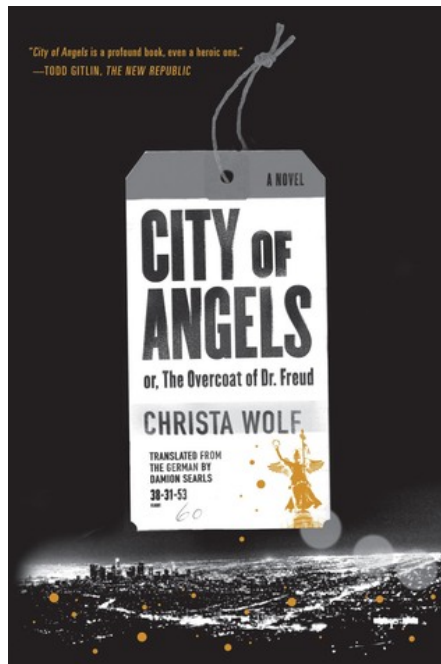




City of Angels or, The Overcoat of Dr. Freud

Christa Wolf, Damion Searls (Translation)

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The stunning final novel from East Germany's most acclaimed writer

Three years after the fall of the Berlin Wall, the writer Christa Wolf was granted access to her newly declassified Stasi files. Known for her defiance and outspokenness, Wolf was not especially surprised to discover forty-two volumes of documents produced by the East German secret police. But what was surprising was a thin green folder whose contents told an unfamiliar—and disturbing—story: in the early 1960s, Wolf herself had been an informant for the Communist government. And yet, thirty years on, she had absolutely no recollection of it.

Wolf's extraordinary autobiographical final novel is an account of what it was like to reckon with such a shocking discovery. Based on the year she spent in Los Angeles after these explosive revelations, *City of Angels* is at once a powerful examination of memory and a surprisingly funny and touching exploration of L.A., a city strikingly different from any Wolf had ever visited.

Even as she reflects on the burdens of twentieth-century history, Wolf describes the pleasures of driving a Geo Metro down Wilshire Boulevard and watching episodes of *Star Trek* late at night. Rich with philosophical insights, personal revelations, and vivid descriptions of a diverse city and its citizens, *City of Angels* is a profoundly humane and disarmingly honest novel—and a powerful conclusion to a remarkable career in letters.

City of Angels or, The Overcoat of Dr. Freud Details

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Author : Christa Wolf , Damion Searls (Translation)

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From Reader Review City of Angels or, The Overcoat of Dr. Freud for online ebook

Laura says

"The Overcoat of Dr. Freud" by Christa Wolf gives readers an up close and personal view into the mind of an elderly woman looking back at her life, and trying to come to terms with all that she has experienced. I felt as I read the book, that I was literally wading at times through regret. This was not an easy read, but not all novels are meant for entertainment....some are meant to expand our minds, and though I don't agree with Ms. Wolf's world view in many ways, I feel I have grown as a person from reading her story.

One quote in particular stood out to me--"I've begun to see the value of everybody's wisdom and the fact that people discover the same truths through many avenues. Open up your life so that you're not caught in self-concern. Then you will no longer think you're at the center of the world, because you're so concerned with your worries, pains, limitations, desires, and fears that you are blind to the beauty of existence. You will see that life is such a miracle, and we spend so much time doing nothing except figuring out the ways life is being unfair to us."

Danielle says

Een indrukwekkend boek dat me lang bij zal blijven. De persoonlijke geschiedenis van de schrijfster komt samen met de politieke geschiedenis van (oost) Duitsland. Haar verhaal roept meer vragen op dan dat het beantwoordt: Waarom verdwijnen bepaalde herinneringen? Is het beter om een mooi ideaal dat in de dagelijkse praktijk verandert in een afschuwelijke dictatuur van binnenuit te veranderen of veel harder actie te ondernemen? Hoe kies je wat goed is? Waarom is het zo moeilijk om je vaderland te verlaten en waarom blijf je in den vreemde bijna altijd een buitenstaander? Dit boek is een boek dat iedereen zou moeten lezen die geïnteresseerd is in de geschiedenis van Europa en het leven in een dictatuur. Het laat de afschuwelijke kanten van zowel het nationaal-socialisme als van het communisme zien, maar leert je ook beter begrijpen waarom een deel van de midden- een Oost-Europeanen ook een soort van heimwee hebben naar hun oude leven. Dit boek heeft een sterk humanistische inslag en laat zien hoe mensen worstelen met uit te vinden wat goed is te doen in moeilijke omstandigheden en dat ze daarin ook fouten maken, kleine- en grotere en dat zaken die onschuldig lijken achteraf gezien grote gevolgen kunnen hebben.

Sarah says

This book had so many layers, and made me think so deeply - not only about the fall of the Berlin wall and Germany's history both pre and post that event. But also about the nature of depression, reading, conversations about literature, travel, America of the last few years and being an expat. Added to that was Wolf's intimate portrayal of the discovery that she contributed, however unwittingly, to collection of information by the Stasi and East German governments. Fascinating and incredibly thought-provoking.

Uwe Hook says

Ms. Wolf was invited to attend a workshop in LA just when the GDR was dissolved. She has left us her impressions of Los Angeles, the US and the 'culture' we have now; the loss of faith she and her friends experienced post-GDR, and the way Westerners and the US reacted to the post-Wall and post-USSR era, as though the reunification were an unmitigated triumph, forgetting about the sense of loss and diminution this evoked in the GDR. This isn't a novel in the sense of inventiveness or dramatic arc, but a series of stories within stories about Wolf and some other emigres (Germans who came to LA in the '30s and '40s), other Europeans in LA. The book shows how people cope psychologically with the loss of their homeland, and incidentally, the loss of belief in a Marxist ideal or notion, not just when the GDR fell, but during the years Stalin destroyed those ideals.

Not her best book but important since it's her final legacy, published one year before her death.

Katy says

What a hidden gem. This book is ostensibly an autobiographical novel about the author coming to terms with the fact that she spied on her fellow citizens in the early days of the new East German government--and her examination of her own files. But it is so much more than that. It is a subtle look at self deception, memory, secrets, commitment to one's values and the contrast between one's inner and outer life. The book is not a fast read. Insights are interspersed throughout. I thought there would be more description of the examination of the files-- and more excitement and drama, but the subject was more nuanced. It ties together politics, Buddhism, psychology, friendship, culture, history and more. Well worth reading.

??? says

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Antonomasia says

There are a handful of older female writers about whom I find myself thinking, I wish she had been my

university tutor, or my aunt - Iris Murdoch, Byatt, Sontag. And now Christa Wolf. Perhaps an odd thing to say in a review of a book about a huge mistake or flaw, and its psychological suppression, that very few would ever want to admit to: after the fall of the Berlin Wall, Wolf discovered via files that 30 years earlier, she had been an informant to the Stasi, and she couldn't remember a thing about it. (And for such a loaded word, the actions sound so little: in the early 60s, she answered a few questions about the habits and tastes of acquaintances, asked by somewhat intimidating men in suits who turned up at her workplace. She was soon critical of the regime, but carefully - yet the consequences and significance of those early, naive collaborations are huge and terrible.)

But there is so much wisdom and insight here, and a willingness to dig around in dark corners of one's mind and to understand, both on an individual and a societal level. Perhaps it may be particularly intriguing to people who've at some point been shocked and shamed by the realisation that they weren't always as nice as they thought when they were younger. *City of Angels* - which mingles commentary on her time at a writers' residency at a cultural centre in LA in 1991, just after this discovery, and memoir about Wolf's life in East Germany - is a highly introspective book. As such, it's really not for everyone. But if you happen to find therapy-like mental processes, and the former Eastern Bloc, fascinating subjects, then it's a find. (A very Central European combination?) And unlike the authors of many recent memoir-novels who can prompt the snide thought "what makes them so special?", Wolf has had a long and interesting life, with unusual insights worth hearing, alongside charmingly mundane details like her *Star Trek* habit and friendship with new neighbours.

There were so many sentences and insights I wanted to highlight or underline (as this was a physical copy, I used scraps of paper) that I was driving myself mad with the *significance* of everything, nearly every page marked. I had to stop reading and switch to throwaway crime novels. And months later I returned to *City of Angels* and finished the last 140 pages only marking three or four more things.

Sometimes you just click with an author. I found this a very companionable book, though if trying to specify *why* it can come down to what Wolf doesn't do rather than does. Visiting second-hand bookshops, she never gushes about books as physical objects, she's simply interested in the contents. Taken on the Universal Studios tour by a friend's partner who works there, she admits to not being very interested in the films, though still goes round. And unlike a lot of contemporary / younger female writers these days, her narrative feels ungendered and she has a self-assurance that does not entertain the idea that anyone may consider her less worthy because of being a woman. There are a number of strong-minded female contemporaries of hers mentioned in the text for whom this seems to apply similarly, especially her deceased friend Emma, whose letters are a big part of her life at this time. (Do those younger C21st writers' family backgrounds make them less sure of themselves than those of the women who became public intellectuals decades earlier? Is the difference anything to do with national cultures? Also, if someone considers rude commenters and tweeters unworthy of notice and therefore doesn't mention them, it's less visible than those who treat them as hugely significant.) Wolf mentions a formidable mother from whom she got traits similar to the English stiff upper lip, which created a deep-seated confidence, but sometimes supplemented by an "act as if" - one which has helped maintained a sense of presence. This comes into play on the only occasion when someone, an American woman, mentions a gender issue: whether it may have made a difference to the way the German media has treated the revelations about her past: Wolf - "I couldn't be the first to say it. The only way to prove it would be to collect all the terms used against me and compare them." In herself, it always seems that being a woman isn't a reason to feel bad, though other things may well be - and this combination of transcendence and faultiness was perhaps what I found most companionable in the book.

I also loved her commentary on Buddhist self-help author Pema Chödrön, whom I read myself some years ago. I like that Wolf isn't above reading such stuff, but that that doesn't mean she swallows the stuff whole -

she genuinely tries, she critiques, she looks at it in terms of wider philosophies and her life experiences, and comes to see what is and isn't for her, and how it looks in the context of different societies. I could have done with this in the past as an example of how to approach such material, which so often is either dismissed out of hand or followed slavishly, with very little visible inbetween.

She also reads *Maus*, which she finds very emotional, and which is inadvertently the lead-in to her being asked to attend a group for the adult children of Holocaust survivors: most of them have never met a German person and want someone to answer their questions about the country. The sense of guilt as part of being German, especially a German of her generation is a background to the book, even as she is in an environment thousands of miles away from it, which allows reflection and processing.

There's a lot of literature out there about life under Communism, but not so much about the end days and just after. Whilst I wonder if Germans could easily cry 'privilege' at Wolf's perspective because she was a prominent (though not uncensored and not uncontroversial) writer under the GDR as well as later, it's interesting to hear abroad because we get a lot of purely underdog stories. There's ambivalence here about the extent of change, missing some aspects of the old country and less commercialism, although she had long been in favour of reform. I tend to think of the 90s as, though far from perfect politically, an optimistic and promising time because Communism had fallen and 9/11 and reactions to it hadn't yet happened – Wolf has moments of noticing that; the Iraq war is on the TV but seems far away and not yet part of something bigger. But what is very evident to her and her friends in LA is racial tension: the Rodney King trial, visits to a high-crime ghetto area with a German journalist, a middle-class black Gospel church (which sounds every bit as fun as the service in the *Blues Brothers*) and to Navajo and Hopi reservations (where friends' connections mean they get to talk to chiefs). The explicit mentions of people's race are sometimes a bit uncomfortable – she has come from a very white country, can't help noticing that this place isn't, but due to age + this being over 20 years ago, it wouldn't have been counted as so rude for her to say when it wasn't directly consequential. Whilst these parts of America aren't so under-reported as they once were, it was an interesting change to hear an account of them by someone from a non-English speaking country – and who unlike typical Anglo-American writers didn't insert explicit commentary and judgement, instead apparently drawing more on what was said by others.

There are chapters but the book isn't neatly divided up into topics, it's more like a diary, just writing down what happened, digressing as it occurs in her head (with past selves as 'you', current self as 'I') almost but not quite stream of consciousness. Whilst I've not read a lot of German literature, the form felt related to the run-on styles of Thomas Bernhard and of Birgit Vanderbeke in *The Mussel Feast*.

Sawsan says

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Kris says

Prob more like 3.5 stars. Frustrating to read, even more so to rank.

Lisa says

Imagine you are over sixty years old.

You have dedicated your whole life to making sense of the person you have become - after living as a child and adolescent under Hitler, after fleeing westwards in 1945, leaving everything behind, including your Nazi childhood, after absurdly hoping for a better world in the Nuclear Age, after starting a family and a writing career in the Eastern occupation zone of post-Nazi Germany, after seeing your political hopes and dreams crumble, one after the other, after seeing your work remain unpublished in the place you call home, after a life under different forms of dictatorship and surveillance ...

Imagine the inner and outer wall of the smallscale prison you call home come down, quite abruptly, only for you to discover that the global world is a much more well-protected high security fort than your naive smalltown self could foresee.

Imagine the world eager to judge you - your entire life and deeds - based on some documents collected in 1959, making you a Stasi "helper" for a meeting or two before you became a "victim" of the brutal state surveillance for three whole decades. Imagine the supreme and infallible "victors" of the new German state happily throwing you under the bus to make their own position shine ever so much brighter. Imagine friends and enemies alike creating a monster out of an ordinary and scrupulously honest writer, whose work is based on the analysis of self and memory in interaction with the collective perception of reality.

What would you do when the vultures come to eat you while you are still alive - yet mortally cold and depressed?

Christa Wolf did what I don't think I would dare to do. She left her family and friends and embarked on a nine-month-long adventure in Los Angeles, to study and think and heal and catch up with memories long forgotten that keep coming back to haunt her in her stateless mind.

An elderly, depressed, confused lady, she mingles with a group of scholars at the Getty Center. She speaks English, she drives a car, she explores the society that could be defined as the antithesis of the state she just saw sink into the ocean like Atlantis.

She harshly questions herself and analyses her guilt and shame while curiously learning the facets of urban American life in the 1990s. She follows contemporary politics, Clinton versus Bush, while peeling the onion of her memory back to the years in her childhood when she lived and breathed the system that brought another generation of exiles to the city of angels. She reads the diaries of Thomas Mann, and his Doktor Faustus, and compares her relationship to German fascism with his. She thinks of Brecht's Galilei, and of the sick world she experiences herself, in which there is no right way to act, only different kinds of wrong actions. She compares her thoughts to those of the scientists who built the Bomb, the One To End Us All.

She sees friends go to pieces in the same way she does, only their reasons are entirely private. A broken heart is a broken heart, no matter whether you lost a lover or a state or a career.

She dares not ask the question whether she would have been treated differently, had she been a man. It is possible, but how to prove things like that, she muses, always trying to find objective answers to impossible questions.

In the end, she leaves the city of angels with another layer of memories deeply ingrained into her mind. Her mind is her state. She is not stateless at all, as long as she is able to transfer her inner state of mind onto paper to create a masterpiece of post-Cold War German identity.

In the huge pile of work I have read by Christa Wolf, I have got to know her on an almost personal basis. I know her family, her thoughts, her feelings, her questions. I know what makes her happy, and what hurts her. Reading her prose makes me live with her mind for the time being. I know what to expect of her novels.

And yet! This one gave me shivers!

Anyone who can write like this after being treated the way she was, at her age, in her situation (I shun the word witch hunt as it has been usurped by the dark side of the force), anyone who dares to show vulnerability while staying brutally honest and intellectually upright, deserves a Nobel Prize!

A pity the deplorable Academy could not see her strengths and her power for all those years until she died in 2012!

Virginia Walter says

I read this fictionalized memoir by the East German writer in English, a 2013 publication from Farrar, Straus Giroux which Goodreads doesn't seem to recognize. It is a confusing book, in which the author tries to make sense of her experiences as a visiting scholar at, I am guessing, the Getty Center, in Santa Monica and also of the revelation that she informed on comrades to the East German secret police at a time in her past. The unsealing of secret Stasi files has made her -- and people back in the reunited Germany -- aware of this episode that she has forgotten, to her horror. The voice changes often from first to second person, often in the same sentence. Is this a deliberate effort to communicate her inability to connect with the Informant she once was?

Barbara says

Wolf does "autobiofictionalography" (um Linda Barry zu zitieren)! Als Getty-fellow wird sie von der vergessenen (verdrängten?) Vergangenheit heimgesucht, schaut Star Trek und liest "Maus" und streut englische Brocken in den deutschen Text. Interessant in Verschränkung mit meiner letzten Lektüre, "Purity" von J. Franzen. 2x Mauerfall, 2x Los Angeles. Bin von beiden Büchern nicht wirklich überzeugt. Beide weisen starke Passagen auf, haben aber einen "wehleidigen" Grundton durch ihre Hauptfiguren, die auf recht unterschiedliche Weise mit der Vergangenheitsbewältigung hadern.

Jule says

Christa Wolf passed away in December 2011 and these news reminded me that i had yet to read a book of hers. When i was young, she visited my school to read from one of her latest publications. Back then i even wrote a school newspaper article about her lecture. Last winter, this book fell into my hands and it intrigued me that Christa Wolf was writing about a time of her life when she was living on the West Coast, a detail of her personal story that i had not even been aware of. I was very curious to read of her impressions of living in LA.

I admit that this read was not the most enjoyable one, sometimes i had to drag myself along. Wolf's writing appeared quite verbose to me, a bit dry at times. It is not a book of action, but rather a recapitulation of constant thought, emotion, and consciousness. In that regard, it comes to no surprise to me that this book is not the easiest to digest. As for many of us, Wolf's mind and heart are caught in circles, and she does a great job of mirroring that process for her readers. As a result, i got an impression of genuine authenticity and integrity.

It seems like Wolf used this book to make peace with her life, to come to terms with her past. I could feel with her, i felt compassion for her. Wolf draws a remarkable historical line from the Third Reich, to the time of the German Democratic Republic, until today, based on her personal beliefs, values and story. Thanks to this book, i received a new platform on which to meet my own grandparents, my mother, to question them about their past and personal history. My reading of this book has already triggered interesting conversation with my family as it offered new grounds for interpretation, understanding, and raised further questions. In particular, Wolf's being in LA seems to have provided a fitting background with the necessary distance to dig deeper into her own self.

Anyone interested in German history experienced on a personal account, and especially from someone living in the east of the country, is recommended to read this book.

Annette Kaiser says

Wichtig um die Emotionen der "ossi" zur Wende zu verstehen

Mir wichtige Zitate:

S.23 Alexanderplatz 4.11.89. Ordner in orange Schärpen: KEINE GEWALT. ...du konntest nicht wissen dass auf den Dachboden Volksarmee stationiert war mit scharfer Munition. Falls Demonstranten vereinbarte Route verlassen und zum Brandenburger Tor durchbrechen sollten.

S.25 ich durfte an einer der seltenen Revolutionen in der deutschen Geschichte teilnehmen, das hat mir Zweifel genommen, ob es richtig war dageblieben zu sein

S.38 es wird eine Wiederholung nicht geben (nazideutschland) das werden wir nicht zulassen. .. frage: nicht Problem eines Landes sondern: wie haltbar ist die Decke unserer Zivilisation. Wie viele vernichtete, sinnlose, Perspektivlose existenzen kann sie tragen, bis sie an einer Stelle reißt wo sie mit heißer Nadel genäht.

S.41 Verlust des parteidokumentes: Heiligtum eines jeden Genossen...wann waren die Gefühle die sich einst an dieses Dokument hefteten ungültig geworden? Unterschiedliche, Widersprüchliche. Ist nicht mein ganzer gefühlshaushalt mit verblasst? Verarmt?

S.69: als Kind im Bett: wie Nachrichten vom Leid anderer Menschen und Angst vor eigenen Verletzungen ein ganzes Leben lang aushalten? Mitgefühl kann sich abschwächen wenn es übermäßig beansprucht wird.

Es wächst nicht in gleicher Menge nach, wie es ausgegeben wird. Man entwickelt Schutztechnik gegen selbstzerstörerisches Mitgefühl.

S.71 wäre ich unter den richtigen Verhältnisse ein anderer Mensch geworden? Krüger besser ohne schuld?

S.74-75 ich habe herausgefunden, dass meine Gefühlslage häufig nicht den historischen Ereignissen angemessen ist. ...mein Schwiegersohn: habt ihr schon gehört die Mauer ist offen – und was sagte ich darauf ganz spontan? Dann sollen sie auf dem ZK die weiße Fahne hießen das war unangemessen. Ich hätte meinen Schwiegersohn um den Hals fallen müssen und schreien: Wahnsinn! Ich hätte in Freuden Tränen ausbrechen müssen.... was habe ich da wirklich gefühlt? Freude? Triumph? Erleichterung? Nein. Etwas wie Schrecken, Scham, Bedrückung und Resignation. Es war vorbei. Ich hatte verstanden.

S.76 nicht immer sind die Tatsachen gegenüber den Gefühlen im Recht.

S.78 USA: Man hat es doch fertig gebracht den Leuten einzureden dass sie in der besten aller möglichen Welten leben. Solange sie das gegen allen Anschein Glauben sind Sie taub für andere Meinungen. Wahrscheinlich würde nur Katastrophen sie wach rütteln.... in den Staaten und herrscht ein starker Anpassungsdruck der wenig von den Betroffenen wahrgenommen wird. Der Alltag Amerikas gilt als Norm für die ganze Welt. Es gelte normal für Profit und Erfolg zu leben. Das alles gilt nach dem Zusammenbruch des Kommunismus als gesichert in alle Ewigkeit. Es werde viel Zeit vergehen bis die immensen Widersprüche die im System legen aufbrechen würden....

S.81 wie sollen wir deutschen damit leben ?was ist eine Last die von Jahr zu Jahr schwerer wird. da gibt es nichts zu verarbeiten nichts aufzulösen keinen Sinn zu finden. Da gibt es nichts als ein jedes Maß sprengendes Verbrechen auf unserer Seite und ein jedes Maß sprengendes Leid auf ihrer Seite.

S.87 wie habt ihr das ausgehalten? Wir hatten keine andere Alternative

S.90. ob das Wort Revolution 1989 unter euch hier gefallen ist weiß ich nicht mehr bezweifel es aber. Das wäre zu pathetisch vorgekommen. Das Wort dass die Lehrstelle besetzte das eingebürgert wurde bei unangemessen und hatte die Aufgabe den Charakter der Ereignisse zu verschleiern: Wände. Was wendete sich denn? Und wohin? Was ihr erlebt dort war ein Volksaufstand, der sich die Form friedliche Demonstrationen gab und das unterstelle nach oben schleuderte. Falls das die Aufgabe von Revolutionen ist, war das eine.... und die Staatsmacht empfand es als schlimmste Drohung, als die Massen auf den Straßen die Losung riefen: wir bleiben hier

S.129 What about Germany today? Der Fall der Mauer. Ein historisches Ereignis, ich zögerte das zuzugeben, von den Demonstranten nicht erwartet und nicht beabsichtigt war. Die Euphorie der Übergangszeit. Ich wollte die Menschen hier nicht enttäuschen, die erwarteten das im vereinten Deutschland jedermann glücklich sein müsse. Nein von Enttäuschungen stand nichts in ihren Zeitungen. Nichts von Verlusten. Es wäre mir kleinlich vorgekommen, hier in den USA davon zu sprechen.

S.130 und ihr die ostdeutschen? Ich sagte denen sei es abgewöhnt worden, privaten Besitz für so heilig zu halten, und auch wenn sie den früheren Staat abgelehnt hätten, neigten viele ostdeutsche der Meinung zu: Gemeinwohl komme vor profit. Der Amerikaner antwortete: da seht also nicht nur ihr euch infrage gestellt, auch die westdeutschen müssen sich durch eure Art zu denken angegriffen fühlen. Das fand ich bedenkenswert.

S.156f Paul Fleming: ... Dt. Übersetzung:wer sein selbst Meister ist und sich beherrschen kann, dem ist die weite Welt und alles Untertan.. Original: the Man who is Master of himSelf and can control himself has the whole wide world and what is in it at his feet.

Francesco: "Untertan" ist dasjenige deutsche Wort das er am meisten hasste, vielleicht ist er wegen dieses Wortes aus Deutschland weg gegangen. Erst wollt ihr euch selbst dann die ganze Welt beherrschen. Das ist der entscheidende Unterschied: ob du die Welt beherrschen willst oder ob sie dir zu Füßen liegt. Eure Selbstunterdrückung bringt das ganze Unglück hervor.

S.182 Der Blick in meine Stasiakte weißt du hat die Vergangenheit versetzt und die Gegenwart gleich mit vergiftet... Ich frage mich ob diese Art Wissen zur Heilung von Wunden führte.... Aber was war das schleichende Gift dass du aus diesen Akten einatmetest und dass dich so lähmte? Jetzt weiß ich: es war die

brutale Banalisierung eures Lebens auf diesen hunderten von Seiten die gewöhnlichkeit, mit der diese Leute eure Leben ihrer Sichtweise anpassten. ... es war die Sprache der Geheimdienste, der sich das wirkliche Leben and Zug ein Insektensammler, der seine Objekte auf Spießen will, muss sie vorher töten. Ich fühlte mich besudelt.

S.186 zwei Kontaktleute über drei oder vier Treffs mit dir und die Tatsache dass sie dich unter einem Decknamen geführt hatten machten diesen Faszirkel zur TäterAkte und schleuderten dich unvorbereitet in eine andere Kategorie von Menschen. Jeder Journalist, der sie anfordere, an diese Akte laut Gesetz. Ich habe mich entschlossen alles zu veröffentlichen

S.188

STALIN Wenn wir die Hoffnung auf den Weisen Völkerlenker aufgegeben hätten hätten wir uns doch damit selbst aufgegeben. Diese halbe Deutschland dieser halbe Staat, auch wenn er streng zu Ihnen war und viele Fehler hatte, war ihre einzige zu Flucht. Dass sie an dem Glauben festhalten muss er werde sich zu der ersehnten Menschen Gemeinschaft entwickeln. Dass sie ihn verteidigen mussten

S.258 wir hätten ja gar nicht bestritten dass wir in einer Diktatur lebten der Diktatur des Proletariats. Eine Übergangszeit, eine Inkubationszeit für den neuen Menschen. Die wir den Boden bereiten wollten für Freundlichkeit, konnten selber nicht freundlich sein, daran habe ich mich festgehalten. Wir platzen Foto Pi da dieses Wort nun mal gefallen ist. Wir möchten unser Land nicht, wie es war, sondern wie es sein würde. Wie es ist bleibt es nicht, das war uns gewiss. Die damals also sagte ich, als diese junge Herren mich ansprachen und ich sie nicht sofort wegschickte, habe ich wohl noch geglaubt: vielleicht sind die notwendig. Vielleicht brauchen wir die, nur zwei Drei Jahre später hätte ich die nicht mehr zur Tür herein gelassen.... Der Arge Weg der Erkenntnis, sagte ich. Davor der lange Weg der Kenntnis, des zur- Kenntnis- Nehmens. Was wir nicht glauben wollten. Die Hoffnung verkam, die Utopie zerbröselte, ging in Verwesung über. Wir mussten lernen, ohne Alternative zu leben

S273 damals habe ich noch nicht geschrieben. Dieser Satz war gültig das wusste ich. Wollte mich festhalten dass danach keine Kontakte der falschen Art mehr möglich gewesen wären. Das ergab etwas Erleichterung, da öffneten sich die Klammern, wenn auch nur um Millimeter.

S.275 die scheinbar tief gespaltene Welt Speist sich in ihrer tiefsten Tiefe aus einer Wurzel, war also noch bedrohlicher als die meisten von uns wollten.

S.291 die wichtigsten Eigenschaften des Zukunftsmenschen: Brüderlichkeit. Mit offenem Visier leben können. Dem andern nicht misstrauen. Die Wahrheit sagen können. Arglosigkeit, Weichheit, Naivität nicht als Schwäche sehen. Ich schrieb das fünf Jahre nach Stalins Tod da war ich 30 Jahre alt. Sowas würde heute nicht mal mehr der dümmste jüngste Autor schreiben.

S. 307 ob ich mich nicht damit abfinden könne, ein durchschnittlicher Mensch zu sein, mit Fehlern und viel Handlungen, wie alle Herr Gott noch mal hör auf sagte er. Du hast doch niemandem geschadet! Doch, sagte ich trotzig. Mir selbst.

S.334 ich lehnte mich in meinem Stuhl zurück, vergaß die Kopfschmerzen, das fröstelGefühl und versenkte mich in das Leben um mich herum, in das Blau des Himmels, den feinen hellen Sand, den Wind, der aufgekomen war und mir über die Haut Strich. Dies alles, sagte die Nonne, ist in diesem Augenblick genau so, wie es sein soll. Dein volles Leben. Let it be.

S.363 Ostsee Skandinavien Bretagne, die Seen um Berlin, ich hätte nicht gewusst, dass ich mein Leben mit einer Geschichte der Gewässer verbinden könnte, in denen ich geschwommen bin oder an denen ich stand,

S.370 My whole life is a process of learning how to make friends with myself

