

und Machtbeziehungen hätten jedoch Perspektiven von unterschiedlichen Arbeiter- und Interessengruppen aus Polen und Deutschland die bereits sehr differenzierten Erkenntnisse zusätzlich bereichern können.

G. M. hat ein sehr gehaltvolles und vielschichtiges Buch geschrieben. Es liefert einen bedeutenden und neuen Beitrag zur Industrie- und Arbeitergeschichte in West- und Osteuropa im 20. Jh., indem es die Zusammenhänge zwischen der fortschreitenden Globalisierung, der Krise und den jeweiligen Auswirkungen auf den betrieblichen Arbeitsalltag in einem marktwirtschaftlichen und einem planwirtschaftlichen Land aufzeigt. Diesen Wechselwirkungen hat sich die Forschung bislang kaum gewidmet, und in den wenigen Studien dominiert ein Fokus auf Westeuropa und die Folgen der Krise für kapitalistische Wirtschaftsnationen. Der im Buch verfolgte Ansatz des transnationalen Vergleichs ist sehr gewinnbringend. Dem selbst gesetzten Anspruch, am Exempel der Schiffbauunternehmen Ideologien, Dualismen und Stereotype des vermeintlich rückständigen Ostens gegenüber einem als modern geltenden Westen zu entkräften, wird das Werk mehr als gerecht.

Bremerhaven

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Rüdiger Ritter: Solidarität mit Schwierigkeiten. Das Bremer Koordinationsbüro der polnischen Gewerkschaft Solidarność und das Engagement Bremens für Polen in den 1980er Jahren. Edition Falkenberg. Bremen 2020. 332 S., XXXIV graph. Darst. ISBN 978-3-95494-219-0. (19,90. €)

The year 2021 marked the 40th anniversary of the imposition of martial law in Poland. This event had an immense influence not only on the history of Poland itself, but also on relations between the Polish and the West Germans on both a government and local level.

In his new book, Rüdiger Ritter, a historian from Bremen University, offers detailed insight into the history of the Solidarność office, which functioned in Bremen during the time of martial law in Poland as a liaison and unofficial “embassy” of Polish democratic opposition in West Germany.

The main part of the book consists of seven chapters. Three of them offer a description of the role of the city of Bremen in Polish-German relations in an era of *Ostpolitik* as well as *détente* in the 1970s, and can be regarded as a presentation of historical context. Chapters four to seven offer a meticulous description of the genesis of the Solidarność office in Bremen. Herein are traced events beginning with the visit of trade union activists from Gdańsk on 13 December 1981, through to the first acts of working together with Poland on the part of the local authorities, in particular the SPD mayor Hans Koschnick, West German trade union activists, and ordinary citizens of Bremen.

The author describes here in a very detailed and well-structured manner the events which led to the creation of the Solidarność office in Bremen. He mentions a series of acts of solidarity with and support for Poland, such as demonstrations and humanitarian aid organized by different political parties, trade unions, social organizations and Catholic and Lutheran churches in Bremen.

Ritter's book also shows the continually growing misunderstandings and conflicts between the Solidarność office and the West German political and social environment, and conflicts with Polish emigrants and the Secret Service. The result was the paralysis of the work conducted by the office in Bremen and its subsequent liquidation in September 1983 because the German Trade Union Confederation (Deutscher Gewerkschaftsbund, DGB) ceased to finance it. The progressive diminishment of the role of the Solidarność office in Bremen was caused by many factors which R. explains, starting from a lack of logistic competence, the extremely basic knowledge of West German political and social reality, and the language barrier. After all, Solidarność had its roots in the Gdańsk shipyard, without any broader knowledge about Polish-German relations.

Moreover, the West German perception of Solidarność was focused on its concern of defending the social rights of laborers rather than the struggle against a communist regime.

Therefore, subsequent articles and leaflets signed by the Bremen office, consisting of many references to Pope John Paul II and Catholic ideals, were regarded by German political partners and the citizens of Bremen as barely understandable. In addition, conflict with other immigrant groups and misunderstandings with a Solidarność office in Brussels, which was to play the role of coordinator between all Solidarność “embassies,” caused the downfall of the Bremen office.

Last but not least, the operations of the Polish Secret Service, and especially its agent Marek Chlebowicz, who had an eye on the activities of the Bremen office for the above-mentioned Solidarność office in Brussels, played a final and important role in the liquidation of the office. The meticulous analysis of Chlebowicz’s activities and the Secret Service’s efforts to compromise the office and its members is a great merit of this book.

In terms of methodology, we have here a classical historical work based on wide-ranging research from Polish and German archives, such as the Institute of National Remembrance in Warsaw, the Archives of the National Commission of Solidarność in Gdańsk, the Stasi-Unterlagen-Archiv in Berlin and the Staatsarchiv in Bremen, as well as the archives of German political parties and trade unions. All these resources are complemented with individual testimonies as well as press articles.

This detailed monograph does, however, have some weaknesses. First and foremost, R. omits a general reflection on the role of Solidarność, which was a social and political movement acting under the guise of a trade union in Poland between 1980 and 1981. The addition of a subchapter with such information would make an analysis of the Polish historical context more comprehensive.

Furthermore, despite solid analysis, in places there is a distinct lack of detail, which could have been placed in footnotes. For example, when the author mentions the Solidarność Walcząca (Fighting Solidarność) organization, we barely find any information about the character of this radical organization and the main differences between it and the mainstream Solidarność. Moreover, there is a lack of biographical notes on the Bremen office members.

All in all, R. provides his readers with solid knowledge about the complicated history of the Solidarność office in Bremen and its leaders. This history is definitely worth remembering and is another element of Polish-German relations during the time of the Solidarność revolution. Perhaps the local authorities of Bremen and Gdańsk could highlight this history in some kind of commemoration. R.’s book could serve as an impulse for such a project.

Berlin

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Revolution! 1989 – Aufbruch ins Offene. Hrsg. von Robert Grünbaum, Jens Schöne und Heike Tuchscheerer. Metropol. Berlin 2020. 227 S., 1 Tab. ISBN 978-3-86331-538-2. (€ 22,—)

Im Mittelpunkt des Buches steht das Jahr 1989 in seiner transnationalen und europäischen Dimension. Dabei sind drei Bezugsebenen auszumachen: die historische Dimension und die Frage nach der Bedeutung der historischen Ereignisse von 1989/90 aus einer transnational vergleichenden Perspektive, die erinnerungskulturelle Dimension und die Frage nach den Erinnerungspolitiken in den verschiedenen post-sozialistischen Ländern sowie die politische Dimension und die Frage nach der Bedeutung von 1989/90 insbesondere für politische und gesellschaftliche Prozesse, die mit Begriffen wie „Populismus“ und „Autoritarismus“ zu fassen sind. Entlang dieser drei Dimensionen beschäftigt sich das Buch mit dem Erbe von 1989. Der Referenzrahmen ist jedoch nicht der deutsche oder osteuropäische Kontext, sondern Europa als ein eigenes, historisch gewachsenes, sich veränderndes politisches System.

Dabei scheint die Feststellung des tschechischen Historikers Michal Kopeček „Das Heute verändert unsere Vorstellung vom Gestern“ (S. 257) auch in den anderen Aufsätzen