

Ulrike Meinhof Archive (UMA)

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Frankfurt-am-Main, in the summer of 2009

**On the 7th October 2009 Ulrike Meinhof would have been 75 years old
Please make a donation to ensure the continued existence of the
Ulrike Meinhof Archive (UMA).**

Greetings!

Without the many individual donations during the past year, the **Ulrike Meinhof Archive (UMA)** could not have survived: it is only thanks to the support of these donors that the UMA has been preserved. All of us who care for the archive cannot express our gratitude strongly enough!

Sadly, the donations were not enough to allow me to retain the space in which the archive had been kept. I've had to give it up and the UMA has been safely stored away for quite a while. Now, I've found a suitable new space that is also cheaper, but without your help I cannot carry the cost, not only of hiring the room, but also of maintaining and extending the archive itself (worthwhile new material turns up all the time!). And we all know that state handouts and trust funding are rather unlikely... **The UMA will remain an independent, autonomous collection, organized by me and paid for by donations, mostly from individuals, including myself.**

Information for those who haven't heard about the archive: The **Ulrike Meinhof Archive (UMA)** contains many and varied items, which illuminate every aspect of Ulrike Meinhof's life – personal, professional and political – as well as material relevant to the people in her life and the institutions she encountered. Altogether, the UMA is a unique collection of several thousand documents, thousands of letters, much unpublished writing, several hundred photographs and many films and radio broadcasts, both by and about Ulrike Meinhof. And the archive is growing, as new items keep surfacing...

I began to accumulate the documentation during the six years I spent researching the background to my book *Ulrike Meinhof. The Biography* (Ullstein 2007) The trigger for the project was my discovery that fundamental assertions about Ulrike Meinhof were untrue and based on contaminated source material from Meinhof's foster mother Renate Riemeck, her ex-husband Klaus Rainer Röhl, the journalist Stefan Aust and also from the Federal Office of Criminal Investigation. Over time, writers have copied and quoted these sources so widely and uncritically that before I could begin to write the biography, I had to become a full-time researcher.

I've worked in dozens of archives and interviewed hundreds of contemporary witnesses. To found the UMA, locate the documents at home and abroad, evaluate and catalogue them was, all in all, a remarkably thankless process, wasteful of time and money. Over the many long years, it has exhausted

Account details:

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my financial reserves. After having sold things that belonged to me and burdened myself with large debts, I now have to face that the continued existence of the UMA depends on your generosity.

The plan: I hope that the **Ulrike Meinhof Archive** can be transferred into the safe keeping of a large, independent Archive one day. As of today, one possible option could be International Institute for Social History (IISH) in Amsterdam or the Feltrinelli Foundation in Italy. The IISH has already acquired large collections of modern German and international documentation on for instance organized workers and women. In the IISH, the archive would be accessible to political activists, academic researchers and other interested people. And so does the Feltrinelli Archive.

The new archive space must be refurbished: Toilet facilities must be installed and the electrical wiring brought up-to-date; various repairs are also necessary and, preferably, new windows to replace all the old ones. The place needs office furniture, shelving, filing cabinets and archival preservative equipment (previous furnishings were borrowed and in poor shape).

The monthly running costs: Rent and associated costs, including heating and electricity amount to 600 EUR per month, or 7 200 EUR per year.

One-off expenditure: Around 12 000 EUR. The deposit – 1 800 EUR. Repairs and refurbishing – at least 5 000 EUR. Purchases of a computer, office and archival furniture and fittings – at least 5 000 EUR [To replace the partly ill-fitting, single glazed windows would add several thousand Euros to the costs, but this could wait for now].

The stark truth is this: without your help I can no longer either keep or care or enlarge the archive. For a variety of legal reasons, several of the documents require adequate protection. Like many of my colleagues, I have found that working as a freelance writer has been made more difficult still by the current worldwide economic crisis. Many of the things I do are regarded as »honorary« and I'm no longer able to meet essential expenses, **which is why I decide to make this heartfelt plea: please help! This is how you can contribute to the support of the UMA:**

- **A single donation.** This would help to pay for the one-offs expenditure, e.g. the deposit, the repairs and the purchases. Or

- **Regular monthly contributions.** It would provide more lasting help with the running costs.

Or – **why not both?** And please remember that every small payment matters, even 5 or 10 Euros would be welcome!

How to thank you?

A.) If you're able to donate at least 100 EUR or commit yourself to making regular payments for at least one year, **one of the following** will come your way, complete with a thank-you and my signature:

Either

O **Book 1:** *Ulrike Meinhof. Die Biografie* by Jutta Ditfurth. Berlin: Ullstein Taschenbuchverlag 2009 or

O **Book 2:** *Rudi und Ulrike. Geschichte einer Freundschaft* by Jutta Ditfurth. München: Droemer 2008 or

O **Book 3:** *Zeit des Zorns. Streitschrift für eine gerechte Gesellschaft* by Jutta Ditfurth. Droemer 2009



B.) If you're able to donate at least 200 EUR or commit yourself to making regular payments for at least two years, you can **choose any two of the following three gifts:**

O **Photo from 1956, showing Ulrike Meinhof** as a student (cf. left).

The format is about 24 x 30 cm. Ownership does not confer copyright.

O And/or **one of the three books listed above.**

O And/or be my **guest** at one of the »stage readings« in connection with Ulrike Meinhof's 75th birthday – you'd be guaranteed a very good seat! The readings will take place in the Berliner Ensemble (Theater Bertolt Brecht), Berlin on 6th October 2009, or in the Theaterhaus in Stuttgart on 7th October 2009 or in other theaters: For further details, see www.jutta-ditfurth.de.

C.) If you're able to donate at least 300 EUR or commit yourself to making a regular payment for at least three years, you can pick **any three gifts**, as you prefer. This reward will also go to those who are prepared to make contributions both to one-off and running costs.

But remember that any contribution, however small, will be welcomed with gratitude!

My best wishes,

Jutta Ditfurth

Dear donors, when you email or write, please include your complete postal address and state if a money transfer has been made. Then I can thank you and send your gifts to you. The bank transfer will in no way be associated with your personal details, not do the bank communicate them to us.