

BULLETIN

**THE INTEGRATION OF REFUGEES AND FOREIGN
WORKERS IN THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF
GERMANY SINCE THE SECOND WORLD WAR**

by Ian Connor

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KLAUS J. BADE, HANS-BERND MEIER, and BERNHARD PARISIUS
(eds), *Zeitzeugen im Interview. Flüchtlinge und Vertriebene im Raum Osnabrück nach 1945* (Osnabrück: Universitätsverlag Rasch, 1997), 216 pp.
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VOLKERACKERMANN, *Der 'echte' Flüchtling. Deutsche Vertriebene und Flüchtlinge aus der DDR 1945-1961*, Studien zur historischen Migrationsforschung, 1 (Osnabrück: Universitätsverlag Rasch, 1995), 318 pp. ISBN
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KLAUS J. BADE (ed.), *Fremde im Land: Zuwanderung und Eingliederung im Raum Niedersachsen seit dem Zweiten Weltkrieg*, Schriften des Instituts für Migrationsforschung und Interkulturelle Studien (IMIS) der Universität Osnabrück, 3 (Osnabrück: Universitätsverlag Rasch, 1997), 336 pp. ISBN 3 950595 39 7. DM 48.00

As Klaus Bade points out in a stimulating introduction to *Fremde im Land*, the Federal Republic of Germany has since the Second World War experienced immigration on a scale unknown in any other western industrial state. Between May 1945 and October 1990, no fewer than 15 million German refugees, expellees, *Aussiedler*, and *Übersiedler* settled in the Bundesrepublik. This represented over 25 per cent of its German population prior to unification. By far the largest group were the German refugees and expellees from the East, some 7.8 million of whom were residing in West Germany by mid-1950. According to official statistics, a further 2.7 million refugees fled from the German Democratic Republic (GDR) to the Federal Republic between September 1949 and August 1961 although the real figure may be as high as 3.5 million; an additional 616,000 fled between 13 August 1961 and the end of 1988. Moreover, 1.6 million *Aussiedler* from eastern or south-eastern Europe arrived in West Germany in the period 1951-88. In addition to these German groups of population, there were no fewer than 5.2 million foreigners living in the former West Germany in 1990. There can be no doubt, then, that the Federal Republic is, as Bade puts it, one of the 'classic immigration countries' (p. 11).

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The three books under review deal with different aspects of this immigration into Germany since the Second World War. They are all regional studies, focusing on *Länder* located in the former British Occupation Zone. *Zeitzeugen im Interview* and *Fremde im Land* look at Lower Saxony, while *Der 'echte' Flüchtling* concentrates on North Rhine-Westphalia. *Zeitzeugen im Interview* examines the integration of the German refugees and expellees from the East who came to Osnabrück in the period 1945-49. Volker Ackermann's study focuses on the refugees who fled from the GDR into the Bundesrepublik from 1945 to 1961. *Fremde im Land* covers a broader spectrum. It comprises six essays on various aspects of post-war immigration into Germany – general demographic trends, the refugees and expellees from the East, refugees from the GDR, *Aussiedler*, asylum seekers, and guest workers.

In the early post-war years a considerable volume of literature appeared on the refugee problem in West Germany, culminating in the publication in 1959 of a three-volume symposium, edited by Eugen Lemberg and Friedrich Edding, entitled *Die Vertriebenen in Westdeutschland*. During the 1960s and 1970s, when the economic, social, and political integration of the refugees appeared to be proceeding smoothly, the subject received much less attention. At that time the refugee question was a politically sensitive issue and scholars working in this field ran the risk of being accused of exacerbating the tense relations with the Soviet Union. However, the 1980s witnessed a dramatic increase in historical research on the refugee problem. This can be attributed primarily to the release from the mid-1970s onwards of a large quantity of British, American, and German archival material. It was also significant that the research was mainly undertaken by younger scholars who were able to view the subject in a more dispassionate way than their older colleagues, some of whom had experienced at first hand expulsion or flight from their homelands in 1944-45.

The focus of research on the refugee problem also underwent a significant change. While much of the literature published in the 1950s concentrated on the expulsion of the refugees or the measures introduced by the 'political élites' to promote their integration into West German society, the emphasis of studies published in the 1980s and 1990s was on the refugees and expellees themselves and their interaction with the indigenous inhabitants. It was, in other words, history from 'below' rather than 'above' and found expression in regional and, in particular, local studies such as Siegfried Schier's volume on Lübeck (1982), Karin

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Mundhenke's work on Hameln (1988), and Thomas Grosser's project on Mannheim (1993). While these books or essays were mainly concerned with the economic, social, and political integration of the refugees, they also assessed the newcomers' impact on the areas where they had settled. Another feature of recent research has been the large number of local case studies of relations between the refugees and the native population – both in rural and urban areas. Rainer Schulze's work on the Rural District of Celle (1990) is of particular interest. It is also noticeable that the refugee problem has attracted the attention not only of historians and political scientists, but also of sociologists, demographers, and economists. Research on this subject has also been diversified by new methodological approaches, in particular, oral history, where pioneering work has been carried out by Lutz Niethammer and Alexander von Plato. The accessibility since the early 1990s of archival material from the former GDR has opened up new research perspectives and in recent years the Institut für Zeitgeschichte has organized two major conferences focusing primarily on the integration of German refugees in the SBZ/GDR in the period 1945-55.

Zeitzeugen im Interview has its origins in a research project under Klaus Bade investigating the integration of the refugees and expellees in the Rural and Urban Districts of Osnabrück in the post-war period. The book contains an introduction by Bade, a lengthy analysis of the refugee problem in Osnabrück by Bernhard Parisius, and a useful commentary by Jochen Oltmer and Adolf Wennemann on some thirty selected works on the refugee question with particular emphasis on local and regional studies of Lower Saxony. Oral history forms a central element of the book and extracts from interviews conducted in 1985-6 with thirty former refugees, as well as two longer interviews dating from 1995, offer a fascinating insight into their experiences in the early post-war years. The interviews are presented thematically and include sections on the refugees' flight or expulsion from their homelands, their efforts to find housing, food, clothes, and employment in Osnabrück, and their relations with the native population.

The essay by Bernhard Parisius, largely based on archival sources, reaches a number of interesting conclusions about the attitude of the municipal authorities in Osnabrück to the refugees. During the war, Osnabrück had suffered extensive bombing and was, in fact, the fourth most heavily damaged town in the British Zone. As a result, housing was in such short supply that neither refugees nor other groups were

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theoretically permitted to settle there. In actual fact, however, the refugee population in Osnabrück increased from 4,100 in January 1946 to 9,000 in November 1948. Publicly, the municipal authorities, wary of upsetting the wartime evacuees who had not yet been able to return to Osnabrück, claimed that this was due to refugees living illegally in the town, but Parisius shows that local housing officials privately acquiesced in finding accommodation for newcomers who had already obtained employment. This policy enabled the authorities to select only those refugees who would contribute most to the town's economic recovery, such as industrial or construction workers. As Parisius notes, the actions of the municipal authorities in Osnabrück do not represent an isolated example since it has been established that Mannheim, Darmstadt, Heilbronn, and Kassel adopted a similar policy.

The failure of local government officials in Osnabrück to admit that they permitted 'economically valuable' refugees to settle in the town, as well as the tendency to portray them in public as a severe economic burden, meant that the new population groups were not given the credit they deserved for helping to bring about the town's economic recovery. Parisius shows that refugee construction workers were responsible for much of the rebuilding work carried out prior to June 1948 and many newcomers also found employment in the metal industry, as well as in business enterprises. In short, Parisius argues that the refugees not only played a major role in the Economic Miracle of the 1950s but also made a more important contribution than has previously been acknowledged to Osnabrück's economic growth in the early post-war years.

One of the most interesting sections of the book concerns the relations between the refugees and the indigenous inhabitants. Parisius concludes that, as a result of the more favourable employment situation, there was less tension between the two groups of population in the town of Osnabrück than in the neighbouring rural district. The interviews with the refugees reveal that the local people who displayed the greatest generosity towards them were invariably those who were least well off. It is interesting to note that some refugees did not feel fully accepted by the native inhabitants even though they had lived in Osnabrück for almost forty years and married into a local family. The interviews also provide evidence, seen from the refugees' perspective, of the main issues which provoked tension between the two population groups. Religion was one source of conflict. A Protestant refugee from East

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Prussia recounted that, due to pressure from the parents of local Catholic school children, all Protestant refugee pupils, irrespective of their age, were put in the same class and a fence was constructed in the school playground to separate them from the native Catholic children. The decision to billet refugees with private householders was bitterly resented by many indigenous inhabitants, some of whom refused to accept the newcomers even after the intervention of the police. There is also evidence of discrimination against the refugees by housing officials and in November 1947 the *Oberkreisdirektor* in the Rural District of Osnabrück refused to appoint additional staff to monitor the availability of unoccupied rooms in private houses because 'their employment would only be on a temporary basis' (p. 44).

Parisius demonstrates effectively the deterioration in relations between the refugees and the farmers with whom they were billeted after the Currency Reform of June 1948. This, he argues, was not primarily due to the continuing arrival of new refugees, or to the decline in the economic position of many newcomers after the introduction of the Deutschmark. According to Parisius, the most contentious issue was that many of the refugees accommodated in farmhouses who had previously worked for the farmer in return for food, succeeded in securing better paid employment in the nearby town after the *Währungsreform*. In view of the acute housing shortage in Osnabrück, these refugees initially wanted to continue living in the farmhouse, a situation the farmer considered totally unacceptable because this prevented him from employing agricultural labourers since he could not offer them accommodation.

Zeitzeugen im Interview is a very readable and interesting book which provides a nice contrast between the integration of refugees in an urban and rural environment. The conclusions are clearly and concisely set out. The interviews are informative and have been skilfully edited. The decision to divide up the refugees' comments thematically helps the reader to gain a general impression of their views on a particular issue. However, there are, in my opinion, also some problems. Parisius does not refer to any of the numerous other local refugee studies carried out in Lower Saxony even though some of their conclusions differ from his. A more serious criticism is the absence of any critical analysis of oral history research. The reader is not told how the interviewees were selected or how reliable their recollection of events which had taken place forty or even fifty years previously is likely to be. After all, several

of those interviewed were over the age of 70 and one was 86. Memory loss appeared to be a particular problem with the 75-year-old Herr Ludwig but the reader is expected to take the refugees' comments at face value.

Volker Ackermann's *Der 'echte' Flüchtling* focuses on the large number of refugees and expellees who fled from the GDR into the *Bundesrepublik* in the period 1945-61. This is an important and interesting topic on which surprisingly little has so far been written. Siegfried Bethlehem's study entitled *Heimatvertreibung, DDR-Flucht, Gastarbeiterzuwanderung*, published in 1982, analysed the policy of the West German government towards the refugees from the GDR, but the author was unable to gain access to the archival material necessary to evaluate the motives behind their flight to the West. Helge Heidemeyer's book, *Flucht und Zuwanderung aus der SBZ/DDR 1945/1949-1961* (1994), concluded that the federal government in Bonn did not have a clear, consistent, or coherent policy towards refugees from the GDR, noting that it accepted them more readily in the early 1950s when they represented an economic burden than at the end of the decade when they constituted an important asset for the expanding West German economy. While Volker Ackermann's work covers some of the same ground, he concentrates in particular on young refugees from the GDR and, unlike Heidemeyer, assesses not only the attitude of the West German authorities to the refugee problem but also looks at it from an East German perspective. Although there is no indication in the title, Ackermann's study is regionally based, dealing with North Rhine-Westphalia, the *Bundesland* which bore the brunt of the influx of refugees from the GDR in the 1950s.

Der 'echte' Flüchtling has been impressively researched and Ackermann has evaluated material from no fewer than twenty-six archives. While the book is based predominantly on West German sources, he has also analysed East German documents held in the *Bundesarchiv* in Potsdam and the *Jugendarchiv beim Institut für Zeitgeschichte*, based in Berlin. This enables the author to see the issues from contrasting perspectives. Curiously, however, Ackermann did not carry out research in the Public Record Office in London, even though a significant amount of material on this topic is held there. The title of the book – *Der 'echte' Flüchtling* – is entirely appropriate because it does indeed represent the 'red thread' running through the work. All the refugees or expellees who fled or were expelled from the Eastern territories in the early post-war years were automatically classified as 'genuine' refugees but, after the establishment of the *Bundesrepublik* in 1949, a distinction was

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made between different groups of refugees from the GDR depending on their motives for fleeing to the West. Ackermann's study focuses on who qualified as a 'genuine' refugee and was therefore entitled to preferential treatment. This issue is looked at from the perspective of the federal government in Bonn and the state government of North Rhine-Westphalia. Particular attention is paid to the treatment of young East German refugees in the 18-25 age group, members of the police force, and soldiers from the National People's Army. Ackermann illustrates how the concept of the 'genuine' refugee was incorporated into federal legislation introduced in the early 1950s. Those deemed to be 'genuine' refugees had suffered 'a direct threat to life and limb or their personal freedom' (p. 13). On the basis of surveys, questionnaires, and reports, Ackermann shows that very few GDR refugees were able to meet this criterion for recognition as an 'echter Flüchtling'.

The response of the Adenauer government to the influx of refugees from the GDR was heavily influenced by political pragmatism. While recognizing that few of them conformed to its definition of a 'genuine' refugee, it continued to accept the vast majority, maintaining in public that they had suffered political persecution in the GDR. This decision can be attributed to foreign policy considerations. As part of its strategy to bring about the unification of Germany, the federal government was anxious to demonstrate to international public opinion what it saw as the inhumanity of the political system in the GDR. It therefore attached great importance to portraying the refugees as victims of the 'overall political situation' (p. 35) in East Germany and was reluctant to concede that they may have fled to the West for economic, personal, or other reasons. In fact, there is even evidence that the government sought to suppress the publication of public opinion polls which refuted its argument that the exodus from the GDR was politically motivated. For example, in April 1957 it exerted pressure on journalists not to publish the findings of a survey by Infratest revealing that 29 per cent of GDR refugees had come to the West in order to improve their economic position.

Ackermann illustrates how the desire of the Bonn government to depict the East German refugees as victims of political persecution influenced the implementation of both the *Notaufnahmegesetz* of 22 August 1950 and the *Bundesvertriebenengesetz* of 15 May 1953. The majority of GDR refugees were accepted under the *Notaufnahmegesetz* throughout the 1950s even though no more than a tiny proportion of

them could prove 'a direct threat to life or limb or their personal freedom'. Thus, pragmatic political considerations rather than consistent, objective criteria determined who was to be regarded as a 'genuine' refugee, and it is hard to disagree with Ackermann's conclusion that the process bordered on a 'farce' (p. 113). While the *Bundesvertriebenengesetz* also laid down that recognition as a 'genuine' refugee should be dependent on evidence of political persecution, this stipulation was gradually relaxed during the 1950s in response to pressure from political and church leaders. On 27 July 1957, an amendment was introduced widening the criteria for recognition as a 'genuine' refugee to include a 'serious conflict of conscience'. More important still, economic reasons were finally recognized in an amendment passed on 29 June 1961, less than two months before the construction of the Berlin Wall. However, according to the Bonn government, such refugees were none the less victims of the political system in the GDR since economic and political factors were inextricably linked. As Ackermann noted: 'From this time onwards even the wish to improve one's standard of living was regarded as a political motive for fleeing [to the West]; the "fight for freedom" was officially interpreted as "the fight of the working population for a fair share in the gross national product"' (p. 283).

Young people were heavily overrepresented among those who left the GDR and, according to one study, almost half of them were under the age of twenty-five. They were accommodated in camps and, on the basis of confidential reports drawn up by the camp authorities, Ackermann explores their motives for fleeing from East Germany. He outlines the difficulties in interpreting the reports since the refugees would not necessarily cite their real reasons for leaving the GDR but those they considered strong enough for them to be allowed to stay in the Bundesrepublik. Several camp administrators observed that an unusually large number of young refugees had an unstable family background and, according to a report from the Haus Elisabeth camp near Gießen in 1954, no less than 61.5 per cent of the occupants came from broken homes. It was noticeable that all the reports from camp officials interpreted 'political motives' in a very broad way. For example, the annual report in 1957 for the Sandbostel and Westertimke camps near Bremen concluded that 71 per cent of their inmates had fled to the Federal Republic for 'political' as opposed to 'personal' reasons. Later in the report it transpired that among those attributed 'political' motivation was a young East German woman who had come to the

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West to marry her fiancé because 'the fulfilment of the most elementary human aspirations was made so difficult by the GDR' (p. 183). The same official noted in 1953 that pregnancy was a common cause of young women choosing to flee to the West. A representative survey commissioned by the *Bundesministerium für gesamtdeutsche Fragen* in 1956 concluded that political motives were of primary importance among only 29 per cent of refugees, while the majority were influenced by personal or economic factors. According to Ackermann, East German students came closest to the Bonn Government's vision of 'genuine' refugees who had suffered political discrimination and rejected the SED regime.

An important aspect of Ackermann's study deals with the efforts, both at federal and state level, to integrate the GDR refugees into West German society. In North Rhine-Westphalia, special homes were set up for young people, jointly financed by public and private money. They were initially concerned exclusively with the economic and social needs of the refugees but later assumed greater political significance due to the gradual recognition that the decision to flee to the Federal Republic did not necessarily imply acceptance of its political system. One study carried out by the Evangelische Heimstatthilfe in 1958 concluded that, while the refugees rejected the SED regime, they did not necessarily identify with the 'parlamentarisch-demokratische Grundordnung', preferring instead 'an ideal form of Communism' (p. 255). This view was borne out by the reaction of young East German refugees to the industrial unrest in Baden-Württemberg in the spring of 1963 when they supported the striking metal workers using 'radical Marxist arguments' (p. 249).

One of the most interesting sections of the book concerns the response of the SED to the flight of its citizens to the West. Initially, the regime adopted a relaxed attitude but the decision to close the border with the Federal Republic in May 1952 indicated its disquiet. This deepened in the mid-1950s as the East German economy began to experience the negative consequences of a dwindling work-force. Ackermann shows that SED officials admitted privately that not enough was being done to counter the exodus of East German citizens to the West, but there was a reluctance to debate the issue openly. In so far as it was discussed, the SED attributed the problem to a conspiracy on the part of the West. It argued that the Federal Republic was consciously attempting to attract economically valuable groups as a means of

slowing down the GDR's post-war recovery and weakening its military position. On the other hand, the SED did not consider even privately that the refugees were influenced by political motives. While the Bonn government viewed them as 'freedom fighters' and 'genuine political refugees' (p. 139) who left East Germany not because of the attractiveness of the Federal Republic but due to their dissatisfaction with the GDR, the SED saw the refugees as victims of the Adenauer government's propaganda campaign to lure them to the West to supplement the West German work-force.

Volker Ackermann has chosen an excellent topic and produced a very fine book. It is extensively based on primary sources and the author succeeds in presenting the results of empirical research within a clear conceptual framework. While the focal point of the book is the attitude of the Federal Government to the refugees from the GDR, it is by no means simply a political study, but also views the refugee problem in an economic and social context. Ackermann succeeds in placing the events he is describing in a wider historical perspective and draws parallels with the issue of asylum seekers in Germany in the early 1990s. He also illustrates the extreme political sensitivity of the refugee problem during the 1950s, showing how the Bonn government sought to suppress evidence of young East German refugees choosing to return to the GDR.

Ackermann's central argument is both original and convincing. He builds up a fascinating picture of the Bonn government's vision of a 'genuine' refugee who, after due reflection on the contrasting political systems in East and West Germany, decides to flee to the West. Ackermann's analysis of the refugees' motives for fleeing to the Federal Republic is the most interesting but also the most problematic section of the book. Although the author undoubtedly succeeds in showing that very few were able to meet the government's stringent definition of a 'genuine' refugee, he acknowledges the difficulties in interpreting the refugees' own statements about their motives for leaving the GDR since they had to convince the West German authorities that they had compelling reasons to remain in the Federal Republic. In fact, this is an area where oral history might have been employed to good effect since the refugees would have had no reason to withhold their true motives many years later.

Fremde im Land is an important publication which has a chapter devoted to the major groups of German and foreign immigrants who

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have settled in the Federal Republic since the Second World War. Peter Marschalck's contribution provides an extremely detailed analysis of demographic trends in Lower Saxony since the Second World War. He assesses the impact on the state's population of the influx of German refugees and expellees in the period 1946-50, the GDR refugees during the 1950s, the guest workers during the 1960s, and the large number of *Aussiedler* and foreigners who have arrived in Germany since the mid-1980s. Although the arguments are apt to be obscured by the wealth of statistical information, this essay represents a useful introduction to the more detailed studies of the individual population groups which form the rest of the volume.

The first of Adolf Wennemann's two chapters focuses on the German refugees and expellees from the East who arrived in Lower Saxony during the second half of the 1940s. He concludes that, contrary to the widely held view at the time, their economic and social integration still had a long way to go at the end of the 1950s and was not, in fact, achieved until the 1970s or 1980s. He argues that, as a result of their mobility, willingness to work, and generally good educational qualifications, the refugees represented an important stimulus for the economy. In this way they 'accelerated the economic and social change of the Federal Republic into a modern industrial society' (p. 124). Wennemann also analyses the newcomers' political attitudes, maintaining that, despite widespread fears that they would succumb to political radicalization, they emphatically rejected the overtures of the KPD and became a source of political stability in post-war Germany. He concludes that the initially tense relations between the refugees and the native population improved during the 1950s and 1960s. Wennemann argues that, while this can be partly attributed to the gradual alleviation of the newcomers' material distress as they began to benefit from the 'economic miracle', another important factor was the arrival of the *Gastarbeiter* in rural areas of Lower Saxony in the 1960s since it prompted the refugees and indigenous inhabitants to establish closer relations in the face of this new 'external threat'. Although this chapter is based exclusively on secondary sources, it is nevertheless an excellent summary of the results of recent research on the refugee problem in Lower Saxony.

Wennemann's second contribution looks at a different but closely related topic, namely the refugees who fled from the SBZ/GDR. Due to its geographical position, Lower Saxony bore the brunt of this exodus until the GDR authorities sealed the border in May 1952. Wennemann

examines essentially the same issues as in Ackermann's more detailed study of North Rhine-Westphalia – the motives of the refugees, the attitude of the East German government to the loss of its citizens, and the policies of the federal government to the continuing influx of new population elements. However, the most interesting aspect of the essay concerns the integration of the GDR refugees in Lower Saxony. Wennemann argues that their economic integration proceeded more quickly than that of the German refugees from the East because they settled mainly in urban and industrial conurbations where employment prospects were more favourable. In addition, they were younger, better qualified and, unlike the refugees from the East, were often able to pursue the same career as in their original country of residence. Moreover, the overall economic situation in the 1950s was appreciably better than in the early post-war years. Nevertheless, the GDR refugees were not readily accepted by the native population who saw them as competitors for housing and jobs. Even though Wennemann's essay does not break new ground, it is none the less a very clear and substantive contribution to this volume.

Leonie Herwartz-Emden and Manuela Westphal investigate the topical issue of *Aussiedler*. About half of the 3 million *Aussiedler* who settled in the *Bundesrepublik* between 1950 and 1994, arrived in the period 1987-92. Most of them came from Poland, the former Soviet Union, and Rumania. The main focus of the essay concerns the response of the German political authorities at national, regional, and local level to the flood of *Aussiedler* in the late-1980s and early 1990s. It shows how the Federal and regional governments, under pressure to reduce public expenditure, increasingly delegated responsibility for the *Aussiedler* to the *Kommunen*. The resulting financial cutbacks have had adverse effects on the economic integration of the *Aussiedler*. Unemployment levels rose, partly because of the reduction in the duration of German language courses, while their housing situation also deteriorated in the early 1990s. The integration of this group was also impeded by their lack of contact with the German population and the fact that 'they consider themselves to be German but find themselves constantly regarded as foreigners in their host country' (p. 209). All in all, this is an original and stimulating chapter on a topic on which comparatively little has been written.

Susanne Benzler's essay is concerned with asylum seekers and other groups of foreign refugees. Benzler is critical of the response of the

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CDU/CSU/FDP government in Bonn to the sharp increase in the number of asylum seekers following the collapse of the Soviet Union and argues that until 1994 the coalition government in Lower Saxony comprising the SPD and the Greens adopted a more constructive attitude on this issue. Despite the stipulation in the *Asylbewerberleistungsgesetz* of July 1993 that asylum seekers were in future to receive payments in kind rather than monetary assistance, the Lower Saxony government permitted the *Kommunen* to continue with monetary contributions if they wished. But, she concludes, financial considerations forced the state government to follow the policies of the federal government more closely from 1994 onwards.

The essay by Michael Bommers looks at the issue of 'guest workers' in Lower Saxony. He shows that, while the Bonn Government sought foreign workers in the 1950s and 1960s, they were to be granted a work permit only if there were no German applicants for the job. After the decision to stop the recruitment of *Gastarbeiter* following the oil crisis of 1973, the Federal Government introduced a series of measures designed to encourage foreign workers to return home. However, Bommers argues that this policy did not turn out to be successful in the long term and there were more *Gastarbeiter* in West Germany in 1980 than 1974. As a result, greater efforts were made to integrate those who decided to stay in the Federal Republic and Bommers focuses in particular on the education policy of the Lower Saxony Government towards 'guest workers'.

All the books under review are the product of meticulous research and have something worthwhile to say. *Der 'echte' Flüchtling* and *Zeitzeugen im Interview* are both important additions to the increasingly large number of regional and local studies on the refugee problem in the German Federal Republic. As yet, however, very little comparative research on this subject has been undertaken, although the release in the early 1990s of archival material relating to the former GDR has paved the way for comparative studies on the integration of the refugee population in the two parts of Germany. Several major research projects are already under way and their results will be awaited with interest.

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number of articles on the integration of the refugees and expellees in post-war Germany and is presently carrying out research on the resettlement of refugees from Schleswig-Holstein in the early 1950s.