

Right-wing extremist accused of murdering German politician Walter Lübcke suspected in another attempted murder

Dietmar Gaisenkersting
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The neo-Nazi Stephan Ernst, who is currently in custody for the murder of Kassel district president Walter Lübcke, is suspected of having been involved in another attempted murder. At the same time, the publication of new research last weekend revealed close connections between the Lübcke murder and the killing of Halit Yozgat by the right-wing terrorist group National Socialist Underground (NSU) in 2006 in Kassel.

Walter Lübcke was executed on the terrace of his home with a shot to the head during the night of June 1-2. Ernst initially admitted to carrying out the killing, but retracted his confession after a few days. Then in January, Ernst accused his accomplice, Markus Hartmann, of firing the lethal shot. He is currently in prison under suspicion of assisting a murder.

The federal state prosecutor has also been investigating Ernst's alleged role in a 2003 attack since last November. The incident involved a teacher in Kassel being shot at. The 48-year-old was standing in his kitchen when a bullet flew through the window. The projectile narrowly missed the man's head.

According to reports from NDR and *Der Spiegel*, the police found a photo of the victim and his name and address, as well as notes on his anti-fascist activities, in an encrypted file on a laptop belonging to Ernst. The file was created in 2002.

Prior to this, the state prosecutor had already initiated an investigation into Ernst for an attempted murder in 2016. The attack took place not far from Ernst's home in Lohfelden near Kassel, where an Iraqi asylum seeker was attacked with a knife, resulting in serious injuries.

The document upon which NDR and *Spiegel* based their reports is likely the "list" first reported on by the anti-fascist website Exiv last weekend. It was prepared between 2001 and 2007. It includes over 60 objects and individuals in the Kassel region, including the teacher targeted in the attack.

In its detailed analysis, the Exiv website drew connections, parallels, and personal continuities between the murders of Halit Yozgat and Walter Lübcke.

Both murders are very similar, with both victims being killed with a shot to the head.

The secret service employee Andreas Temme was present at

the scene when the young Halit Yozgat was murdered in his internet cafe. Temme, who was given the nickname "little Adolf" in his home village, repeatedly lied to investigators, refused to make statements to parliamentary investigatory committees and the courts, and only admitted to things that could no longer be denied.

Following the murder of Yozgat, the NSU's ninth victim, the "ceska" series of racist murders carried out by the NSU came to an end. One year later, in April 2007, the NSU allegedly killed police officer Michele Kiesewetter in Heilbronn.

After the NSU murder in Kassel, Temme switched his place of employment. He has worked ever since in the Kassel district office, the agency headed by Lübcke until his murder.

Evidence is mounting that Temme not only played a role in the NSU murder, but in other murders as well. Evidence recently surfaced linking Temme to the NSU murders of Ismail Yasar in Nuremberg and Theodoros Boulgaraides in Munich.

Exiv research also suggests that there existed personal ties linking the neo-Nazi milieus in Kassel and Dortmund.

In Dortmund on April 4, 2006, just two days before the killing of Yozgat, Mehmet Kubasik became the eighth victim of the NSU when he was shot in his kiosk.

Exiv describes the neo-Nazi milieu in Kassel in detail, and also interviewed one of its former members, M.K., in January. Exiv reported that he lived two houses away from the internet cafe where Yozgat was murdered, and was known as a violent neo-Nazi at the time. In the interview, he said that he was never asked by any authorities about Yozgat's murder, although "I was living next door."

M.K., who was born in 1979, also reported that he knew Stephan Ernst. According to Exiv's research, he must have also known Ernst's accomplice, Markus Hartmann. M.K., Ernst, and Hartmann were also known to Benjamin Gärtner. The neo-Nazi Gärtner was, in turn, an informant for the Hesse state intelligence agency managed by none other than Temme. Temme and Gärtner briefly spoke to each other by telephone prior to and after Yozgat's murder.

Hartmann, Ernst, and M.K. also knew Stanley Röske, until recently the leader of the Combat 18 Germany right-wing

extremist group, which was banned in January 2020. According to a report in the *Bild* newspaper, Stephan Ernst and the three NSU members, Uwe Mundlos, Uwe Böhnhardt, and “probably Beate Tschäpe”, attended Röske’s 30th birthday party in the clubhouse of the Bandidos rocker club in Kassel in 2006, immediately prior to the murder of Yozgat.

Evidence of the ties between the Kassel and Dortmund neo-Nazi milieus is provided by Corryna Görtz, a member of the militant hard core of neo-Nazis in Kassel and Thuringia from where Mundlos, Böhnhardt and Tschäpe also emerged.

In 2006, Görtz was in a relationship with the Dortmund-based neo-Nazi Siegfried Borchardt, also known as “SS-Siggi.” Mehmet Kubasik was murdered in the north of Dortmund, just a few hundred metres from Borchardt’s home. And in the apartment used by the NSU in Zwickau, which Tschäpe set fire to before she fled, the remains of a case of ammunition used in the NSU murders was found. The case carried the handwritten inscription “Siggi.”

“It remains unclear whether Borchardt had anything to do with this case. He was never officially called to testify,” wrote Exiv, citing the journalist Tobias Großkemper, who researched the story.

There is evidence to suggest that Corryna Görtz worked as an informant for the intelligence agencies. According to the NSU investigatory committee in the Hesse state parliament, wrote Exiv, she spied for an Austrian intelligence agency during her time in Austria from 2000 to 2003. Then, in October 2004, she wrote to the Hesse state intelligence agency from prison to offer her services. At the time, she allegedly asked about a support programme for people trying to get out of the milieu.”

It is unknown whether Temme, who oversaw informants in the right-wing extremist scene, made contact with her in 2004. In 2009, the intelligence service destroyed her personal file. Whatever the truth may be, she remains an active right-wing extremist to this day, although it remains unclear whether she worked as an informant, like many others who wished to break with the neo-Nazi milieu.

On 15 September, 2017, Görtz testified to the NSU investigative committee in Hesse that she knew Yozgat’s internet cafe and had visited it. She referred to various reasons for this, none of which were plausible.

Görtz is today good friends with Mike Savallich, who said in recent months that he is a close friend of Stephan Ernst.

However, “the case of the Kassel-based neo-Nazi Markus Hartmann stands out from all of these connections and networks,” wrote Exiv. Hartmann originally comes from Rudolstadt, the same area in Thuringia as the NSU. He became active in the far-right milieu there, but was already in Kassel by 2006.

He was questioned by the police following the Yozgat murder. Investigators discovered that he had visited an internet site unusually frequently, which reported on the murder. “In short sentences, Hartmann said that a neighbour who was also a

friend of his was close friends with Halit Yozgat, and that he had also got to know Yozgat briefly.” According to Exiv, the officer questioning Hartmann then noted in the file: “No longer relevant, viewed as conclusive.”

It is unclear whether Hartmann was on the payroll of the intelligence agencies at this time. However, Exiv did report on a meeting of the “Committee for Internal and Homeland Affairs” on January 15, 2020, which discussed the latest development in the investigation of the Walter Lübcke murder. Asked at the meeting whether Hartmann was an informant, Cornelia Zacharias of the federal state prosecutor’s office remarked that while she knew the answer, she did not have the authorization to testify on the matter. “Prior to this, a representative of the state prosecutor commented in response to the question of whether Stephan Ernst was a spy by saying that for his office’s part, this possibility could be categorically excluded. This statement was not made with regard to Markus Hartmann.”

Stephan Ernst, Markus Hartmann, Benjamin Gärtner, Stanley Röske, Corryna Görtz, Mike Savallich, and others are part of the Kassel neo-Nazi milieu, the hard core of which never consisted of more than about 50 people. According to the Hesse state intelligence service, Temme, his boss and another colleague maintained seven informants in 2006 in this relatively small group. Apart from Benjamin Gärtner, the names of the other informants remain unknown, never mind the names of those neo-Nazis who worked with other intelligence agencies.

It is therefore impossible to say where the neo-Nazi milieu, the NSU included, ends and where the state begins. Temme, the central figure in the NSU, is not only being protected by the intelligence agency, but also the Christian Democrat-Green Hesse state government under Volker Bouffier, who was Interior Minister at the time of Yozgat’s murder.



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