INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL FOR
HISTORY, CULTURE AND MODERNITY
www.history-culture-modernity.org
Published by: Uopen Journals

eISSN: 2213-0624

Through the Witness's Emotional Eyes: Bruno Barbey's Portrait of Poland

Gisela Parak

HCM 5 (1): 74–90
DOI: 10.18352/hcm.522

Abstract

The enforcement of martial law in Poland in December 1981, a major setback to the policy of détente, contributed to a cooling of international diplomacy and triggered a second phase in the Cold War. This analysis of the photo book *Pologne* by Magnum photographer Bruno Barbey, published in 1982, shows how the photo book commented on the political situation in Poland and gave a vivid testimony from major protagonists in the field. This article argues that the book was not merely a 'documentary', but also dared to offer a transnational response to the events of the day and, as such, reflected wider French sympathy for the aims and requests of Polish citizens, as seen by a French photographer. Moreover, Barbey attempted to introduce Polish history in general, and Poland's burdened relationship to the Soviet Union in particular, in order to suggest that it belonged to the history of Western democratic states across the Iron Curtain.

Keywords: Bruno Barbey, Cold War politics, Magnum, martial law, Solidarność, transnational perspective, visual publicity

In 1982, French photographer Bruno Barbey published a photo book entitled *Pologne*.[1] It contained seventy-eight photographs selected from those he shot in Poland between 1979 and 1981.[2] When Polish Prime Minister Wojciech Jaruzelski declared martial law on 13 December 1981, Barbey left the country. The same year his book was published in the French original, German and English editions also appeared.[3]

This quick succession of publications can be explained by the book's topicality and, in particular, the political relevance of its subject matter, as well as by a heightened awareness at the time of the importance of Polish current affairs in Europe and the United Kingdom. In addition, Barbey's Poland photographs were reproduced in various international magazines. *National Geographic*'s April 1982 supplement 'The Face and Faith of Poland' contained a selection, and several pages of *Life*'s January 1982 issue were devoted to the photographer's works, published under the headline 'Poland on the Brink'. Furthermore, exhibitions devoted to Polish current affairs also featured Barbey's photographs: in 1983, the gallery FNAC became one of several in France to show his prints, which were also to be seen the same year in the Museo d'Arte Moderna in Rome and the Nikon Gallery in Zurich.[4]

Historical Background

The presence of Magnum photographer Bruno Barbey in Poland coincided with a time when the opposing forces of the Cold War were especially focused on the country. The first free trade union, Solidarność ('Solidarity'), expressed aspirations for autonomy that were felt in all European satellite states of the Soviet Union during a momentary flicker of hope. From the Poznań workers' uprising in June 1956 onwards, citizens' patience with the country's leadership began to fade, as food shortages and an increase in the price of meat continued to complicate the lives of the country's population. Political protest flared up in mass demonstrations in Gdynia, Gdańsk and Szczecin in December 1970, as well as in Radom and Ursus in 1976. When Anna Walentynowicz was sacked from her position at Gdańsk's Lenin Shipyard in August 1980, strikes ensued with the initial aim of having Walentynowicz reinstated. Solidarność was founded before the end of the year.[5] Initially, the Polish government acknowledged Solidarność as the first non-governmental union of its kind. The Soviets, however, who had already intervened against uprisings in Budapest in 1956 and in Prague in 1968, forced the Polish government to take a hard line. In October 1981, General Wojciech Jaruzelski was installed as Prime Minister. On 13 December 1981, he imposed martial law and imprisoned the leaders of Solidarność. Under Jaruzelski's military dictatorship, mass arrests

and repression became the norm. Meanwhile, the failed assassination attempt on John Paul II on 13 May 1981 began to be viewed with suspicion. Given the Polish Pope's political commitment, which was a thorn in the side of the communist leaders, the USSR's involvement was considered likely.[6] The violently suppressed Prague Spring, Soviet troops' invasion of Afghanistan in 1979 and the imposition of martial law in Poland shortly thereafter all constitute crucial events that spelled the end of policies of détente and ushered in a second phase of a resurgent Cold War.

Barbey employed his pictorial language to give superb expression to the zeitgeist in *Pologne*. The photo book's restrained and sombre tonality evokes the repressive atmosphere of ongoing militarization and the feeling of paralysis in the Eastern Bloc.

Creating Meaning: *Pologne's* Form and Structure

The tremendous success of Barbey's photo book, as proven by the immediate appearance of images from the publication in a range of magazines and galleries, is not only due to the excellent quality of the photographs, but also to the positioning of the book within the context of a major political debate. Barbey had convinced Bernard Guetta, a world-renowned international relations expert and commentator on the political situation in Poland, to write the book's accompanying essay. Guetta, who worked for the French daily *Le Monde*, had been awarded the Albert Londres prize in 1981 for his reporting on Poland, and his articles were also translated into German and published in the weekly *Die Zeit*.[7]

Although Barbey's photo book is largely unknown today,[8] it remains a key publication of the early 1980s, in which the history of the press image uniquely blends with the history of the Cold War. Most of the photographs chosen for the book date from between 1 May 1981 and November 1981, when the photographer left the country ahead of the imposition of martial law. However, Barbey also integrated shots from his earlier trips into the selection, such as those of John Paul II's first visit to Poland after his election as Pope in 1978.

I consider *Pologne* a *photo book* and not a *photo essay*. In contrast to the term 'photo book', which describes all books that reproduce

photographic prints as illustrations,[9] art historians use the term 'photo essay' to describe a sequence of photographic images that are to be read as an essentially non-textual artistic statement. It is the associations that emerge between the images that create meaning. The key publications that have played a major role in the coining of the term are Walker Evans' *American Photographs* (1938) and Robert Frank's *The Americans* (1958),[10] two of the most frequently discussed photo essays to date. It is well known that Walker Evans was highly sensitive to any kind of editorial work inflicted upon his photography, and that he wanted his works to remain free of any political bias.[11] This approach set the tone for the photo essay as something of a purely artistic form of representation with a single author. In photo books, by contrast, co-authors tend to provide texts and background information. Moreover, relations between text and image range freely in a photo book, especially where accompanying texts are particularly lengthy.[12] The images in Barbey's *Pologne* are accompanied by extended captions, and the sequence of photographs is interrupted by Guetta's essay. Most importantly, Guetta's extended essay implies that the photographs have been selected to provide information on current political events and related circumstances; the basic intention behind the book does not concern making an artistic statement.

The seventy-eight photographs reproduced present a wide range of everyday impressions and moments. The series has been split into two unequal parts; the selection of photographs is not divided into chapters, though some sequencing can be seen. The book starts with the portrait of a Silesian miner that was also used on the aforementioned *National Geographic* front cover.[13] The first part serves to announce important topics that will be explored in more depth in the second part, including rural and Catholic traditions, life under communism and the Solidarność revolution. Like the photographs in the first part, those in the second also depict rural scenes in which people seem to maintain an almost archaic way of life. Further, they show views of Solidarność as a cultural grassroots movement, as well as views of shipyards, mines and steel factories. Images of political demonstrations are juxtaposed with depictions of everyday life that emphasize the communist propaganda displayed on huge billboards in the streets. Polish Catholicism is also emphasized, whether in terms of Catholic rites or the visit of John Paul II in 1979. The hope that the Polish Pope would become politically

committed is evoked by an image of a spontaneous ceremony held in response to the attempted assassination of the Pope in 1981. Barbey's depiction of Lech Wałęsa also points to the importance of Catholicism in Poland. While the charismatic opposition leader was quickly turned into an icon of Solidarność in the media,[14] Barbey does not portray him as a rebellious hero, but as a humble Catholic at prayer. Further, the book shows the hardships of everyday life brought about by food shortages; it also portrays veterans of the Second World War and memorials dealing with both Nazi and Red Army terror. Finally, images of Auschwitz and Jewish life are presented. The very last photograph in the book shows a graveyard and a man carrying flowers that may be interpreted as a symbol of or a wish for reconciliation.

The journalistic intention of this photo book is to convey knowledge of the Solidarność revolution as seen from the broader perspective of Polish history at large. The photographs are reproduced in full with a gloss finish, in a style that became standard in illustrated city books or travel guides after the Second World War. However, the concept of photographic cultural studies of a nation, region or city dates back to publications such as the famous 1928 *Der Gigant an der Ruhr*, the first volume in a series entitled *Das Gesicht der Städte*, which also covered such capital cities as Peking (1928), Moscow (1928), Barcelona (1928) and Berlin (1929).[15] This series was also an important vehicle for disseminating examples of avant-garde photography in the Weimar Republic. But Barbey's book also reflects the growing curiosity concerning life under communism during the Cold War. Jean-Pierre Montier has described how visits to the Soviet Union became the subject of a literary genre from the 1920s onwards, as writers and intellectuals wished to present their own insights into the Russian revolutionary experiment.[16] At the age of twenty-seven, before she became established as a renowned photographer, Margaret Bourke-White published her impressions in a 1931 book entitled *Eyes on Russia*. The book – and its textual account in particular – reads like a hymn to Soviet labour, and its naive enthusiasm closely resembles communist propaganda.[17] Only in its last section does Bourke-White distance herself from the Russian perspective. André Gide made his visit in the summer of 1936 and, later, Robert Capa and John Steinbeck travelled to the USSR together. Capa and Steinbeck published their report in a 1947 issue of the *Ladies' Home Journal*, followed by a travel book in 1948

entitled *A Russian Journal*.[18] Photographers, writers and intellectuals alike attempted to portray how things were in the USSR. Issues raised by Bourke-White's work arise too with reference to Jean Paul Sartre and Simone de Beauvoir's Moscow visit of 1954. The couple complained about how difficult it was to maintain a neutral point of view regarding their host country.[19]

From the 1950s onward, the medium of the photo book not only reflected the West's sustained fascination with the USSR, but also the enormous interest of the West in events behind the Iron Curtain. Photography contributed much to the uncanny dichotomy of 'the East' and 'the West' and to the period's international tensions and great anxieties as the Cold War heated up. In 1962, Swiss photographer René Burri published *Die Deutschen*, a photo book that was the first of its kind to cover divided post-war German societies in a country split in two by the Iron Curtain. In subsequent years, Magnum photographers repeatedly responded to current affairs with images of 'the East'. Some of the agency's most famous photographers published voluminous photo books of images captured alongside more routine works of photojournalism. The photo essay as an autonomous, non-verbal art form had managed to evade the needs of the news business; apparently, Magnum photographers considered these books as the only format which could do justice to their experiences. In 1956, Magnum photographer Erich Lessing, who had immigrated to Palestine in 1939 but returned to Vienna in 1947, reported on the Hungarian revolution in Budapest, as well as from Poland and Yugoslavia in the 1950s. In his complex reports resulting from these visits, Lessing depicted everyday life under communism in quiet but haunting images.

It is impossible to generalize regarding the restrictions that photojournalists had to deal with when travelling in the countries of the Eastern Bloc at various stages of the Cold War.[20] More often than not, however, photographers were under surveillance. The Soviet Union also tried to instrumentalize Western intellectuals as vehicles of foreign counter-propaganda. Shortly after Stalin's death, Nikita Khrushchev opened up the USSR to Western intellectuals, but it became quite a challenge not to report too positively on the political system and maintain one's impartiality. On 14 July 1954, the day Sartre's Soviet Union interviews with journalist Jean Bedel began to be published in France,[21] photographer Henri Cartier-Bresson arrived in Moscow to start his

guided tour of the USSR. Following Sartre's confession about being influenced by the Soviets' friendly embrace, Cartier-Bresson was well aware of how narrow the scope was for photographing what he saw without being manipulated by the Soviets. The photographer, also a famous Magnum member, responded by making the 'interpreter' who was told to join him part of his photo-reportage, thus providing visual information about the conditions under which his images had been captured.[22]

The logic of Khrushchev's foreign policy regarding opening up to the West informs David Douglas Duncan's book on the Kremlin, the photographs for which were taken in 1956. Khrushchev personally gave Duncan permission to become the first photographer to document the Kremlin's treasure chamber. The resulting colour shots offer a striking impression of these art treasures. Yet they do not offer a report on the condition of the country and its people that might have materialized had the photographer received permission, as originally requested, to travel through the USSR along the Volga River.[23]

Abandoning the Policy of Détente in France

Barbey's perspective on Polish-Soviet relations largely corresponded with French public opinion. His photo book covers a period of change in terms of French diplomatic policy; starting with Charles de Gaulle's *Eastern Politics*, it spans the era of peaceful coexistence with the Soviet Union under Valéry Giscard d'Estaing, ending with the abandonment of the policy of détente under François Mitterrand. As the scholar of Polish history Wichard Woyke points out, from the end of the 1970s, French foreign policy took an increasingly independent course with regard to Eastern Europe, with a view to strengthening France's influence and the country's position in Europe vis-á-vis an increasingly confident Federal Republic of Germany.[24] Between 1974 and 1981, d'Estaing tried to strengthen relations with the Soviet Union and make France the Soviets' preferred negotiating partner in the West.[25] In this respect, he departed from sustaining the ideological confrontation with the Soviet Union and refused to receive dissidents in 1979 – unlike American President Jimmy Carter.[26] Even after the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in December 1979, d'Estaing did not want to strain

relations with the Soviet Union.[27] His adherence to the policy of détente at all costs and cooperation with the communist dictatorship prompted those French intellectuals who recognized Moscow's totalitarian behaviour to criticize d'Estaing's foreign policy. The enforcement of martial law in Poland exacerbated matters further. Historian Natalie Bégin has highlighted the degree to which French and German intellectuals and trade unions publicly demonstrated their support of Solidarność.[28] Bégin views the French public's intense concern over events in Poland as a continuation of a tradition of Franco-Polish friendship. She also discerns this tradition as one of the conditions that made it easier for the French to comment on these events than it was for citizens and politicians in the Federal Republic of Germany.[29] François Mitterand, who was appointed French Prime Minister in 1981, initially maintained France's policy of détente but ultimately stopped making concessions to Moscow upon entering into an alliance with Ronald Reagan.

Bruno Barbey's interest in Poland and the exquisite photo book that he devoted to the country reflect the enormous interest in Solidarność, not only on the part of French intellectuals, but also of broad sections of the European population.[30] Andrzej Wajda's movie *Man of Iron* about the strikes of August 1980, which won the Golden Palm at Cannes in 1981, significantly increased the level of international attention focused on the movement and, moreover, heralded an awakening within the Polish film industry.[31] These cultural developments gave a new vigour to the international debate on the Soviet Union sparked less than a decade earlier with the publication of Alexander Solzhenitsyn's *The Gulag Archipelago* in 1973 – the book interpreted around the world as proof of the inhumanity of the Stalinist regime. Against this background, it is possible to appreciate the importance of Barbey's choice of Bernard Guetta as author of the photo book's essay, especially given that Guetta was an expert who was not afraid to express his political convictions.

Barbey's Photographs as a Visual Comment

On the one hand, some of the era's finest examples of photographic reportage are to be found in Barbey's *Pologne*. On the other, the photo book also breaks with the conventions of the standard press image as a representation of a sensational moment and the attempt to capture

a symbolic event while it is happening.[32] Instead of 'freezing' history in the process of being made, his photographs depict less obviously charged moments in Polish everyday life. Of course, the way in which the presentation of everyday life is used in photography to make a subversive political statement has often been discussed and not only with reference to the famous case studies in American photographic history.[33] Photography produced in the GDR has been tainted by the regime under which it was created, not least by the Stasi's notorious use of photography. On the other hand, the clandestine practice of photographers who did not adapt to the regime's official guidelines also has to be taken into consideration.[34] That said, Annette Vowinckel reminds us to be wary of hastily attributing subversive political statements to images without taking into consideration their reception within governing elites. Vowinckel points in particular to Sybille Bergemann's photographic documentation of sculptor Ludwig Engelhardt's work on statues of Marx and Engels in the 1970s and 1980s as photographic images that officials never considered to be a critique of the GDR.[35]

Some of Barbey's images also further modernist understandings of photography that emerged on both sides of the Atlantic during the twentieth century. Photographs by the U.S. photographer Walker Evans have been called landscapes of signs.[36] He, as well his colleague Dorothea Lange, who was – like Evans – assigned to capture images by the Farm Security Administration mediating President Roosevelt' New Deal policy in the 1930s, shot pictures that contrasted advertisements, billboards and slogans in public space with the immediate situations found in front of these media. Like his photographic forerunners, Bruno Barbey carefully registers architectural surfaces that amount to communist party statements. Against these manifestations of ideological claims, ordinary Polish people are shown in situations of daily despair.

Yet Barbey also displays his virtuosity in capturing adaptations of twentieth-century iconography. One of his photographs shows an office at the shipyards in Gdańsk. The office space is occupied by members of Solidarność, the organization's logo can be seen on display everywhere, a young woman reads Solidarność's magazine and a Lenin figure adorning the door carries an issue of the magazine in his pocket: Lenin, the father of the communist revolution, now gets his information from Solidarność's magazine.[37] Thus, the photograph represents the battle for control over history; not only does Solidarność reject the

notion of Moscow's leadership outlined in the Brezhnev doctrine, the movement also adapts Moscow's use of Lenin as a political symbol for its own purposes.

Pologne constitutes a carefully balanced, well-researched report on Poland's political landscape in a time of acute crisis during the Cold War period. However, the book also attempts to put the Solidarność revolution in historical perspective. A large part of the book covers the history of Poland, from Napoleon establishing the Duchy of Warsaw up to shortly before the date of publication. The book obviously sympathizes with Solidarność's struggle for national autonomy. From a French perspective, comparing and contrasting the French Revolution with Polish history is implied. Yet the book's historical overview also relates to Jewish life. Quite a few photographs recall Nazi terror and war crimes, including acrimonious impressions of the Holocaust memorial in Auschwitz. That said, even more attention is given to Poland's troubled relations with the Soviet Union and to the atrocities committed by the Red Army than to those committed by Hitler's regime. It is clear that the wounds inflicted by the Red Army on Polish citizens have scarcely healed. Barbey obviously concurs with the opposition's perspective, as his pictures and their captions condemn the Red Army's treatment of Polish rebels. A case in point here is several extended captions that provide an alternative narrative: 'Monument to the glory of the Polish Army and the Red Army, but in 1944, Soviet troops remained in Prague for sixty-three days without helping Polish rebels during the Warsaw uprising against the Nazis'.[38] The caption accompanying the image of the memorial for the victims of the Katyn massacre states that 'Four thousand Polish officers were executed by the Soviets in 1939'.[39] Moreover, the image of the mass graves of Polish soldiers killed during the Second World War can be interpreted as addressing more general tensions in relations between Poland and the Soviet Union, tensions that did not first emerge during the Cold War but date back to the nineteenth century.

In contrast to Barbey's emphasis on sustained and even growing animosity between Poland and the USSR, his images present Polish-German relations as being relatively harmonious, a notion strengthened in 1970, when Willy Brandt knelt before the monument in Warsaw commemorating the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising, and underlined in 1972, when German-Polish diplomatic relations were officially established.

On balance, Barbey shares and reinforces the impression that Poland's national independence is severely compromised by Moscow: one of his photographs sharply contrasts a view of the Warsaw Monument glorifying the Polish Army and the Red Army in the Second World War with an impression of a citizen passing by.[40] The man in the tramway is obviously unimpressed by past glories eternalized by the monument. The man is not depicted contemplating his country's history, but rather turns his back on the monument as if consciously avoiding taking notice of it. Moreover, the man's sorrowful look furthers the impression that he does not agree with this representation of the past nor its meaning for contemporary Polish everyday life. In the light of the Solidarność revolution, Barbey's photograph framing the man's sceptical glance against the monument can be read as a sign of the unresolved suffering of the Polish people.[41]

Conclusion

Pologne offers a complex, diachronic representation of Polish history and the country's contemporary political landscape on the eve of the imposition of martial law. The photo book, published in three countries, verifies the huge interest of the West in the happenings of Solidarność as a key point of the Cold War. The book also shows that photographs mediated and deepened political discussions of their time and were employed as political comments to coin and establish visual publicity in transnational perspective. Photographs and photo books like Barbey's *Pologne* allowed insights into the countries behind the Iron Curtain and spread visual manifestations of the counter-movement beyond the protocol of government photography or state-controlled photojournalism. Barbey's *Pologne*, for example, included a view of the iconic Gdańsk monument, which was erected in August 1980 to commemorate the Fallen Shipyard Workers of December 1970 that started the Solidarność movement. The unveiling of the monument in 1980 can be understood as a first concession by the Polish state to acknowledge the workers' requests and as a signal of encouragement to all Polish inhabitants before martial law restored of the Soviet's political order.

At the same time, Barbey's visual discussion of Poland reflects the literary and journalistic curiosity with the image of the East that

emerged following Russia's October Revolution. Despite – or perhaps because of – the shocking images of the suppression of the Hungarian Revolution of 1956 and the Prague Spring of 1968, as well as other negative incidents of the Cold War era, the West maintained a lively interest in the life of ordinary people behind the Iron Curtain. This interest can also be read as an openness and willingness to distinguish the political system and its officials from common citizens. Bruno Barbey's Poland pictures generally tend to reflect western intellectuals' confidence in the Eastern Bloc's capacity for self-renewal, a capacity rooted in its citizens, as demonstrated by the Solidarność movement.

For Barbey, the theme and the selection of the photographs may have been sufficient when it came to making a political statement. He did not see any need to further explain his political position on Poland or the Solidarność revolution in writing. Given the timing of publication and the selection of the book's essayist, the work can still clearly be described as being grounded in the protests of French intellectuals that came to a head at this point in the Cold War. On the other hand, it also seems very likely that Barbey – despite his lifelong involvement in and direct experience of crisis areas – was ultimately more interested in aesthetic issues than in serving as a political commentator. This is underlined by the very personal statement that serves as an introduction to the book:

> In 1967, in the great square in Cracow, engulfed in a tidal wave of human warmth, I photographed General de Gaulle as he made his way, with some difficulty and with obvious delight, through the dense crowds. In 1979 I was in that same square for the visit of the former Cardinal Archbishop of Cracow, now Pope John Paul II. In May 1981 I was back, once more enfolded by a vast and emotional crowd. This time the Poles were praying for the life of their Pope, wounded by an assassin's bullet at St. Peter's in Rome. I have often returned to stroll in that square…[42]

There is a tone of astonishment to Barbey's words, the astonishment of a well-travelled photojournalist and chronicler of the political world at the coincidences that repeatedly brought him back to the sites in which history unfolds. Barbey sees himself as a visual witness, yet he does not claim to be telling or even 'writing' history; he records what he sees, but he is also puzzled by that which he is allowed to see. It remains an

open question as to whether his presence in Kraków's main square was a pure coincidence or, indeed, if Barbey is in fact claiming this habit of being in the right place at the right time as a personal talent or a photographer's 'gift'. Nevertheless, photojournalism has often been discussed on the basis of assumptions about the photographer as a 'neutral' or 'disinterested' observer as opposed to an 'engaged', 'concerned', 'committed' or 'embedded' observer. Bruno Barbey – like his younger colleague Paolo Pellegrin, who gave one of his books the title *As I Was Dying* – prompts yet another understanding of photojournalism. These photographers are well aware that the images captured through the use of their subjective and emotional eyes offer a personal statement at the same time as offering glimpses that allow us to think about history.

Notes

1 Bruno Barbey [photographs] and Bernard Guetta [text], *Pologne* (Paris/Hamburg, 1982).

2 The selection of photographs as compiled in the book can be viewed online at Magnum Photos, https://pro.magnumphotos.com/Package/2TYRYD1E4C1H, accessed 17 April 2017.

3 See Karl Dedecius (ed.), *Polen*, photographs by Bruno Barbey (Hamburg, 1982). This German edition, published as a Merian book, uses the same photographs as the French edition, but has a totally different concept. Over three dozen short texts by different authors further highlight aspects of Polish history. The English edition is a straight translation of the German one. See Jan Krok-Paszkowski (ed.), *Portrait of Poland* (London, 1982).

4 Bruno Barbey's homepage, http://www.brunobarbey.com/LastExhib.html, accessed 2 January 2016.

5 See Jan Kubik, *The Power of Symbols Against the Symbols of Power: The Rise of Solidarity and the Fall of State Socialism in Poland* (Pennsylvania, 1994) 185.

6 Hellmuth Vensky, 'Wie der polnische Papst zum Mythos wurde', *Die Zeit,* http://www.zeit.de/wissen/geschichte/2011-05/papst-attentat-johannes-paul, accessed 7 January 2016.

7 See Bernard Guetta, 'Wir haben lange genug gegen Mauern angeredet', *Die Zeit*, 20 August 1980, http://www.zeit.de/1980/36/wir-haben-lange-genug-gegen-mauern-angeredet, accessed 12 December 2015.

8 In autumn 2015, the *Maison européenne de la photographie* in Paris displayed Barbey's first retrospective, which included a small selection of his Poland pictures, but did not outline their historical background.

9 'Photo book' is a rather vague, non-binding term but includes professionally edited collections of artistic works as well as all forms of illustrated travel guides, nineteenth-century photographic albums and commercial brochures that feature commissioned photography, or even Nazi propaganda books. On photo books in German speaking countries, see Manfred Heiting and Roland Jaeger (eds), *Autopsie: Deutschsprachige Fotobücher 1918 bis 1945*, 3 vols, vol. 1 (Göttingen, 2012) and vol. 2 (Göttingen, 2014).

10 For a discussion of Frank's *The Americans*, see Sarah Greenough, 'Fragmente, die ein Ganzes ergeben: Zur Bedeutung on fotografischen Sequenzen', in Sarah Greenough and Philip Brookman (eds), *Robert Frank: Moving Out* (Washington DC, 1995) 106.

11 This has been intensively discussed with reference to the example of the Roosevelt administration's intention to use all FSA photography, including that by Evans, for propaganda trumpeting the government's accomplishments. See Michael Brix, 'Walker Evans' photographisches Werk', in Michael Brix and Birgit Mayer (eds), *Walker Evans Amerika: Bilder aus den Jahren der Depression* (Munich, 1990) 24.

12 Given the historic genesis of the photo essay, I do not share the view of the photo book as 'an autonomous art form' (the words of Dutch photography critic Ralph Prins), as put forward in the introduction to *The Photobook: A History*, 3 vols, edited by Gerry Badger and Martin Parr (London, 2010) I, 7. This view is also contradicted by the selection of photographs offered in *Autopsie*, see Footnote 9.

13 The front cover of the *National Geographic* issue containing the supplement 'The Face and Faith of Poland', April 1982.

14 The cover of *Time Magazine*'s 4 January 1982 issue, for example, depicted Wałęsa as 'Man of the Year'.

15 M. P. Block (ed.), *Der Gigant an der Ruhr* (Berlin, 1928).

16 Jean-Pierre Montier, 'Henri Cartier-Bresson, 'Public Intellectual'?', *Études photographiques* 25 (2010) 146–179, see https://etudesphotographiques.revues.org/3449, accessed 26 March 2016.

17 Margaret Bourke-White, *Eyes on Russia* (New York, 1931).

18 Ibid.

19 Montier, 'Henri Cartier-Bresson'.

20 Josef Koudelka's photographs of the Soviet invasion of Prague in 1968 had to be smuggled out of the country. See Magnum Photos, https://www.magnumphotos.com/newsroom/josef-koudelka-invasion-prague-68/, accessed 19 April 2017.

21 Jean-Paul Sartre, interviews with Jean Bedel in *Libération*, 14–20 July 1954; see also Montier, 'Henri Cartier-Bresson', footnote 16.

22 A selection of images was printed in the edition of *Paris Match* shortly after his return, and also used as covers for *Life*, *Stern* and *Epoca*. In 1973, a book presenting images of his journey was published in four countries. See Henri Cartier-Bresson, *Sowjetunion: Photographische Notizen* (Luzern, 1973); *A propos de l'URSS* (Delpire, 1973); *About Russia* (London/New York, 1973).

23 David Douglas Duncans, *Der Kreml* (Düsseldorf, 1960).

24 Wichard Woyke, *Frankreichs Außenpolitik von de Gaulle bis Mitterand* (Wiesbaden, 1987) 88.

25 Ibid., 90.

26 Ibid., 89.

27 Ibid., 89.

28 Natalie Bégin, 'Kontakte zwischen den Gewerkschaften in Ost und West: Die Auswirkungen von Solidarność', in Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (ed.), *Deutschland und Frankreich: Ein Vergleich* in *Archiv für Sozialgeschichte* 45 (Bonn, 2005) 320.

29 Ibid., 321. For relations between France and Poland, see Dariusz Jarosz and Maria Pasztor, *Polish-French Relations, 1944–1989*, Polish Studies - Transdisciplinary Perspectives, vol. 12 (Frankfurt am Main, 2015).

30 For the reception of Solidarność in Europe, see Timothy Garton Ash, *The Polish Revolution: Solidarity* (London, 1983). Upon the initiative of writer Heinrich Böll and publicist Freimut Duve, German intellectuals published texts on the topic in *Verantwortung für Polen?* (Reinbek, 1982).

31 Grazyna Kudy, 'Cut! Dissolve to Fade-Out', in Charles Ford, Robert Hammond (eds), *Polish Film: A Twentieth Century History* (Jefferson, North Carolina, 2005) 201.

32 Arthur Rothstein, *Photojournalism: Pictures for Magazines and Newspapers* (Philadelphia, 1970).

33 There has already been intense discussion of photographers' refusal to bend to the needs of propaganda as well as their insistence on the need for a space that is guaranteed as being free of bias, in which their photographs can be received by audiences. See Walker Evans' famous proclamation

''NO POLITICS whatsoever'' and the discussion of his and Robert Frank's photo essays as artistic statements that created a subconscious expression of their time.

34 See Ulrich Domröse and Berlinische Galerie (eds), *The Shuttered Society: Art Photography in the GDR 1949–1989* (Bielefeld, 2012).

35 See Annette Vowinckel, *Agenten der Bilder: Fotografisches Handeln im 20. Jahrhundert* (Göttingen, 2016) 26.

36 See Lincoln Kirstein, 'Photographs of American: Walker Evans', in Museum of Modern Art (ed.), *Walker Evans: American Photographs* (New York, 1988) 195.

37 Bruno Barbey: POLAND. Cracow. In the editorial office of the weekly newspaper Solidarnosc. 1981, PAR167969. http://pro.magnumphotos.com/Asset/-2S5RYDULFP2.html, accessed 30 May 2017.

38 Bruno Barbey: POLAND. Mazovia region. Warsaw suburb. Praga. East bank of the Vistula. 1981. Monument in glory of the Polish Army and the Red Army, but in 1944 Soviet troops remained at Praga for 63 days without helping Polish rebels during the Warsaw uprising against the Nazis. PAR167968. http://pro.magnumphotos.com/Asset/-2S5RYDYENM0T.html, accessed 30 May 2017.

39 For the importance of Katyń as a *lieu de mémoire*, see Cordula Kalmbach, *Das Massaker erinnern: Katyń als lieu de mémoire der polnischen Erinnerungskultur* (Frankfurt, 2015).

40 See Footnote 38.

41 For a history of the continuously strained relations between Poland and the Soviet Union see Andrzej Skrzypek, *Polen im Sowjetimperium: Die polnisch-russischen Beziehungen von 1944 bis 1989* (Klagenfurt, 2016); Anna Wolff-Powęska and Piotr Forecki (eds), *World War II and Two Occupations: Dilemmas of Polish Memory* (Frankfurt am Main, 2016).

42 Barbey, *Pologne*, n.p. The translation is from the English version.

About the Author

Gisela Parak (PD Dr.) is an art historian and curator of photography. She received her PhD in 2008 from LMU Munich and was awarded postdoctoral fellowships at the Smithsonian American Art Museum, the Terra Foundation for American Art, at Washington University, St. Louis, and at the German Historical Institute in Washington, D.C. to work on

her second book *Photographs of Environmental Phenomena. Scientific Images in the Wake of Environmental Awareness, USA 1860s–1970s* that was published in 2015. From 2013–2016, she was appointed director of the Museum für Photographie Braunschweig and taught as an Associate Lecturer at the English seminar at Braunschweig Technical University. She currently works as a curator and lecturer at Technical University Freiberg. E-mail: giselaparak@gmx.com