

*'Das leben der anderen' and the cult of Feliks Dzierzynsky**

Por Marc Cools

Wir, Mitarbeiter des Ministeriums für Staatssicherheit, sind jederzeit bereit, die Deutsche Demokratische Republik, in der die unsterblichen Ideen von Marx, Engels und Lenin revolutionäre Wirklichkeit wurden, mit unseren ganzen Person, bis zum Einsatz des eigenen Lebens, entschlossen zu verteidigen.

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ABSTRACT

Narrative knowledge is highly important for intelligence scholars and practitioners and cannot be left aside. The German movie 'Das Leben der Anderen' or 'The Lives of Others' by movie director Florian Henckel von Donnersmarck is a brilliantly visualized, realistic but romantic introduction into the daily life of citizens and the organization, tasks and corporate culture of the former 'Ministerium für Staatssicherheit', 'MfS' or 'Stasi' in the 'Deutsche Demokratische Republik' or German Democratic Republic, 'GDR'. Highlighting the (cult) figure of Feliks Dzierzynsky is used to bring a historical note on his importance towards the Soviet Union and East German intelligence community. In reviewing the structure of the 'Stasi' we argue the functioning of an intelligence organization without any form of oversight tends to become a totalitarian and arbitrary institution. The disappearance of the 'Stasi' and the cult of Feliks Dzierzynsky can be studied and researched as an evil narrative example within the history of the intelligence agencies.

1. Berlin, so lost and back again

Lou Reed once sang 'in Berlin, by the Wall'. This totalitarian wall, built on 13th August 1963, became the Cold War symbol 'par excellence'. During his first visit to Berlin, Ronald Reagan said 'we have got to find a way to knock this thing down'. Later he would utter the historic words 'Mr. Gorbachev, tear down this wall'. Going to this city is a fascinating experience for scholars and practitioners who are interested in the history and functioning of state intelligence and or state security agencies. Over there Frederic the Great invented the so called rational nation-state with his punctual civil servants. Prussia would become the scholar example for 19th century state building. In order to unify all the German prince and kingdoms including the noble 'Junkers', he and his successors were willing to destroy the so rational Prussia for the wellbeing of the later German Empire or 'Reich'. The imperial, the national-socialist and the socialist (East) Germany became 20th century nation-state realities, which were at the core of the destruction of so many totally depersonalized human beings and souls.

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Walking through Berlin is amazing. The confrontation with state power is so immense that you lose track in observing buildings and nowadays restorations. Imperial 'Pickelhaube' helmeted warriors, national-socialist brown and black shirts and socialist 'soviet' inspired security personnel were once king of the streets and the state. They didn't only possess the legal state monopoly on violence but they also were physical and psychological criminal violence in themselves. 'Tomorrow belongs to me' is so chilling that it defined the 'Cabaret' movie as an exponent of the evil forces who were home for so long in Berlin.

Frederic the Great, being an enlightened ruler, tried to create a rational nation-state to get rid of mercenaries and relied on a professional army, which needed a good 'policing' of society and a bureaucratically well organized 'corps' of public servants. Taxes were so high and controlled by a 'central bank' that the only way to avoid inner noble and 'bourgeois' revolts was to go and search for 'Lebensraum' outside the national borders. Within this paradox, the birth of the police, inspection, intelligence and military complex took place.

2. Narrative knowledge and 'das leben der anderen'

Next to 'Cabaret', the movie 'The Lives of Others' by the movie director Florian Henckel von Donnersmarck received nominations and prizes (Oscar, European Film Awards, German Film Awards and Audience Award) as if Berlin can only be filmed in its darkest totalitarian corners to have international movie fame. This 2006 movie on the 'Ministerium für Staatssicherheit' or 'Stasi' should be subject to academical research and teaching. Intellectual interest cannot only be found in popular arts such as novels, police detective and spy literature but also in the popular movie. This so called 'dangerous knowledge' as subjective in the narratives is part of the necessary 'illegal science' and does have an added value in order to learn and to break rules getting a-dogmatic scientific progress. Narratives or stories are not synonymous with fiction. A story is a sequence of events invented, selected, emphasized or arranged in such a way as to vivify, explain, inform or edify. They need not be true, but coherent, intelligible and significant. They act as searchlights.

In this movie, East Berlin 1984-1985, the country's leading playwright Georg Dreyman, codename 'Lazlo', and his girlfriend, the actress Christa-Maria Sieland, codename 'CMS', became subject to 'Stasi' interest in their political, philosophical, societal and sexual behaviour due to Dreyman's lobbying for his blacklisted friend, stage director, Albert Jerska. The Minister Bruno Hempf, member of the 'Central Committee of the Socialist Unity Party' is also blackmailing Christa-Maria Sieland and having an affair with her. The aggressive seduction of Christa-Maria Sieland in the official Bruno Hempf car is near to rape. Lieutenant Colonel Anton Grubitz who leads the 'Stasi' culture department appoints Captain Gerd Wiesler to eavesdrop on the artist couple. After Albert Jerska's suicide, Georg Dreyman decides to write an article on the high suicide rate in the 'GDR' and will have it published by the 'Spiegel' journalist Gregor Hessenstein in the West. This 'subversive' article is composed on a smuggled typewriter. Gerd Wiesler is aware of this and doesn't report it to Anton Grubitz. After a 'schizophrenic' interrogation by Gerd Wiesler, under strict order and suspicion of Anton Grubitz, Christa-Maria Sieland betrays her boyfriend as the author of the article and owner of the typewriter.

The 'Stasi' raid Georg Dreyman's apartment trying to find the typewriter which will incriminate him. The typewriter being removed, by the already turned Gerd Wiesler, to protect Georg Dreyman proves Christa-Maria Sieland's guilt racked mind and she runs into the road and gets killed by a truck. Anton Grubitz distrusts the surveillance done by Gerd Wiesler and punishes him by removing him to the department of postal services to steam open letters. After the fall of the Berlin Wall, Georg Dreyman knows from Bruno Hempf he was subject to overall 'Stasi-surveillance' or 'Operativer Vorgang', 'OV' and 'Operative Personenkontrolle', 'OPK'. Georg Dreyman reads his 'Stasi-files'. There he realises his protection by 'HGW XX/7', codename for Gerd Wiesler, now being a postman and he dedicates his book 'Sonata for a Good Man' to him. Gerd Wiesler's turning sides becomes reality to Beethoven's 'Apassionata' about which Vladimir Lenin once stated 'if I keep listening to this music, I won't finish the revolution'.

3. A kind of 'new journalism', relevant scenes and subjective interpretations

The making of the movie was possible due to the research done by Florian Henckel von Donnersmarck, interviewing victims and 'Stasi-officials'. He also used original settings and material. The actor Ulrich Mühe, playing Gerd Wiesler, who passed away recently, was subject to 'Stasi-surveillance' himself. The Berlin 'Stasi-spots' in the 'GDR' are brilliantly shown in their most primitive nature. The 'GDR' being the first workers' and peasants' paradise on German ground was nothing more than a primitive and 'Kafkaesque' socialist state and society. In the movie are shown: the 'Stasi-prison' or 'MfS-Haftanstalt Berlin-Hohenschönhausen' called 'UHA-I', the 'Stasi-legal academy' or 'Juristische Hochschule' at Potsdam-Eiche, the 'Karl Marx bookshop', the 'Stasi-headquarters' in the 'Normannenstrasse' with his database and the overwhelming taproom. Also the typical 'IFA' truck for transporting prisoners is lifelike.

The story starts with the interrogation of a 'GDR' citizen who is not that cooperative with his interrogator Gerd Wiesler in betraying one of his friends for trying to escape the country¹ or committing the crime of 'Republikflucht'. Finally he confesses. As everybody did in the 'GDR', even one's proper parents, children, friends and lovers. This picture is used in the Stasi-legal academy for training purposes. Bugging people's conversation was standard policy and good class material to brainwash 'Stasi-recruits' in dealing with the enemies of socialism. Don't forget to take a 'human smell sample'; it can be of good use for dogs in finding 'comrades' who turned against the state. Watching a theatre performance a threefold conspiracy in surveillance of Georg Dreyman is decided by Bruno Hempf, Anton Grubitz and Gerd Wiesler. One because of his bureaucratic opinions, one because it can be useful for further career opportunities and one for a sexual reason.

Whether he was loyal to the 'Sozialistische Einheitspartei Deutschland', 'SED' or not, surveillance of Georg Dreyman came into reality. The flat of the playwright is wired, bugged and taped some meters higher up in a spare floor. The neighbour, Frau Meineke, who saw the breaking in by the 'Stasi', is threatened in the continuity

¹ Joestel, *Verdächtig und beschuldigt. Statistische Erhebungen zur MfS-Untersuchungstätigkeit 1971-1988*, p. 317.

of her daughter's medical study. All rooms are subject to bugging and taping. Nothing is held secret.

The primitive but authoritarian practice of the 'Stasi' is shown in the ugly furniture and the old-fashioned tape recording and typewriting machines as well as in the cars used. The grey prisoner 'IFA' transporter, for example, makes people already depressed and mentally broken before they are put in the 'Stasi-prison'. In this prison, which once was national-socialist welfare 'canteen' and a Soviet 'special camp', one was never in contact with other prisoners. Moving through corridors was controlled by a light signal device so that no prisoner could meet people except their security guards. Disorientation, isolation, control and psychological torture became an additional punishment in a 'social' community of 'comrades'. The prison was active until 1989.

Putting interrogated and/or bugged people in the system of 'IM' or 'Inoffizieller Mitarbeiter' was an element in the final class struggle against the bad and capitalist West. The 'Stasi-minister' Erich Mielke saw the 'IM-system' with his 173,081 informers as the main weapon in the protection of the 'SED' state. Not only the regular servants of the 'Stasi' with a 1.3% of the state budget but also the 'IM' got into the shield and sword or 'Schild und Schwert' apparatus of the 'SED'. It was common knowledge in the 'GDR' that 'die Partei hat immer Recht' or was always right. Even Christa-Maria Sieland, no longer willing to have sex with Bruno Hempf becomes an 'IM'. She had the choice, spy on your boyfriend and lover or you will never have theatre performances and illegal drugs again. The only way to get out was committing suicide, as she did. This was an act that officially didn't exist in the socialist paradise. In our opinion the sexual abuse of Christa-Maria Sieland by Bruno Hempf shocked Gerd Wiesler. As a perfect 'Weberian' bureaucrat, living in a free of rent social high rise flat, his frustrated sexual appetite is satisfied by using and paying for the services of a state owned prostitute, Ute, who is also working for other 'Stasi-members'. Everything he knew was grey: his flat, clothes, food, car, pub, office and life.

Also the functioning within the 'Stasi-hierarchy' is shown in an extraordinary view from inside. It was a military hierarchy using military ranks and doing service in casual and/or in uniform, similar to the national-socialist ones. The 'denazification' in the 'GDR' was pervert. Not so high-ranking national-socialist party members became loyal members of the 'SED'. Even the 'Freie Deutsche Jugend' or 'GDR' youth movement kept the same uniform and magazine 'Junge Welt' as the former 'Hitler-Youth'. They only changed brown for blue shirts. The system was based on arbitrary decisions taken by superiors without motivating. 'Stasi-members' were subject themselves to a system of inner security and discipline using proper definitions of deviant behaviour and punishments. The end of the 'Stasi-career' –as it was the case for Gerd Wiesler getting emotionally too close to his target and Under lieutenant Axel Stigler, joking on the Secretary-General of the 'SED', Erich Honecker– became steaming open letters to fill the kilometer-long shelves of files in which almost every citizen had his or her card. 122,000 meters of written material, 46,500 meters microfiches, 360,000 photos, 600,000 negatives, 24,000 slides, 3,850 videos, 730 movies and almost 99,600 sound recordings. Today 600,000,000 pieces of paper, destroyed by the 'Stasi', are being put together with computer aid to reconstruct these files.

The 200-year period of the dominant rational nation-state started with the French Revolution in 1789 and ended with the collapse of the Berlin Wall in 1989. This so called 'Wende' in Germany was the beginning of a new world order. The democratic and afterwards unified Germany could finally view her past to get judged by history. Today the 'Information and Documentation Center of the Office in Charge of Stasi Documents' or 'Gauck-Behörde' is a fact thanks to the job done by 'ASTAKe.V.' to protect the 'Stasi-archives' from destruction. The law or 'Stasi-Unterlagen-Gesetz' provides the possibility to consult one's own file and track those who spied on you. Georg Dreyman found his girlfriend Christa-Maria Sieland being an 'IM', codename Marta, spying on him.

4. 'Tscheekisten' in the 'GDR'

The leading elite in the 'GDR' always wanted to be the best schoolboy in the class. The soviet 'big bear' was also their 'big brother'. George Orwell knew by writing his 'Animal Farm' and his '1984' that these novels would heal him from his political far left wing sympathies. It was not the case for his colleague in the international brigades in the Spanish civil war Erich Mielke. He became deputy to the 'Kommissariat 5' or K-5 being the first German political police –since the Gestapo for whom he had a great admiration– essentially an arm of the soviet secret police. Walter Ulbricht, the former Secretary-General of the 'SED', put him in absolute power on 1st November 1957. Erich Mielke was appointed minister for state security and restructured the 'Stasi' immediately into a duplicate of the soviet 'KGB'. From then on this 'Chekist' organization would become the 'political combatant, the loyal son of the workers' class, standing at the head of the battle to strengthen the power of our workers' and peasants' state'. The 'Stasi' strategy was simple, total control and psychological terror on the society embedded in a 'so called' legal system.

The 'Stasi' was created on 8th February 1950 and reported directly to the Secretary-General of the 'SED', till 1971 to Walter Ulbricht, till 1989 to Erich Honecker and shortly to Egon Krenz. The organization was geographically ('Bezirk' and 'Kreis') and operational build on divisions and got the status of an authorised 'Kontrollinstanz' towards the state apparatus. The head divisions had diverse responsibilities towards e.g., protection, training, observation, anti-terrorism, and communications and to the army, the control on tourism, the party and the economy. Other divisions dealt with e.g. the archives, press relations, tapping and emigration. The 'Stasi-personnel' grew from less than 5,000 in 1950 to more than 90.000 in 1989. Other sources go up to 105,000 members. There was approximately 1 'Stasi-collaborator' for 180 citizens. In 'The Lives of Others' special attention is given to the intelligence techniques of the 'OV' and 'OPK' Georg Dreyman becomes subject to. These techniques were also knowledge to get acquainted by the 'Stasi-pupils'. Gerd Wiesler asked to do this 'OPK' by himself.

The 'OPK' was used since 1st April 1981 against criminals, political dissidents and high ranked citizens who were not conform to the state. Before starting the 'OPK' a plan was made which 'Stasi-collaborator', which department of the police or 'Volkspolizei' and or 'IM' could be used and what technical and others means were needed to know everything on the person's life at work, during leisure time and at home. The 'OV' existed since January 1956 and was an investigative instrument to-

wards political crimes existing next to the classical penal procedure. Next to the use of criminalistics and forensics: 'IM', phone tapping and opening letters were common practices.

5. The cult of Feliks Dzierzynsky

Intelligence is often seen as spying like in James Bond movies. In a more modern approach one can refer to the popular 'BBC' television story 'Spooks'. As shown until now we hope scholars and practitioners are interested in popular and subjective narratives whatever the medium in which they are brought. Even the fact that James Bond movies are subject to unbelief and smiling it was Ian Fleming himself who admitted his James Bond to be modelled after a real life spy, named Dusko Popov. This double agent with the British codename 'Tricycle' and German codename 'Ivan' liked money, cigarettes, champagne, girlfriends, cars and living dangerously. He survived World War II espionage and is nowadays recognized as a master spy who additionally wrote his proper biography. Dusko Popov became a cult figure in the public life of the 'jet set' liking to be in contact with a real spy. In the movie 'The Good Shepherd' the life of 'Edward Wilson' can be seen as the one of James Jesus Angleton and is subject to a kind of semi-real 'biopic' story. This spy catcher or 'Cold Warrior' with his love for 'poetry and orchids' became the legendary counter-espionage chief of the CIA. Another cult figure in the world of intelligence was born.

Closer to our subject is Major General Markus Wolf. This 'Stasi-official' was one of John Le Carré's favourite novel opposite in the 'GDR'. This 'man without a face' was raised in the socialist tradition during his exile in the Soviet Union. After a career as a journalist and diplomat he joined the 'Stasi' and became one of his top officials heading the 'HVA' or 'Hauptverwaltung Aufklärung' which was responsible for spying abroad the 'GDR'.

In modern strategic management theories the notion of 'corporate culture' is an important management tool. Parts of the concept of 'corporate culture' are subjective narratives, heroes and enemies. In the intelligence community those issues do have an added value in organizing and managing their organizations. 'Corporate culture' and '-communication' are essential in speeding up intelligence organizations efficiency and effectiveness. It was also the case in the Soviet Union. There they used the person of Feliks Dzierzynsky as a cult figure in order to create and use a 'Chekist-corporate culture' similar to what happened in the 'GDR'. Unfortunately the cult of Feliks Dzierzynsky is not that seen in the movie. But this artistic freedom of the movie director does not influence the totalitarian nature of bureaucratized evil the 'Stasi' was.

The Polish Feliks Dzierzynsky, nicknamed 'Iron Feliks' was born on 8th August 1877, in Vilna in today's Lithuania as a son of Edmund Dzierzynsky a high-school teacher belonging to the lower Polish aristocracy. With his wife Sofia Sigismundovna Mushkat he had a son Ian. In 1895 Feliks Dzierzynsky became a member of the illegal 'Lithuanian Social Democratic' group and got elected in the 'Central Committee'. He was no longer interested in becoming a Roman Catholic priest. He participated in the uprisings in the Kingdom of Poland, the Russian revolution in 1905 and met Vladimir Lenin in 1906 in Stockholm. After years of exile, imprisonment and escapes he

managed the bolshevist Russian 'Cheka'. The 'Cheka' or 'Vserossiskaya Chresvichaynaya Komissia po borbe z kontrevolutsiyay I zabortazhem' was created on 20th December 1917. This 'Cheka' immediately became the 'shield and sword' of the revolution. As said by Feliks Dzierzynsky, his organisation was not a tribunal but an institution of organized terror, 'we represent in ourselves organized terror, this must be said very clearly'. In 1919 he was the 'People's Commissar for Internal Affairs of the Russian Socialist Federal Republic' or 'Narodny Komissariat Vnutrennikh Del' known as the 'NKVD' and combined this task in 1922 with the chairmanship of the 'GPU' or state political administration 'Gossudarstvennoye Politicheskoye Upravleniye'. In 1924 he united the state political administration into the 'OGPU' or 'Obyedinyonnoye Gossudarstvennoye Politicheskoye Upravleniye'. On 20th July 1926 he died of a heart attack during a meeting.

Vladimir Lenin has studied the classic works on how to conquer, keep and abuse power. The Marxist 'dictatorship of the proletariat' was only a master plan to become the dictator on the proletariat. The use of a secret police, as he had learned from the former Tsarist 'Ochrana', was necessary to keep the proletariat in his so called liberated dream from imperialism and capitalism. This dream later would become an institutional nightmare. Vladimir Lenin chose Feliks Dzierzynsky, at that moment the commandant of the Smolney headquarters in Petrograd, to lead the 'Cheka'.

He was devoted to the 'cause' and the fight against the counterrevolutionaries. He was cultivated by reading poetry, not that much speaking and sleeping in his office at the 'Lubjanka' headquarters. Under his command the 'Cheka' was responsible for the internal political repression, the counterespionage, the espionage abroad especially in France and England and the border control.

After the death of Feliks Dzierzynsky it was Josef Stalin who inculcated a cult on him. Josef Stalin made up death masks of Feliks Dzierzynsky's face and hands and his corpse was displayed, clothed in uniform, in a glass coffin in the 'GPU' officers' club. The cult was renewed under Nikita Khrushchev who named the border guards school in Alma-Ata after him as well as many streets and squares in the Soviet Union. He also took the decision to raise a 14-ton statue of Feliks Dzierzynsky in front of the 'KGB Lubjanka' headquarters and renamed the square into 'Dzierzynsky Square'. Leonid Brezhnev, Yuriy Andropov and Mikhail Gorbachev continued this cult. Boris Yeltsin established the new 'KGB' or 'SVR' by decree effective 20th December 1991 on the seventy-first anniversary of the founding of the 'Cheka'. Feliks Dzierzynsky was to be found on stamps, coins, pins and pictures. His name was also given to factories, schools, ships and culture palaces.

Big statues were found in a lot of cities and miniature ones in various poses were cast in aluminium, iron, white metal and bronze for the adornment of offices. For long time intelligence officers received their paycheck on the twentieth of the month being 'Cheka-day' in glorifying their 'Knight of the Revolution'. The big statute on 'Dzierzynsky Square' was desecrated on 27th August 1991 and removed to a 'graveyard' for soviet statues in a field near the 'Tretjakov' gallery.

It was Colonel General Erich Mielke, minister of state security, himself who introduced his idol Feliks Dzierzynsky into the 'Stasi' and referred to himself as being a

‘Chekist’ or ‘Tschekist’ who followed the ‘Chekist’ principles. These principles are summarized as ‘we shall have a state within a state’.

The ‘GDR’ border guard regiment was also named after ‘Feliks Edmundowitsch Dzierzynsky’. Statues, big and miniature, and pictures of him were in all offices of the ‘Stasi’ and of course also in the personal office of Erich Mielke in the ‘Normannenstrasse’. Karl Werner, a ‘Stasi-poet’ even wrote the poem ‘Nach Aufzeichnungen von Feliks Dzierzynsky geschrieben in der Zelle n° des ‘Pavillons’ idolizing him. The cult of Feliks Dzierzynsky was a fact in ‘Stasi-bureaucracy’. He was omnipresent to guide, inspire and control the ‘Stasi-collaborator’. Erich Mielke, his staff and personnel became soviet copycats. He died in 2000 after becoming senile and calling the ‘KGB’ for help with a ‘toy phone’. The ‘Stasi’ already had come to an end on 3rd October 1990.

6. Intelligence oversight in one lesson

‘The Lives of Others’ is certainly subjective narrative knowledge for scholars and practitioners in intelligence studies, however we can highlight a main critique. The person of Gerd Wiesler could not have existed in real ‘GDR’ life. ‘Stasi-collaborators’ could never have changed sides and tried to save suspects. There was compartmentalisation of duties and no one could have done the job in listening, typing and interrogating alone. Above all the punishment for betrayal was death penalty and not just being sent to steam open mail.

Why so many Western (public) intellectuals saw the realisation of their dominant worldview in for example the ‘GDR’? After years this universal socialism proved to be a dictatorship oppressing every citizen for the benefit of the ruling class. This ‘Nomenklatura’ class depersonalised everybody and made them permanent targets of ‘OPK’ and ‘OV’ techniques. For a very long period only three Western political philosophers saw the evil and totalitarianism in socialism and informed us about the threat to individual human freedom and responsibility. Friedrich von Hayek did it with his ‘The road to serfdom’, Karl Popper in ‘The open society and its enemies’ and Hannah Arendt with her ‘The origins of totalitarianism’ and ‘Eichmann in Jerusalem. The banality of evil’. Especially Hannah Arendt gave attention to secret policing in totalitarian regimes. In her opinion they are instruments in permanently switching reality into fiction so this new reality can be executed and controlled. Today’s novelists of East German origin also write about the absurd life in the ‘GDR’ and the role of the ‘Stasi’. This is the case in ‘Meine Freie Deutsche Jugend’ by Claudia Rusch and in ‘Das Verhör’ from Andreas Sinakowski who worked for the ‘Stasi’. We can conclude the ‘GDR’, formally having a rule of law, was nothing more than an ‘Unrechtsstaat’ or even a state based on internal terror.

Political history showed examples of small sized nations with a limited state as being democratic and humanitarian. Big sized nations can also be of a democratic nature knowing members of parliament are often limited in their knowledge on intelligence, to avoid political abuse, upholding the rule of law and ensuring the proportionate use of exceptional powers in order to protect civil rights. Oversight is a means of ensuring public accountability for the decisions and actions of security and intelligence agencies. Most countries allow parliamentary oversight done through special

commissions, e.g., the Netherlands, Germany and Belgium. Today's effective oversight consists out of five vital elements. An oversight body needs to be independent from the executive and the intelligence services. It should have investigative powers as to decide to inquire into whatever subject it chooses. The body needs to have access to classified documents and information, be able to maintain secrets and have enough support staff, legal powers and financial resources.

This article was written while 'Iron Feliks' was literally in oversight on us. Visiting the Moscow based museum for the revolution in the early 1990's was as going to the supermarket. One could buy everything in the official museum shop, even original collector items if they were dated after the revolution of 1917. So a present for a former 'KGB-official', inscription included, bought there, being an iron miniature statue of Feliks Dzierzynsky now adorns one of our bookshelves. Also Berlin, 'Hauptstadt der DDR' learned fast. In the 'Normannenstrasse' and on the flea markets one could buy Feliks Dzierzynsky artefacts, as we also did there. The cult of Feliks Dzierzynsky in the former Soviet Union and East German intelligence community has now left Berlin but still influences scholars and researchers everywhere.

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