pre-CCTV, pre-digital and pre-internet surveillance

technologies, the Stasi's data-production enterprise remains unparalleled.

What is more, doubling its staff each decade until the early 1980s, the ministry reached

91,015 employees shortly before the dissolution of the GDR.[125] As one frequently referenced

quote goes, there was one MfS employee for every 180 East German citizen by 1989—a far

higher quota than the KGB, the Gestapo, or any other state security service that ever existed.[126]

While these comparisons help make the capacity of the ministry comprehensible, they are

nonetheless misleading in regard to the scale and depth of the Stasi's surveillance operations for

a considerable portion of the ministry's full-time employees (*hauptamtliche Mitarbeiter*) were

not tasked with surveillance activities: they were secretaries, drivers, servers, builders. What is

revealing in terms of the Stasi's infiltration of the East German state and society is, instead, its

vast network of unofficial collaborators.

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[122] Betts, *Within Walls*, 21. Even though its main subjects in question was mainly comprised of academics, artists, intellectuals and alike, people in contact with anyone from West Berlin in general or factory workers in particular were also of great interest to the state security.

[123] Robert Darnton, "The Stasi Files," in *CTRL [SPACE]: Rhetorics of Surveillance from Bentham to Big Brother*, ed. Thomas Y. Levin, Ursula Frohne, and Peter Weibel (Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 2002), 171.

[124] Betts, *Within Walls*, 22.

[125] Even though the KGB had 500,000 employees, it had "a considerably lower ratio of agents in proportion to the overall population:" 1 to 595 in Soviet Russia, compared to 1 to 867 in Czechoslovakia, and 1 to 1,574 in Poland. Gieseke, *The History of the Stasi*, 49.

[126] The Stasi presence in the East German society must be understood in conjunction with other non-secret security apparatuses, as Gieseke suggests. With 80,000 people under the German People's Police (Volkspolizei) and 47,000 as part of the border troops of the National People's Army (Grenztruppen der Nationalen Volksarmee – GT der NVA), there was 1 police officer per 77 East German citizen. The GDR was thus unequivocally a police state. Gieseke, 75; Another striking statistical comparison shows that in 1988, there was one doctor per 400 GDR resident—more than fourfold of the police-citizen ratio. Popplewell and Childs, *The Stasi. The East German Intelligence and Security Service*, 82.

Regarded as the "main force" of East German state surveillance, IM's were "the Stasi's 'eyes and ears,'" as Mike Dennis puts it, "without whom the full-time officials could not achieve their goals."[127] According to Helmut Müller-Enbergs, the leading scholar on the subject, around 600,000 people worked as an IM between 1950 and 1989.[128] A contested subject among historians, the number of IMs by 1989 is argued to be somewhere between 190,000 and 110,000, putting their concentration within the East German population at 1 to 150 even within the most conservative estimates.[129]

The studies referenced above, on the one hand, ask "to what extent" and debate the true scale and depth of surveillance in the GDR from a numerical perspective. Scholarship asking "how" this historically unique level of penetration was achieved, on the other hand, have discussed the dynamics behind it as social phenomena, looking at what motivated or coerced East Germans to partake in state surveillance to the degree they did—or did not.[130] While both of these lines of inquiry are important to understand the Stasi's unprecedented level of infiltration of the East German state and society, they nonetheless bypass the vital question of "by what

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[127] Dennis, *Stasi*, 91.

[128] Müller-Enbergs, *Inoffizielle Mitarbeiter des Ministeriums für Staatssicherheit. Richtlinien und Durchführungsbestimmungen*, 1:7.

[129] Disputing previous estimates of 189 thousand published by the BStU, Ilko-Sascha Kowalczuk, in his 2013 book *Stasi Konkret*, argued that the numbers have been exaggerated and set the record to 110,000. This caused a veritable stir amongst scholars of the Stasi and the GDR as well as the public, which since has been labelled "historians' dispute v.2" (Historikerstreit) in reference to the 1986-1987 dispute between historian Ernst Nolte and philosopher Jürgen Habermas on the singularity of the Holocaust.

[130] According to historian Jan Palmowski, the state security apparatus had trouble recruiting informants where they needed them the most--namely, neighborhood communities, church circles, and the youth. Most MfS operatives came from families with a military or police background with strong ties to the party and the state, and most informants were loyal SED supporters and hence belonged to social spheres already close to the center of power. The MfS was thus not very successful in recruiting IMs from social circles it wanted to penetrate the most. Even if it had, these collaborators were reluctant in giving up information, as Palmowski shows with his study on denunciation practices in Dabel, a village in the region of Schwerin (today Mecklenburg). Jan Palmowski, *Inventing a Socialist Nation: Heimat and the Politics of Everyday Life in the GDR, 1945-1990* (Cambridge, UK; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 285–89; The goal to have a Stasi collaborator within every housing community (Hausgemeinschaft) also seem to have failed, with only 30 – 40 percent of house administrators being involved, according to Paul Betts. Betts, *Within Walls*, 30.

means:" a question that cannot be answered without looking at the Stasi's spatial techniques of surveillance.

Henke rightfully suggests that methods such as recruitment of informants, foot-tracking subjects of interest, or searching and bugging homes have been practiced by dictatorships, monarchies, and parliamentary democracies and hence are not unique to the GDR. The determining factor here was indeed not these methods but the ways in which they were practiced—or, more specifically, how they were practiced spatially. Surveillance, after all, takes place in space; its penetration of state and society and of people's private lives is a spatial phenomenon as much it is social one. Observing people's behaviors and activities, listening to their conversations, intruding into their homes and workplaces all require spatial planning as to from where to watch, listen, and enter. In the GDR, the "historically unique" penetration of society was thus achieved not only by means of informants but also by means of architectural-spatial analysis, documentation, and planning, as this chapter has shown. Several observations can be made about this architectural and spatial production. First, by trying to standardize the norms and conventions with which to read, reproduce, and use the built environment, the Stasi—in a sense—encoded how surveillance was to be spatially performed. For the encoded data to be used in different situations or for different surveillance procedures, it also created an information infrastructure with which the multimodal representation of the built environment could be catalogued, verified, and re-used. In this sense, the Stasi's role became to cross-reference and hyperlink, as it were, people and spaces, and informants provided additional content for surveillance. Even the Stasi's reliance on its IMs was not simply a social but also a spatial phenomenon. After all, the conspiration of who would watch, listen, and enter depending on their willful or coerced participation was additionally—and perhaps more decisively—framed as a

question of who *could* do so. The Stasi thus conceived of its nesting dolls of observation by

means of an architectural-spatial analysis, which could explain why it was able to exert—in a

Foucauldian sense—capillary power more extensively than its precursors and contemporaries.[131]

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[131] Foucault defines "capillary functioning of power" as "the penetration of regulation into even the smallest details of everyday life." Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, 198.

Conclusion

As a child, I was one of the millions glued to their televisions on the night of November 9, 1989, as the Berlin Wall was declared fallen. I vividly remember seeing German youth from both the East and the West sitting and singing on the wall in triumph. That night, we watched East Germans storming border control, joining friends, relatives, and neighbors they were forcibly separated from for almost three decades, and flooding the streets of West Berlin with an intoxicating joy. This was a time in Turkey when there was a single TV channel: the state broadcast TRT. Its news coverage was unambiguously celebratory, and I remember feeling the revolutionary energy radiating from Berlin's streets through our Turkish screens. (Why I retained this otherwise mundane memory at five years of age can only be explained by this feeling.) We jubilantly watched the fall of a militarized totalitarian police state through our own communication monopoly and in a country that violently suppressed its own revolutionary movement with a military coup d'état only nine years back. This irony was lost on me then. For spectators like us, the events of that November night were reminiscent of the title of Alexei Yurchak's book on the collapse of the Soviet Union: "everything was forever, until it was no more."[1] For East Germans and those closely observing the GDR's last years, however, change was underway for some time.

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[1] Alexei Yurchak, *Everything Was Forever, Until It Was No More: The Last Soviet Generation* (Princeton, NY: Princeton University Press, 2005).

Despite the Stasi's unrelenting persecution and the East German state's merciless political prosecution, the 1980s were marked by a strengthening of organized opposition in the GDR.[2] There were external and internal factors contributing to this. Mikhail Gorbachev's rise to power in 1985 initiated a process of socio-political relaxation through Soviet-wide reforms, conditioned by economically contingent disarmament negotiations and expansion of trade with the West, albeit much to the dismay of the SED-leadership.[3] Alongside such outside stress factors, which caused turmoil from within the GDR state, a growing environmental awareness about widespread pollution and risks of nuclear energy fueled popular dissent from below.[4] Not just environmental activists but also church members, literary groups, and punks were amongst the non-conforming and openly system-critical groups, and the more their members were intimidated and imprisoned by the Stasi the more their collectives grew. Considering this, it is unsurprising to see that the Stasi's close-range spatial surveillance activities, analyzed in Chapter 3, saw an increase during the second half of the GDR's last decade. By May 1989, the

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[2] Mary Fulbrook explains that "a network of organized groups, who, for all their internecine differences, for all the state infiltration and control, were determined to set in motion realizable processes of democratization and reform. It was this peculiar combination which was to eventuate in the 'gentle revolution' of the autumn of 1989. Mary Fulbrook, *Anatomy of a Dictatorship: Inside the GDR, 1949-1989* (Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 244–45.

[3] As Hertle writes, "the existence of the GDR as a state was, above all, legitimated by an outside force. The state's existence was based on the military, economic, and political guarantee provided by the Soviet Union as well as the USSR's imperial claim and will to power." Yet, since the early-1980s "the superpower was increasingly unable to provide the necessary means of support for its empire." Having his hand forced to cooperate with the West to solve the economic problems in his own country, Gorbachev agreed to demilitarization and observance of human rights, among others, which came at the expense of vilifying the political elite governing its satellite countries. Hans-Hermann Hertle, "The Fall of the Wall: The Unintended Self-Dissolution of East Germany's Ruling Regime," *Cold War International History Project Bulletin*, no. 12/13 (Winter/Spring 2001): 132.

[4] East German environmental activism is widely regarded as a catalyst for organized protest and civil disobedience in the GDR. See: Merrill E. Jones, "Origins of the East German Environmental Movement," *German Studies Review* 16, no. 2 (May 1993): 235–64; Julia E. Ault, *Saving Nature Under Socialism: Transnational Environmentalism in East Germany, 1968 – 1990*, New Studies in European History (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2021), 197–227.

falsification of the GDR's local election results and the opening of the Hungarian-Austrian border exacerbated dissent amongst East Germans.[5]

By Fall 1989, organized opposition—until then largely underground or taking refuge under the protective roof of the Protestant church—sprung onto the public arena.[6] In Leipzig, where some hundred people had been regularly convening for "prayers for peace" (*Friedensgebete*) since the early 1980s, churchgoers took to the streets for the first time on September 4, 1989. What had started as a safe forum for oppositional voices, particularly against the nuclear arms race, had turned into a public protest for freedoms. Known as Monday night candlelight marches, the Leipzig demonstrations quickly rippled across major East German cities. By October, thousands of peaceful protestors were marching the streets of Erfurt, Gera, Rostock, Halle, and Berlin, demanding free elections, free press, freedom of mobility, and justice reform. On October 7, the GDR's 40th anniversary celebrations were interrupted by a mass of peaceful protestors, and many were detained by the Stasi as a result. This only aggravated the situation. On October 9, roughly 700 people gathered at the Gethsemane church in Berlin-Prenzlauerberg asking for the release of those detained, with another 2000 people joining them at the gates, supported by neighbors with lit candles on their windowpanes.[7] On October 18, in an attempt to deescalate tension and mitigate demands, the Politbüro of the SED forced Honecker to resign from his posts as the general secretary of the party and the chairman of the state council. The bid, however, was unsuccessful.

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[5] There were other "remarkable policy shifts" happening across Eastern Europe in 1989. "In January, non-Communist parties were legalised in Hungary. In February, Round Table talks began in Poland. In April, the Hungarian leadership resigned. […] In June, the Polish Communist Party relinquished its hold on power." Gareth Dale, "The Revolution of 1989," in *Popular Protest in East Germany*, Routledge Advances in European Politics 27 (London & New York: Routledge, 2005), 137.

[6] Patricia J. Smith, "Introduction," in *After the Wall: Eastern Germany Since 1989*, ed. Patricia J. Smith, Eastern Europe after Communism (New York & London: Routledge, 2018), 1–2.

[7] Nadja Häckel and Nicol Püschl, eds., *Keine Gewalt! Stasi Am Ende. Die Demonstrationen Im Herbst '89*, Einblicke in Das Stasi-Unterlagen-Archiv (Berlin: Bundesarchiv Stasi-Unterlagen-Archiv, 2014), 33–34.

By November, country-wide protests had become an ineluctable force to be reckoned with. In Leipzig alone, 300 to 400 thousand people were regularly marching the streets. The upheaval saw its climax on November 4, when approximately one million East Germans rushed to Berlin's Alexanderplatz to participate in the first state-authorized civic mass demonstration in the GDR history.[8] Real political change had arrived.

The Stasi's significance during the GDR's autumn revolution was not limited to its role in surveilling, policing, and detaining members of the opposition, or its widely reported abstention from consulting armed conflict. The Stasi had an architectural significance for the demonstrations, as well. From northernmost Rostock to the southern Karl-Marx-Stadt (today Chemnitz), every Monday demonstrators marched a similar path: starting from the church they gathered at, they would walk peacefully to the Stasi's regional administrative complex in their city. After one minute of silence, they would leave candles on its stairs of entrance. The Stasi's remand prisons, where the politically persecuted were held awaiting trial, were part of the ministry's district complexes in most cities. Standing at the heart or within the immediate vicinity of their respective city centers, these building assemblages were black boxes: constant reminders of the state surveillance apparatus in architectural form, they were both visible and invisible at once. Everyone knew what they were but very few had access to what went behind the iron lattices equipping their windows, who was imprisoned in them, and under what conditions. Monday demonstrations across the GDR strategically turned the heavily guarded buildings of the state security apparatus from sites of surveillance bureaucracy and political incarceration to sites of political dissent and protest.

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[8] Häckel and Püschl, 7.

This symbolic act also powerfully emphasized one of the main demands of uprising East Germans: the end of the surveillance and political persecution regime. Demonstrators chanted and held signs calling "Stasi in die Produktion," "Stasi in den Tagebau," and "Stasi in der Volkswirtschaft." In demanding the dissolution of the state security apparatus, these slogans underlined a central dilemma of the Stasi's existence: the heaps of information it produced with its massive employment base of nearly 90,000 people were seen as inherently unproductive.

As discussed in Chapter 1, the Stasi claimed to aid the efficiency and productivity of industrial production by regularly monitoring and reporting from sites of manufacture and construction. Within the building industry, the Stasi was able to understand the economic, material, and organizational shortcomings due its own expertise in building production. It also articulated certain failures endemic to the GDR's Soviet-socialist economic system, specifically by the mid-1980s. Yet, the ministry did not devise substantive solutions that would steer the national economy of building. When it did come up with recommendations, they remained insular and largely bureaucratic fixes addressing the local decision-makers, such as planning committees or district councils.

A similar critique of inherent unproductivity can also be applied to the Stasi's own building industry. The growth of the Stasi's construction enterprises over the 1970s and 1980s, as Chapter 2 has shown, was in direct correlation with the growth of its employment base and its efforts in scientifically managing industrialized production processes. Such efforts were justified as necessary to provide the ministry's tens of thousands of employees with adequate work and living conditions in a fast and efficient manner. The dilemma of this justification, however, is that it made sense only if the existence of the ministry was justified. To East Germans discontent with their state and asking for the abolition of the secret police, the architectural and industrial

labor force mobilized for the Stasi's building needs was simply self-serving and self-fulfilling. The productive powers were thus rendered unproductive under the Stasi's construction enterprises. In an industry suffering from high worker turnover, calling the Stasi "into the production" demanded, among others, that the almost five thousand employees of the ministry's VEB Spezialhochbau and its administrative unit, the VRD, join the rest of the country's labor force: they needed to leave the military economy of the GDR's armed forces and join the people's economy.

On November 7, 1989, three days after one million East Germans took to the streets, Stasi-Chief Mielke, along with the entire GDR government, resigned. The ministry's dissolution ensued quickly. By mid-November, it was structurally disintegrated and renamed the Office for National Security (*Amt für Nationale Sicherheit – AfNS*) under the provisional East German government. While conversations regarding the role and nature of this follow-up organization continued, by mid-December the office, too, was terminated. The ministry's main construction enterprise, the VEB Spezialhochbau Berlin, was renamed *VEB Industriebau Berlin* and subordinated to the Ministry of Building, effective from January 1, 1990.[9] The much smaller interior architecture firm VEB Raumkunst Berlin was declared a "legally and economically independent entity."[10] Following the free elections of March 1990, where the West German Christian Democratic Union (*Christlich Demokratische Union Deutschlands – CDU*) promising reunification won in a sweeping victory, the GDR declared its accession to the Federal Republic of Germany on August 23, 1990. The ultimate outcome of the peaceful revolution was

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[9] The firm became the parent enterprise of the centrally-managed VEB Building and Assembly Combine (*VEB Bau- und Montagekombinat – VEB BMK*). "Vereinbarung über die Überleitung des VEB Spezialhochbau Berlin und des VEB Raumkunst Berlin vom Amt für Nationale Sicherheit zum Ministerium für Bauwesen und Wohnungswirtschaft," Berlin, 21.12.1989, BArch MfS Liegenschaften 108, 40-42.
[10] "Vereinbarung über die Überleitung des VEB Spezialhochbau Berlin und des VEB Raumkunst Berlin," BArch MfS Liegenschaften 108, 40-42.

considerably different than what most East Germans organizing since Spring 1989 had

envisioned. The first generation of East Germans who were born into and came of age in the

GDR were striving for a change from within, aiming at vast reforms to establish socialism with a

human face. As many of my contacts expressed, and as it has been widely written, they had

every intention to abolish the Stasi but not to abolish socialism all together.[11]

Throughout the process of the MfS' dissolution, its buildings continued to be sites of

protest and even revolt. Tipped off to the possibility that state security agents were

systematically destroying files, on December 4 citizens stormed the ministry's offices in Erfurt,

Suhl, Rostock, and Leipzig.[12] Their suspicions were confirmed: documents were being burnt,

shredded, or moved off site in a final effort to wipe off incriminating evidence on the state

security apparatus' high-profile informers, violations of international law, and surveillance and

manipulation of party members, to name a few. Over the next days, East Germans in other cities

and towns followed suit and rushed to buildings used by the Stasi—at least the ones they knew

of. From regional headquarters to district offices and service units, state security offices large

and small were occupied to prevent the further destruction of files. Citizens in occupation

spontaneously formed "citizens' committees" (*Bürgerkommitees*) to oversee and advocate for

file preservation, motivated by the prospect that, under the new regime, crimes would be

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[11] Charles S. Maier, *Dissolution: The Crisis of Communism and the End of East Germany* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999), 161. For example, Fulbrook notes that "it is notable that the common theme of... home-made made banners and slogans was simply the desire for greater democracy, freedom, and dialogue, rather than any specific social or economic demands." Fulbrook, *Anatomy of a Dictatorship*, 250. Dale adds that "citizens' movement activists, for the most part, focused their hopes on reforming the existing state" reflected in their "acceptance of the GDR's legitimacy, and [their] desire to achieve change by legal routes, notably through negotiation (or 'dialogue') with the regime." This position "also expressed a critical stance towards Western capitalism and, for some, the perception that the pressure exerted by West German business circles and political elites to extend their power eastwards was imperialist in nature." Gareth Dale, *Popular Protest in East Germany*, Routledge Advances in European Politics 27 (London & New York: Routledge, 2005), 165.

[12] Nadja Häckel and Nicol Püschl, eds., *Stasi Raus – Es It Aus! Stasi Am Ende – Die Letzten Tage Der DDR-Geheimpolizei*, Einblicke in Das Stasi-Unterlagen-Archiv (Berlin: Bundesarchiv Stasi-Unterlagen-Archiv, 2015), 10.

accounted for, and criminals brought to justice. A similar take-over took place in the Stasi's

ministerial headquarters on Normannenstraße in Berlin-Lichtenberg, albeit a month later, on

January 15, 1990. These occupations might not have completely served the dictum of

preservation, however, David Childs notes, as files were also destroyed by demonstrators

possibly infiltrated by the Stasi and its informants.[13]

The endeavors for the preservation of the Stasi's "paper memory" paid off, regardless.

After months of public debate and organizing, citizens' committees successfully campaigned for

the establishment of an institution that would safekeep the MfS archives, research the history of

"communist repression," and make the files publicly accessible. This last objective, namely

allowing any citizen to access surveillance files kept on them, was highly controversial.[14] On the

day of German Reunification, the new government passed a resolution to found the Federal

Commissioner for the Stasi Records and appointed East German humans right activist and

elected federal parliament (*Bundestag*) member Joachim Gauck as its head administrator. Under

Gauck's stewardship, the institution finally opened the archive to the public in 1992 and, in a

process that continues to this day, ensured that its holdings are made gradually available to

researchers.[15] This dissertation could not have been written without these efforts.

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[13] David Childs, "The Shadow of the Stasi," After the Wall, p. 103.

[14] For instance, this goal was "met with publicly expressed hostility from East Germany's last, non-Communist, Minister of the Interior, Peter-Michael Diestel. He argued that personal files could not be made available to citizens upon demand, because every file contained more than just one name, including those of informers." See: Richard Popplewell, "The Stasi and the East German Revolution of 1989," *Contemporary European History* 1, no. 1 (March 1992): 38–40.

[15] The process is gradual because making the archive available requires it to be inventoried and catalogued first, which takes time due to its sheer volume. By the start of my research, the main bulk of the files pertinent to my subject—those coming from the VRD—were amongst the least inventoried portions of the archive as indexing had largely focused on materials of the MfS' espionage, reconnaissance, and domestic surveillance departments. These archival processes are partly initiated by the needs and requests of researchers and hence, with my study, a significant portion of the VRD's holdings are now indexed and directly available to future researchers.
It is also worth mentioning that the BStU became a model for processing communist pasts across the former Soviet space, and inspired the founding of the Polish Institute for National Remembrance (*Instytut Pamięci Narodowej – IPN*).

A Difficult Heritage

At a 1992 round-table discussion on the Stasi-Files and the analysis of GDR history, historian Klaus-Dietmar Henke described the documents left behind by the East German surveillance state as "difficult heritage" (*schwieriges Erbe*).[16] The revelations after 1989, made largely with the study of these documents, on the Stasi's scale of activities and reach and breach of East German society had nothing short of an explosive effect. It was well known that the Stasi functioned as an intimidation instrument central to curbing freedoms of opinion, expression, and mobility. Equally well-known—and well documented—was its pursuit of "Western" visitors, especially those coming in diplomatic capacity, and surveillance and imprisonment of people engaging in what was considered "hostile-negative" (*feindlich-negative*) activity, such as photographing government officials and buildings, being in contact with West German organizations in any capacity, activity in religious groups such as the Jehova's Witnesses, and broadcasting "Western" music. Most East Germans thought that the Stasi was after the "dissidents" but, as they learned soon after German unification, its surveillance net was much larger than previously thought and almost anyone could have been caught in it. As East Germans rushed to the BStU to see surveillance documents kept on their person, many friends, relatives, and colleagues were revealed as Stasi informers. The collective trauma and distrust reached its apex with the literature battle (*Literaturstreit*) of July 1990, prompted by prominent East German author Christa Wolf's delayed publication of her 1979 novella *Was Bleibt*, which critically

The November 2020 amendments made to the Federal Archives Act by the German Bundestag annexed the BStU to the German Federal Archives, with the aim to accelerate and complete this process and make the entire inventory digitally accessible in the near future. The digitization and publication of non-sensitive documents is also foreseen under the renamed Stasi Records Archive of the Federal Archives.

[16] Klaus-Dietmar Henke, ed., *Wann Bricht Schon Mal Ein Staat Zusammen! Die Debatte Über Die Stasi-Akten Auf Dem 39. Historikertag 1992* (Berlin: dtv, 1993), 13.

chronicled life under constant state surveillance, and the concurrent discovery of the author's

collaboration with the Stasi.[17]

Not only files but also buildings of the Stasi proved themselves as objects of difficult

heritage.[18] Parallel to the debates on the socially and politically responsible ways of handling the

Stasi-Files, discussions on the future use of the MfS' architectural legacies arose. Piggybacking

on the collective solidarity and grassroots organizing shaped and strengthened by the events of

1989, elements of civil society gave way to alliances advocating for the preservation and re-

appropriation of significant Stasi buildings—namely, for their transformation from difficult to

"official" heritage.[19] So were many of the state security apparatus' remand prisons, most notably

in Berlin-Hohenschönhausen, Potsdam, Erfurt, Leipzig, and Dresden, transformed into memorial

sites (*Gedenkstätte*) with research and education divisions overseen by dedicated foundations. As

memorials to the victims of the GDR's political prosecution regime, these structures have been

carefully restored and, to this day, provide architectural evidence for the exhaustive surveillance,

spatial-temporal disorientation, and isolation enacted in the Stasi's carceral environments.

Numerous administrative complexes of the Stasi, including those in Dresden, Neubrandenburg,

and Rostock, are currently used as the regional offices of the Stasi Records Archive. These

structures, in contrast to the memorials mentioned above, are generally inaccessible to the public,

which make their status as heritage ambiguous. In comparison, the ministry's headquarters at

Berlin-Lichtenberg has been partially repurposed as a memorial museum and exhibition space

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[17] Christa Wolf, *Was bleibt: Erzählung* (Frankfurt am Main: Luchterhand Literaturverlag, 1990).

[18] Sharon Macdonald identifies difficult heritage as "a past that is recognized as meaningful in the present but that is also contested and awkward for public reconciliation with a positive, self-affirming contemporary identity. 'Difficult heritage' may also be troublesome because it threatens to break through into the present in disruptive ways, opening up social divisions, perhaps by playing into imagined, even nightmarish, futures." Sharon Macdonald, *Difficult Heritage: Negotiating the Nazi Past in Nuremberg and Beyond* (London & New York: Routledge, 2009), 1.

[19] According to Macdonald, preservation of sites of "atrocity, trauma or perpetration" treat difficult heritage as "official" heritage, foreclosing the possibility to forget or dissociate from that past. Macdonald, 80–81.

under the name "Campus for Democracy" (*Campus für Demokratie*), displaying the interiors of the Stasi's former center of power in original form. The ministry's main archive is preserved on this site, where the majority of the Stasi Records Archive collections are held. Select few buildings from the complete Lichtenberg ensemble, which comprises 41 structures in total, house research and education facilities, while the rest has been privatized.

The politics of remembrance has been more dubious for other buildings belonging to this difficult architectural heritage, however. For example, at Lichtenberg, the Stasi's remand prison on Magdalenenstraße resumes its carceral function as a women's correctional facility (*Justizvollzugsanstalt – JVA*) under the Federal Republic. Along with the former Stasi remand prison in Leipzig, these late 19th century buildings served state violence under the colonial Wilhelmine empire, the fascist NS-regime, Soviet occupation forces, and the GDR; yet they continue to be used in their original function to this day. As spaces where generations of political dissidents shared a similar fate, these structures of unfreedom complicate the Federal Republic's promise of "processing" Germany's pasts (*Vergangenheitsbewältigung*). They also complicate the unified state's claims to freedom and equality, in particular because current carceral politics disproportionally effect migrants, refugees, and those with a migration background.[20] What is more, while the Neubrandenburg (1983) remand prison, designed and built by the Stasi, has been closed in 2020 due to low admittance rates, its Suhl prison (1987), where the state security apparatus tried to perfect its carceral principles through architectural measures, continues to be used as a penitentiary. Having established a much longer history as prisons of the Federal

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[20] As 2021 federal statistics on Germany's prison population reveal, while incarceration rates have been on a steady decline over the last decade, the proportion of imprisoned persons with an immigration background constantly increased. As of March 2021, one in every three incarcerated individuals does not hold a German citizenship. See: Statistisches Bundesamt (Destatis), "Strafgefangene und Sicherungsverwahrte: Bundesländer, Stichtag, Nationalität, Geschlecht, Altersgruppen, Art des Vollzugs" (Statistisches Bundesamt, March 31, 2021), https://www.destatis.de/DE/Themen/Staat/Justiz-Rechtspflege/FAQ/gefangene.html. On the topic, see also: Ronen Steinke, *Vor Dem Gesetz Sind Nicht Alle Gleich: Die Neue Klassenjustiz* (Berlin: Berlin Verlag, 2022).

Republic than that of the Stasi, these buildings evince a sustaining carceral logic that requires close architectural analysis—a point I will return to by the end of my conclusion.

The entwined history of architecture and surveillance examined in this dissertation looked beyond these material manifestations of state power in the GDR, however. Largely relying on previously unstudied (and not even archivally indexed) files, I investigated otherwise immaterial methods of surveillance and policing inscribed on paper. In doing so, I examined material forms that document and communicate surveillance—or, what anthropologist Matthew Hull calls "graphic artifacts."[21] On Chapter 1, I delineated primary methods of the Stasi's economic monitoring of the East German building industry and traced the information gained by informant feedback—whether through technical observation, visual supervision, or mood reporting—at building factories and construction sites, interrogating their differing levels of significance and influence. Chapter 2 interrogated administrative mechanisms of control and bureaucratic surveillance through paper trail as they substituted visual supervision of manufacture and management at the Stasi's building enterprises and architectural departments. Chapter 3 analyzed how the Stasi agents analyzed the built environment, and reconstrued the paths they took and the corners they hid behind by cross-examining their maps, sketches, photographs, and reports. Following Hull, I thus addressed "the logics, aesthetics, concepts, [and] norms" of the Stasi's bureaucratic ephemera on building production and the built environment while accounting for how these documents "engage (or do not engage) with people, places, and things" and—I shall add—institutions to make (other) bureaucratic objects and institutions participating in the production of the East German built environment.[22]

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[21] Matthew S. Hull, *Government of Paper: The Materiality of Bureaucracy in Urban Pakistan* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2012), 1.
[22] Hull, 5.

Historical and Theoretical Reflections

One of the questions that lingers throughout this dissertation is, perhaps, why the GDR was characterized by a more intense surveillance regime than anywhere else in the Soviet space. This inquiry occupied historians since the *Wende*, receiving a range of responses. While, in the early years German Unification, some scholars argued that the expansion of the East German state security apparatus was in response to the crises of 1953, 1961, and the 1968 Prague Spring, this theory was debunked soon after with more in-depth research revealing the ministry's steady growth throughout its lifetime and specifically during the relative relaxation years of the détente.[23] To explain this phenomenon, Klaus-Dietmar Henke pointed toward the professionalism and practical functions the Stasi acquired over the decades. Instead of overt tools of repression, the ministry assumed "extensive and covert steering and manipulation functions in all areas of state and society, down to interpersonal relationships," which presented a historically "new, refined form of total exercise of power."[24] Richard Popplewell, adding to the refinement hypothesis, stated that "the MfS had the primary duty of ensuring that only those loyal to the Party got good or important jobs, and those disloyal got the worst ones," which turned the ministry into "a massive system of vetting as it was an apparatus of simple persecution."[25] To Jens Gieseke, looking at the covert, subtle, and therefore more labor-intensive forms of control as the reason of the MfS' scale might be misleading as it presupposes a certain efficiency to the Stasi's operations. Instead, Gieseke maintained, the unprecedented growth of the ministry might

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[23] See: Stefan Wolle and Armin Mitter, eds., *Ich Liebe Euch Doch Alle! Befehle Und Lageberichte Des MfS Januar - November 1989* (Berlin: BasisDruck, 1990); referred by: Gieseke, *The History of the Stasi*, 50.

[24] Henke, "Zu Nutzung und Auswertung der Stasi-Akten," 585–86.

[25] Popplewell, "The Stasi and the East German Revolution of 1989," 41.

be a symptom of "hypertrophied" security bureaucracy and hence of inefficiency.[26] The

architectural history of the Stasi laid out in this dissertation offers us additional insights.

Studies on the Stasi's reach and breach have repeatedly referred to the ministry's total

employee count to make series of comparisons to other secret policing organizations across the

Soviet space and beyond. As one often repeated statistic goes, with over 90,000 employees in a

country of roughly 16 million people, there was one full-time Stasi operative per 180

inhabitants.[27] In comparison, in the USSR, "the ratio of Soviet KGB employees to citizens was 1

to 600."[28] Under the NS-regime, the Gestapo "employed a mere 7,000… for a population more

than three times that of East Germany."[29] These ratios in Soviet-socialist Romania were one to

1553, in Poland one to 1574.[30] What such numeric comparisons, cited almost ad nauseam to

emphasize the "unique" case of Stasi infiltration, overlook is the nature of employment.

As I have shown on Chapter 2, the VRD was one of the ministry's largest departments

with 3288 full-time employees, and the entire department worked on provisioning the Stasi with

housing, holiday retreats, and motor vehicles, organizing banquets, and managing guesthouses—

in short, on non-surveillant t asks.[31] Its employees were factory workers, builders, heavy

machinery operators, architects, planners, engineers, as well as drivers and secretaries, to name a

few. What is more, the size of a service department like the VRD was in direct correlation with

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[26] Gieseke, *The History of the Stasi*, 51.
[27] Childs, "The Shadow of the Stasi," 94.
[28] Jens Gieseke, "What Did It Mean to Be a Chekist?," in *State Security. A Reader on the GDR Secret Police*, ed. Daniela Münkel (Berlin: Bundesbeauftragter für Stasi-Unterlagen (BStU), 2015), 31.
[29] Gary Bruce, "Participatory Repression? Reflections on Popular Involvement with the Stasi," in *Stasi at Home and Abroad: Domestic Order and Foreign Intelligence*, ed. Uwe Spiekermann, German Historical Institute Bulletin 9 (Washington, D.C.: German Historical Institute, 2014), 49.
[30] Dennis, *Stasi*, 79.
[31] Richard Popplewell makes an overlapping argument by stating that "just over a quarter of [the Stasi]—21,000—were 'directly operative,' that is… involved with running agents or were agents themselves; 5,000 more officers were engaged in observation and investigation; 2,200 in postal control; and 1,052 in telephone-tapping. The rest were employed in administration work and work not directly connected with intelligence." Popplewell, "The Stasi and the East German Revolution of 1989," 44.

the size of the ministry's employment base. The more employees were recruited, the more the need was to provide them with adequate housing, for example. From 1968 to 1979, the ministry almost double folded from roughly 35,000 to more than 70,000 in personnel, while its subordinate building enterprises expanded from 396 to over 2500 employees—more than six times. Thus, to a certain extent, the MfS grew in response to its own growth.

Chapter 1 has investigated the Stasi's activities as a building agent overseeing the GDR's centrally planned building industry, which was one of the ways the ministry expanded beyond classic secret police functions and deployed covert and more subtle means of control. I have shown that monitoring the Housing Program—the crown jewel of the GDR's internal policy and an important component of its international image from the 1970s onward—gained an increasing significance for the ministry's claim to act as the "guardian of the East German material sphere." Within this context, the Stasi did not really steer or manipulate the building economy, but it did assume the functions of a human resources department—a vetting system—for managers and administrators. The Stasi also acted as a control establishment overseeing the compliance establishment of the building industry—a function that would have been dispensable in a profit-driven capitalist system of free market competition. Cross-referencing and assessing the immense data collected through the Stasi's informants at building production and construction sites was labor-intensive, nonetheless, and contributed to the ministry's personnel outlays.

The findings of this dissertation both corroborate and update Gieseke's thesis. The VEB Spezialhochbau Berlin and the VRD, examined in Chapter 2, provide prime examples of a hypertrophied security bureaucracy. As discussed, managers and administrators of the construction firm were unable to fulfill the surveillance and control requirements through visual supervision—one of the key aspects of Taylorist scientific management—at their factories and

offices. In these structures, built in Plattenbau-types to decrease costs and increase the pace of construction, architectural solutions allowing visual supervision could not be incorporated. Managers and administrations of the Stasi's own building industry thus became increasingly buried in the paperwork of bureaucratic surveillance, but not simply because the MfS was inefficient and became a "self-absorbed entity that could no deal with the mountains of information it produced."[32] In this instance, the bourgeoning bureaucratic surveillance over the Stasi's architectural production was the result of the GDR's economic exigencies and central economic planning.

One last observation can be made about the efficiency of the Stasi's domestic surveillance. As discussed in Chapter 3, the ministry's recruitment of and "collaboration" with its informants relied on spatial conspiration that was standardized, systematic, and highly structured. Visiting, analyzing, and documenting the built environment to link people, places, and things across the country was labor-intensive and hence not economic, but it was nevertheless efficient. This spatial network and the accompanying data infrastructure allowed the Stasi to outsource certain means of information collection, such as listening, eavesdropping, and observation, to its informants perhaps more effectively than any other pre-digital and pre-internet surveillance organization. The spatial-organizational aspect of Stasi infiltration might not necessarily explain the ballooning of MfS staff, but it does clarify one of the means through which the Stasi was able to process the heaps of information it produced and trickled down into to the level of interpersonal relationships, exercising the "new, refined form of power" that Henke describes. This was essentially what Foucault terms capillary power: "the point where power reaches into every grain of individuals, touches their bodies and inserts itself into their

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[32] Gieseke, *The History of the Stasi*, 51.

actions and attitudes, their discourses, learning processes and everyday lives," power exercised

"*within* the social body rather than *from above* it."[33] Architectural and spatial literacy was

instrumental to and defining of this capillary modification of power in the GDR.

Architecture was neither just the means nor the object of East German state surveillance

but also its site and even subject. Architecture and surveillance were mutually articulated in the

GDR, as I explored throughout this dissertation, and their mutual articulation was characterized

by recursivity—a recursivity that also illuminates the functioning logic, principles, practices, and

eventually the limits of the Stasi's networks of knowledge and power between 1961 and 1989.

Perhaps nowhere was this phenomenon more visible and tangible than the Stasi's involvement in

the Housing Program and production of prefabricated mass housing. By surveilling, supervising,

and observing industrialized and centrally administered building production, the Stasi aimed to

aid scientific management processes integral to the efficiency and productivity of the building

industry. The architectural technologies—namely, the Plattenbauten—manufactured through this

process, in turn, determined the output of the Stasi's own building production through its

subordinate enterprises. Yet, having to rely on these technologies for the construction of not only

housing but also offices, factories, prisons, and even enclosing walls around those offices and

prisons proved to be a deterrent to the Stasi's concerns in surveillance, security, and certainty.

The attempt to compensate for visual supervision through bureaucratic surveillance, for example,

rendered enterprise managers and their administrators incapable of attending to the development

of scientific management plans, as discussed in Chapter 2. These plans, which foresaw the

typification of the ministry's service units by 1990, if followed through, could have solved the

problem by introducing a building catalogue more adequate for the design of office spaces.

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[33] Michel Foucault, "Prison Talk," in *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews & Other Writings*, ed. Colin Gordon, trans. Colin Gordon et al. (New York: Pantheon Books, 1980), 39.

Another ramification of the GDR's Housing Program was the sprawl of Plattenbauten around the ministry's restricted zones and administrative complexes. On Berlin's Frankfurter Alle, across the MfS' Lichtenberg lot, for example, the construction of some 16-story high Plattenbau-towers alarmed the Stasi as their upper floors provided unobstructed views into their offices. The state security apparatus attempted to intervene in these plans, but the GDR's social and economic policy centered around the fast and cheap provision of housing triumphed state security interests. In response, the ministry—through the VRD—petitioned the Berlin municipality and planning commission to allocate these units to its employees. Many housing units around the so-called Stasi-Central were indeed transferred to the ministry's ownership over the 1960s and 1970s, with some old residents not being able to return.[34] Yet, not all pleas for housing allocation were answered favorably, and many units continued to be occupied by regular East Germans who passed by or peeked into the Stasi's premises on a daily basis.

By 1978, Mielke formed a task force to examine security conditions at his ministry's local and territorial branches. The study revealed vast liabilities, partly to aforementioned reasons, and the task force recommended a series of security measures, which were of significant architectural character.[35] Technological interventions, such as the installation of surveillance cameras, were declared ineffective; instead, building of massive enclosing walls, fencing of windows, and the spatial reorganization of entry and exit points were endorsed.[36] The VRD oversaw the application of these architectural elements across the GDR,[37] and the VEB

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[34] See: BArch MfS VRD 11175. 36, 65. Christian Halbrock also talks about the Stasi's infiltration and allocation of housing around Lichtenberg in detail. Halbrock, *Stasi-Stadt - die MfS-Zentrale in Berlin-Lichtenberg*, 158–71.

[35] "1. Durchführungsbestimmung (DB) zur Bauordnung des MfS," Berlin, October 1980, BArch MfS VRD 7771.

[36] "Anforderungen zur Gewährleistung der baulichen, technischen und nachrichten-technischen Sicherheit in Kreis- und Objektdienststellen," Berlin, 20.12.1979, BArch MfS VRD 7771, 272-286.

[37] The VRD managed the project in coordination with the ministry's Operational-Technical Sector (*Operativ-Technischer Sektor – OTS*) and the Department of Telecommunications (*Abteilung Nachrichten*) in order to ensure the standardized wall-type's compatibility with add-on technological equipment such as cameras, remote communication, and automatized control systems. See: "Vorbereitung der Beratung mit der Abteilung N und dem

Spezialhochbau was to develop a dedicated prefabricated wall-type for on-site assembly, along with a congruent typified watchtower.[38] Yet, with an estimated total of 10 kilometers-long wall construction foreseen country-wide, enclosing the Stasi's premises proved itself to be a costly endeavor. In order to facilitate widespread application and cut costs, the enterprise ended up using elements from the WBS 70 Plattenbau-type, which put constraints on the project. For instance, even though an assortment of wall-types ranging from 2 to 3,5 meters in height was planned, only one standard and 2,2 meters tall wall element could be produced.[39] In 1984, when the task force reconvened to inspect the results of its motion, the results were more than unfavorable.[40] At the Stasi's Schwerin branch, for example, the wall-type had to be fitted with barbed wire and railings to enhance the security of the easily climbable wall.[41] The congruent watchtower implemented at the Berlin-Hohenschönhausen remand prison was discovered to fail in providing a broad enough visual field to guard the main gate.[42] The Stasi thus continued to be preoccupied with how to prevent curious neighbors and passers-by to peek into their offices and where to add security guards to protect its gates.

Writing a systems theory of society, Niklas Luhmann defines both differentiation and recursivity of communication and meaning making as integral to a social system's gradual

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OTS zum koordinierten Zusammenwirken bei der Durchsetzung der Anweisung 10/80 des Genossen Minister," Berlin, ca. 1984, BArch MfS VRD 7771, 122-124.

[38] See: "Erläuterungen zum Ausführungsktalog für montagefähige massive Einfriedungen (standortlos)," Berlin, ca. 1984, BArch MfS VRD 7771, 106; "Entscheidungsvorlage für die Anwendung des im VEB SHB entwickelten Postenturme des MfS," Berlin, 25.2.1988, BArch MfS VRD 7771, 2-5.

[39] "Bericht über die Wirksamkeit und Realisierung der diensteinheitspezifischen Maßnahmen für die bauliche Sicherheit der Dienstobjekte," From Leiter VRD to Leiter der AG des Ministers (AGM), Berlin, 14.1.1985, BArch MfS VRD 7771.

[40] This was also due to a lack of coordination between responsible departments and branches. For instance, the cameras were installed without appropriate lighting fixtures. "Vorbereitung der Beratung mit der Abteilung N und dem OTS," BArch MfS VRD 7771, 122-124.

[41] "Berichterstattung über durchgeführte Kontrollen zur Durchsetzung der Maßnahmen für die bauliche Sicherheit der Dienstobjekte," Schwerin, 1986, BArch MfS VRD 7771, 59.

[42] "Erläuterungen zur vorliegenden Entscheidungsvorlage in Umsetzung und Prüfung des Forderungsprogrammes der HA IX vom Februar 1987, zur Gewährleistung der baulichen Sicherheit des DOs Berlin-Hohenschönhausen, Freienwalder Straße," Berlin, 1987, BArch MfS VRD 7771, 16-18.

change and evolution. Basing his reading on the biological concept of autopoiesis, Luhmann

explains that social systems "produce not only their structures but also elements of which they

consist" and if elements are information, these elements are used for the production of structures

that bore them in return.[43] This, to Luhmann, is an "operational closure:" "the recursive

enablement of a system's own operations through the outcomes of its operations."[44] Put

differently, autopoietic systems—social or biological—work to maintain themselves within the

constraints of the system, a process within which differentiation with every operational iteration

eventually leads to evolution. The recursive chains of operations between architecture and state

surveillance in the GDR, when understood within Luhmann's terms, seem to have been marked

by incompatibility or even dysfunctionality. Despite its intimate knowledge on and active

involvement in the architectural production, the Stasi was unable to steer and manipulate the

built environment to fit the methods and end goals of state surveillance and state power. The

dysfunctional recursivity of the Stasi's architectural and surveillant operations thus elicits an

Ouroboros: an organism "'condemned' to return all the time to bite their own tails and relive

their own beginnings" and whose circular movement propagates the "conditions of its existence

at the cost of its own parameters of functioning."[45]

In the course of researching and writing this project, I have been asked, many times over,

whether there is a "smoking gun" argument that came of it. Was East German social housing

designed and constructed to incorporate communal listening devices? Did the Stasi dictate urban

planning tailored to centrally observable sightlines? Ironically, it was exactly such widespread

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[43] Niklas Luhmann, *Theory of Society*, trans. Rhodes Barrett, vol. 1 (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 2012), 32.
[44] Luhmann, 1:51.
[45] Won Jeon, "Second-Order Recursions of First-Order Cybernetics: An 'Experimental Epistemology,'" *Open Philosophy* 5 (2022): 382.

expectations for sensational historical findings—partly attributable to the impact of the phenomenally successful and largely inaccurate "Stasi-movie" *Das Leben der Anderen* (The Lives of Others)—that caused my research request on architecture and surveillance to initially be met with wary skepticism at the Stasi Records Archive, as my archivist confided in me years later.[46] I would argue that the "smoking gun" of this history, albeit utterly unsensational and likely mundane, is that the practice of building—and hence of architecture—was infinitely more complex and intricate to lend itself completely to aspirations of state surveillance and state power in the GDR.

I believe that there is hope to be gathered from this for the present and futures of totalitarian police states. Or, to appropriate Christa Wolf's words from *Was Bleibt*, there is hope to be gathered from the fact that the measures taken by the Stasi and the reactions of architectural processes to them did not mesh together "like the teeth of a smoothly functioning zipper."[47] In researching the long defunct Stasi, and hence taking advantage of the unique opportunity to read—unencumbered by censorship and red taping—the inner workings of a state surveillance organization, my ambition has been to understand and unveil the ways police forces render

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[46] Writing on the film's claim to authenticity, Jens Gieseke notes that the portrayal of a Stasi-agent who, upon his focused and extended visual and auditory surveillance of an artist couple, comes to admire and empathize with them and even attempts to protect them, could and did not exist. Gieseke argues that Stasi operatives were "authoritative characters who saw the shimmering Bohemian aura of intellectuals and artists as a threat to their well-organized world," and that they "embodied a much more banal mixture of subalternity, anti-intellectualism and power-consciousness," which renders such cinematic-narrative illustration romantic and idealistic. Gareth Dale, however, criticizes such accounts stating that "Stasi officers were indeed critical of aspects of their work and were capable of empathy" and "have been more resistant than most… but not immune" to the changing climate of dissent which became visible in 1989. Jens Gieseke, "Stasi Goes to Hollywood: Donnersmarcks 'The Lives of Others' Und Die Grenzen Der Authentizität," *German Studies Review* 31, no. 3 (October 2008): 583–84; Gareth Dale, "Heimat, 'Ostalgie' and the Stasi: The GDR in German Cinema, 1999–2006," *Journal of Contemporary Central and Eastern Europe* 15, no. 2 (2007): 157–58 I must add that the movie was furnished with other inaccuracies, such as the Stasi agent sitting on the roof floor of the artists' apartment to almost continously listen to the conversations recorded by the bugs installed. For a discussion on the realities of technologically enhanced auditory surveillance in the GDR, see Chapter 3.

[47] Referring to her and other East Germans' complicity in state surveillance and repression, Christa Wolf writes that hope could *not* be gathered from "the fact that the measures taken by the others and our reactions to them meshed together like the teeth of a smoothly functioning zipper." Christa Wolf, *What Remains and Other Stories*, trans. Heike Schwarzbauer and Rick Takvorian, 1st ed. (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1993), 244.

themselves indispensable for the functioning of modern states and societies—and what part architecture plays in it. In this vein, I hope this dissertation elucidated architectural functions that might be taken over by police institutions working for totalitarian states elsewhere, which then can be strategically dismantled from where they already start to crack.

Future Directions

Throughout this dissertation, I engage with the concept and practice of scientific management implicitly. Scientific management is a useful operative term for understanding the GDR's efforts in technological advancement, industrial-economic planning, and fiscal optimization. Yet, first negated and then embraced by Lenin, downright rejected by Stalin, and ultimately welcomed by Khrushchev, Taylorist-capitalist scientific management principles, as they have been appropriated to the Soviet-socialist German context, cannot be solely explained through key U.S. American primary texts. Tracing the dual trajectory of East German scientific management—through Nazi Germany and via the Soviets—requires a sustained engagement with its complex genealogy. What is more, *wissenschaftliche Arbeitsorganization* (WAO)—as it is called in German—appears nebulous and is used alongside other concepts like socialist competition (*sozialistischer Wettbewerb*) and innovation movement (*Neuererbewegung*). Parsing through these complementary terms and situating them historically is a project on its own right and a subject I will explore to expand this dissertation into a monograph.

Moving forward, I plan to comparatively analyze the Stasi's administrative complexes and remand prisons designed and constructed in Plattenbau-types, asking: how do we understand when spaces of dwelling, working, and confinement become reiterations of the same architectural-industrial system? My research on this subject will look at the ministry's administrative complexes in Gera (1981-1988) and Neubrandenburg (1977-1985), and its

remand prisons in Neubrandenburg (1981-1986) and Suhl (1987-1989). With my initial findings on this topic, I crafted an article titled "Apperceiving, Inscribing, Sounding: Spatial Acts of Resistance in the Stasi's Remand Prisons," which explores the dialectical tension between spatially enacted protest and refinement of architectural design between 1954 and 1989.

This institutional history must also be supplemented by an architectural history from the bottom up: specifically, on how those subjected to state surveillance in the GDR perceived, used, and produced the built environment to subvert power relations. In an upcoming article, I examine the ways surveillance was experienced spatially in the GDR through a close architectural reading of Christa Wolf's *Was Bleibt*. Here, I look at the author's deliberate instrumentalization of windows as a literary and spatial leitmotif to reflect on the conditions of East German surveillance and its affect on the formation of subjectivities.

Lastly, I hope to expand the findings of this dissertation by exploring the afterlives of the Stasi's buildings. The privatization of some structures within the ministry's former headquarters, for example, foresees their transformation into luxury flats for Berlin's growing expat population. The ramification of such projects must be explored, not only because they will turn a site of state repression to a site of neoliberal consumption but also within the context of the Berlin's growing housing insecurity. This, coupled with the current plans for the Stasi's Neubrandenburg remand prison's reappropriation into a housing complex, warrants committed historical-architectural engagement with the architectural legacies of the Stasi, in particular, and Soviet-socialism, in general, under neoliberal capitalism. I hope this dissertation will provide a fruitful starting point for such scholarly discussions.

Appendix

Archives Accessed

BArch   Bundesarchiv

BArch MfS   Bundesarchiv, Stasi-Unterlagen-Archiv (formerly Bundesbeauftrager für Stasi-Unterlagen – BStU)

BBSR Bonn   Bundesinstitut für Bau-, Stadt- und Raumforschung

IRS   Leibniz-Institut für Raumbezogene Sozialforschung

LAB   Landesarchiv Berlin

HSH   Dokumentenarchiv der Gedenkstätte Berlin-Hohenschönhausen

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