The rise of photojournalism
excerpt from‘Photography Sure of Itself’ by Colin Osman and Jean-Claude Lemagny - Chapter 8 in ‘A History of Photography’ (1987) edited by LeMagny and Rouillé, Cambridge University Press

Between the twenties and the fifties, up until its retreat in the face of television, photojournalism' enjoyed an extraordinary success thanks to the introduction of new techniques, new ideas and above all small cameras that were easy to handle and fast to operate. To be sure, cameras in which plates were used, such as the Contessa Nettel 6 x 9 cm, continued to provide competition, for they had the advantage of producing finer-grain contact prints. The most typical camera of the time, the 1924 Ermanox, still used plates, but its fat Arnostar f/1.8 lens and its roller-blind shutter permitted exposure times of 1000 of a second and its use in difficult light conditions.

In 1923, Oskar Barnack, in Wetzlar, invented a camera adapted to operate with rolls of cinema film. This was the Leica,' which produced 24 × 36 mm images on roll film 35 mm wide. It went into commercial production in 1924 and was a great success. In 1932, it was further significantly improved with a rangefinder coupled with seven interchangeable lenses of varying focal lengths.

The Rolleiflex by Franke and Heidecke, which came out in 1929, was a reflex camera with twin lenses, using a roll of 117 mm film and producing pictures of 6 x 6 cm. These were small dimensions for the time.

Meanwhile progress was being made with lenses such as the Tessar and the Sonnar f/1.5 by Zeiss. They let in more light and so allowed for faster shutter speeds and clearer definition. At the same time, camera films were becoming increasingly sensitive. The Ilford Panchromatic (32 ASA) came out in 1929, followed in 1933 by the Agfa Superpan (100 ASA) and the Kodak Super Sensitive. Their advantage over plates was that they offered a run of thirty-six exposures without reloading. There was no longer any need to drag around a heavy box full of glass or the lighter but still bulky cut film or film pack. The reporter, thus relieved and now, thanks to the rangefinder, able to focus and shoot from eye level, could move around his subject, taking it from a series of different angles. The plunging and upward views favoured by Soviet photographers such as Rodchenko now triumphed in practice. Viewpoints were liberated.

The page layout of magazines was revolutionised. In the early twenties, the continuity of a story had been chiefly provided by the text. This would be accompanied by a number of isolated pictures, often from different sources, all illustrating the same theme. Photographic plates spelt dis-continuity; the 35 mm roll of thirty-six exposures spelt continuity. Now the tendency was to print a collection of pictures taken by a single photographer in the same style. Furthermore, the layout designer was now less prone to crop images since with a 35 mm film, less finely grained than plate, the entire area should be used. The framing chosen by the reporter was thus increasingly respected. Furthermore, the layout designer, who now had more pictures at his disposal. created his effects by exploiting their interrelationships and emphasising their continuity.

These new dynamics in the field of illustration originated in Germany with Stefan Lorant. In 1928, Lorant, a Hungarian, became editor-in-chief of the *Münchner Illustrierte Presse*, the bold layouts of which had a seminal influence. When obliged to flee from Nazi persecution, he settled in Great Britain where he continued to pursue a brilliant career, bringing the

same flair to his direction of the *Weekly Illustrated* and founding *Lilliput* in 1937 and *Picture Post* in the following year. In 1940, he moved on to the United States. In 1928, in France, Lucien Vogel, also brimming over with new ideas and with generally left-wing views, founded *Vu* magazine. Regards, even more lively and politically committed than *Vu*, was founded in 1931 and meanwhile the venerable Illustration, a much more bourgeois but very luxurious magazine, continued to pursue a prestigious career with Emmanuel Sougez as its director of photography.

It was now becoming clear that it was in the photographic agencies, which mediated between the magazines and the photographers, that reportages were born: a case in point was the Dephot agency in Berlin, which was directed by Simon Guttmann, one of the first to conceive of reportage as an assembly of pictures that was coherent and complete in itself.

Each reporter would set out with a plan of action. One of these agencies, Associated Press, originally known as Pacific and Atlantic, liaised with the United States. Photographers such as Tim Gidal, Felix Man and the future Kurt Hutton (then still Kurt Hübschmann) met at Dephot, together with Umbo and others, in the late twenties and early thirties. In 1934, Dephot was obliged to cease to operate in Germany.
But within the space of ten years the star reporter had been born: a colourful character, essentially international and, in many cases, also highly cultivated.
Erich Salomon, * born into a wealthy family in 1886, was a doctor of law. In 1926, he entered the publicity service of the firm of Ullstein, where he encountered photography. In 1927 he acquired his famous Ermanox and in 1932 moved on to a Leica. His cultivated manner enabled him to infiltrate the most exclusive places such as law-courts and diplomatic conferences. In Geneva, for example, with his tail-coat and white tie and his camera tucked into a briefcase, he won the amused indulgence of such a man as Aristide Briand. In 1930, while in the United States, he snapped Marlene Dietrich engaged in a telephone conversation. In 1935 he scooped a session of the Supreme Court, using a camera hidden inside a false bandage. Many of his photographs appeared in the Berliner Illustrite Zeitung. In 1931, his book entitled *Berühmte Zeitgenossen in Unbewachten Augenblicken* (Famous Contemporaries Caught Off Their Guard) enjoyed a great success. He was to die in Auschwitz in 1944.

Felix H. Man, born Hans Baumann, was also a highly cultivated individual, an eminent historian of lithography, who in 1926 likewise joined Ullstein's in Berlin, initially as an artist. Using the Dephot agency as his base, he subsequently produced many photographic reports for the *Münchner* (rom 1929 to 1931) and the *Berliner* (from 1929 to 1934). He resorted to his considerable ingenuity to photograph the irascible Arturo Toscanini, slipping among the musicians of his orchestra and synchronising the clicks of his shutter with the louder passages of music; and also to bring off scoops such as his Day in the life of Mussolini (*Münchner* No. 9, 1931). In 1934, Man left Germany and joined Stefan Lorant in Great Britain, where he shared the success of the *Weekly Illustrated* 1934) and *Picture Post* (1938). After the war, in 1948, he was one of the first photographers to produce major reportages in colour.

Kurt Hutton was born Kurt Hübschmann in Strasburg in 1893. After studving law and seeing courageous service at Verdun, he contracted tuberculosis and went into photo-journalism. It was once again the Dephot agency that commissioned his first reportages. But his career as a reporter really took off in Great Britain, where he remained very loyal to both the *Weekly Ilustrated* and the *Picture Post*.

Another German, Tim Gidal, worked at first in Germany but then travelled widely, settling in Palestine in 1936, where he became a British subject. Lorant asked him to come to Britain in 1938 to work on *Picture Post*. Because he was British he was not interned on the Isle of Man, like Man and Hutton. In the early years of the war he became for a period the most important photographer for both Lorant and his successor Tom Hopkinson. He later worked for the British Army magazine *Parade*, published in Cairo and based on the French-language *Images*, founded in Alexandria in 1930, not long after Vu in Paris. He has completed in the region of two hundred reportages all over the world. A doctor of philosophy, he also wrote the first serious history of photojournalism. He too started his career with the *Münchner* and the *Berliner*.

The ranks of these great reporters also include the Swiss Walter Bosshard and the Austrian Harald Lechenperg.

In the course of his travels and even more because of his need for connections to protect him from the most brutal vicissitudes of war and politics, a reporter's nationality might undergo a number of changes. For example, Lucien Aigner, born in Budapest, studied in Prague and Berlin, then became a London press correspondent in Germany. From 1931 to 1939 he worked in Paris as a correspondent for many magazines, including *Life*. In 1939, he emigrated to the United States where he took out naturalisation papers in 1945. His portraits of Einstein, Mussolini and Roosevelt are famous.

But images of the world were also produced by countless regional photographers who stayed put, spending their entire lives representing the people, monuments and scenery of their own lands. Of the reporters who became famous, some also made a name for themselves in other branches so that it is hard to say where their deepest vocations lay. Martin Munkacsi started as a sports reporter in Budapest and in his last years returned to painting. In 1927 he began to or for the German magazines in Berlin but in 1934 he landed an advantageous contract with Harper's Bazaar which turned him into one of the foremost fashion photographers of his time. He introduced vitality, sport, fresh air and physical health into his pictures. His work places him at the intersection ot sports photography, photojournalism, fashion and even purely artistic experimentation. He was to provide inspiration for Henri Cartier-Bresson, and later for Richard Otto Umbehr. known as Umbo. was a Bauhaus student trom 1921 to 1924. He took up professional photography at the instigation of Paul Citroen, a creator of extraordinary surrealist collages. In 1928 he was working for the Dephot agency, meanwhile pursuing experiments of a surrealist nature in the plastic arts: these included collages, photo-montages, multiple exposures and experiments on film with x-rays.

The work of André Kertész - setting aside the amazing 'distortions' which he produced in Paris - possesses an overall unity. Kertész, who was born in Budapest in 1894, was attracted to photography at a very early age. He was working as a bank clerk with no particular vocation for his job when his photographs began to be published. In 1925 he arrived in Paris, where he was employed by French, German and British magazines. In 1927 he held his first one-man exhibition, which to be was an inspiration to his compatriots Brassai and Capa. He acquired a great reputation as a portraitist and a photojournalist. In 1930 he left for New York, where he earned his living as a photographer in the worlds of fashion and interior decoration, with contracts from first Keystone, then Condé Nast. But in 1962 he shook himself free of such obligations. He became an American citizen in 1944 and died in New York in 1985.

The rise of Nazism and its attendant perils around 1934 caused a break in the evolution of photojournalism which, hitherto centred in Germany, now continued its progress in Britain and the United States. We have noted the many changes in Munkacsi's career and the exiles of S. Lorant, Kertész and many others. But at a deeper level what was at work here was an underlying contradiction between the creative temperaments of these strong personalities and the manner in which ordinary press photographers were required to become increasingly servile to the average tastes of the general public.

Brassai was another Hungarian. Born Gyula Halasz in 1899, he first studied art in Budapest and Berlin, then moved to Paris in 1923, never yet considering turning to photography. It was Kertész who, in about 1930, showed him how photography could capture the rather seamy poetry of streetlamps glowing in the dark, wet paving stones, un-savoury hotels and street dancing that so fascinated him. His book, Paris de nuit, which appeared in 1933, marked a turning point for Brassaï. His pictures were now published in many magazines. He was still a talented draughtsman and sculptor and now became friendly with Picasso.® He also became a marvellous writer, using the French language (Histoire de Marie, 1949). He continued to live in France until his death in 1984. His keen awareness of the problems of plasticity revealed to him the power of graffiti scratched on walls. The photographs he took of them are a cross between primitive art and surrealism and even contain elements of the conceptual art of the future.

Another giant of photography, Bill Brandt, 1° also found himself caught between editorial practice and purely artistic expression. Born in 1904, he studied with outstanding success in Germany and Switzerland. In 1929 he was working alongside Man Ray in Paris, discovering in surrealism the source of photographic inventiveness. He met Brassai, and came upon the work of Atget. Having returned to Britain in 1931, he devoted himself principally to reportages on the harsh social realities and to portraits of writers and artists. His pictures appeared in the popular magazines *Weekly Illustrated* and *Lilliput* and also in the French avant-garde *Verve*. But most of his best work went into books: *The English at Home* (1936) and *A Night in London* (1938). During the war, he showed the same indistinct masses of people sleeping in heaps and shelters that appear in the drawings of Henry Moore. In 1945, he embarked upon his great series of nudes - but, as with Brassaï's Graffiti, these fall into what must, strictly speaking, be termed the contemporary period.

Little by little, a development was taking place along lines that ran in the opposite direction to those of the twenties: single photographs, in isolation, were becoming increasingly important, but now they were regarded as the original works of creative artists. Brassaï's images of Paris and Brandt's of London were now seen as part of a unified project devised by the photographer himself, not simply as a commission. A photographer's ambition would now be to produce a book representing the sum of his research, rather than an illustrated article, the erstwhile mark of professional success. The same pictures began to reappear all over the place, more as representative of a work complete in itself than by virtue of their documentary value. Brassaï's pictures of prostitutes published in Regards on 31 December 1936 had already appeared in Paris de Nuit in 1933. They were once more to be seen in Camera de Paris (1949) and again reproduced (provoking considerably less criticism) in Secrets de Paris des années trente. In similar fashion, Brandt's work was soon better known through his books than through his articles; it was not until after the success of his books that he began to work extensively for Picture Post and Lilliput. His pictures for them, such as his street scenes in Halifax, had a strong social slant and were not well received by his subjects, who wrote to Picture Post complaining that they would rather

have seen more cheerful images of their smoky city. Despite his humanitarian intentions, Brandt was obliged to return to the solitude of his artistic experiments.

The recognition of the photograph as a separate work and individual achievement was largely due to photographic year books, anthologies of photographic images. Nowadays, it is perhaps difficult to understand their importance during the thirties. *Das Deutsches Lichtbild* first appeared in 1927 and remained an important record even after 1934. In France, *Photographies* (published by Arts et Métiers Graphiques) also came out from 1930 onwards, under the guidance of Emmanuel Sougez. In Great Britain, the publishers of *Studio*, a modern art periodical, in 1931 brought out *Modern Photography*, directly inspired by C. G. Holme. In 1935, Photography magazine launched *Photography Year Book*, under the direction of the Hungarian T. Korda. It contained a stimulating mixture of press, journalistic and art photography. In the United States in 1935 *US Camera* was the first in a series of marvellous yearbooks which continued to appear until the early fifties under the combined direction of Tom Maloney and Edward Steichen. The more traditional yearbooks, foremost among them the venerable Photograms of the Year, although somewhat old-fashioned, continued to be appreciated by amateur photographers. It was the beginning of the elevation of the single photographic image into a work of art.

In the first decade of the heyday of photojournalism, from 1925 to 1935, photographic artists had begun to be respected for their individual qualities. But soon the growing importance of ideologies, the battle for men's minds and the outbreak of war introduced all sorts of restrictions to their freedom of expression. In Great Britain and Germany photojournalists became war correspondents. In France, only photographs depicting the frivolities of Parisian life were tolerated.

The movement that had started in Europe now continued in the United States and Canada. Even the creation of the quintessentially American *Life* magazine, " in 1936, reflected the influence of refugees from Germany such as Kurt Kof. previously editor of the *Berline Illustrirte*. The same went for the photographic agencies: the Black Star agency in New York was a reincarnation of the Mauritius agency of Berlin. The prosperous and enterprising American business world constituted the public at which a magazine such as *Fortune* was aimed. In this thick, glossy production, its boss, Henry Luce, spared no pains to make it a vehicle worthy of its heavy advertising charges. But *Fortune* was more than this: it was a test-bed for *Life*, particularly in the field of reportages, such as the study of Russia produced by Margaret Bourke-White. She was the first photographic star and was sometimes accompanied on her assignments by Luce himself, who brought back copies of the Weekly Illustrated from Britain in order to study their page layout.

Life was the first magazine to be coherently planned from start to finish. Henry Luce wanted a 'shiny magazine, in every sense of the expression, with gleaming pictures on coated paper. He wished to 'advance the art and function of pictorial journalism' and was a ready purchaser of the best product of the best freelance cameramen'; but he also worked with a team of five or six accredited reporters, which was something quite new.

The magazine's name was chosen from a long list of runners, some of which were tried out in dummy issues. In his prospectus, which appeared in June 1936, Luce set out his views: high-quality printing and reports constructed around two cornerstones: the big news stories of the week and the big special feature. The latter was supposed to introduce the reader into the intimate life of some famous figure or into the way that some great institution worked. The aim was ‘to see and take pleasure in seeing, to see and be

amazed, to see and be instructed... Thus to see and to be shown is now the will and new expectancy of half mankind….'. We were entering a world in which reality, with its concrete problems and all its sometimes inadmissable aspects, was to be replaced by a double, reproduced on the cinema screen or the pages of a magazine.

The first issue of *Life* appeared on 19 November 1936, with an impressive cover photograph by Margaret Bourke-White showing a proud symbol of determination and achievement, the Fort Peck dam.

The team of McAvoy, Stackpole and Vandivert working alongside Bourke-White was also brilliant. Alfred Eisenstaedt had arrived in the United States in 1935, already experienced from his newspaper work in Berlin and Paris. His reports on the war in Ethiopia (1935) confirmed his reputation. Carl Mydans, who had come from the Farm Security Administration, specialised in the Far East, while Fritz Goro, from the *Münchner Illustrirte*, increasingly devoted himself to scientific photography. John Phillips was everywhere with his reports before, during and after the war. But relations between the photographers and the management of Life were not always as idyllic as Henry Luce suggested: that much is clear from the passionately committed life of one of the great photographers of all time: William Eugene Smith.

Gene Smith was born in 1918 in the town of Wichita, Kansas. He started off working for local newspapers, studied photography at the University of Indiana and received his first important commissions from Newsweek in 1937. His great hero at the time was Martin Munkacsi. In 1938 and 1939 he was working for the Black Star agency, supplying photographs for *Life* and for *Collier's*. In 1939, he joined the *Life* team. Now he was in the big time, but he left the paper in 1941. During the war, he worked as correspondent in the Pacic. His photographs were both admirable and tragic, particularly those of the island of Saipan. But he was anxious to make his own position clear: ‘It made no difference to me as a news event that an island was being taken, what I wanted to bring out were the emotions hehind the taking of that island’. He was seriously wounded in Okinawa and took two years to recover. In 1947 he returned to *Life.* This was the period of his most famous reportage essays: ‘Country Doctor' (1948), ‘Spanish Village and Nurse Midwife' (1951), paralleled by the equally distinguished essays of Leonard McCombe: ‘New York Secretary' (1938), 'Cowboy' (1949), ‘Navaio’ (1951), etc. But in 1954, after editorial disputes concerning his reportage on Dr Schweitzer, Smith broke with *Life*. In 1956, he was awarded his first Guggenheim Prize and Stefan Lorant, who had arrived from Europe in 1940, hired him to work on an ambitious project: its subject was to be the great industrial own of Pittsburgh. The book eventually appeared in 1964 but its aspirations were not completely fulfilled. Since 1955 Smith had been a member of the Magnum agency but in 1958 he left it to devote himself to a huge autobiography planned to contain 340 pages and 450 photographs but which, in the event, proved impossible to publish. He then went to work for the Hitachi firm in Japan and in 1961 published a book in Tokyo. From 1966 to 1969 he was the art director of the magazine Visual Medicine and from time to time gave lectures in universities. At the time of his last great reportage in Japan, the purpose of which was to denounce the scandalous pollution of the village of Minamata, he was roughed up by thugs and again seriously injured. In 1975 his book *Minamata* was nevertheless published. He died in 1978.

In the world of photojournalism, Smith is regarded as a saint-martyr figure. The force and grandeur of his pictures, violently expressionist and printed with extreme care and skill, have an epic quality. His life was dominated by two contradictions at once terrible yet productive. First, there was his moral intransigence regarding the use of his pictures. He

wished to keep control of them from start to finish, including their publication, and would tolerate no intervention. ‘I want no unavoidable inadequacies of presentation to mar that work... I seek understanding before I photograph, I photograph with passion of my intent [sic) and I examine the results and their utilization with cold, dispassionate discipline.Then I allow passion to return.' However, the tensions to which Smith submitted others as well as himself proved intolerable. Despite receiving a full-time salary from *Life* from 1952 to 1954, during that period he worked on no more than eight commissions, only six of which were eventually published. A project on the Metropolitan Opera, in 1952, involved months of work and hundreds of photographs, but Smith was never satisfied and refused to hand it over to *Life*. Secondly, Smith was conscious of the profound clash that was inevitable between the objectivity of photojournalism and the subjectivity of a photographer who was a great creator of images: I am constantly torn between the attitude of the conscientious journalist who reports facts, and the creative artist who knows that poetry and literal truth seldom go together! Through his professional intransigence on the one hand and his heroic and dramatic style on the other, Smith embodied the classic contradictions of reportage at their climax. His was perhaps both the highest and the last achievement of photo-reportage.

To escape from exploitation and pressures of every kind, one group of press photographers decided to form a co-operative. This was the Magnum agency, founded in Paris in 1947 by Robert Capa, Henri Cartier-Bresson, David Seymour (known as Chim) and George Rodger. In the following year it opened another office, in New York.
Robert Capa's was the founding father of Magnum. Born Andreas Friedmann in 1913 in Budapest, in 1931 he was obliged to leave Hungary on account of his alleged communist sympathies and went to study in Berlin. He began to work as a photographer for the Dephot agency in 1931. In 1933 he was forced, as a Jew, to flee to Vienna and then Paris, where he shared a dark-room with Henri Cartier-Bresson and Chim. In 1936 he began his incomparable career as a war correspondent in Spain; next, it was China and the Second World War as a Life correspondent. Despite his desire to be 'an out-of work war correspondent, there were always wars and he was kept busy: Israel was followed by Indo-China, where he was killed by a mine in 1954.

George Rodger was another great war correspondent, although his best-known pictures are probably the ones he took of the black tribesmen of Central Africa.

David Seymour, who succeeded Capa as the president of Magnum, was killed during the Suez invasion in 1956. Finally there was Werner Bischot, whose photography had been of a very aesthetic nature when he was working with Hans Finsler in Zurich; later, he travelled as a reporter and joined Magnum in 1949. He brought back admirably harmonious pictures from India, China, Japan and Peru, where he died in a car crash in 1954. But even all these deaths could not put a stop to Magnum. It continued to expand, establishing more and more links with America, and still remains open to new talents today.

The genius of Henri Cartier-Bresson was involved in the Magnum adventure but not contained by it. He was born in 1908 into a cultivated upper middle-class family and was passionately interested in painting. He studied under first Jacques-Emile Blanche, then André Lhote, and was friendly with the surrealists and Tériade, the great publisher. Throughout his life he was to concentrate on the rigour of forms. He visited Africa, acquired his first Leica, then travelled in Mexico and in the United States, where he studied film-making with Paul Strand and held his first exhibition at the Julien Levy gallery in 1932. When he returned to France, he continued to make films for a while with Jean Renoir and

Jacques Becker. Then, in Spain in 1933, he produced his first great reportage pictures. He realised that he had a brighter future catching 'decisive moments' such as these than with images that were fabricated and cerebral. In 1940 he was taken prisoner, but escaped to photograph the Liberation in Paris. His first great book, a classic, was *Images à la Sauvette* (1952). For twenty years he travelled the world over, considered as the greatest reporter of his time. Eventually he returned to drawing, for him simply another way of tackling the essential problems of reality and vision.

It is Cartier-Bresson who had produced the most perfect definition of the reporter's action in taking photographs: ‘Photography is the simultaneous recognition, in a single instant, of on the one hand the significance of a fact and, on the other, the rigorous organisation of the visually perceived forms which express and give meaning to that fact.’ What he was interested in was capturing a moment of reality and getting forms to hang together. The result has been rather distant pictures of a delicate elegance, which neither praise nor condemn but dissect reality and impress a style upon it.

Thus, even as it triumphed, reportage carried within it the seeds of a clash between the photographer who sought to express himself and the ideological systems that used his images to affect the masses. The few reporters who managed to retain contact with the raw truth did so by rejecting all attempts to muzzle their freedom of expression.

Arthur Fellig, known as Weegee, came to New York with his parents from Galicia. He had grown up in poverty and became a jack-of-all-trades. He saw photography as a possible means of setting up in a little business. He started off with passport photographs, spending long days in his darkroom. To escape from this, he became an independent reporter, realising that it was as an independent that he could get closest to his sensational subjects, provided he was the first to arrive on the scene and then make it back to the newspaper. He set up a laboratory in the boot of his car but would, it necessary, develop his plates on the floor of an ambulance, ina taxi or even in the subway. He used a 4X5 inch Speed Graphic focused at 10 feet with the shutter set at o second and the aperture at f/8. He stamped his prints Weegee the Great In this fashion he nearly always managed to be the fist to snap the corpse in a pool of its own blood, people escaping at full speed down the staircase of a burning house, murderer as he was thrown into the Black Maria or, even more strikingly, the terror in the faces of the gaping bystanders. By using infra-red film he captured the unconscious mimicry of audiences in darkened theatres. He would have laughed all the way to the bank at being called an artist, but the absolute honesty of his pictures, shocking and upsetting as they were, even attracted the attention of the Museum of Modern Art which in 1944 organised an exhibition of them. His book *Naked City* was received with rapturous acclaim in 1945. He was now employed by *Life*, sometimes even by Vogue, and was invited to give many lectures.

In the later evolution of modern photography, Weegee may be regarded as the first in a line which would include not only Diane Arbus but even William Klein. First, though, it passed by way of Lisette Model, 23 as delicate and refined as Weegee was - or wished to appear - vulgar and insolent. She was born into a highly cultured and cosmopolitan family in Vienna, where she studied music and painting with the very best masters. Upon her arrival in France as a refugee, she studied photography as a means of earning her living and in 1937 produced a series of pitiless portraits of people on the Promenade des Anglais in Nice. It was on the strength of these powerful pictures that Ralph Steiner, the photography director for p.m., engaged her when she moved to New York.
Then Alexey Brodovitch, the artistic director of *Harper's Bazaar,* offered her employment. Fashion photography, which was seeking renewed vigour from the vibrant blood of

reportage, turned to her, as it had to Martin Munkacsi in 1933 and subsequently to Weegee. In 1950 Lisette Model became a professor at the New School for Social Research. The uncompromising stance and manifest truculence of her figures broke through the boundaries between documentation and personal expression. The consequences were to be far-reaching.
Virtually wherever violence flared, there would now be photographers to show it. The most naive of them were perhaps sometimes the most effective. The rediscovery of the Mexican archives of Augustin Victor Casasola, founder of the country's first press photography company in 1911, revealed pictures of the early twentieth-century revolutionary upheavals of that country of a strikingly forceful character.

Many photographers wished to escape from turning life into an empty spectacle, as the amateur exhibitions and photographic politics of newspapers demanded. Banding together in order to safeguard their artistic independence, they formed the New York Photo League.25 Its origins can be traced back to the German worker-photographer movement of the twenties, set up by Willi Münzenberg, whose purpose had been to keep the left-wing press supplied with images taken by the workers themselves. The League, whose principal founders, Sid Grossman and Sol Libsohn, were both politically inclined to the left, was set up in 1936 and developed into an organisation for the defence of both quality and sincerity in photography. With the aim of denouncing social injustice and revealing the undisguised truth, a number of groups were set up to study problems such as that of the New York slums. Their members included Morris Engel, Jack Manning, Walter Rosenblum and Aaron Siskind. The League engaged in many activities: it rescued Lewis Hine's archives and organised the earliest exhibitions of artistic photography.
It extended a welcome to Eliot Elisoon, a pioneer of colour photography on Life magazine, and also to Dan Weiner who was soon working for Colliers and Fortune. From the early forties onwards a number of the League's photographers, Aaron Siskind among them, lost their faith in direct photography and turned to experimental work instead. At about the same time, it also took in photographers with views as far apart as Ansel Adams and Richard Avedon, as is testified by their 1948 exhibition, This is the Photo League. The League was now tending to become a general organisation for all United States photographers. It was at this point that, in the inquisitorial wind that was blowing through the country, the US Attorney General placed the League on the list of organisations alleged to be totalitarian, fascist, communist or subversive. Some photographers, grouped around the League's president Gene Smith, tried to fight back. But in vain: in 1951 the League was disbanded.