



# The File: A Personal History

*Timothy Garton Ash*

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**The File: A Personal History** Timothy Garton Ash

"Eloquent, aware and scrupulous . . . a rich and instructive examination of the Cold War past." --The New York Times

In 1978 a romantic young Englishman took up residence in Berlin to see what that divided city could teach him about tyranny and freedom. Fifteen years later Timothy Garton Ash--who was by then famous for his reportage of the downfall of communism in Central Europe--returned. This time he had come to look at a file that bore the code-name "Romeo." The file had been compiled by the Stasi, the East German secret police, with the assistance of dozens of informers. And it contained a meticulous record of Garton Ash's earlier life in Berlin.

In this memoir, Garton Ash describes what it was like to rediscover his younger self through the eyes of the Stasi, and then to go on to confront those who actually informed against him to the secret police. Moving from document to remembrance, from the offices of British intelligence to the living rooms of retired Stasi officers, *The File* is a personal narrative as gripping, as disquieting, and as morally provocative as any fiction by George Orwell or Graham Greene. And it is all true.

"In this painstaking, powerful unmasking of evil, the wretched face of tyranny is revealed." --Philadelphia Inquirer

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