

Abstract

The exposure of the terrorist organisation *Nationalsozialistischer Untergrund* (National Socialist Underground, NSU) in November 2011 exposed the still topical problem that is the right-wing scene in contemporary Germany. The *Nationalsozialistischer Untergrund* consisted of three young people: Beate Zschäpe, Uwe Mundlos and Uwe Böhnhardt. The group managed to stay hidden for over ten years without being discovered by the police or the authorities during which time its members committed at least ten murders, fifteen robberies and two bomb attacks. Its discovery reopened the issue of how the Federal Republic of Germany has been dealing with both its Nazi-past and its current right-wing scene. This thesis focuses on the radicalization of East German youth in the 1990s and presents this trend using the aforementioned group as an example. Firstly, right-wing extremism is characterized and this part is followed by the description of the specifics of right-wing extremism in GDR and the new federal states (*Bundesländer*). The thesis then describes the lives of the three members before the formation of the group, the operation of the group while hidden as well as the crimes linked to the group. Firstly, it focuses on the bank robberies the trio used to gain financial resources, secondly, on the murders committed between 2001 and 2007 and finally, the description of the two bombings in Cologne attributed to NSU follows. In the analytic part of the thesis, attention is also given to the general factors considered to lead to radicalization of East German youth in the 1990s, which are then compared with the case of the group *Nationalsozialistischer Untergrund*. The thesis describes the time period between the births of the members of the group and the discovery of the group in 2011. Because the trial of the only living member of the group and its several other supporters is still in motion, the thesis does not deal with the trial itself.