THE GERMAN ARCHIVAL SYSTEM 1945-1995

by

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ABSTRACT

After World War Two, Germany became divided into two countries commonly called East and West Germany. This thesis describes how the two countries, one communist and one pluralistic, developed distinctly different archival systems with respect to the organization, legislation and appraisal methods of government archival institutions.

East Germany's archival system was organized and legislated into a rigorous hierarchical structure under central government control with the mandate of fulfilling in a systematic way primarily ideological objectives. Although professional collaboration between the archivists of the two countries had been officially severed since the early years of separation by East Germany, because of irreconcilable political differences, they influenced each others' thoughts. Specifically, East German archivists borrowed and implemented extensively appraisal concepts formulated in West Germany, such as the documentation profile idea.
The examination of the archival system in West Germany reveals organizational characteristics typical of federalist countries. The development of archival legislation in West Germany was clearly the outcome of initiatives from the archival profession itself, and West Germany's appraisal methods reflected a diversity of theoretical considerations which, because of the pluralistic nature of the discussions, were marked by a lack of professional consensus. The description of the discussions that took place over time illustrates an ongoing struggle to identify and respect the perceived demand for sources, and to formulate appraisal methods focusing on the contextual and functional analysis of records creators' activities and competencies. The discussion of the developments that followed Germany's political reunification in 1990 shows that East Germany's archival system was absorbed by the West German system. The thesis concludes that the main effect of reunification was a search for a balance between East and West appraisal concepts and methods, and a renewed constructive debate characterized by a reexamination of previous archival contributions supporting contextual and functional appraisal approaches.
TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract .................................................................ii

Acknowledgments ......................................................v

Introduction ...........................................................1

Chapter One: Archival Organization in West Germany ..........7

Chapter Two: Archival Legislation in West Germany ..........23

Chapter Three: Archival Organization and Legislation in East Germany .................................................36

Chapter Four: Appraisal Theory and Methods in West Germany .................................................................57

Chapter Five: Appraisal Theory and Methods in East Germany .................................................................91

Chapter Six: Appraisal Theory in Germany after 1989 ....124

Conclusion ...............................................................154

Bibliography ............................................................157
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INTRODUCTION

This thesis studies the organization, legislation and appraisal approaches of German archives between 1945 and 1995. A discussion of the role and character of German archives is useful for three reasons. First, there is little if any archival literature in English dealing with the archival developments in the former East and West Germany. Second, the German archival experience is significant both in its own right and as a component of history of archives. And third, the different motivations and influences that East and West German archivists brought to the archival function of appraisal may form the basis for constructive reflections on the role of archives in modern societies. Studies in archival history have demonstrated that the selection of records for preservation is directly connected to the needs and perceptions of the society for which the records were kept and depended on the particular world view of a given people in a given period of time. The impact of differing world views may be most clearly discernible when comparing different political forms of society. The

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states of East and West Germany during their existence in the period 1945-1990, represent an exemplary contraposition of socio-political philosophies. In fact, these states shared a common cultural heritage before their separation in 1945, and the way in which their different political paths over nearly five decades have determined different archival approaches and the formation of different archival heritage, provides an intriguing case study in archival history.

At the end of World War Two, Germany became divided into East and West. Each country subsequently underwent distinctly different developments regarding the organization and legislation of government archival institutions, and the role that they were to play in society. In West Germany the archival system was, as in other confederations, such as Canada, described in terms of a provincial and federal archival structure. The federal archives, i.e. the Bundesarchiv, only had archival jurisdiction over records of federal government departments. The Bundesarchiv did not possess any legal authority or jurisdictional competence upon the archives of the federated provinces. The provinces were autonomous in

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regulating the administration of the records of their governments. Municipal and city archives, and those of private persons and institutions were outside of provincial and federal competencies. Within the framework of government archives, archival activities encountered the difficulties in the determination of priorities that are typical of western pluralistic societies.

In contrast, East Germany had a central archives administration, placed under central government, which became directly responsible for all levels of the hierarchy of administrative units in the state archival system. The German Central Archives was just one, albeit a very important one, among the archival administrative units of East Germany. Municipal and city archives also were under central archival administration and formed the bottom of the hierarchy of state archives. Archival responsibilities and practices were legislated and regulated by central government authority in accordance with overall state objectives.

The primary function of government archival institutions is to preserve public records and to make them available for
use. The preservation of the documentary heritage in the East and West German societies was motivated by entirely different philosophical reasons, which are made evident by the way government archives were organized and regulated. A descriptive analysis of the organization and legislation of government archives will help to clarify these differences. However, an effective way to gauge the degree of difference in the role of archives and archival institutions in both states is to analyze the methods and theories developed for selecting records worthy of preservation for society. The difference in appraisal approaches exemplifies the mind set of archivists in the two German states, and by extension that of the society of which they were part. Therefore, a description of appraisal theories and methods developed in both countries will provide a basis for comparison. A general overview of the trends in the debate on appraisal theory and methods in Germany since reunification in 1990 will then show how the different approaches converged.

The focus of this thesis is on government records and on archives in government institutions as these best reveal the political and philosophical differences between East and West
Germany. In any case, because private archives were incorporated into the public domain in East Germany, a discussion of them as separate entities is essentially superfluous. The examination of appraisal theories and methods will be limited to an illustration of concepts and their factual implementation. The definitions of the terms used in the thesis, such as "archives", and "records", and the terms associated with the process of "appraisal", are based on the respective entries in the ICA "Dictionary of Archival Terminology". Unlike West Germany, East Germany discontinued the use of the term "Behörde" (agency) in the 1950s. The term that substituted it, "Registraturbildner", is most accurately translated with the English term "records creator". The definitions of both German terms, however, were virtually identical. Thus, the English equivalent terms "agency" and "records creator" will be used as synonyms and for both countries.

The structure of this thesis aims to facilitate comparison and reveal contrast. Chapter One deals with the West German archives organization from 1945 to the present. However, in

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order to allow for a general comprehension of the state of archives in 1945, a brief retrospection to pre-war Germany is included. Chapter Two describes the development of archival legislation in West Germany, its problems and justifications. Chapter Three describes the organizational developments of the archives system in East Germany for the period of its existence from 1945 to 1989. As the formation of the archival system was undertaken by the central legislature, its structural organization and the definition of its legal competencies and functions cannot be discussed separately, as in the case of West Germany. Thus, they will be dealt with in an integrated way in the same chapter. Chapter Four and Five discuss the theories and methods of appraisal developed during the existence of each country (1945-1989), respectively. Chapter Six describes the trends in the appraisal debate since 1990, as it developed among the archivists of the reunited Germany, and presents its direction. The Conclusion provides a brief summary of the findings from the individual chapters.
CHAPTER ONE:
ARCHIVAL ORGANIZATION IN WEST GERMANY

With the end of the Second World War in 1945 and the division of Germany into four military zones, each administered by one of the allied forces, the German state of Prussian heritage and its central government institutions were declared dissolved. From an archival point of view, the tasks of the first hour were to take stock of the damage to and loss of archival holdings and government records, to salvage and put together scattered archival holdings and government registries of all levels of government, and to reconstitute and construct archival storage and administration facilities. The western allies soon gave permission for the reorganization of archival administrations in the western zones\(^4\). Upon the initiative of archivists in the British and American zones, a resolution was passed in 1946 regarding the professional organization of archivists. This resulted in the establishment of the "Society of German Archivists" (Verein der Deutschen Archivare) in the same year. The society's purposes, according to its statutes, were to "promote archival concerns, to support the cohesion of

its membership and its continued education, as well as to represent the membership's professional interests”\(^5\). These goals were to be promoted by regularly held conferences of the archivists' society (Deutsche Archivtage), and by the establishment in 1947 of the quarterly professional journal "Der Archivar”\(^6\). This new journal was to complement the more historically oriented, annual archival journal “Archivalische Zeitschrift”, published since the early 1900s by the Bavarian state archives\(^7\). Furthermore, the board of directors of the archivists society formed a Special Committee (Deutsche Archivausschuss), which was to facilitate primarily the cooperation of the fledgling provincial archives administrations within the western allied zones, to represent their concerns in front of the allied authorities, and to function as their resource staff\(^8\). The committee, which acted from 1947 to 1952, was also in charge of establishing international contacts, in particular with the International Council of Archives (ICA), and the Table Ronde Des Archives\(^9\).

\(^6\) Kahlenberg, 1972, 37.
\(^8\) Kahlenberg, 1972, 38.
The tasks of the committee which are of primary concern to the purpose of this thesis were:

1. the establishment of jurisdictional boundaries for government archives, including the repatriation of records scattered in various safety deposits and/or confiscated by the allied powers;
2. the formulation of new archival legislation for the management of public and private archives; and
3. the establishment of a new central government archives.

The initial efforts of archivists to weld together a unified administrative structure of government archives in the western allied zones were a continuation of the struggles of archivists in pre-war Germany. Before the war, the strongly independent states had successfully managed to keep to a minimum any obligation of regulated cooperation as favoured by the central Prussian power. In fact, a centrally directed and unified state archives organization had never existed in pre-war Germany. However, the presence of eighteen Prussian-style state archives in the federated states and of the central government archives (Reichsarchiv) in Berlin, with its

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10 Kahlenberg, 1972, 39.
Institute for Archival Science (Institut für Archivwissenschaft), had been effectively yielding a guiding and unifying influence on the management of government archives in the individual German states. 

After 1946, it became increasingly clear that the western allied zones were facing a prolonged separation from the soviet zone. This situation left no choice but to proceed with the re-organization of government structures in western Germany, including those related to archival institutions. As steps were taken in 1947 to form a national German government, the pre-war political structure of a federation of states under a central government was maintained. New provinces were created, and territorial and jurisdictional boundaries re-defined. In particular, the western and northern areas of the western allied zones experienced a severing of old state borders, whereas the south, namely the state of Bavaria, survived essentially intact. The new provinces of Baden-Württemberg, North Rhine Westphalia (Nordrhein-Westfalen), and Schleswig-Holstein were forged out of a number of fragmented states. As a result, archival jurisdictions which traditionally reflected

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11 Ibid., 26.
both historic territories and government structures required
adjustment. Each new province established a provincial
archives administration which had the purpose of overseeing all
government archives within the province itself.

Each province maintained from three (North Rhine
Westphalia) to eight (Bavaria) former state archives, most of
which had existed since the 19th Century\textsuperscript{12}. Those former state
archives which happened to be located in the new provincial
capitals, such as in Düsseldorf (1961), Hannover (1971),
Koblenz (1975), and Wiesbaden (1958), were elevated to the rank
of Main Provincial Archives (\textit{Hauptstaatsarchiv}). They became
responsible for the records of the central agencies of their
provincial government. In contrast, former state archives in
other locations were merged and/or reduced to subordinate
provincial archives\textsuperscript{13}. As a result, some archival institutions
which had been quite significant because of the large
territorial or administrative jurisdiction they had in the
past, lost their high rank in the overall organizational
hierarchy. Usually, the Main Provincial Archives were also
designated repositories for records generated in a capital’s

\textsuperscript{12} Franz, 1990, 19.
\textsuperscript{13} Leesch, 1984 (a), 116-117.
adjacent region. In addition, the provincial archives administrations were given the mandate to care for records produced by regional agencies of the federal government, based on a 1931 agreement between central and individual state governments\textsuperscript{14}.

In spite of the formation of new administrative jurisdictions for the provincial archives, their historic territorial jurisdictions (Archivsprengel) remained largely unaffected, as the new provinces were constituted from the aggregation of former states which were territorially smaller. In one case, as indicated earlier, the state of Bavaria merely substituted the title "province" for "state", that is it became the province of Bavaria. There were only two cases in which a pre-war state was divided into segments assigned to distinct new provinces. Briefly, the administrative organization within each province changed the hierarchical structure among its archives, which became either the central or the regional repositories for provincial government records\textsuperscript{15}.

\textsuperscript{14} Franz, 1990, 19.
\textsuperscript{15} Ibid.
An entirely new member (post 1945) of the archival organizational structure in West Germany was the Archives for Vital Statistics (Personenstandsarchiv). Two such archives were established in the province of North Rhine Westphalia, one in Brühl (1954/55), and one in Detmold (1964). In these archival institutions, the archivist's competence and that of the records administrator were integrated, as archivists also made entries in current records, such as death registries and old age pension files\(^\text{16}\).

The new provincial governments placed their respective archival administrations within their government hierarchy according to different conceptions. In some provinces, such as in the Saarland, Lower Saxony (Niedersachsen), Rhineland-Palatinate (Rheinlandpfalz), Baden-Württemberg, and Schleswig-Holstein, the provincial archives administration was initially placed directly under the head of government, according to the Prussian tradition. By the 1970s, only the Saarland and Lower Saxony among those provinces, maintained this arrangement. On the other hand, Baden-Württemberg sought a new direction by giving its archives administration the rank of a senior

\(^{16}\) Leesch, 1984 (a), 118-119.
government agency (Oberbehörde) removed from the head of the government, but without a direct ministerial affiliation. On the other hand, Rhineland-Palatinate and Schleswig-Holstein, made their archives administrations dependent on the provincial ministry of culture, as the provinces of North Rhine Westphalia, Hessen, Berlin, and Bremen had favoured from the beginning. In these provinces, the archives administration formed a section of the ministry of culture. The dependence of the archives on this ministry fostered the perception of government archives as cultural institutions serving research needs and diminished the role of archival institutions as integral part of the government’s records management.

Bavaria was an exception in this restructuring as it was the state least affected by territorial changes. Its archives organization was developed in the 19th century, and consisted of one central archives in the capital of Munich and eight subordinate state archives in the regions. The structure of the Bavarian provincial government went through minor modifications after the war, and thus the organization of its archives matched the pre-war situation. The archives

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17 Kahlenberg, 1972, 27.
18 Ibid.
administration was under the ministry of culture until 1970, and later it became a separate senior government agency, as in Baden-Württemberg.

By the end of the 1940s, as the government archives in the provinces were firmly established within their jurisdictions, the foundation of a central government archives for West-Germany was in the phase of preparation. As a result of the historical developments in Germany, an "all-embracing" national archives, such as that of France, had never existed. The closest approximation was the central government archives (Reichsarchiv) in Berlin, which existed from 1919 to 1945 and functioned as the repository for the archives of the federal government and of all federal government departments and their regional agencies, including all other public institutions that held delegated powers to carry out federal affairs. The Reichsarchiv also actively pursued the acquisition of non-government archives of national significance which were intended to complement government archives, and thus reflect all aspects of German society. The Reichsarchiv strove for

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19 Leesch, 1984 (a), 115.
20 Kahlenberg, 1972, 19.
21 Ibid., 20.
the "total archives concept", but financial and political developments limited its efforts.

After the end of World War II, the western allied zones were effectively without a central government archives, as the Reichsarchiv was situated in the soviet sector of Berlin. In fact, the majority of the holdings of the Reichsarchiv and the Prussian state archives in Berlin were under the control of the soviet authorities. Most of the surviving registries of the central departments of the Nazi's government were confiscated by the allied forces. The Americans and the British created special document collecting centres for records of central government agencies and their affiliated local agencies, the most important of which were located in Kassel, Frankfurt, and in Berlin. Department registries which had been used for the war crime trials at Nuremberg were taken to the United States (in Alexandria, near Washington, D.C.) and England (Whaddon Hull/Buckinghamshire), or to Moscow by the Russian allies.\footnote{Guides to German Records Microfilmed at Alexandria, Va., Washington 1958. Edited by the National Archives, National Archives and Records Services. For information on one of these allied collecting centres see Lester K. Born, "The Ministerial Collecting Centre near Kassel, Germany," American Archivist XIII (1950): 237-258.}
When the Russian authorities announced the establishment of a central German archives in the soviet sector of Berlin in 1946, intending to build on the tradition of the former Reichsarchiv, western Germany considered this initiative a promising one to form the nucleus of a future united German national archives\textsuperscript{23}. In fact, for the first three years, the establishment of a new central government archives in the western zones was not a pressing issue. There were no central government records, past or present. By 1948, however, the political situation had deteriorated, and the separation of West and East Germany became inevitable. Naturally, the old Reichsarchiv was not longer considered as a repository for the records of the future government of West Germany. In addition, many of the records used in the Nuremberg trials of 1946 and the holdings of the documentation centres were being released for distribution among the western and east zones. Finally, the 1949 proclamation of West Germany as a sovereign state accelerated the establishment of a new central government archives. Because of the need to house the records of the interim German administration of the western zones, and the anticipated transfer of confiscated records, the new federal

\textsuperscript{23} Kahlenberg, 1972, 56-57.
government was soon convinced of the necessity of having its own government archives. The subsequent proposal for the establishment of the "Bundesarchiv" was prepared by the Special Committee of the Society of German Archivists, and was presented in parliament in 1950. It recommended to place the Bundesarchiv directly under the authority of the head of the government, the chancellor. Based on the tradition of the Prussian archives administration, such an arrangement was expected to provide the best solution for an effective cooperation with all the government departments. However, the 1950 resolution of the federal parliament established that the Bundesarchiv be placed under the authority of the Ministry of the Interior, and specifically within its Cultural Affairs Division, thus receiving less than departmental status. The Bundesarchiv was finally opened in 1952 in the city of Koblenz, about 60 km south of the capital Bonn, as a concession to regional politics. The distance from its sponsor was faulted for the organizational obstacles which arose and for the lack of cooperation between the archives and the government. Yet, in the 1950s, the location of the Bundesarchiv in Koblenz, as

24 Ibid., 58.
25 Ibid., 64.
26 Ibid., 66.
well as the location of the German capital in Bonn, was viewed as a temporary situation. It was widely hoped and expected that the reunification of East and West Germany would occur in the near future\textsuperscript{27}.

At its inception in 1952, the Bundesarchiv was given responsibility for:

1. the acquisition, arrangement, and research use of the archives of the federal government and its agencies;
2. the acquisition of archives holdings from the former Reichsarchiv and Prussian central state archives as far as they were located in West Germany, as well as the acquisition of the records of the Nazi government;
3. the transfer of records of the German administrations created in the western allied zones; and
4. the registration and care of confiscated and retrieved records from previous federal (Reich) jurisdictions\textsuperscript{28}.

This rather general mandate specified that only the federal government and its immediate administration were to

\textsuperscript{27} When the reunification finally occurred forty years later in 1990, and the government was transferred, with most federal departments and agencies, to the new capital of Berlin, the Bundesarchiv began to be seen as a possible regional branch of a new federal archives in Berlin.

\textsuperscript{28} Kahlenberg, 1972, 61.
fall under the archival jurisdiction of the Bundesarchiv. The other constitutional organs, that is, the Parliament, the Upper House (representatives of all provinces forming the Legislative Council), the Supreme Court, and the Auditor General were not included. Moreover, the archival competence for the appraisal of non-current records was left undefined, and this resulted in the subsequent dependence of archivists on the voluntary cooperation of government administrations. This situation also allowed for the continuation of various departmental archives as separate institutions largely inaccessible to the public. A most notable example here was the Political Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The issue of public access to federal government archives in general was virtually not addressed either, as the term "research use", faithful to pre-war tradition, referred primarily to the research function of staff archivists of the Bundesarchiv itself. In other words, the mandate failed to provide the Bundesarchiv with the legal authority in matters of records transfer, records appraisal, and provision of public access for most federal government records. Finally, the fact that the Bundesarchiv became part of one ministry resulted in suspicion and at times mistrust by
neighbouring ministries\textsuperscript{29}. However, in time, on the initiative of federal archivists internal administrative procedures were established within each government department, and this in part compensated for some of the deficiencies.

In summary, the basic structural organization of government archives in relation to their provincial and federal governments had been completed by the end of the 1950s. The jurisdictional competencies were defined separately for the provincial and the federal archives. The federal structure of West Germany produced independently operating provincial archives, while the federal archives was exclusively responsible for the federal domain. A certain degree of consistency regarding the jurisdictions and operation of government archives was favoured by regular consultations of senior management. The 1946 Special Committee of the Society of German Archivists, which had been the driving force in all archival matters after the war, had ceased to exist in 1952 with the foundation of the Bundesarchiv. A new semi-annual conference (Konferenz der Archivreferenten des Bundes und der Länder) took its place in 1953. It was composed of the

directors of the main provincial archives and of the
Bundesarchiv, who represented both their archives and their
superior government agency\textsuperscript{30}. The establishment of this
conference concluded the federalization of the archives
organization in West Germany, in respect of the new
constitutional principles\textsuperscript{31}. Its purpose was to function as an
extension of the archives administrations for consultation and
for reaching an agreement regarding common administrative
affairs. However, the conference was not given the competence
to issue binding resolutions, but only recommendations. Yet,
the establishment of this institution represented an
improvement compared to pre-war conditions where no such formal
inter-state archives representation had existed\textsuperscript{32}. In
combination with the professional Society of German Archivists,
the conference provided the arena from and through which ideas
and initiatives were disseminated.

\textsuperscript{30} Leesch, 1984 (a), 120.
\textsuperscript{31} Kahlenberg, 1972, 55.
\textsuperscript{32} Ibid., 86.
The development of archival legislation had a difficult history in West Germany. In fact, prior to the 1980s, the care and protection of government archives in West Germany (and in Germany prior to the Second World War) was solely managed through internal administrative regulations. As a rule, they were created by and for government administrations. Standardization of such regulations even within one level of government was never fully attained. Although archivists frequently were involved in creating administrative policies, they virtually had no authority over administrators in regards to records transfer, scheduling, and appraisal. An advisory function was the closest allowed role.

After the French Revolution in the late 18th century and the rise of historicism in the early 19th century, government archives began to be perceived as part of the cultural heritage of the state which were to be gathered in centralized archival institutions. During the early 19th century in Germany, state

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archives administrations were established within each state. Among them, the archives administrations of Bavaria and Prussia became important for the development of a government archives organization in Germany, as well as for the establishment of professional principles within Germany\textsuperscript{34}. Soon, questions arose about territorial and administrative jurisdictions of individual state archives with respect to each other and other kinds of archival institutions which were not under state control, specifically local government archives, and the large sphere of private archives. It also became apparent that internal regulations frequently were insufficient to ensure the orderly and regular transfer of non-current records of all government departments, and to prevent the destruction of potentially valuable records by those records creators. A well-established registry system moreover, competed with archival institutions for the control over records transfer and appraisal. These registries operated as specialized and independent offices between the government agencies whose current records they managed, and the archives\textsuperscript{35}. However, archivists were not sufficiently motivated to make archival

\textsuperscript{34} Kahlenberg, 1972, 17.

\textsuperscript{35} Richard Klumpenhouver, \textit{Concepts of value in the archival appraisal literature: an historical and critical analysis} (University of British Columbia, M.A.S. Thesis, 1988). This thesis provides a detailed discussion of the development of appraisal theories and methods during this period in Germany highlighting the relationship of the registry system to archival institutions.
legislation a priority. The close association of archivists with the historical community contributed heavily to this lack of initiative. Historians and archivists alike were mainly concerned with the archives created between the medieval period and the early 19th century. This fostered a passive-conservative relationship with, and resultant lack of interest in, the living government administration and records management. Since archivists were historians themselves, they were preoccupied with their own research, for which "old" archives were of primary importance. A stronger involvement in the records management practices of their sponsors would have allowed for less time spent on research, and also held little prestige. In fact, the subject of records management was all but absent from the archivists' training during the 19th and the first half of the 20th century. State archives had become central research and cultural institutions, and thus divorced themselves from the role of repositories of the records of particular government departments. Hence, archives no longer served the business needs of the records creators. In turn, administrations rarely saw reasons for granting any

36 Kahlenberg, 1972, 42.
competence to archival institutions in matters of transfer and appraisal\textsuperscript{38}.

A more concerted effort undertaken by archivists towards the formulation of archival legislation involved those archives which clearly fell outside the jurisdiction of the state archives but were considered vitally important for historical research. As early as 1871, historical, antiquarian, and archival societies across Germany appealed to the national government to create laws or internal administrative regulations which would ensure that local governments, churches, foundations, corporations etc. either took proper care of their archives, or transferred them to the custody of state archives\textsuperscript{39}. A similar effort was made after World War One, as inflation had left many such records creators financially unable to care for their holdings. When state archivists requested that these archives be placed under the authority of the state archives, their owners and sponsors resisted vehemently. Thus, the only national legislation that came to pass, and that was effective from 1920 to 1925, was one prohibiting the unauthorized expatriation of "objects of

\textsuperscript{38} Kahlenberg, 1972, 43.
\textsuperscript{39} Brenneke, 409 (footnote).
historical, artistic, and research value" 40. Although archival documents and records were not listed specifically (except in the Prussian interpretation, which mentioned deeds and historically valuable records), this law was nevertheless to be understood to include them. In the same decade, many German states created their own legislation protecting their public heritage from destruction and expatriation (Denkmalschutzgesetze). Primarily intended for buildings, monuments, and art, in so far as they were owned by the public, this legislation, in some states, included archives of local governments, churches, and private owners41.

During the Nazi period (1933-1945), the strongly centralized government of the Third Reich sought to bring the individual German states under tighter control. One such measure resulted in a national directive (Reichsverordnung), issued by the Ministry of the Interior in 1934, which was intended to provide a common legal basis for the protection of state government archives from unauthorized destruction or loss due to lack of care42. It prescribed that the responsible

40 Ibid., 414-415.
41 Ibid.
42 Ibid., 411. The state of Prussia had issued its own directive earlier in 1934, a reflection of its dominant role in Germany in archives initiatives of practical and theoretical nature.
state archives be informed about intended records disposition, and that authorizations for records destruction be issued to the records creator by its superior administrative authority. Furthermore, schedules of records transfer were to be devised to avoid the unnecessary accumulation of records in the registries, and poorly managed registries had to be properly arranged and described or sent directly to the archives. The care of archives still held in the government registries was to be facilitated by an especially created position of archives custodian (Behördenarchivpfleger) within the bureaucracy, who was to constitute the link between the registry officer and the archival institution by assisting in the storage, arrangement and description, and appraisal of records. Local government, that is, cities, municipalities, and towns, although outside of immediate state control, were in principle included as well in the responsibilities of the archives custodians⁴³. Yet, this directive was only implemented in one central government department, namely the Ministry of Justice⁴⁴. Possible reasons may again point to the fact that the German states had routinely resisted centralizing tendencies, and in addition disapproved of the dominant role of the state of Prussia, which

⁴³ Brenneke, 414.
⁴⁴ Ibid., 412.
provided the model for this directive\textsuperscript{45}. Also, the war years would have required administrations to focus on the bare necessities of functioning, and thus there were little time and human resources available for archival management.

When the discussion about archival legislation began again after 1945, it revealed the stagnant position of archivists and various levels of government from the decades before the war. A 1949 proposal prepared by the Special Committee of the Society of German Archivists suggested a model that would see dramatic changes in the responsibilities of archivists toward records creators (private and public) to be enshrined in a common legislation binding all provinces. The proposal recommended to institute laws that regulated the transfer of records from the records creators to archival repositories, with archivists holding the sole competence for archival appraisal and records disposition, as well as having a role in records management. The resistance of private records creators and local governments to state intervention in the following years resulted in the dismissal of the entire proposal in 1953\textsuperscript{46}. The only national legislation that obtained support

\textsuperscript{45} Ibid., 411.
\textsuperscript{46} Kahlenberg, 1972, 49.
from all sides was passed in 1955 and was a new edition of the cultural property law of 1920. Archives constituted just one category of cultural property protected from unlawful expatriation⁴⁷.

A few of the well-established Prussian archival advisory bodies bridging state and local governments from the 1920s were revived and still exist today: examples are institutions such as the Archives Advisory Office (Archivberatungsstelle), and the Provincial Office for the Care of Archives (Landesamt für Archivpflege) in North Rhine Westphalia⁴⁸. In the 1960s, a trend towards professionalization of archivists was visible as churches, private corporations, and local governments, established their own chapter within the Society of German Archivists, and also formed their own inter-provincial professional associations, but this did not result in any effort towards the issuing of archival legislation⁴⁹.

The federal Privacy Legislation of 1977 (Datenschutzgesetz) worked as a catalyst for a renewed

discussion of comprehensive archival legislation\textsuperscript{50}. The 1977 law created an impediment to the accessibility of government records/archives by the public, and forced archivists to rethink their relationship with records creators\textsuperscript{51}. The issues of regulated transfer of records, closure periods of sensitive records, and disposition needed urgent attention. Although archivists had no authority with respect to records creators, they had a mandate, more or less legally defined (otherwise perceived as professional obligation), to provide access to records to the public. In the following years, provincial and federal archives administrations lobbied their respective superior government agencies to create a law that would secure access to and use of government archives. The province of Baden-Württemberg was the first to pass a law on "the care and use of archives" in 1987. This law specifically included all other public archives within the provincial jurisdiction, such as community and city archives\textsuperscript{52}.

The first federal archives law (\textit{Bundesarchivgesetz}) on "the protection and use of records of the federation" was

\textsuperscript{51} Booms, 1986, 70.
\textsuperscript{52} Franz, 1990, 39.
passed in 1988⁵³. It was, however, limited to the archives produced by federal bodies. This law stipulated that all federal ministries had to transfer all their respective records of no further administrative use to the Bundesarchiv (Art. 1 of the Bundesarchivgesetz). Excluded from this obligation were the legislative bodies of Parliament and Upper House, which could decide themselves whether to offer records to the Bundesarchiv for appraisal and transfer, and when.

Specifically included in the provisions of the law was the previously independent Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Auswärtige Amt) and its Political Archives. The Bundesarchiv finally was given the sole competence for appraisal: the transferring administrations were entitled to assist in the process, but were given no authority to decide on final disposition (Art. 3). Those records which the Bundesarchiv had designated as having enduring value had to be transferred to the Bundesarchiv itself. All other records were to be destroyed. The aspects which were to be considered in the appraisal decisions were:

1. the lasting value of records for research and for the understanding of German history;

2. the protection of the civic rights of citizens; and

⁵³ Hoffmann, Appendix 3, 607-612.
3. the provision of access to information to the legislature, the judiciary, and the administration.

In addition, the Bundesarchiv was given the authority to advise the federal government in records management (Art.2). The archival "human rights", that is, the civic right of use of federal government records was finally legally protected. A restriction period of 30 years after records creation or, in the case of records dealing with natural persons, 30 years after their death, had to be observed (Art.5). Longer periods of closure applied to records of government financial institutes (80 years), and records protected for reasons of national security. In addition, access to records still retained by the administrations themselves was legally guaranteed, and this meant that the location of a record no longer influenced whether access was to be granted. In 1989, the provinces of Bavaria, Hessen, and North Rhine Westphalia passed laws with the same content as the federal law. The remaining provinces, and some of the new provinces of former East Germany followed suit in the early 1990s\textsuperscript{54}.

\textsuperscript{54} Ibid., 613.
In summary, after the initial discussions in the late 1940s, the interest in archival legislation seemed to wane for a long period of time. This may be explained in part by the fact that the sense of chaos and urgency following the Second World War were gradually replaced by a sense of stability and order. With the proclamation of the Federal Republic of Germany in 1949, the separate spheres of jurisdiction of provinces and state were confirmed. In the 1950s, the administrative structures of the provincial governments were in a phase of consolidation, and any desire for a centrally organized and legislated archival system in Germany lost its appeal. Solutions to archival problems were sought through dialogue with individual governments, and improvements to internal regulations. The Special Committee of the Society of German Archivists, which had been the only common body for all archives and archivists, regardless of territorial and political affiliation, dissolved in 1952 to be replaced by the conference for government archivists of provinces and state in 1953, but this increased professionalization of archivists did not lead to archival legislation. It was only in the 1980s

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55 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Germany (Grundgesetz) 1949. Article 30: regarding the distribution of competencies between provinces and state; Article 146: regarding the temporary nature of the constitution.
that government archivists succeeded in establishing a legally grounded relationship with their sponsors.
CHAPTER THREE:
ARCHIVAL ORGANIZATION AND LEGISLATION IN EAST GERMANY

In East Germany, archival organization soon came under centralized state control, and a uniformly structured archives system resulted. The building of a state archives system was perceived as an integral part of the formation of communist society. As East Germany slowly phased in the Soviet model of government, private property underwent progressive nationalization through dispossession. In particular, the nationalization of industry and agricultural production was considered vital to the planning of economic growth under communist principles. This understanding of state responsibilities naturally resulted in a significant extension of state jurisdiction in archival matters. The obligation to protect and manage large volumes of records resulted in the gradual increase of central control over the state archives system.

In 1946, without hesitation, the Russian military administration supported the foundation of a Central German Archives (Deutsches Zentralarchiv) in its occupied zone, in
part because the main bulk of the holdings of the former Reichsarchiv was located there and urgently needed curatorial attention. The new Central Archives was placed under the authority of the Soviet allied administration, specifically under the Department of National Education (Verwaltung für Volksbildung). The promptness with which the Russian authorities acted, and the administrative linking of archives to national education were indicative of the political importance that communist countries assigned to archives.

The Central Archives was initially given the following mandate:

1. to care for the archives of the former Reichsarchiv;
2. to acquire the records of the dissolved central government (Reich) and Prussian government agencies;
3. to acquire the non-current records of the new central administration of the Soviet occupied zone;
4. to acquire the non-current records of political parties, labour unions, "democratic mass organisations", and industry;
5. to "collect" contemporary materials;
6. to acquire the archival holdings of the pre-war archival institutions of the former German territories in the east as far as they were located within the Soviet zone; and,

7. to deal with fundamental archival questions as instructed by the Department of National Education\(^56\).

This mandate was eventually reduced in a few areas. The collection of contemporary materials and sources became the responsibility of two new documentation centres: the Institute for Contemporary History (Institut für Zeitgeschichte), and the German Economic Institute (Wirtschaftsinstitut)\(^57\). Similarly, political and "mass organisations" created after 1945, such as the ruling Socialist Uniformity Party (Sozialistische Einheitspartei), and the National Trade Union (Freie Deutsche Gewerkschaftsbund), established their own archives, with the Central Archives merely having an advisory role\(^58\).

The fact that the mandate included records and materials of non-government provenance, which now were considered to be the property of the people, that is, of industry and other

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private organizations, is evidence of the progressive transformation of East German society under Soviet guidance. Accordingly, the evolution in the organization of the state archives system was characterized by a marked shift in archival competencies and functions. The archival system of the Soviet Union, which had accumulated half a century of experience, became the model for East Germany. The claim of the communist state to all archives originating in public bodies, and their conceptual aggregation under the term 'State Archival Fonds' (Staatlicher Archivfonds) were first presented and stated in the Soviet Union, following a decree by Lenin in 1918. This claim was soon subject to an expanded interpretation in East Germany to include non-current records, and the expression of the right of archival institutions to control records management and to secure the proper care of records at the place of creation. With the proclamation of East Germany as a sovereign state in 1949, its societal transformation from western style democracy to communism had come to completion. The central archives administration began to create mechanisms

59 Botho Brachmann, Archivwesen der Deutschen Demokratischen Republik, (East-)Berlin: VEB Deutscher Verlag der Wissenschaft, 1984), 142. This publication is a good source of reference on the archival organization and literature of the former Soviet Union.
60 Brachmann, 1984, 143.
to regulate the management of archives and records under state control, and to formalize them through legislation.

Professional cohesion, and the continuous involvement of archivists of all archival jurisdictions in the articulation of new legislation and in the objectives of archival work were facilitated by the establishment of a national archives journal. The central archives administration created the only archival journal of East Germany, entitled "Archivmitteilungen"; in 1950, a journal initially intended to be an internal government publication only. In 1953, it began to be widely distributed and, since then, it evolved to become a professional organ for the continuing education of archivists and for the communication of reports and the discussion of work projects, as well as a venue for the dissemination of research in archival theory and practice. Professional development was further supported by regular, state sponsored archival conferences, held since the early 1950s.\(^6\)

A first legislation affecting the archives system was passed in late 1949. It prohibited all records creators in the

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public domain from destroying any records\textsuperscript{62}. This prohibition seemed necessary after the uncontrolled destruction of records that took place in the first chaotic years after the war. The records had to be kept with the records creators until proper archival care could be established. The establishment of the state archives system proceeded by creating a separate central archives department, the Department for Archives Management (\textit{Hauptabteilung für Archivwesen}), in the central Department of the Interior. It included a section for the Central German Archives, a section for archives education, and a section for economic archives\textsuperscript{63}.

The first fundamental legislation regarding the organization of the archives system of the new state was passed in 1950\textsuperscript{64}. It impacted decisively on the jurisdictional competencies of archival institutions which had existed prior to World War Two. It should be noted that East Germany had a federal state structure between 1945 and 1952. There were five provinces (\textit{Länder}): Thuringia, Saxony, Mecklenburg, Saxony-Anhalt, and Brandenburg, which were formed from pre-war

\textsuperscript{63} Leesch, 1970, 430.
confederated states, Prussian provinces, and a duchy. Each province had a "main" provincial archives (Landeshauptarchiv) which administered a number of subsidiary provincial archives. These provincial archives collectively were placed either under the provincial Ministry of the Interior (Brandenburg), the provincial Ministry of National Education (Saxony-Anhalt, Thuringia, and Mecklenburg), or directly under the premier of the province (Saxony). Prior to East Germany becoming a sovereign state in 1949, the central archives administration in Berlin had no authority over the provincial archives administrations. With the 1950 archives legislation, this independence was progressively undermined, as it represented the first step towards a centrally directed archives system. The central Department for Archives Management was given the authority to issue directives regarding the archives administrations and archival institutions of all provinces.

In 1951, the provincial archives administrations experienced a further reduction in powers. Now, the main provincial archives within each province also constituted its

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65 Leesch, 1965, 346.
66 Leesch, 1970, 430.
archives administration\textsuperscript{67}. The provincial archives administrations became responsible to the central Ministry of Interior via their respective provincial Ministries of Interior. The provincial archives administrations were delegated authority to oversee all archives in their respective provinces, including city and municipal archives, and business and industry archives. Special departmental sections were created in the provincial archives administration: one for the provincial archives, one for municipal and city archives, and one for business and industry archives\textsuperscript{68}. The local governments and economy were brought under state control also by means of two regulations aimed to implement the 1950 legislation: in 1950, the creation of archives in all nationalized industries, businesses, and agricultural productions became a requirement\textsuperscript{69}; and, in 1951, local governments were required to transfer their archives to either existing or new city archives, or to newly established municipal archives\textsuperscript{70}.

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{67} Leesch, 1984 (a), 121.
\textsuperscript{68} Leesch, 1965, 347.
\textsuperscript{70} Ministerialblatt 1951, No. 9, S.1. Printed in: Archivmitteilungen 1 (1951): 11ff cited in ibid.
\end{flushright}
In 1951, it became a legal requirement for every government administration to create an agency archives (Verwaltungsarchive) where the non-current records were to be managed by a technically trained archives administrator. The 1949 legislation on records protection, which prohibited the destruction of records by records creators, could thus be enforced. The purposes of the agency archives were similar to the West German off-site storage concept of the 1960s. Yet, the legal competence for the East German agency archives was much more clearly defined and far-reaching. An agency archives regulated and supervised records management in the current administration, ensured the orderly registration of records, supervised records scheduling, and carried out the selection process; it looked after the transfer of records, and provided access to records for current administrative use. The goal was to transfer only already selected archives to a "final archival institution" (Endarchiv). The appraisal process took place in two stages in two separate archives. The disposal of records by the agency archives constituted the selection for destruction of those records judged a priori as not worthy of preservation. The "final archives" was the place where the

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71 Leesch, 1965, 352.
potentially valuable records were appraised for purposes of selection for final acquisition (see Chapter Five). The agency archives were placed under the authority of their respective archives administration: the professional supervision of the activities of the agency archives within central government agencies rested with the Central Archives, having been delegated to it by the central Department for Archives Management; the supervision of the activities of the agency archives of the regional and local government agencies was instead the responsibility of the provincial archives administration. In this system, every government administration had one agency archives. A certain degree of concentration, where an agency archives was responsible for several government administrations, such as the government records centres in West Germany, was not attempted until the 1970s. One short-lived exception existed in the former province of Saxony, and was abandoned due to jurisdictional restructuring in 1952.

The year 1952 marked the official and final transformation of East Germany from a federal state to a uniform centralized

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72 Ibid.
73 Ibid., 353.
state, conform to the communist state model of Soviet design. The five provinces were replaced by fourteen regions (Bezirke) without historical roots, and named after their respective new capitals. Lower administrative units comprised the approximately two hundred districts (Kreise), which included the former cities and municipalities. The right to municipal self-government was effectively annulled in this reform. The regions and districts were administered by their respective councils (Räte der Bezirke, and Räte der Kreise). The councils for the regions and districts answered to their respective elected public representation (Volksvertretung), which in turn answered to the unicameral People’s Assembly of the State (Volkskammer).74

The consequence of the political reform of 1952 was a final concentration of archival competence with the central archives administration, which was renamed State Archives Administration (Staatliche Archivverwaltung) in 1953. Temporarily, the former provincial archives administrations were renamed Archives Inspectorates (Archivinspektion), and placed under the authority of their respective sections for

74 Leesch, 1970, 431.
internal affairs in the regional councils. However, the competence of the central archives administration soon rendered the existence of regional archives inspectorates entirely redundant. Their responsibilities were absorbed in 1954 by the sections for internal affairs in the respective regional councils. In other words, the management of archival institutions was no longer the responsibility of professional archivists, but became one of the components in the work of government administrators trained in archival practices.

In particular, at the regional and district level, the councils' archives officials were not university trained archivists; instead they received more technically oriented archival instruction, and were comparable to modern archival technicians75. In addition, there was only one archives official in charge of all archives located in one region, which included one or several of the former provincial archives, numerous district archives, and those of economic agencies. However, a regional archives administrator received assistance from the managers of district archives76.

75 Leesch, 1965, 348.
76 Ibid.
The district archives essentially received archives and non-current records from various local government bodies in one central institution. Each district archives thus served a dual role as:

1. the agency archives of the district council; and

2. the "final archives" for records transferred from the district's agency archives, and for the archives of businesses and economic organizations and cities in the district which had not been granted the right to maintain their own archives.\(^{77}\)

A complete adjustment of archival jurisdictions to the 1952 regional administrative structure took more than a decade. After the archives legislation of 1965, some of the major regional archives received the designation of "state" archives, others that of "historical state" archives, and still others were reduced to branches of the state archives, or archives storage.\(^{78}\) The breaking date for the designation of an archival institution as "historical state archives" was the year 1952. Accordingly, the "state archives" continued to operate as repositories for records created since 1952, and the "historical state archives" closed their holdings at the year

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\(^{77}\) Ibid., 351.

1952. The historical state archives were placed under the authority of the state archives. In 1976, finally, the historical state archives were reduced to mere branches of the state archives, which, due to space limitations, required additional storage for their own modern holdings\textsuperscript{79}.

The archives legislation of 1965 also established the authority relationships within the state archives system. The state archives organization was directed by the State Archives Administration of the Ministry of the Interior. The Central German Archives was directly responsible to the State Archives Administration. Archives at the regional and district level were supervised and controlled by the central State Archives Administration. They received administrative assistance from the sections for internal affairs in the regional and district councils. The agency archives of central government agencies had authority over agency archives of lower level government bodies\textsuperscript{80}.

The plan to build a separate archives system for the state's economic management soon encountered serious problems, and was eventually abandoned. The mandatory establishment of a "final archives" for each major economic area proved to be unrealistic. In addition, the large number of economic management agencies incurred unreasonably high financial and staff training costs for their maintenance. The frequent restructuring in the economic sector has been cited as another reason impeding the formation of specialized archives system\(^81\). The third major archives legislation in 1976 finally determined that only large economic agencies, and those with particular economic significance were to have their own "final archival institution"\(^82\). Most economic agencies merely had to maintain an agency archives which, similarly to the agency archives of government administrations, transferred records that had undergone the selection process to regional, district, or city archival institutions\(^83\). In addition, the 1976 legislation made provisions for the concentration of agency archives of similar economic administrative areas\(^84\).

\(^{81}\) Leesch, 1965, 355.
\(^{82}\) Leesch, 1984 (a), 125.
\(^{84}\) Leesch, 1984 (b), 508.
Problems also occurred in the management of the countless agency archives within government administration. In addition to financial constraints, the number of archivists required exceeded the capacity of archival training programs\textsuperscript{85}. The 1976 archives legislation finally established that the number of agency archives ought to be reduced by integrating those of similar jurisdictions, and creating "decentralized" agency archives, or records centres which transferred their records to the regional, district, and city archives in their jurisdiction\textsuperscript{86}. The 1976 legislation also expanded the State Archival Fonds. Previously, this was comprised of archives held in final archival institutions. The new interpretation included "potential archives" which was defined as all records that are to be created and have been created and are in the custody of the records creator in the agency archives\textsuperscript{87}. Accordingly, the competence of government agency archives was broadened to include the entire appraisal process, carried out according to prescribed guidelines, before the records were transferred to the competent final archival institution\textsuperscript{88}.

\textsuperscript{87} Leesch, 1976, 391.
\textsuperscript{88} Leesch, 1984 (b), 508.
The development of the archives system for the management of the State Archival Fonds was essentially completed in the late 1970s. It provided the framework within which state objectives regarding the activities of archival institutions and archivists were carried out. As indicated at the beginning of this chapter, the archives system was perceived as an essential participant in "the progressive evolution of the state towards an advanced form of communism"\(^{89}\). A brief illustration of the basic tenets of the Marxist-Leninist world view will help to understand the role of archives and archival institutions in East Germany. It will also illuminate the philosophical underpinnings of the discussions surrounding the appraisal function presented in Chapter Five.

In the overall state structure, archival institutions fulfilled functions which, according to Marxist-Leninist philosophy, aided society to proceed on its path to equality and freedom\(^{90}\). The societal study of archival information, together with the information held, for example, in museums and libraries, was to facilitate an understanding of the human condition as it evolved over time. The evolution of society

\(^{89}\) Leesch, 1976, 391.

was believed to be subject to pre-determined laws of economic development (historical materialism)\textsuperscript{91}. As a class-divided society struggled to become a classless society (dialectic materialism) it needed to be supported by a state structure which facilitated the ideological advancement of the individual\textsuperscript{92}. In this context, the main purpose of archival institutions was to make available archival information particularly for political and ideological, research, legal, economic, and cultural-educational uses\textsuperscript{93}. Archival information provided the basis for historical research, which was to explore and track the evolution of society. The results of this research were to further the necessary ideological education of the individual\textsuperscript{94}. Archival science, as one of the social sciences, was obliged to devise plans and solutions aimed at satisfying the "societal need" for information\textsuperscript{95}.

As the economy and the entire societal life were subject to central planning and regimentation, the same applied to the archives system and its activities. Government conventions

\begin{flushright}
92 Ibid., 75.
93 Brachmann, 1984, 154.
94 Ibid., 15.
95 Leesch, 1972, 164.
\end{flushright}
(Parteitage), which occurred at approximately five year intervals, formulated principal directives. On the basis of long term goals, the prospective foci were determined and laid out in master plans for a given period of years (Perspektiveplan)\textsuperscript{96}. On the basis of these plans, the central archives administration then determined the tasks for subordinate archival institutions. Accordingly, every archival institution, every archivist's working group, and each archivist were instructed to prepare a work plan for the coming year, which was then subject to control and approval\textsuperscript{97}.

The modus operandi of defining goals and planning cycles in the East German archives system focused on a number of different archival activities over time. A detailed description of these efforts would go beyond the scope of this thesis, but examples are worth mentioning: thus, work on description and arrangement resulted in universal "guidelines for description and arrangement", published in 1964\textsuperscript{98}; between the late 1950s and the 1980s, the appraisal of modern records was given major attention (see Chapter Five); beginning in the

\textsuperscript{96} Brachmann, 1984, 37-75.
\textsuperscript{97} Leesch, 1984(b), 496.
late 1960s, the definition of archival science within Marxist-Leninist philosophies was the focus of archival activity; and, the reworking of archival terminology as logical consequence began in 1970\textsuperscript{99}.

In summary, the proclamation of a State Archival Fonds and the resultant expansion of archival jurisdictions sanctioned the establishment of a centrally controlled archives system in East Germany. Archives generated by the central state administrations, public institutions, and economic management were placed under the jurisdiction of the Central Archives; the parallel institutions and agencies on the regional level were under the jurisdiction of the competent state archives; and the archives generated by the lowest levels of government in the districts were placed under the competence of the district, and city archives\textsuperscript{100}. In contrast to West Germany, East Germany immediately focused on the management of modern archives and accordingly developed a system of institutions supported by central government legislation. In West Germany instead, the traditional occupation of the historian-archivist

\textsuperscript{100} Enders, G., 1968, 24-27.
with "old" records resulted in a slow development of modern records management concerns after 1945. The competence of East German archival institutions was progressively broadened and this allowed for the extensive control of records management in government and economic administration through the creation of agency archives, followed by the expansion of archival jurisdiction to records creation itself. By the 1950s, in East Germany, the program of articulating comprehensive legislation for the protection of archives under state jurisdiction seemed completed, while at this same time West German efforts were on the brink of faltering. The economic goals and planning of the East German legislature defined the objectives for the archival system. The supreme authority of the central state archives administration over all archives and records administrations in the state provided a basis for coordinating archival tasks, promoting coherence in archival research, and implementing policies. The politico-ideological orientation of East German archival activities stood in stark contrast to West Germany, where archival initiatives were solely the domain of individual, and relatively unguided archival institutions.
CHAPTER FOUR:

APPRAISAL THEORY AND METHODS IN WEST GERMANY

In West Germany, discussions concerning appraisal theory and methods did not begin until the 1950s. The contributions of archivists at the last pre-war German Archives Conference in Gotha in 1937 had provided the last important stimuli\(^{101}\). The conference contributions by the Prussian state archivists H.O. Meisner and H. Meinert had been particularly important. Meisner reported on the first findings of the Prussian archives commission on selection for disposition, which operated from 1936 to 1940. He urged that appraisal decisions be no longer based on the intuition of the archivist (Fingerspitzengefühl) but on clear rationales, based on appraisal guidelines\(^{102}\). In fact, Meisner had initiated the "Motivenberichte", that is, reports which Prussian state archivists had to prepare since the late 1920s for every major records destruction\(^{103}\). In the late 1930s, the Prussian state archives administration had capitalized on these reports and worked out principles for

\(^{101}\) For a description of the development of value concepts in appraisal in Germany prior to the 1930s, see Klumpenhouwer, Concepts of value.

\(^{102}\) Brenneke, 42.

\(^{103}\) Bodo Uhl, "Die Geschichte der Bewertungsdiskussion," in Bilanz und Perspektiven archivistischer Bewertung, ed. Andrea Wettmann, Veröffentlichungen der Archivschule Marburg-Institut für Archivwissenschaft, No. 21 (Marburg, 1994), 22.
records disposition (Gruppengrundsätze) for several government agencies\textsuperscript{104}. In his presentation at the 1937 conference, Meisner also suggested criteria for judging the value of documents which referred to their age, content, and the rank of their records creator within the administrative hierarchy\textsuperscript{105}. The criterion of age resulted into a mandatory preservation of archives created prior to the 16th Century\textsuperscript{106}; it reflected German archivists' primary concern with pre-modern records. The criterion of content referred to the informational value of records: Meisner believed that considerations of the importance of the informational content of records should not be relinquished entirely. He judged necessary the preservation of those records which provided information about the creation of agencies, in particular related laws, decrees, and regulations\textsuperscript{107}. Meisner explained his criterion of rank as a way of giving priority to central government agencies over local agencies. However, a deciding factor strictly connected to it was whether the records of a central agency resulted from a decision-making competence (Federführung)\textsuperscript{108}. In concluding his argument, Meisner stressed that appraisal principles should

\textsuperscript{104} Brenneke, 39-40, footnote 23.
\textsuperscript{106} Meisner, 1939, 47.
\textsuperscript{107} Ibid..
not be considered a dogma, as such a view would paralyze the archivist's freedom of decision making\textsuperscript{109}.

At the same conference, Meinert attempted to summarize in a systematic way the previously articulated methods of records appraisal. He especially emphasized the origin of documents, that is, their provenance. He supported the view, also expressed in the final report of the Prussian committee on selection, that a knowledge of structure, functions, and procedures of the records creator was fundamental and was a starting point for appraisal\textsuperscript{110}. However, Meinert also asserted that in the final analysis, selection for disposition was a selection according to the informational content of documents, that is, the subject matter. The evaluation of the content was to follow established standards of value, which Meinert found in society itself as represented by the state (\textit{Staat}), the people (\textit{Volk}), and the culture (\textit{Kultur})\textsuperscript{111}. Meinert contended that the appraisal of the informational content of records

\textsuperscript{108} Ibid., 49.
\textsuperscript{109} Ibid., 50.
\textsuperscript{111} ‘Final Report of the Prussian Commission on Selection’, 1940, discussed in Uhl, 1994, 22.

Meinert, 1939, in Uhl, 1994, 22.
remained a difficult task, as archivists had to anticipate and respect future research interests of agencies and historians.\footnote{Meinert, 1939, in Brenneke, 43.}

The discussions of the 1930s demonstrated a parallelism of two appraisal approaches, one based on the value of the informational content of documents, and the other on the provenance of the records, and more specifically on the activities and nature of the records-creating agencies. Common to both approaches was, however, the conviction, at times explicitly expressed, that archives existed to satisfy the historical demand for sources. Whether and how these approaches were to be reconciled appeared not to have been a concern of archivists at that time. A delineation of their implications was attempted in the discussions following the war, which were characterized by an entrenchment on one of two positions: that advocating a content approach, and that supporting the provenance approach.

In the early 1950s, when East Germany built its "agency archives" system, West German provincial archives administrations limited themselves to reforming internal
regulations and utilizing in part the records destruction guidelines of Prussian times. In government agencies which had efficient records keeping systems, disposition schedules for certain records classes were implemented that fixed the length of time after which records were either destroyed or transferred to archival institutions\textsuperscript{113}. These measures proved unsatisfactory, as they did not sufficiently reduce the high volumes of records generated in existing government agencies. The problem was exacerbated as lack of storage became severe, in particular in the provincial archival institutions.

The issue of appraisal was pressing, and the German Archives Conference of 1957 in Koblenz addressed the urgency of the problem by searching for different appraisal methods. There was consensus on the need to find ways to reduce drastically the flood of records towards archival institutions. Prominent contributions at this conference came once again from archivists of the pre-war Prussian archives tradition. Meinert had proposed a little earlier, and did again so, with more emphasis, at the conference, to place the focus on the "positive" decision of what to keep rather than on the

\textsuperscript{113} Kahlenberg, 1972, 101.
traditional "negative" decision of what to destroy\textsuperscript{114}. This shift in focus was later termed the revolutionary "Copernican turn" (Kopernikanische Wende) in appraisal\textsuperscript{115}. Meinert believed that the archivist, being historian, had to consider historical research and methods in arriving at positive selection. He stressed that a positive selection did not stem from the needs of records creating agencies\textsuperscript{116}. Yet, he conceded that, if positive selection utilized his value categories proposed in the 1930s, the issue would soon arise of how value could be concretely formulated. With a sense of resignation, Meinert concluded that "a good archivist had to be something of an artist". In reverting back to traditional views, he stated that, as experience and practice were valuable but not sufficient, a passion and an intuitive decision were required\textsuperscript{117}.

The archivists G.W. Sante and W. Rohr who had also been involved in the pre-war Prussian committee on selection, urged a radical reduction of the records to be indefinitely

\textsuperscript{114} Hermann Meinert, "Von archivischer Kunst und Verantwortung," Der Archivar 9 (1956): 283.
\textsuperscript{117} Ibid., 100.
preserved. Both proposed to begin selection not with the records themselves, but with the records creators, that is, government agencies, and thus to exclude whole agencies from preservation. Sante explained that only those agencies which were most significant in the structure of government administration, the "creme de la creme", should be considered. The significance was to be determined by analyzing and assessing the functions of each specific agency in relation to the other agencies. He also said that only those records which were to be preserved permanently should enter the archival institution, while all records of temporary value, even if needed for a relatively long time, should be kept by the records creator. Rohr, in an attempt to make Sante's concept workable, suggested to rate agencies within their administrative hierarchy. The deciding criteria had to be the degree of autonomy of an agency, its degree of competence for decision-making, the significance of its responsibilities, and the historical or legal importance (Tragweite) of its work.

119 Ibid.
In contrast, F. Zimmermann, archivist of a younger generation, revisited the content-based approach to appraisal. He asserted that the essential character of selection related to the informational content of single documents or, at most, the content of certain forms of records. He insisted that the origin of documents, the provenance, was only helpful in so far as it indicated which records creators did not produce valuable material to begin with. Provenancial considerations were thus merely focusing on negative selection, which was too inefficient for reaching desirable results. A positive selection had to consider the value of documents to the users. Zimmermann recommended that the archivist pay more attention to the legal, practical, and research uses of archival sources. Archivists ought to benefit from current and past historical research inquiries, as means to identify areas of inquiry worth knowing about. Zimmermann concluded that the demand for documents by researchers, present and future, determined their value.

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122 Ibid., 106-107.
The intense discussions of the late 1950s ended without consensus on the theoretical foundation of appraisal methods. However, interestingly, the contributions of Meinert, Rohr, and Sante at the 1957 conference were accepted and implemented by East German archivists, as will be seen in Chapter Five. In the 1960s, West German archivists continued their struggle to find an agreement on the solution to the problem of appraisal.

The archivist J. Papritz, professor at the Archives School in Marburg, in the mid 1960s, suggested to approach the problem of appraisal from a different angle. He maintained that progress could only be made if archivists studied the various forms of records. The structural differences of, for example, case files, subject files, and correspondence files, could be used as the basis for the definition of appraisal standards distinct for each records form (Strukturtyp). Moreover, since the same record forms occurred across many records creators, archivists could create appraisal guidelines for each type only once. Based on these guidelines, standardized appraisal catalogues could be created that would

be useful for all government records in West Germany. Papritz called attention to the appraisal practice of Prussian archival institutions in the 1920s and 1930s. Archivists there had applied the standardized reports on records disposition across many records creators, and thus were able to exclude large parts of registries from preservation in archives. Papritz had great faith in the capacity of the records keeping system to guide appraisal as was evident in his recurrent description of the registry system of Prussian times and in the recommendations that he derived from an analysis of its structure. In essence, he believed that a thorough examination of the structural components of the modern registry system would be able to lead its appraisal. This conviction became particularly clear when he reiterated the stance of A. Brenneke, the influential supporter of the principle of provenance, that the process of appraisal was essentially a component of the process of arrangement and description. Papritz did not address the method for determining the values used to decide on the destruction or preservation of the various record forms. He simply stated that valuation and selection had to be based on scientific principles.

126 Papritz, 1964, 220.
Despite the persistent lack of an appraisal theory which would determine appraisal methods, archivists began to incorporate some of the suggestions made by archival writers into appraisal practice. However, the traditional view that archives had to be selected according to general values, whether legal, administrative, or scholarly, was upheld. In describing the various appraisal methods devised over the years, the archival literature simply avoided addressing the theoretical basis, or rationale for appraisal decisions. In fact, archivists turned to what was more feasible and practical. In the absence of a universal value theory, formal appraisal criteria were favoured which were based on an analysis of the organization and functions of records creators. As a sort of prerequisite of appraisal, this analysis provided archivists with a better understanding of the context of records creation. Values could emerge in the course of the process itself. Thus, archivists became more involved in the workings of records administrations. The shift of parts of the appraisal process away from the archival institutions allowed for an identification of the valuable records at a much earlier time, and thus addressed the problem of volume before the

material arrived in the archival institution. Three approaches could be recognized at this time:
1. the creation of archival advisory programs which sought cooperation with the records-creating administrations;
2. the creation of divisions within archival institutions dealing with the management of non-current records still in the custody of the agencies; and
3. the creation of off-site records centres (Zwischenarchive) under archival jurisdiction.

Archival advisory programs established in some provinces were concerned with, for example, the creation of records retention schedules and the improvement of records keeping practices by promoting the formation of consistent classification schemes and file plans. The province of Hamburg had begun as early as 1951 to employ special archives custodians (Behördliche Archivpfleger) delegated by the provincial archives to assist the government in records management and disposition. However, most provinces opted for the second approach, and established mechanisms within the

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archival institutions for taking care of non-current records still in the custody of the creating agency, although the records service obligations to creating agencies did not result in a benefit for the archives with respect to intellectual control\textsuperscript{130}.

The concept of off-site storage in decentralized records centres, at the core of the third approach, allowed for a better control of resources. A recommendation for the creation of records centres had been voiced by the archivists Rohr, Sante, Meinert, and Zimmermann in the papers they delivered at the 1957 Archives Conference. Accordingly, the purpose of records centres was to "divert the volumes of records away from the archival institutions"\textsuperscript{131}. Records centres were justified as temporary solutions as they allowed the archivist ample time to make appraisal decisions. It was hoped that without time and space constrictions archivists could develop appraisal criteria\textsuperscript{132}.

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{130} Franz, 1990, 79.
  \item \textsuperscript{131} Sante, 95.
  \item \textsuperscript{132} Meinert, 1958, 100; Rohr, 86; and Zimmermann, 1958, 119.
\end{itemize}
Although only two records centres were actually built, one for federal government records (1965), and one for government records of the province of Lower Saxony (1969), they provide another insight on how government archivists chose to deal with appraisal. The federal records centre of the Bundesarchiv, as the more prominent one, will be discussed in detail.

By the early 1960s, the federal government archives, the Bundesarchiv, began to experience the record volume problems that provincial archives had dealt with since the early 1950s. The Bundesarchiv, which was confined to make-shift quarters in Koblenz, could not cope physically with the flood of the non-current records from federal ministries. The task of appraisal was further complicated as the quality of record keeping practices in some federal ministries had declined in comparison to pre-war times. This required an assessment of the agency's organization and file plans before any decision about the value of records could be made.\textsuperscript{133} The records centre of the Bundesarchiv opened in 1965 in proximity to the federal ministries in Bonn.\textsuperscript{134}


\textsuperscript{134} Hoffmann, 364. The federal records centre was located in Bonn-Bad Godesberg, until in 1971 it moved to a new facility in St. Augustin-Hangelar near Bonn, which was the first specially designed records centre in Europe.
Ministerial records in the federal records centre were
regulated through the Common Rules of Procedure (Gemeinsame
Geschäftsordnung der Bundesministerien). The records creator
set the length of the retention period, calculated from the
time the records arrived in the centre. As the non-current
records were still in the custody of the records creator, and
some administrative use was ongoing, archivists provided
reference services for the records creators. Archivists
carried out appraisal for disposition and selection, and
records judged worthy of preservation were transferred to the
custody of the archives after the expiry of their retention
periods. As discussed in Chapter Two, the competence for
appraisal, however, was not clearly attributed to the
Bundesarchiv until the enactment of the first federal archives

The appraisal practice in the records centre was guided by
the purpose of maintaining evidence of the organizational
structure, through which the federal government carried out its
responsibilities. The establishment of a systematically
organized index, listing the competencies and organizational

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135 Hoffmann, 365, and Appendix 2d, 586-587.
136 Kahlenberg, 1968, 42.
structures, aided in this process. This tool was utilized further to identify and describe records relating to a particular subject matter, thus providing the appraising archivists with a comprehensive basis for comparison\textsuperscript{137}. By the early 1970s an appraisal method had been defined which followed two basic criteria, namely\textsuperscript{138}:

1. the completeness of the historical record (\textit{Überlieferung});

and

2. the jurisdiction of the records creating agency.

The first criterion applied only to those records of federal government agencies which were under the jurisdiction of the Bundesarchiv. Completeness was ensured through the role by the records centre itself, as it received the entirety of non-current records of all government agencies. Therefore, disposition of records by the records creators was made theoretically impossible. The second appraisal criterion related to the degree of competence of the administrative unit within an agency. Competence was defined to consist of two elements: decision making competence (\textit{Federführung}), and

\textsuperscript{137} Ibid.

participating competence. Those records which demonstrated decision making process were preserved, regardless of informational content. Yet, if a subject matter was judged particularly significant, the records relating to it were preserved. On the other hand, those records which were the result of a participatory competence required further assessment. If there was evidence of confrontation of the unit generating them with the superior administrative unit, then the records were preserved.

The appraisal practice of the Bundesarchiv as implemented in the federal records centre was a clear indication of the preference for a provenance based approach to appraisal. An analysis of functions and competencies of the records creator was at the basis of the appraisal process. However, the element of content evaluation was present as well. Determining the significance of a subject matter, or its "controversial nature", required the assignment of a relative value to the records. Implicit in this activity was the assumption that certain events were more interesting, and thus more valuable, to researchers than others. The strongly provenance focused appraisal strategy was adopted by the Bundesarchiv, somewhat
paradoxically, only a few years after its president H. Booms had delivered his passionate call for a content-based appraisal theory, culminating in his documentation plan for society.

At the West German Archivists Conference in Dortmund in 1971, Booms, in his well-known presentation, provided a thorough analysis of the inherent flaws in past approaches to archival appraisal theory and methods. Booms maintained that systematic methodologies based on provenancial considerations had not been effective, as they had left open the question of judging the value of records. He believed that records did not have an inherent value; rather, the archivist assigned values to records. Therefore, archivists ought to concentrate on the appraisal of the informational content of records. The necessary value criteria had to be taken from society itself.

Booms wanted archivists to find ways which yielded societal values, and proposed a documentation plan which would list the events and processes which deserved consideration in

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139 For a discussion of Booms’ article, see also Klumpenhouver, Concepts of value, 136-147.
140 Booms, 1972, p. 20, and 34 (in the original German publication).
141 Ibid., 14.
the appraisal of records\textsuperscript{142}. Archivists had to use research methods from the various historical and social sciences in order to gain insight into historical processes and determine which events were significant\textsuperscript{143}. The final mechanism of control in this evaluation process should be society itself. Thus, Booms recommended that the archivist consult the contemporary articulations of public opinions, provided they were formulated in a politically unrestricted environment\textsuperscript{144}. Booms’s suggested that this strategy ought to be carried out within the jurisdictional competence of each archival institution, and the outcome of the application of the strategy to all jurisdictions would be a complete documentary heritage of society\textsuperscript{145}. Within the jurisdiction of the Bundesarchiv, he recommended that the organization and competence index compiled in the federal records centre be used to identify and locate where and by whom records containing subject matter of societal significance were created\textsuperscript{146}.

Booms’ contribution is significant because for the first time appraisal methodology was approached from a philosophical

\textsuperscript{142} Ibid., 34-35.
\textsuperscript{143} Ibid., 36.
\textsuperscript{144} Ibid., 37-38.
\textsuperscript{145} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{146} Ibid., 40.
point of view, and the motivations underlying the various
appraisal methods of the past were explored. His support of a
content based approach to records appraisal by itself was
reminiscent of the past. Yet, his expansion of the approach to
a formulation of a documentation plan for society's history was
something radically new. His plan was rejected by his peers as
unwieldy and unrealistic\textsuperscript{147}, and was never realized in West
Germany. However, it came to fruition in East Germany (see
Chapter Five). It is therefore interesting to study the
historical context, the professional atmosphere, which made
Booms' vision of a societal value theory for archival appraisal
and the resultant documentation plan possible.

Booms' contribution was in response to a claim made in
1969 by the East German archivist H.-J. Schreckenbach. He had
written that "the hopelessness of bourgeois archival science,
due to its given societal context, was unable to solve the
problem of information appraisal in a definite manner".
Schreckenbach concluded that "a comprehensive, scientifically
based system of information appraisal, one that is valid for
all areas of society, is in the final analysis only possible

\textsuperscript{147} Gerhard Granier, "Die archivische Bewertung von Dokumentationsgut, eine ungelöste Aufgabe," Der
under the conditions of socialist society"\textsuperscript{148}. The mixing of political orientation and professional integrity characterized the deterioration in the relationship between East and West German archivists which began in the late 1950s. During the early 1950s, constructive dialogue had occurred as can be seen, for example, in the activity of the working group on German archival terminology which had produced a common German publication in 1960\textsuperscript{149}. As well, conferences in East and West Germany were attended by archivists of both sides and papers were given, until the verbal altercations at the Historian Conference in Trier (West Germany) in 1958 effectively severed all direct professional ties\textsuperscript{150}. This resulted in the subsequent boycott by East German archivists of all subsequent West German archivist conferences. Schreckenbach's article of 1969 merely specified the ideological tenor which had characterized, since the mid 1960s, the East German archival journal "Archivmitteilungen", and the East German historical publications, such as the "Journal for History" (Zeitschrift für Geschichtswissenschaft)\textsuperscript{151}. Booms' paper, at the 1971

\textsuperscript{149} Heinrich O. Meisner and Wolfgang Leesch, "Grundzüge einer deutschen Archivterminologie," Archivmitteilungen 10 (1960): 134-152.
\textsuperscript{150} Kahlenberg, 1972, 90.
\textsuperscript{151} Booms, 1972, 4, footnote 8.
conference, represented clearly a reaction to the recurrent antagonistic comments made by East German archivists. His formulation of a societal value theory should be understood as an attempt to vindicate West Germany's pluralistic society and its ability to develop a genuinely democratic value theory. In doing so, Booms addressed a question raised by the archivist Meinert in 1958 on whether the method of the dialectic Marxism adhered to by communist countries could indeed arrive at genuine selection principles.\(^{152}\)

However, Booms' desire to address East German ideological claims was only part of what spurred him to write his paper. His contribution occurred within the context of a program of inquiry of the German Archivist Society on acquisition and appraisal. The West German Archivists Conference in Dortmund represented the last in a set of three conferences held between 1969 and 1971 and designed to solicit discussions on this program of inquiry. The interest in the area of archival acquisition in the 1960s was a reflection of a strong trend in the information professions concerned with the formation of a comprehensive documentation of society. It should also be

\(^{152}\) Meinert, 1958, 99.
recalled that the 1960s saw the beginning of electronic information technologies, which provided storage for more and more data and opened up the possibility of sophisticated data manipulation and improved access provisions. The anticipated capabilities of information storage and retrieval, combined with an increase in records production, were a factor in the discussions on documentation. The idea of archivists as active shaper of, or at least active contributors to the documentary heritage of society was sincerely entertained at the time. The notion of government archival institutions being merely responsible to care for records of their sponsors was repeatedly challenged, a phenomenon that could be traced back to the early 1900s.\(^{153}\)

Many archivists supported the idea of formally and officially expanding the archival institutions' acquisition mandate to include non-archival information materials to complement their archival holdings on certain subjects. Booms in particular had been a strong proponent of the recognition of archival collections (private fonds) as an integral part in the

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acquisition mandate of public archival institutions. Booms claimed that archivists, in collecting archival materials above and beyond those of their sponsoring institutions, had long recognized that the sum of all activities of government agencies was not congruent with the sum of all historical and political life. His documentation plan proposed at the 1971 conference was in a sense a natural extension of his alliance with segments in the documentation movement. The issue of the significance of archival work for society at large and of the archivists' obligation to the public in relation to how and what to select was one of the questions he intended to address. Although, as indicated earlier, Booms' documentation plan was rejected as unrealistic and unwieldy in West Germany, the larger documentation movement of the 1960's succeeded in influencing policy making. Noteworthy was the 1974 UNESCO resolution for a program called "National Information Systems" (NATIS), which aimed at a coordinated organization of national infrastructures in the areas of documentation, library and archives. In the same vein, the West German government

155 Booms, 1972, 34 (in the original German publication)
developed the "Information and Documentation Program" in the early 1970s\textsuperscript{157}.

After Booms' attempts at a comprehensive appraisal model, discussions of similar depth came to an end in the 1970s. Subsequent contributions focused on less conceptual and global appraisal models, and sought more practical solutions. Yet, the consideration of researchers' demands was never put aside. The 1970's C. Haase's three part series on appraisal, although reminiscent of many elements of Boom's documentation plan, was noteworthy because it discussed for the first time the taboo subject of reappraisal (Nachkassation)\textsuperscript{158}. Haase stated that the function of the records centres itself was a kind of organized reappraisal, because records remained untouched, due to highly variable and often lengthy retention periods, after their transfer to the records centre\textsuperscript{159}. The appraising archivist had ample time to gain a perspective on what to keep and what to destroy. According to Haase, archival holdings in archival institutions should therefore not be excluded from reappraisal. He recommended the establishment of reappraisal

\textsuperscript{157} Ibid., 33.
schedules for all archives, and suggested to begin a reappraisal process at 100 years, but not later than 250 years, from the time when archives had become accessible for use through arrangement and description. Haase concluded that frequency of use ought to decide whether archives survived the reappraisal process.

The other noteworthy contribution came from Zimmermann, a persistent proponent of a pertinence approach to appraisal, as mentioned earlier. In 1979, he admitted that his earlier views needed a revision. He believed that it was wrong to make the archival value of records dependent on their quality as sources for historical research. He postulated two new kinds of value criteria. He believed that archivists had to revise their assumption as to their role in appraisal, and argued that archival science was in part administrative law, as archival appraisal was in large part defined by administrative regulations. Thus, consideration should be given to the value assigned to records by the records creator themselves. Records creators defined which records had prolonged value for

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160 Ibid., 194.
162 Ibid., 270.
the conduct of their business, as set out in retention schedules, which were the basis from which archivists conducted their appraisal\textsuperscript{163}. In respecting the value determination of the records creator, the archivist could easily segregate the worthy from the unworthy. He termed this "the primary value determination". Zimmermann's secondary value determination consisted of the process of reappraisal, the concept of which he had derived from Haase. His main tenet was to prolong the appraisal process, as value categories presented themselves in the sequential stages of appraisal\textsuperscript{164}. At the beginning, the primary values became apparent; later, as records were held in the archival institution, other values could be determined. Zimmermann believed in a "maturation process" within the archival institution: the longer the records were in the institution, the more significant became their research value, and the smaller the legal or administrative values\textsuperscript{165}. He suggested that archivists ought to reappraise records at set intervals. User statistics could aid in this process, as they indicated which records were used most frequently, and also signaled the value of records as sources. Accordingly, the

\textsuperscript{163} Ibid., 271.
\textsuperscript{164} Ibid., 275.
\textsuperscript{165} Ibid., 277-278.
less frequently used archives could be destroyed. Zimmermann disregarded the provenance of records as indicative of value, as reappraisal would destroy records context. In fact, at the outset, he reaffirmed his belief in pertinence, in the informational content as the determining factor of a record's value.\(^{166}\)

Although there was extensive overlap between the ideas expressed by Haase and Zimmermann, what was new was the idea that reappraisal had to be sanctioned as an acceptable method by the archival profession. Yet, the practice of reappraisal was not entirely unknown, as is evidenced in the archival literature of the 1970s. Explicit mention of it can be found in the reports of the working group on "methods and guidelines for acquisition and appraisal of archives" of the previously discussed West German Archives Conference of 1971. The term "reappraisal" was, however, consistently avoided, and instead the term "fine selection" (Feinkassation) was used. For example, the main provincial archives and other provincial archives in the province of Baden-Württemberg, in the 1970s, considered reappraisal a very useful tool. Archivists

\(^{166}\) Ibid., 272.
practiced reappraisal during the process of description and arrangement, to remove duplicates, and also materials recognized in retrospective as not "worthy of preservation".\textsuperscript{167} Similarly, a working group report on the survey of appraisal practices and methods in many city and municipal archival institutions in West Germany came to the same conclusion. Reappraisal was considered a valuable means of "condensing" records which was carried out most economically during the process of description.\textsuperscript{168}

The foregoing discussion has shown that, in the 1970s, appraisal methods and practices had been developed or adjusted to include some of the suggestions made over time. Yet, a direct debate on appraisal theory did not occur again until 1989. The Festschrift of the Bundesarchiv in honour of H. Booms, published in 1989 (before the fall of the Berlin wall), marked the beginning of the new discussions. Two of the articles, by S. Büttner and O. Merker, will serve to illustrate two very different points of view, reminiscent of past discussions. The federal archivist Büttner rejected sharply


Booms' 1971 documentation plan\textsuperscript{169}. He explained his reasons in the context of critiquing the degree of cooperation, following the first archival legislation of 1988, between the Bundesarchiv and its sponsoring ministerial agencies. He commented that the Bundesarchiv had for a long time conducted appraisal utilizing the provenance approach and structural organizational principles, but found its strategy persistently hampered by two main problems, namely:

1. the lack of cooperation of many ministerial agencies regarding the transfer of records, as they had the final say in determining which records were considered of no further use "for the fulfillment of public responsibilities", and thus what was subject to the archivists' appraisal work\textsuperscript{170}; and,

2. the resistance by government agencies to establish uniform records keeping practices, a situation which impeded the identification of administrative changes as to functions and competencies\textsuperscript{171}.

Büttner asserted that the concept of Booms' documentation plan would have failed primarily because of the apparent

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{169} Büttner, 159-160.
\item \textsuperscript{170} Ibid., 155.
\item \textsuperscript{171} Ibid., 157-158.
\end{itemize}
\end{footnotesize}
disinterest of the federal government in accepting a responsibility in the formation of the modern documentary heritage of society. His statement reacted to the position taken by the Ministry of the Interior, responsible for the Bundesarchiv, which emphasized - as expressed in another article in the Booms’ Festschrift - the historical research responsibility of the Bundesarchiv and envisioned its closer affiliation with historical museums and oral history programs. Furthermore, Büttner, refuting Booms, considered archival appraisal not to be aimed at the formation of a balanced documentary heritage of the past: complex human perceptions and ideas of value could hardly be harmonized, especially when one dealt with a concrete single appraisal situation. Büttner concluded that appraisal decisions had to be based on rational and accountable professionalism, aided by systematic methodological efforts, and characterized by a general disregard of any expressed or implied political or research interest.

172 Ibid., 160.
174 Büttner, 160.
175 Ibid., 160-161.
Merker provided an entirely different perspective. Describing appraisal practice in the provincial archives of Lower Saxony, he stated that the value of records for present and future historical research was paramount for appraisal decisions\textsuperscript{176}. He insisted that, as the selection of archives determined the possibilities of future research, archivists had to be in close communication with research disciplines using historical methods. Archivists ought to derive from their research interests the standards for the formation of the documentary heritage (Überlieferungsbildung)\textsuperscript{177}. This approach to appraisal was illustrated with practical suggestions regarding the selection of case files. As quantitative research methods using case files had become the mainstay of researchers of the previous two decades, appraisal efforts had to take this demand into consideration for the future\textsuperscript{178}. In order to provide a better fit between present appraisal methods and potential demand for sources, Merker proposed the use of sampling techniques for case files aided by statistical software programs. This strategy would ensure a representative


\textsuperscript{177} Ibid., 143.

\textsuperscript{178} Ibid., 147.
selection of both the "typical" and the "unique" at the same
time. The contributions of Büttner and Merker may be indicative
of differences between the federal archives and provincial
archives. As indicated earlier, the Bundesarchiv, as a post-
war creation, dealt largely with contemporary government
records. This situation may have favoured a practical approach
to appraisal that has utilized the available information, such
as the records creators' organizational and functional
structures, and that has narrowed its focus to the
documentation of government sponsorial activities.
Provincial archival institutions, on the other hand,
traditionally dealt with archival holdings of much older
origin, of which modern government records were just one
component. As a result, provincial archivists, by and large,
were more accustomed to research inquiries requesting older
records. This situation may in part be responsible for ongoing
support and defense of the traditional historical value
approach to appraisal. In any case, Merker's and Büttner's

179 Ibid., 148-149.
contributions revealed that the debate surrounding a value theory of appraisal had not yet reached the point of consensus. Merker's philosophy of a records value derived from historical research gave testimony to the vitality of the orthodox view of appraisal theory. In contrast, Büttner's assessment appeared to be vastly critical of this view, as he clearly wished to distance himself from the attraction of historical and political voices lobbying for the archivist's attention in records selection. As will be discussed in Chapter Six, the ensuing debate gained an unforeseen momentum with the fall of the Berlin Wall in October of 1989.
CHAPTER FIVE:

APPRAISAL THEORY AND METHODS IN EAST GERMANY

As discussed previously (Chapter Three), archival theory and methods in East Germany had completely different intellectual bases from those developed in West Germany. Marxist-Leninist philosophy had been adopted as the ideological framework within which all societal activities took place. In the words of the East German archivist G. Enders, the principal purpose of archival institutions was to support the continued maturation of the communist society by making accessible archival documents for political, academic, and economic use.\(^{181}\) He further explained that, in accordance with communist economic policy, archival appraisal was regarded as the mechanism which would ensure that the economic expenditure of preserving records was warranted by their use for societal purposes. Thus, the value of archival documents was determined by their relative significance for societal purposes.\(^{182}\) Archival standards of value were derived from the prevalent world view, which was defined by a specific interpretation of history: historical and dialectic materialism. Of particular

\(^{182}\) Ibid., 86.
significance, therefore, were archival sources documenting the history of the working class, the history of economic production, and the history of the state in its educating and economic planning functions in the context of the formation of communist society. As the development of communist society was perceived to be an ongoing process, the direction of historical inquiries and methods was expected to change over time. Accordingly, also the appraisal of records was subject to adjustment.

Generally, three stages can be identified in the development of East German appraisal theory and methods. The first, which dealt largely with the development of value categories, appraisal criteria, and methodological appraisal guidelines, ended in 1965. The second, which focused on developing appraisal tools for selecting records creators of significance, ended in the mid 1970s. The third stage, in which archivists turned to selecting societal activities worthy of documentation, came to an abrupt end with the collapse of

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183 Ibid., 87.
184 Ibid.
East Germany in 1989. The following description will trace the developments within each stage.

**Stage One: Development of Value Categories, Appraisal Criteria, and Appraisal Guidelines.**

In 1949, the East German state delegated the competence for appraisal to state archival institutions by issuing specific legislation that prohibited records creators to destroy any record without the permission of the responsible archival institution (see Chapter Three). With the establishment of the centrally organized state archives system in the early 1950s, the structure to carry out this competence was in place.

From 1945 to the early 1950s, archivists utilized and expanded on guidelines for records destruction employed by the pre-war Prussian state archives. In order to make the process of selection more efficient, simplified destruction guidelines (Kassationsrichtlinien) were produced in 1959 and 1961 for specific categories of records. These guidelines were intended to be used by the records creators themselves to destroy specified records without first requiring permission from the
respective final archival institutions. However, in a situation similar to that of West Germany in the late 1950s, East German archivists saw themselves confronted with an ever increasing volume of records. In particular, the repeated restructuring of the East German state, in 1949 and 1952, had rendered many records creators defunct and their records in need of appraisal.

As indicated in Chapter Four, some of the suggestions for appraisal methods and criteria presented by West German archivists at the 1957 West German Archivist Conference in Koblenz were implemented in East Germany. In particular, the ideas of the West German archivists Rohr, Sante, and Meinert found full sanction in East Germany. These included the concepts of positive selection and of selection of records creators before selection of records. In fact, the East German archivist G. Enders described these contributions as revolutionary. The East German archivist H.J. Schreckenbach (whose article had spurred Booms' documentation plan) also

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described the West German contributions as significant steps in
the appraisal discussion\textsuperscript{188}.

In 1964, an East German state commission was formed to
develop appraisal methods, and in 1965 it published the
"principles for appraisal for the preservation and destruction
of records of the socialist era" (hereinafter "appraisal
principles")\textsuperscript{189}. The focus of this method were records created
since 1945 which were to be appraised in terms of their
historical and practical value. The historical value category
was defined as comprising scientific, political, economic,
legal, and cultural values\textsuperscript{190}. The practical value of records
consisted of their capacity to serve as evidence and memory-aid
for the various purposes of the state, as well as for the
protection of the personal interests of citizens\textsuperscript{191}. The
historical value of records was connected to their potential
use as sources for historical research. Records of practical
value required temporary preservation in agency archives;
records of historical value, on the other hand, required

\textsuperscript{188} Schreckenbach, 179.
\textsuperscript{189} Grundzüge der Wertermittlung für die Aufbewahrung und Kassation von Schriftgut der sozialistischen
\textsuperscript{191} Enders, G., 1968, 92.
permanent preservation in final archival institutions\textsuperscript{192}. The 1964 appraisal commission stated that the two value categories were not mutually exclusive\textsuperscript{193}, yet, their final definitions in the appraisal principles ignored this statement and gave to the two values a temporally sequential nature.

The appraisal principles also described five criteria which were to be considered in the appraisal process, targeting the selection of both records creators and records. These were\textsuperscript{194}:

1. the function of the records creator;
2. the type and character of the records;
3. the completeness, form, concentration, and duplication of records;
4. special circumstances due to major societal changes; and
5. territorial specialties.

The starting point of appraisal was to be the evaluation of the societal significance of a records creator's function. This function was assessed in relation to the particular

\textsuperscript{192} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{193} Muller, p. 194.
\textsuperscript{194} Enders, G., 1968, p. 92-93.
societal area in which the records creator acted, its rank in
the organizational structure within the societal area, and its
responsibilities and competencies in regard to territorial and
subject jurisdiction. Generally, the records of central
agencies had more significance than those of local agencies. A
similar evaluation process was to be carried out for the
administrative components of each agency\textsuperscript{195}.

Based on this analysis, the records creators were to be
ranked into three categories. Records creators in Category One
generated records "primarily worthy of preservation" in final
archival institutions (to be distinguished from agency
archives, see Chapter Three). Examples of these records
creators were central government bodies and their local
representative agencies. In general, this group was comprised
of state bodies which had a leading role in the various areas
of endeavour of society. Category Two consisted of records
creators whose records were "partially worthy of preservation"
in final archival institutions. Included in this group were
agencies at the district level, as their activities were

\textsuperscript{195} The macro-appraisal concept developed by Terry Cook in the early 1990's for the National Archives of
Canada showed some striking similarities with East Germany's appraisal of records creators prior to appraisal of
records. For a comparison see Terry Cook, "Mind over Matter: Towards a New Theory of Archival Appraisal," in
partially reflected in records of the superior regional level. Category Three consisted of records creators whose records did not warrant the economic expenditure for preservation, either because they carried out mere auxiliary functions, or because their activities were sufficiently documented in superior records creators. Among the members of this group were the lowest administrative levels within a certain state domain. The appraisal principles stressed that classification into the three categories was to be subject to a thorough analysis of the contextual relationship of records creators within the structure of society. The assignment of records creators to the various categories was to be followed by a thorough analysis of the records themselves.\(^{196}\)

The second of the five appraisal criteria focused on the degree of comprehensiveness and thoroughness with which a particular responsibility, and the activities and processes comprised in it, were reflected in the records. The records which concerned decision making, such as statistical reports, directives, and planning documents, were regarded as the most important. The records which related to the implementation of

\(^{196}\) Müller, 194.
individual decisions or responsibilities, such as case files, were considered of lesser value\textsuperscript{197}.

The third appraisal criterion consisted of four components: completeness, form, concentration and duplication. In order to ensure the completeness of recorded information on a given topic, a preservation of routine records was warranted. The form component related to the state of transmission of the records: originals were preferred to copies. The component concentration was meant to give priority to documents reflecting higher concentrations of information: summary documents were to be chosen over documents dealing with individual incidents. The component duplication implied that the appraisal of duplicates of documents had to be conducted in relation to the context in which records were found.

The fourth appraisal criterion referred to major societal changes. Records created during such times were considered more important than those created during times of slower societal developments. The fifth and last criterion concerned territorial specialties: the preserved records were to reflect

\textsuperscript{197} Ibid., 195.
the regional distribution of records creators carrying out certain societal functions, such as agriculture or industry. The issue of appraising uniform volumes of records was not addressed in the appraisal principles; yet, archivists were to follow a basic rule: selection techniques were not to focus on the unique and special, but on the typical.\textsuperscript{198}

G. Enders summarized the approach of the 1965 appraisal principles. He remarked that the appraisal criteria and the methodological guidelines constituted the tools for solving the appraisal problem, but they did not in themselves represent the solution. He asserted that all records had an information and documentation value, otherwise they would not have been created and retained by their creators. Appraisal was a matter of deciding which of these records were of value to society at large. The ultimate way of determining that value was to focus on the informational content of records.\textsuperscript{199} He pointed out, however, that the content value could not be grasped by scientific archival analysis. As the content of records dealt with all societal areas, a knowledge of those areas was necessary. Not only were insights into the course of East

\textsuperscript{198} Enders, G., 1968, 93.
\textsuperscript{199} Ibid., 87.
Germany's developmental process required, but an extensive knowledge of economics, law, and many other academic disciplines was indispensable. Enders concluded stressing that appraisal remained a very complex problem. His carefully formulated view shows how, also in East Germany, the problem of a value theory of appraisal continued to exist.

Other East German archivists felt more confident that a reliable value theory had been found. The archivist R. Kluge was a prominent supporter of this view. He stated that the 1965 appraisal principles were especially commendable as they approached the appraisal problem from the position of dialectic and historical materialism. Accordingly, the records' value was neither the result of individual views of archivists, nor was it derived from collective subjective opinion. Rather, the value derived from the objective capacity of records to give information about societal situations, organizations, objects and people. Thus, the value of records was objectively conditioned by the societal significance of phenomena reflected in them. The degree of significance could be established on the basis of a records creator's jurisdiction and competencies.

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Therefore, appraisal was not a process of assigning a value, but rather a process of identifying or recognizing a value that was objectively there. Upon identification, the value of records was to be further assessed with regard to the form and kind of representation, and the precision and completeness of the information in them\(^{201}\).

It is clear that G.Enders and Kluge represented two camps in the ongoing debate that took place during the 1960s and early 1970s on the origin and character of records' value\(^{202}\). The proponents of Kluge's position claimed the existence of an absolute value that is inherent in records and has to be recognized or "located" by archivists. The English term "value location" corresponds best to the term "Wertermittlung", which was created to reflect this view. This term was initially, and most importantly, used in the 1965 appraisal principles. The supporters of G.Enders' position believed that records only have an absolute informational content to which archivists assign a value during the appraisal process. Accordingly, the term evaluation (Bewertung) was preferred to that of

\(^{201}\) Kluge, 1967, 47-48.
appraisal\textsuperscript{203}. In the end it was Enders' position, and his suggested term which eventually prevailed\textsuperscript{204}.

Stage II. Development of Appraisal Tools.

The 1965 appraisal principles specified formalized appraisal tools which would assist in the implementation of the prescribed appraisal methodology. In the late 1960s and 1970s, East German archivists developed records creator indexes (\textit{Registaturbildnerkarteien}), pattern lists (\textit{Musterlisten}), and accompanying records schedules (\textit{Schriftgutkataloge}). The pattern lists consisted of a description of the records creators belonging in a number of major administrative domains\textsuperscript{205}. The pattern lists registered each records creator into one of the three designated categories that ranked them in order of importance, and determined whether their records would be considered for preservation. The pattern lists formed the basis from which record creator indexes, or lists, were prepared. Each archival institution compiled one such index for its respective territorial jurisdiction. This index also

\textsuperscript{203} According to the ICA Dictionary of Archival Terminology, the entry \textit{"Bewertung"} corresponds to the English term \textit{"appraisal"} which encompasses the concept of \textit{"evaluation"}.

\textsuperscript{204} Gerhart Enders passed away in 1972; his position continued to be articulated by his wife, Lieselott Enders.

\textsuperscript{205} Enders, G., 1968, 95.
served to determine which agency archives was under the responsibility of each "final archival institution". The records schedules were to be worked out by the agency archives in accordance with the ranking their records creator had received. In this activity, they were assisted by the responsible archival institution. The records schedules were to be built on file plans specifying record groups, series, files, and record forms. Letter codes were then used to mark the entries according to preservation, further appraisal, or destruction, the latter having retention periods attached.\(^{206}\)

The development of these appraisal tools was aimed at a coordinated appraisal process involving records creators, agency archives, and final archival institutions. The final archival institution would be freed of most of the actual appraisal work that was to be carried out by the agency archives. Final archival institutions would receive from agency archives primarily records of Category One. As a result, archivists of the final archival institution would have the time to turn to other archival tasks, namely arrangement and description, and reference service. Agency archives, on

\(^{206}\) Ibid., 96.
the other hand, would administer records which had primarily practical value, that is, Category Two and Three, and in time destroy most of them following established guidelines for records destruction\textsuperscript{207}.

During the phase of development of these appraisal tools, archivists raised numerous concerns regarding their actual effectiveness for records reduction. The contributions of R. Kluge, L. Enders (not to be confused with G. Enders), and B. Brachmann were particularly prominent in this phase. Kluge proposed a strategy for the determination of the significance of records creators. He reiterated that the informational content of the records was dependent on the jurisdiction and competencies of the records creators\textsuperscript{208}. He introduced the concept of an appraisal profile which took into account the uniqueness of archival jurisdictions. He explained that the purpose of selecting records having permanent value was to secure a documentation about the nation which was comprehensive in content, and each final archival institution was to fulfill its part in this general archival mission. The profile of an archival jurisdiction was comprised of its economic, cultural,

\textsuperscript{207} Kluge, 1967, 51.
\textsuperscript{208} Ibid., 48.
social, and educational structures. Kluge pointed out that the profile would pose the question of which societal phenomena, processes, objects, and persons must be documented. He believed that the answer would lead to the appropriate records creators. He stated that it was a misunderstanding of the appraisal principles to base the selection of records creators solely on their status within the organizational structure of the state, and on their societal functions. He criticized the pattern lists (Musterlisten) of records creators as being too general. Individual records creators still needed to be selected from the general domains encompassed by the pattern lists. Such selection was usually carried out according to the specific composition of each archival jurisdiction. In creating a defined documentation profile distinct for each archival jurisdiction, the potential for duplication of documentation within each archival institution would be greatly reduced. Kluge thought that such profile should also consider the documentation work carried out by other organizations in the same jurisdiction, namely libraries and museums. He argued that, for example, future historical research into the evolution of technology would

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209 Ibid., 49.
210 Ibid.
utilize scientific publications and descriptive records (that is, reports and plans), rather than the records themselves. Kluge's ideas regarding a documentation profile were an expression of the contemporary documentation movement seen elsewhere in the western world (see Chapter Four). These concepts remained however without consequences in East Germany until the 1980s.

Kluge also proposed a different approach to appraising records themselves which was aimed to simplify selection. He stressed that it was the individual record units which reflected historical fact. He went on to analyze the relationship between source and fact, and identified two forms of sources on the basis of such relations, which he termed "reflections"211:

1. sources which reflect one or more aspects of a fact; and
2. sources which are characterized by empirical or theoretical abstractions of such facts.

The first form was exemplified by records from feudalist and capitalist times, that is, pre-1945. The second form was typical of records of the Socialist Period, that is, post-1945,

211 Ibid., 50.
and it was the most important in East Germany. Kluge believed that, as the development of communist society was understood better, more scientific terms would enter the sources. He used the attribute "scientific" to mean "enlightened about the purposes and goals of communist philosophy": because of the scientific quality of the records creators' work, the resultant abstractions and summaries would have been more complete, deep, and true. For appraisal purposes, it was significant that the abstractions themselves contained historical facts. Therefore, the quality of analytical abstractions was sufficient to make the sources valuable for later historical research; consequently, large groups of sources made up of unabstracted records did not need to be preserved indefinitely in archival institutions\textsuperscript{212}.

L. Enders, in her discussion of appraisal, argued strictly from an economic point of view. She believed that the high societal significance of a records creator did not imply that such creator would necessarily produce records worthy of archival preservation. Rather, it was important to provide evidence of the existence and activities of records creators\textsuperscript{213}.

\textsuperscript{212} Ibid., 51.
This evidence did not have to come from a records creator's own records. She doubted that the existing appraisal principles were sufficient to reduce the records volume to a level that allowed for timely arrangement and description in the final archival institution\(^{214}\). She feared also that the ultimate user would be inundated with records and would look for alternative sources of information. Concurring with Kluge, Enders suggested that published information material, such as summary reports, statistical analysis, etc. could suffice to provide the necessary information and could replace large volumes of records. Moreover, the publishing activities of the records creators themselves would provide sufficient documentation of their societal activities and this would render the archival preservation of many of their records unnecessary. In agreement with G. Enders, she emphasized that the decision about selection or destruction of records was not a process determined by a standard inherent in records, but rather depended on the judgment of the archivist\(^{215}\). L. Enders concluded that appraisal had to be assisted by two controls, one quantitative, and one qualitative. Quantitative control was provided by setting acquisition quotas for each archival

\(^{214}\) Ibid.
\(^{215}\) Ibid., 191.
institution, thereby allowing for better planning in regard to resources and archival work. Qualitative control was based on the use of records for research: the denser the informational content of archival documents preserved by archival institutions, the more attractive they were to users.\textsuperscript{216}

The contributions by B. Brachmann to the selection of records creators were replete with political overtones. Also, Brachmann’s papers were characterized by a heavy use of terminology derived from information and documentation sciences, which had been firmly integrated into East German archival terminology in the later 1970s.\textsuperscript{217} Brachmann, reiterating state objectives for the planning period 1971-1975, stressed the ideological role of the social sciences, of which archival science was part.\textsuperscript{218} This role was to improve further the political education of the citizens. The purpose of archival information appraisal, in the context of the overall societal information and documentation, was to determine the societal requirements for information. A stronger coordination with other information centres, such as libraries, was

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{216} Ibid.
\item \textsuperscript{217} Leesch, 1984(b), 499.
\end{itemize}
necessary to reduce the redundancy of both records and excessive information capacities\(^{219}\). Brachmann stressed that the selection of records for preservation ought to concentrate more on those records creators which had the most important information for documenting the political development of society. He proposed to place far more emphasis on preserving the records of the state. In particular, the directives and documents of the ruling party provided the best information. Further, the application of Marxism-Leninism had to be anchored more definitely in the 1965 appraisal principles\(^{220}\). Brachmann urged for their thorough review so that the ranking of information sources could favour Marxist-Leninist source materials. In this context, he emphatically quoted from the appraisal program of the USSR, which listed the (published) works of Lenin at the top\(^{221}\).

East German archivists had laboured extensively at developing appraisal tools, and yet found them less efficient than hoped for. A new appraisal method was devised which was to simplify the process of selecting records creators.

\(^{219}\) Ibid., 94.
\(^{220}\) Ibid., 96.
\(^{221}\) Ibid.
Frequent restructuring within the overall state administration had made the identification of records creators difficult. The implementation of a framework-system (Rahmensystematik) in 1974 was an attempt to mitigate the situation. The framework-system represented a generalization of the pattern lists, and was to constitute the first stage in the appraisal of records creators. Pattern lists of records creators had only been created for a few selected areas, such as transportation and health care. The framework-system, on the other hand, showed the entire structural and hierarchical organization of all records creators in the state, and thus could keep account of structural changes more easily. In order to simplify the selection process, record creators were grouped into types across all societal areas, such as all educational and research bodies. The categorization of records creators was to favour a clearer segregation between worthy and unworthy, that is, between Category One and Three respectively. Category Two was to be used very sparingly. The framework-system consisted of three parts, namely:

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223 Grohmann, 39.
a. a list of all records creators;
b. a list of record creators grouped into types (Nomenklatur); and
c. a summary of records creators of Category One.

Based on this framework-system, each final archival institution identified the records creators of Category One located within its territorial jurisdiction, and described them in its own lists.

The framework-system was complemented by new records schedules for records creators of Category One. As discussed earlier, records creators of all three categories were to prepare records schedules designating and scheduling all of their records. Archivists, within both the agency and the final archives, still had to separate the worthy from the unworthy, because, even for Category One records creators, only a small portion of their records were selected for final preservation. This process was accelerated by emphasizing positive selection. Since the mid-1970s, archival institutions worked on specialized archives indexes (Archivgutverzeichnisse) which only listed those records that were potentially worthy of

preservation\textsuperscript{227}. They served as guide for further designating records within the conventional records schedules\textsuperscript{228}. Conversely, negative selection, that is, the identification of records for destruction, was improved by the creation of generalized framework-indexes for the simplified destruction of certain record forms. These were to be applied by the agency archives without requiring further permission from the competent final archival institution\textsuperscript{229}.

**Stage III. Development of Content-Based Appraisal**

In the 1970s, an ideological justification for archival work became more pronounced than in previous discussions. This may in part be explained as an effect of Booms' critical analysis of East Germany's archival world view in his 1971 conference presentation. In fact, a textbook on the East German archival system in preparation during that time abounded with ideological criticism of West German archivists, especially of Booms\textsuperscript{230}. This book identified the following principles as the foundation of archival work in general and appraisal in particular:

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{227} Enders, L., 1992, 38.
\item \textsuperscript{228} Leesch, 1984 (b), 501.
\item \textsuperscript{229} Grohmann, 40.
\item \textsuperscript{230} Brachmann, 1984.
\end{itemize}
1. the principles of “partiality” (that is, conforming to the party line) and “objectivity” (that is, conforming to the objectives of the Marxist-Leninist philosophy);
2. the principle of historical approach; and
3. the principles of universalism and complexity\(^{231}\).

The declared purpose of the principles was to ensure that the ideological orientation of East German archivists could be seen in maximum contrast with that of West German archivists\(^{232}\).

On a less polemic and more concrete level, renewed discussions began among East German archivists in the late 1970s on the value of records and the effectiveness of existing appraisal methods. In particular, the contributions of the archivists Kluge and L. Enders were once again instrumental. L. Enders and Kluge contended that the main question of appraisal regarding the content of records and its significance had not been answered by the appraisal principles of 1965 and by the resultant appraisal tools\(^{233}\). They felt that archivists were still dependent on an intuition (Fingerspitzengefühl) that was in the end the result of experience and of knowledge of

\(^{231}\) Ibid, 225-228.
\(^{232}\) Ibid., 173.
history, from which value standards were developed and appraisal decisions made. Paying tribute to political requirements, the two authors also reemphasized that appraisal rested on the ideological obligation to supply information in support of society's class struggle. Thus, in the future, the information demand of society ought to be the measure for appraising archival information\textsuperscript{234}. The solution to the problem, as proposed by L.Enders and Kluge, was the creation of a documentation profile, as a content-conceptual basis for appraisal and acquisition\textsuperscript{235}.

Following these recommendations, archivists shifted their attention to selecting the general societal phenomena, processes, events, and persons that were worth documenting. All appraisal tools in combination were to inform the choice of the historical facts that were to be documented, with the records capable of doing so and relevant records creators\textsuperscript{236}. The creation of a framework-documentation profile and of documentation profiles for the final archival institutions,

\textsuperscript{235} Lieselott Enders and R.Kluge, 1977, discussed in Papendieck, 124.
\textsuperscript{236} Brachmann, 1984, 263.
formed in the 1980s the last stage in the development of East Germany's appraisal system.

The notion of a documentation profile was not entirely new to East German archivists. The previously discussed 1967 article by Kluge had in fact discussed a similar instrument. Kluge had formulated a documentation profile which aimed at documenting the social phenomena specific to each archival jurisdiction. This profile was to function as a guide in selecting records creators of significance in the competent jurisdictions. But Kluge's version of the profile did not officially become part of the appraisal tools when it was proposed in 1967, although, the notion of territorial differences among archival institutions was partly addressed within the context of jurisdiction-specific record creator indexes (pattern lists). However, at the time, the necessity for an abstraction of Kluge's territorial documentation profile to transform it into a state wide documentation plan had not yet been felt.

L. Enders and Kluge were the leading archivists in the development of the documentation profiles in East Germany. In
1979, Kluge provided the definition and scope of the documentation profile as the whole of the historical facts which were to be documented by means of records preservation. He explained that, with the help of the documentation profile, further events and processes could be selected which were worthy documenting because of their historical significance. The first step was the creation of the framework-documentation profile. It was intended to provide a common guide for the subsequent creation of documentation profiles for final archival institution. The framework-documentation profile was structured chronologically and by societal domains. Chronologically, it was divided into the official periods of state history, as designated by government (these were at the time: 1945-1949, 1949-1961, 1961-1971, and 1971-1981). For each period, the profile was further subdivided into fourteen parts by subject or theme complexes, as follows:

1. political organization of society;
2. protection of state and society;
3. industry and construction;
4. trades and services;

238 Ibid.
5. agriculture, forestry, and food production;
6. environmental protection and water works;
7. domestic and foreign trade;
8. transportation, post, and communications;
9. finances and prices;
10. education;
11. culture;
12. youth politics and sports;
13. social politics and health care; and
14. foreign politics and international relations.

Within each of these divisions, a further grouping into sub-areas and topics occurred. For each chronological period, a brief summary of prevalent societal trends was provided. The subject and theme complexes were accompanied by references to relevant state legislation, and policies.

L. Enders asserted that the content description was not simply an enumeration of historical facts, but rather a conceptual description of major historical developments. She gave a few examples, such as the establishment of the "dictatorship of the proletariat", and the "realization of the
leading role of the working class"\textsuperscript{239}. Other examples included "increase in book reading as habit", "securing of the unity of science and socialist ideology", "establishment of workers' forces against provocation", and "new stage in socialist cultural revolution towards the formation of a universally evolved socialist personality"\textsuperscript{240}.

L. Enders, responding to criticism by East German colleagues, stated that the events and processes identified in the documentation profile had actually been used before, but they had not been fixed on paper. The formalized documentation profile merely listed what every archivist had applied, namely a solid historical knowledge, an understanding of the territorial and institutional jurisdiction of the respective archival institution, and a recognition of the documentary potential of the respective records. L. Enders noted that the profile would be most useful for archivists who were inexperienced in conducting historical research. This particular comment specifically addressed the concerns, voiced by other archivists as well, that the archivists' direct

\textsuperscript{239} Ibid., 174.
involvement with historical research had suffered, due to the strict division of archival work and to lack of historical training. L. Enders reaffirmed her conviction that archivists generally ought to be historians. On the same grounds, she considered documentation profiles valuable tools for facilitating intellectual access in the context of the arrangement and description process. However, she emphasized that the documentation profile would not relieve archivists from deciding which records constituted the optimal documentary sources for historical research. L. Enders concluded with the admonition that documentation profiles were only tools which would aid archivists in the creative, scientific appraisal process.

The 1984 framework-documentation profile formed the basis for creating the documentation profiles for individual final archival institutions. The relationship between national history and regional and local history had not been discussed in the context of the preparation of the documentation profiles. Some of the major regional archives attempted to compensate for this bias by advocating the preparation of

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242 Ibid., 175.
territorial profiles\textsuperscript{243}. They called upon the 1965 appraisal principles, which had specified that territorial uniqueness and diversity ought to be considered. A territorial profile was to contain a description of a given territory in terms of economic and geographic characteristics, and for a given period of time. Archivists lobbied successfully to make sure that these profiles had precedence over the documentation foci prescribed by the frame-work documentation profile. By the late 1980s, the documentation profiles of final archival institutions consisted of the following three components\textsuperscript{244}:

1. the national framework-documentation profile;
2. the documentation profile with regional focal points derived from the first component above; and
3. the territorial profile, which conceptually preceded the second component.

East Germany's documentation profile bears striking similarities to Booms' documentation plan, as noted by the West German archivist B. Uhl\textsuperscript{245}. The development of the documentation profiles in the 1980s was received with severe criticism in

\textsuperscript{243} Papendieck, 124.
\textsuperscript{244} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{245} Uhl, 1990, 534.
West Germany. The issues were revisited by both sides after the collapse of East Germany in 1989, as will be discussed in Chapter Six.

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During the tumultuous period following the collapse of the East German centralized government in 1989, East Germany began a process of political democratization and opening of society to pluralism. The revolutionary renewal of East Germany's society, as it was termed, expressed itself through an interim government and free elections. Economic and political considerations, however, favoured a reunification with West Germany, which occurred in October of 1990\textsuperscript{247}.

The structural integration of former East German archival institutions did not require any major modification of the basic organization of the government archival institutions of the former West Germany. Five new provinces were added to the federation, namely: Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, Brandenburg (including Berlin), Saxony-Anhalt (Sachsen-Anhalt), Thuringia (Thüringen), and Saxony (Sachsen). The borders of the new provinces coincided with those demarking the short lived provinces that existed in East Germany until 1952. The

\textsuperscript{247} For a chronology and media discussion of the events see \textit{Ode to Freedom}, 2nd edition (Frankfurt: Ullstein Verlag, 1990), 120-135.; and \textit{Der Spiegel Spezial}, No. 2 (Hamburg: Spiegel Verlag, 1990), 3-145.
structural adjustments in the archival administration in these provinces, as well as archival legislation, followed the West German model\textsuperscript{248}.

With reunification, the State Archival Fonds of the former East Germany was effectively dissolved. Repatriation claims of private property, businesses, and real estate relied to a great extent on archival documents, and thus required the accessibility of many archives relating to former owners of industry and other private ventures for legal investigation in Germany's court system. Similarly, many records of East Germany's government agencies were confiscated for investigations of human rights violations.

In 1989, the year preceding reunification, East German archivists began a thorough critical analysis of the archival system. Of particular significance was a report by the vice-director of East Germany's state archives administration, Kluge, delivered to the interim East German government in December of 1989\textsuperscript{249}. In his function as spokesperson for East

\textsuperscript{248} Hoffmann, Appendix 4, 617-621.
German archivists, Kluge stated that critical reflection had to begin with the reasons for the negative public opinion of archival institutions within East German society. The principal reason was considered to be the prescribed world view and the distorted research perspective that ignored historical reality. If historical research could conduct an honest analysis of reality, then archival institutions, as providers of historical sources, would become more credible as well.\textsuperscript{250} In this context, he stressed that archival institutions had to do their share by preventing the uncontrolled destruction of records, a phenomenon which was typical of revolutionary changes.\textsuperscript{251} Kluge expressed the need for an independent professional society of archivists which would further enhance the development of professional ethos, and provide a forum for archival discussions.\textsuperscript{252} He went on to criticize the present system by stating that the overpowering centralism and a proliferated bureaucracy had resulted in ineffective leadership in many areas of archival work. In accordance with the recent separation of state and ruling party, a democratization of leadership structures was needed which would give greater decision making powers to the heads and directors of archival

\textsuperscript{250} Ibid., 5. \\
\textsuperscript{251} Ibid., 6.
institutions\textsuperscript{253}. Kluge stressed that some aspects of a centrally directed archives system should be maintained, as a continuing management of the reformed State Archival Fonds required uniformly organized archival institutions, and an adherence to uniform professional methods and standards across all archival institutions. He conceded, however, that archival appraisal in particular had to undergo reforms, as the method according to which it had been carried out in the past had resulted in a politically biased documentation of government activities. Evidence of this narrow view of history was found in the appraisal tools themselves, and the resultant archival holdings\textsuperscript{254}. These wide-sweeping reforms were initiated and partially implemented after the collapse of the East German government and before reunification.

After the reunification of West and East Germany in 1990, appraisal theory and methods became the focal point of attention for German archivists of both sides. As discussed in Chapter Four, the debate on appraisal theory and methods had been initiated in West Germany with the publication of the

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{252} Ibid., 7.
  \item \textsuperscript{253} Ibid., 5 and 8.
  \item \textsuperscript{254} Ibid., 6.
\end{itemize}
Festschrift for Booms, which preceded the collapse of East Germany by a few months. With the political collapse of East Germany, the debate received an added stimulus. Significant progress was made when East and West German archivists convened for the first time with the intent of assessing the status of appraisal methodology.

In 1991, a conference was held in the former East-Berlin, due to the initiative of the directors of the three German centres for archival education: the formerly West German archives schools in Munich and Marburg, and the formerly East German archival science section at the Humboldt University of Berlin. The purpose of this conference was to find some agreement on the definition of new directions for archival appraisal in Germany255. Some of the discussions, and particularly the papers presented, were fraught with tensions256. The contributions ranged from descriptive surveys of the practical problems encountered over time in the implementation of appraisal methods to analyses of fundamental theoretical ideas.

The issue of defining appraisal strategies for the reduction of the unprecedented volumes of records generated and maintained by the defunct East German state administration was addressed primarily by East German archivists. In this context, they made attempts to salvage the usable components from the former East German appraisal methods. Specifically, Papendieck, among a few other East German colleagues, advocated the continuing use of territorial profiles prepared by regional archives in the appraisal of records under the new provincial jurisdictions. The territorial profiles had been created from a regional perspective, and thus disregarded largely the prescribed state doctrine so strongly reflected in the national frame-work documentation profiles\textsuperscript{257}. As the territorial profiles had been designed for a specific period of time, adjustments would have to be made to reflect the most recent developments\textsuperscript{258}. The necessary research should make use of the coverage of events in the printed press, as had been done extensively in the past. In that regard, East German archivists had followed Booms' suggestion as explained in his documentation plan of 1971.

\textsuperscript{257} Papendieck, 124.  
\textsuperscript{258} Ibid.
A major point of contention between East and West German archivists was constituted by East Germany's documentation profiles. The West German archivist B. Uhl, in a first comparison of East and West German appraisal theory and methods in early 1990, had commented on the similarities of Booms' 1971 documentation plan and East Germany's documentation profile\textsuperscript{259}. He observed that both plan and profile, although emerging from different philosophical stand points, essentially arrived at the same result. Both merely provided a framework that had to be concretely filled in for each administrative level. Ultimately, Uhl asserted, both plans documented what was already known, that is, what had been selected \textit{a priori} as important\textsuperscript{260}.

At the 1991 conference, the issue of documentation strategies received much attention. L. Enders identified the nature of the disagreement as relating mainly to two aspects: the design of the strategies' content, and their application in practice\textsuperscript{261}. She defended the intention and application of the documentation profiles as general guidelines, in particular for

\begin{footnotes}
\item[259] Uhl, 1990, 534.
\item[260] Ibid.
\end{footnotes}
the East German archivists who had suffered from a chronic deficiency in historical training. She stressed that the appraisal of records of the defunct East German state administration had to take into account that the state had de facto determined the development of society. As the state controlled the activities of all records creators, its influence was inevitably reflected in their records. Enders stated that an archivist trained in the former West Germany and using an "ideologically cleansed" documentation profile would lack the contextual knowledge necessary for conducting the appraisal of East German records\textsuperscript{262}. She rejected an earlier statement made by the West German archivist A. Menne-Haritz, director of the Archives School in Marburg, that the documentation profiles were merely "motivated to document known facts which would ask the question why records ought to be preserved in the first place"\textsuperscript{263}. L. Enders explained that the opposite was the case, and that "the appropriate utilization of documentation profiles provided a quantity of records which enabled researchers to analyze causes, context, forces and

\begin{footnotes}
\item[262] Ibid.  \\
\item[263] Menne-Haritz, 1985, 411.
\end{footnotes}
counter-forces, and course and results of historical processes"\textsuperscript{264}.

The East German archivist B. Brachmann rejected the use of documentation profiles on conceptual grounds. He recalled the attempts made by East German archivists to identify the future information needs of historical research which were thought to constitute the basis for appraisal. These efforts had failed, according to Brachmann, because of the difficulty of reaching consensus on what contents or pertinence were or would become important. The documentation profiles also had focused on abstract content concepts. In the late 1980s, East German archivists themselves had realized that and, attempting to make the profiles more applicable, had reverted to appraising records directly by creating new records appraisal schedules\textsuperscript{265}. Brachmann observed that a higher degree of consensus was reached whenever appraisal was approached with formal, that is, provenancial, criteria recognizing the origin and function of records creators. He then rejected any possibility of a continued use of East German documentation profiles as they

\textsuperscript{264} Enders, L., 1991, 126.
\textsuperscript{265} Brachmann, 1991, 112.
were too permeated by ideology. However, as archivists still needed to form a documentary heritage, appraisal of records required a prior knowledge about the administrative history of records creators. In this context, Brachmann praised an information handbook of the (West German) federal government, as its indexes provided multidimensional access to jurisdictions, persons, and subject areas of every federal provenance. He wished for the creation of such sources of information in particular for the new provinces, so that archivists could have a solid basis for appraisal. Although Brachmann's and Kluge's suggested approaches varied considerably, they both took the stance that contextual knowledge was the prerequisite for making appraisal decisions.

The West German archivist A. Menne-Haritz offered an approach that went beyond conventional appraisal strategies and was built on a new interpretation of the principle of provenance, as well as on a promotion of appraisal methods advocated in the United States in the 1960s by the American archivist Th. Schellenberg. She began her analysis with a thorough examination of the history of archival appraisal.

\[266\] Ibid.
theory and methods in the reunited Germany\textsuperscript{267}. As Menne-Haritz's presentation provided the first comprehensive analysis of German appraisal theory and methods since Booms' article in 1971, it will be described at length.

Menne-Haritz noted that, throughout Germany's appraisal history, all attempts to establish value concepts on the basis of philosophical or historical criteria had not materialized to be of real use in the appraisal of records. She claimed that Booms, Zimmermann, and Haase had in the 1970s supported the criterion of the demand for historical sources as the final measure of archival value. This view had led to a rejection of any appraisal method that relied on provenancial criteria, and the archivists supporting it came to believe that, in the final analysis, pertinence determined the actual archival value of records. Menne-Haritz observed that appraisal practice had nevertheless operated subconsciously on solid foundations, such as the records creators' decision-making competence (\textit{Federführung}). She concurred with Uhl's 1990 observation, that the documentation of an agency's activities, and with it, the objectification of the appraisal process had prevailed\textsuperscript{268}.

\textsuperscript{267} Menne-Haritz, 1991, p. 102.
\textsuperscript{268} Uhl, 1990, 534-535.
Despite this manifested development in appraisal practice, however - Menne-Haritz explained - the expectation remained irrefutably present that appraisal had to orient itself towards the demand for sources for historical research, in the widest sense of the term\textsuperscript{269}. The resultant impasse in the search for a uniform value theory of appraisal stemmed from a more fundamental problem. Menne-Haritz argued that in West Germany, and in Germany prior to 1945, the identity of archivists had been derived from a profession centred on historical activities, rather than from the theory of an autonomous archival science. Thus, the coming to terms with a scientific theory of archival management had been denied to German archivists by the primacy of historical research in archival activities\textsuperscript{270}. Although East German archival science had in theory risen to the rank of an autonomous discipline, it had been, in actual fact an instrument of politics. Yet, East and West Germany shared the same legacy in that both countries, under different pretenses, had made of historical research interests the basis for appraisal\textsuperscript{271}.

\textsuperscript{269} Menne-Haritz, 1991, 102.
\textsuperscript{270} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{271} Ibid., 103.
Menne-Haritz then went on to analyze East Germany's appraisal concepts. She found that they had continuously oscillated between content and context-based approaches without, however, comprehending the contradiction. She demonstrated this by quoting from the East German 1965 appraisal principles, according to which, on the one hand, the function of the records creator determined the value of its records, and, on the other hand, the objective significance of societal phenomena was the value criterion for records appraisal\textsuperscript{272}. Summing up the debate on the nature of value in East Germany in the 1960s and 1970s (see Chapter Five), Menne-Haritz stated that this contradiction was never resolved. In final analysis, appraisal theory had been based on evaluating historical facts, as evidenced by the East German documentation profiles.

Menne-Haritz then proposed an alternative approach to appraisal theory\textsuperscript{273}. She called for a theory of appraisal which was free of fluctuating value concepts. Concurring with the French archivist Bruno Delmas, she proposed a development of archival science from a descriptive to a functional science.

\textsuperscript{272} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{273} Ibid., 104.
She stated that the principle of provenance ought to form the foundation of such functional archival science, and explained that a functional understanding of the principle of provenance would mean to analyze the origin of information in terms of structure and function. Taking even further the traditional structural application of the principle of provenance, she stated that the inter-relationships of functions were not necessarily identical to the organization of delegated functions. However, as functions and organizational structures had in fact most often been consistent, an analysis of the origin of records had repeatedly proven its practicality. Yet, the increasing changes in the distribution of administrative responsibilities necessitated a focus on functional concepts. A functional application of the principle of provenance allowed one to understand the reasons for the existent distribution of administrative responsibilities. This approach rested on an analysis of functions and responsibilities in their context and would not appraise archival information, but actions and processes. Thus, the destruction of records had the purpose of freeing the essential archival information of the redundant. The term "archival information" itself required analysis for a better understanding of the appraisal process. Menne-Haritz
proposed to define archival information according to three characteristics:

1. archival information was process generated information;
2. archival information contained verbal and non-verbal components; and
3. archival information consisted of evidence and content.

Her discussion of the first two characteristics contained elements of diplomatic analysis, that is, of an analysis of the structural components of documents. Her elaboration on the third characteristic deserves closer attention. It is in relation to it that the conceptual connection with Schellenberg’s primary and secondary value categories was made.

Menne-Haritz asserted that the meaning of archival work was to bring to light evidence about the organized processes of administrative activities. This provided the framework within which the content of texts received meaning. She contended that records did not reflect reality "as it was", but the way the records creator had perceived it and formed it. Therefore, there was no pure, objective informational content in administrative records. Rather, this content revealed its

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274 Ibid., 104-106.
meaning, in an impartial and open manner, when it was placed in relation to the purposes of the record's creation. As a result, contents would be open to all possible forms of research interpretation, and archivists had no need to anticipate a catalogue of possible research interests.

Menne-Haritz argued that elements of a functional approach respecting the evidential nature of records creation could be detected in earlier contributions of German archivists, such as C. Haase and especially J. Papritz (see Chapter Four). Yet, these elements had not been utilized towards a formulation of an appraisal theory. She then explained that Schellenberg's concepts of primary and secondary value had rested on the foundation of a functional understanding of the principle of provenance, and deserved closer consideration. The primary purpose of records was defined by Schellenberg as the purpose for which records were created, namely as instruments in the coordination and control of activities. In addition to the primary purpose, a secondary purpose, could be identified. The secondary purpose was to provide evidence about activities.

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Thus, records became traces, which were the clearer the better they served their primary purpose. The differentiation between primary and secondary purpose was not only of use for archival concerns, but served as foundation for any investigation by the records creator of activity processes. Records without a primary purpose could not acquire a secondary purpose through archival treatment, therefore, archivists ought to be concerned that records creators use their records as effectively as possible, as this ensures their evidential quality. From this followed that an analysis of the primary purpose of records is necessary for their use for secondary purposes. Thus, archival appraisal was intended to examine records in terms of their potential for the conveyance of evidence and information. Menne-Haritz emphasized that the potential informational content of the records, that is, their capacity of being evidence, as opposed to content understood as answer to a question was reason for preservation or destruction. As appraisal for preservation was impartial, it enhanced the evidential quality of records. Echoing Brenneke's stance on the subject, Menne-Haritz stated that the combination of appraisal, arrangement and description gave an archival body its final form by bringing out its inherent structure.
Menne-Haritz’s conclusion was that archival value theory was redundant, as the archival value of records was not measurable humanly or philosophically. It simply needed to be determined whether certain records had evidential quality, and thus whether they were qualified for secondary purposes. Menne-Haritz extended her position to the appraisal of electronic records. She commented that modern software systems for the various administrative activities often ignored the requirements of the primary purpose of records. This situation threatened the ability to assess the use of records for secondary purposes, and ultimately the records evidential quality as archival sources. She then made an appeal to archivists to benefit from a closer association with information sciences and administrative sciences.

The discussions following Menne-Haritz’s presentation included a noteworthy commentary by Booms. His remarks provided a final assessment of his 1971 documentation plan. Booms responded primarily to Menne-Haritz’s critique of his apparent denial of provenance as an important factor in appraisal. He insisted that, as an historian, he knew of the

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277 Ibid.
importance of the context of records creation, and had always recognized the lack of usefulness of records organized according to pertinence for the benefit of researchers for whose inquiries they had not been compiled. He admitted that his explanations may have not been sufficiently precise in the past, and stated that he clearly supported provenance oriented appraisal. In this context, he took the opportunity to distance himself categorically from his own 1971 documentation plan. Booms said that his plan merely intended to establish relationships between historical processes and the times in which records creation occurred, not to construct complex value concepts as ideologies do. The plan was "a child of its time", when planning euphoria had been spurred by predictions about uncontrollable volumes of information\textsuperscript{278}. At the conference of the Association of Canadian Archivists, late in the same year (1991), Booms noted that East German archivists had recently admitted to have based their documentation profile on his plan: by renaming it "profile" they did not have to acknowledge its origin\textsuperscript{279}.

\textsuperscript{278} Hans Booms, Commentary in the Conference Discussions at the 1991 Conference, 127 and 129.
The next step in the appraisal debate in Germany was represented by the contributions of Menne-Haritz and Uhl in 1993 and 1994 respectively. At the International Conference of Archivists held in Stockholm in 1993 and devoted to appraisal theory and the principle of provenance, Menne-Haritz gave a paper which elaborated on her support for Schellenberg’s methods. She saw in Schellenberg’s concepts a resurrection of useful German concepts from the 1930s. She had found striking similarities between Schellenberg’s appraisal methods and concepts and those developed by the German archivist A. Brenneke in the 1930s. She suggested that the intellectual connection between the two had been made by the German archivist E. Posner. Posner, who was Brenneke’s substitute in the direction of the Prussian State Archives in Berlin, upon his immigration in 1939 to the United States, exported German theory and practice to the New World\textsuperscript{280}. According to Menne-Haritz, Brenneke’s free provenance principle (freie Provenienzprinzip) provided the foundation of Schellenberg’s primary and secondary value\textsuperscript{281}. A summary of Brenneke’s main arguments, as presented by Menne-Haritz, will serve to illustrate her belief.


\textsuperscript{281} Menne-Haritz, 1994, 245.
Brenneke had expanded on the organically interpreted principle of provenance as it had been introduced by the Dutch archivists Muller, Feith, and Fruin in 1898. Brenneke believed that the free principle of provenance presented, in addition to its three conventionally described characteristics or uses (principle of internal order, principle of external order, and principle of historical research), a fourth characteristic. He defined it as the ability of an archival body to reveal a community of purposes (Sachgemeinschaft) as its constituent records represented the outcome of a common administrative activity. His understanding of an archives' community of purposes was more than a bond or relationship. Rather, the community of purposes was created through the common purpose of the objectives and actions of the agency which produced the records. This qualitative difference between a community of purposes and a relationship of purposes defined the distinctiveness of archives with respect to, for example, library materials. For Brenneke, an analysis of this community of purposes was aimed at representing it through

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283 Brenneke, 88-92.
284 The German term “Sache” is best understood as “purpose”, “matter”, “affair”. A translation of the term with “subject” could be misunderstood to imply a content oriented meaning of “topic”.
285 Brenneke, 22.
archival arrangement and description. He believed that a body of records was to be understood as "an organism" which had undergone a process of growth. Yet, refuting the Dutch interpretation of provenance, he argued that natural growth had not necessarily resulted in a perfect organism as end result. Thus, Brenneke stated that the goal was to shape a body of records, which fulfilled the conditions of organic growth, into a form which would bring out that organic growth, even if this form had not existed before. Brenneke had not concerned himself with appraisal as a distinct archival activity: rather, he considered it to be a measure of arrangement, which aimed at freeing a body of records from the redundant and bringing out the essential.

Menne-Haritz asserted that an understanding of the principle of provenance in Brenneke's terms strongly suggested its use in appraisal. The principle implied two purposes. The first purpose was to make clear the context of records creation. The second purpose was to turn those records whose contextual creation had been established into an archives. Thus, the secondary purpose of the principle of provenance was

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286 Ibid.
287 Ibid., 38.
fundamentally different from its primary purpose, as it aimed at providing evidence of the first purpose. The principle of provenance described functional purposes, which were universally valid and, although established within the context of archival arrangement, were transferable to appraisal. This meant that this principle had the same objective of arrangement, namely, to make clear the "community of purposes" of records and to show their organic growth. Further, as arrangement made evident the various connections in records classifications, appraisal determined which records constituted the necessary connections for a representation of contexts. Revisiting her earlier elaboration, Menne-Haritz concluded that appraisal removed redundancy, which blocked the view of the essential.\(^{288}\)

Menne-Haritz believed that Schellenberg's methods were a consistent application of the free principle of provenance to appraisal.\(^{289}\) She observed that his methods were based on the assumption that archival institutions existed because the value of records had a double nature: primary, for the creating agency itself, and secondary for other agencies and private

\(^{288}\) Menne-Haritz, 1994, 247.
\(^{289}\) Ibid., 248.
users\textsuperscript{290}. Schellenberg's two values defined two kinds of purposes, one for the creating agency, and the other for archival institutions. Menne-Haritz was particularly interested in Schellenberg's explanations of secondary value, which was divided into two aspects: the evidential value, understood as answers to questions relating to the activities, functions, and competencies of creating agencies within an organizational hierarchy, and the informational value, understood as answers to questions relating to the persons, things and events the records talked about.

A key issue for Menne-Haritz was Schellenberg's use of the term "evidence". In fact, the term had rarely been used in German archival literature. When Menne-Haritz edited an earlier translation of Schellenberg's main work from 1956, she introduced the term into German archival terminology\textsuperscript{291}. She believed that the term "evidence" in Germany had been misinterpreted and mistranslated to mean "proof" in the legal sense of the word, while it expressed something in records that did not require proof, but was inevitably present, thus evident. Evidence was therefore what could be found in between

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\textsuperscript{290} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{291} Menne-Haritz, 1990, 17-20.
the lines, and not necessarily in textual information about the activities, competencies, and procedures of creating agencies. Only after an analysis of the evidential values, an evaluation of informational values could be attempted. Menne-Haritz concluded by stating her surprise that German archivists, West and East alike, had ignored Schellenberg's contribution, although it had been available in translation since the early 1960s.

It appears that Menne-Haritz's and Brenneke's ideas have come full circle as both consider appraisal to be an extension of archival arrangement and description, where the principle of provenance is the fundamental tool. Menne-Haritz's emphasis and reexamination of the merits of the principle of provenance for appraisal may be stated to be an attempt to find a value free appraisal approach. Her arguments ought to be seen in light of the failed attempts in Germany's appraisal history to solve the problem through value concepts derived from historical research expectations. Thus, Schellenberg's seemingly objective approach based on the analysis of the purpose and the context of records creation fit Menne-Haritz's focus.
The contribution of Uhl occurred within the context of a second German conference on appraisal which took place in 1994 at the Archives School in Marburg. The discussions addressed a broader spectrum of issues surrounding appraisal. Moreover, it has to be kept in mind - as a former East German archivist points out - that, beginning in 1991, also the concept of objectivity had entered the debate on appraisal. At this second conference consideration was given to a number of areas impinging on appraisal, such as archival education, recent archival legislation at the federal and provincial levels, and archival terminology. In his paper, Uhl continued the investigations begun by Menne-Haritz into the merits of Schellenberg's methods. In agreement with her position, he asserted that the provenance oriented appraisal approach, as supported by Schellenberg, had never been articulated into a theory in Germany.

Uhl, having conducted a survey of German archival literature aimed at identifying attempts to base appraisal predominantly on provenance, drew particular attention to a

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292 Grohmann, 37.
293 Uhl, 1994, 31.
paper written by A. Zechel in 1965\textsuperscript{294}. Zechel’s effort to formulate a theory for appraisal had been intended as a critique of Zimmermann’s reliance upon the demand for historical sources as a guide to selection (see Chapter Four). Zechel’s aim was to overcome the hopelessness which had previously paralyzed the search for a value recognition that was not primarily concerned with the demand of historians\textsuperscript{295}. Zechel commented that, whenever the archivist “crossed paths” with a historian, it was because the archivist had left his/her path, and moved into the “marsh route” of the historian. If one understood archival thinking as an autonomous function of the human mind, then there had to be a separate way to archival value recognition. Thus, appraisal of archival value might come into contact with the value theory of the historian, but must not be determined by it\textsuperscript{296}.

Zechel did not refer specifically to Brenneke, but he took up Brenneke’s core concept, that is, the idea that it was not the responsibility of the archivist to preserve records according to the historians’ wishes. Rather, preservation had

\textsuperscript{294} Ibid., 32-34.


\textsuperscript{296} Ibid., 8.
to occur in such a way that it was consistent with the inherent essence in records[^297]. Zechel commented that, fortunately, the practice of appraisal had for a long time, that is, since the assertion of the principle of provenance, resisted historical value principles, and that the science of arrangement had had a stimulating and regulating effect on appraisal[^298]. Further, Zechel supported an appraisal approach which would analyze a body of records in its entirety, rather than focus on the "especially important" or "assumed important" for historians. He believed that a method which considered the special and the typical in unison would be historically the most true[^299]. Concurring with Papritz’s approach, Zechel suggested that a value theory be developed that consider the holistic composition of a body of records, and criteria be identified that are applicable in assessing the entirety of a body of records.

Although Zechel had recognized the importance of the principle of provenance in appraisal, and the quality of evidence as an objectifiable appraisal category, his

[^297]: Ibid., 9.
[^298]: Ibid., 10.
[^299]: Ibid., 14.
contribution was not appreciated at the time. Uhl observed that the reasons for the lack of interest in Zechel's ideas, as well as Papritz's and Brenneke's, were the same that were at the origin of the ignorance of Schellenberg's contribution, which also rested on a functional interpretation of the principle of provenance. Since German archivists by and large had been fixed on concepts centred on the documentary content of records and on the demand for sources by historians, Zechel's approach had met deep incomprehension.

In summary, the debate on appraisal theory and methods since Germany's reunification has generally rejected all the appraisal approaches focused on the informational content of records and the value theories derived from historical considerations. The failing of the documentation strategies of East Germany was in part the result of ideological and political constraints. However, similar content-based appraisal strategies proposed in West Germany over time were rejected because of conceptual flaws. Whether such rejection was partly due to the desire to maintain the distance from an undesirable political past will become clearer over time. What

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300 Uhl, 1994, 31.
has emerged so far is a support of formal appraisal criteria based on an analysis of a records creator's activities and of the contextual characteristics of records determined by their circumstances of creation. In the renewed and intense debate, German archivists have made use of international contributions to archival science. In their search for guidance, an examination of past contributions, both domestic and international, seemed to offer the most valuable food for thought and stimulus for a constructive debate.
CONCLUSION

This thesis has surveyed German archival history for the period 1945 until present. Much of the information it has provided was previously only available in the German language. The exposition has focused on a description of the development of government archival organization and legislation as well as of archival appraisal theory and methods in both East and West Germany. It has been shown how the differences in the organization and legislation of government archival institutions between the two Germanys were a direct reflection of the two distinctly different political systems. West German government archival institutions were organized according to federalist principles, while East German archival institutions were structured by legislation into a very rigid uniform system. Lack of central authority and lack of regional support by sponsoring governments can be identified as the main shortcoming in the archival development of the former West Germany, where the archival initiative regarding the formulation of legislation for basic archival functions derived mainly from concerned archivists themselves. In contrast, archival responsibilities and competencies in East Germany were
initiated and regulated by the state. Similarly, archival objectives, such as the development of archival appraisal theory and methods were defined and supported by central authority. It follows that the approach to appraisal theory and methods was largely affected by state ideology. Yet, the interest of the state in archival institutions made possible the concerted work of archivists on the problem of appraisal. In contrast, West German archivists were required to find solutions to appraisal problems within their own professional support groups, as government sponsors in general showed insufficient interest. Thus, while East German archivists focused immediately on the problems of modern records appraisal which, because of ideological interests, found strong state support, West German archivists did not recognize this problem until much later.

The significant ideological differences between the two Germanys hampered direct professional sharing of archival appraisal concepts during much of the period of their separation. Nevertheless, the contributions of numerous West German archivists to appraisal theory and method found acceptance in East Germany. The reunification of the two
Germanys in 1990 resulted in the collapse of East German archival organization and legislation. Subsequent meetings of archivists from the former two countries provided stimulating discussions on various approaches to appraisal that are worthy of consideration by archivists of other jurisdictions. East Germany is an excellent example for those who wish to analyze the advantages and disadvantages of documentation strategies. West Germany, having been free of ideological constraints, is instead a very interesting case study for those who wish to examine the evolution of archival thinking. In conclusion, the archival experiences of East and West Germany present a very valuable subject of study in archival intellectual history, one that needs further exploration and analysis, and one that can be usefully compared with the experiences of other countries, especially Canada and the United States.
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