

Introduction

Making, Experiencing and Managing Difference in a Changing Germany

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In late August and early September 2015, thousands of asylum seekers from the Middle East were stranded in Hungary's capital, Budapest. Many complained about heavy-handed mistreatment by the authorities, who also set up new 'detention centres' at the country's southeastern border (Haraszti 2015; Kallius et al. 2016). When thousands of migrants left Budapest to march on a motorway towards Austria – and Germany – the German Chancellor, Angela Merkel, and her Austrian counterpart, Werner Faymann, took a far-reaching decision. Bypassing the ordinary rules of the EU's shared asylum system, both leaders agreed to permit asylum seekers entry into their countries to process applications for protection and combat human trafficking. Only two weeks previously, the discovery of seventy-one dead bodies in a locked van on the A4 motorway in Austria – the victims of trafficking – had illustrated the fatal consequences of Europe's insufficient protection schemes for those fleeing conflict elsewhere (den Heijer et al. 2016). The pressure on European leaders to act further increased after the highly publicized death of a young boy, Alan Kurdi, who drowned on his way to Europe. Images of his lifeless body, washed up on a Turkish beach, shocked the world.¹

According to the EU's Dublin Regulation, asylum seekers ought to apply for protection in the first EU country they reach. In most cases, these are Greece or Italy – two countries that, in the mid 2010s, struggled with unemployment and austerity, and from which asylum seekers sought to continue northwards (Lucht 2012; *Redattore Sociale* 2015; Trauner 2016).

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Merkel and Faymann's decision to ease the pressure on Europe's south-eastern fringes responded to a large-scale migration movement, with dimensions most Europeans had not seen in decades. In the final months of 2015 going into 2016, a makeshift corridor opened up between Greece, at the one end, and Austria, Germany and the Scandinavian countries, at the other. State borders were opened and hundreds of thousands of people seeking refuge or migrating for other reasons reached Central and Northern Europe. State institutions struggled to manage the influx and many newcomers moved on independently to reach friends or relatives elsewhere before and after registration. According to official figures, in 2015, 890,000 asylum seekers arrived in Germany, mainly from Syria, Afghanistan and Iraq (Bundesministerium des Innern 2016: 89). At the time, pundits warned that the number of refugees entering Europe would rise to three million in 2016 and that most of them would come to Germany and Sweden (Koser 2015).

While this prediction did not come to pass – 280,000 asylum seekers entered Germany in 2016² – news coverage and public discourse became increasingly framed by a crisis narrative. The term *Flüchtlingskrise* – refugee crisis – flourished. The difficult experience of migration – desiring a better life away from the place of one's origin – became a focus for increasingly hysterical media commentary (Fernando and Giordano 2016). Critics denounced what they saw as Germany's descent from supposed order into chaos and emergency. Simultaneously, enthusiastic forms of civil society engagement in villages, towns and cities sprang up to provide assistance. The German government, and Chancellor Merkel in particular, surprised many with commitment to openness – showing 'a friendly face', as Merkel described the approach during a press conference in September 2015. She appeared on talk shows to explain that Germany was under an obligation to help. She couched this partly in terms of Germany's historical responsibility to protect political refugees after the experience of the Nazi dictatorship and partly in relation to her own biography, and that of millions of other Germans, who had been raised behind the Iron Curtain in authoritarian East Germany, locked in by the socialist regime. Moreover, she argued that migration into Germany was a consequence of the country's economic prosperity, political stability and commitment to the rule of law, which included protection for asylum seekers. In effect, she declared refugees to be welcome in Germany.

This volume explores the context, experiences and ramifications regarding the so-called refugee crisis in 2015–16. The term 'refugee crisis' has been criticized for contributing to a moral panic (see Kosnick, Chapter 7 in this volume), as well as for locating chaos and emergency in refugees as cultural others – rather than, say, framing the crisis as the failure of a wealthy

society in managing immigration and integration. Declaring a 'crisis' can be a means by which a state legitimizes authoritarian forms of intervention and 'delegitimize(s) some forms of agency', such as those of refugees and migrants themselves (Kallius et al. 2016: 9). Nevertheless, we use it here as an object of analytical study that took on its own reality in the mid 2010s. It did so not only in Germany, but also across Europe, and indeed could be productively analysed as a 'historical and structural caving in of the European border regime' (Hess et al. 2017: 6, our translation). Indeed, the term was used globally to refer to the situation at the time. Here, we focus upon Germany, the country that took in more refugees than any other Western nation and whose role was pivotal in the developments. Moreover, while the German context was specific in various respects, such as the ways in which national memory was mobilized or the particularities of legal statuses of migrants, it also exemplifies responses to the crisis: from the emergence of a 'culture of welcome' (*Willkommenskultur*), on the one hand, to the powerful expression of rightwing anger in the rejection of ethnoreligious diversity and immigration (exemplified, for example, by the Pegida movement), on the other, as well as more complex and sometimes ambivalent reactions. The polarizing and divisive rhetoric that characterized the German discourse found its echo elsewhere in Europe. Therefore, an in-depth study of the German case can illuminate reactions across European societies and is vital for an understanding of how debates about immigrants and refugees shaped politics across the continent during the early decades of the twenty-first century.

While the book begins from a consideration of what was variously called 'the refugee crisis' or 'long summer of migration' of 2015, it has a longer and broader analytical frame. This is an important dimension of our approach in that we seek not to look at those events alone, but as part of wider and changing understandings of difference and diversity (the patterns of difference that are identified). Terms such as 'refugee' are inevitably relational and exist as part of a shifting constellation of other terms, including 'asylum seeker' and 'migrant', as well as 'citizen' or 'German'. Rather than seeking to pin down what such terms should mean, our interest in this volume is in the practical, analytical and political work that may be done through the choice of the words that are used – and by who uses them and to what effect. The insistence by some politicians on using the term 'migrants' rather than 'refugees' to refer to those arriving in Europe in 2015, for example, supported their arguments that not all of those coming deserved protection, and was part of a broader process of distinguishing between 'deserving' and 'non-deserving' people on the move (Crawley and Skleparis 2018; Holmes and Castañeda 2016; Sigona 2018). One potential German term already in circulation, *Vertriebene*, meaning those who had

been expelled, was seen by some as potentially apt, but was too attached to the specific history of postwar refugees, in particular Germans expelled from what became Poland (see below and also Karakayalı, Chapter 8 in this volume). The term *Flüchtling*, which came to be most commonly used – as in *Flüchtlingskrise*, for what in English was called the ‘refugee crisis’ – was itself subject to debate (Fleischhauer 2015; Goebel 2016; Tinius, Chapter 10 in this volume). Putting its emphasis on the idea of ‘flight’, like ‘refugee’ it conveys the sense of a ‘forced migration’, though with the weight in this case on the escape rather than what is being sought at arrival. Some, however, objected that its suffix – ‘-ling’ – implies a diminutive and even something negative, with some suggesting that the the English term *Refugee* should be used instead. It was also argued that its form acted to typologize a kind of person rather than to refer to a temporary state, as other terms, such as *Geflüchteter* – literally meaning ‘one fleeing’ – did. Nevertheless, it was *Flüchtling* that was prevalent in public discourse and that even became ‘Word of the Year’ for 2015 (Gesellschaft für deutsche Sprache 2015).

In this volume, then, we examine the changing differentiations made in practice, as well as to debates about them. To do so, we bring together analyses from anthropological, sociological and political-science perspectives. The interdisciplinary approach allows us to examine the ways in which not only government organizations but also civil society, cultural institutions, small-scale initiatives and individuals explored ways of addressing immigration and the experience of increasing diversity. Deploying this mix of perspectives, which, importantly, includes attention to legal definitions and policy-making, as well as a close ethnographic understanding of lived realities, allows us to tackle both the broader transformations and their potentials, and to grasp something of the variety and significance of experiences on the ground.

Analytically, our contributors employ a range of conceptual terms and lenses, though all give attention to how particular notions of difference – whether these be ‘multiculturalism’, ‘cultural diversity’, ‘migration background’ or ‘post-migrant’ – can be defined and mobilized in policy and practice. Using the term ‘difference’ allows us to incorporate a wide range of kinds of differentiations, and also identifications, that may be invoked. In other words, we do not take it as given that, say, ethnic, religious or linguistic difference will necessarily be regarded as the most significant lines of differentiation, or even as necessarily significant at all; such differences are culturally deployed in particular ways at particular times. When and how they are, and when and how they and other potential differences – such as those of class, gender, life experience, accent or skin colour – are entangled with one another is a question that our contributors explore. Equally, analysing how similarities or potentials for sharing

and solidarity across differences can be developed – through, for example, notions of collective experience, empathy, community, political aspirations or historical memory – is a major focus of our approach and of the chapters brought together here. In this way, then, with the refugee crisis as our prism, we seek to make a new contribution to understanding current struggles over interpretations of identity, diversity and belonging, and to the key debates, polarizations, differentiations and directions that will shape Germany's – and Europe's – future.

The volume is divided into four parts. The first, 'Making Germans and Non-Germans', illustrates some of the political, legal and social mechanisms through which the categories of 'German' and 'foreigner' are produced, and outlines the implications that these categories had when a large number of refugees entered the country in 2015–16. Part II, 'Potential for Change', explores how emergent forms of co-existence and conviviality could challenge the concepts used to frame difference and diversity in Germany, and indicates possible avenues for innovative ways of managing a plural society. The third part, 'Refugee Encounters', investigates the spaces and activities through which engagement with new kinds of diversity became possible during Germany's 'refugee crisis', and how those who pursued involvement experienced their entanglement with the geopolitics of flight and migration. Part IV explores new avenues for connectedness in the grassroots initiatives and civil society projects that responded to the transformations of German society. This part also provides an outlook on concepts of citizenship and political behaviour that result from emergent kinds of collaboration in the face of social change. Sharon Macdonald's conclusion brings the different sections together, and speculates on the future of difference and diversity in a changing Germany, following a period of significant transformations and wide-ranging political as well as social ramifications.

Diverse Responses to the 'Refugee Crisis'

By the end of 2016, over one million asylum seekers had arrived in Germany over the course of eighteen months. The need for emergency accommodation saw school gyms, warehouses and empty administrative buildings or disused clinics converted into makeshift shelters. In Berlin, the enormous hangars of the former Tempelhof Airport, decommissioned in 2008, were turned into a camp for thousands of asylum seekers, managed by a private for-profit company on behalf of the municipal government (Muehlebach 2016). Under the German federal system, asylum seekers were distributed across the country's regions, which then continued the

distribution process towards cities, towns and villages. In this way, the events of 2015–16 affected the entire country, not simply large cities, in which the effects of immigration and cultural diversity were already commonplace (Petermann and Schönwälder 2014; Schönwälder et al. 2016). Now, support groups and initiatives for asylum seekers and refugees were established all over Germany, in rural as well as urban environments, as grassroots activists responded to the apparent struggle of state institutions by putting forward their visions for coexistence and solidarity. For some, the fact that hundreds of thousands of volunteers joined new support projects amounted to a social movement (see Schiffauer, Chapter 12 in this volume). It is difficult, in this written text, to evoke the feverish and excited atmosphere that characterized Germany's 'long summer of migration' (Hamann and Karakayalı 2016; Kasperek and Speer 2015). In the autumn of 2015, media coverage incessantly updated the public on the latest figures of asylum seekers reaching Germany, mainly at the border with Austria. During the most intense weeks, the numbers often topped 10,000 arrivals per day. Politicians, social media and television talk shows discussed few other topics. The country's most-read paper, *Bild*, launched its *Wir helfen* ('We Help') campaign in September 2015. Unlike other European tabloids, which attacked politicians for supporting immigrants – and to the surprise of many German commentators – *Bild* championed the government's welcoming stance and reported daily on success stories of integration and volunteering. Faced with a similar surge in the numbers of new asylum seekers during the early 1990s, *Bild* had responded very differently and demanded a government crackdown (Gaserow 2012). Now, numerous celebrities embraced the tabloid's positive campaign and wore its *Wir helfen* badges publicly.

The need for emergency accommodation and a widespread desire to address a social challenge collectively also energized new forms of dialogue involving citizens and their democratic representatives. Across the country, MPs, mayors, city councillors, political parties, representatives from the sixteen regional governments responsible for asylum-seeker management, and other high-level officials scheduled open meetings to inform local communities, explain political decisions, and ask for grassroots and civil society support. Citizens also used such gatherings to vent frustration at a perceived lack of communication and transparency, as well as fears over a lack of state control, while support groups were established in towns and villages. Traditional civil society actors, such as the Protestant and Catholic churches, reported many phone calls from local residents who sought ways of assisting the newcomers. They turned to their local parish or diocese to ask what they could do. Picnics and welcome-refugee events were staged across the country, seeking to bring together foreigners,

long-term residents and other volunteers through language classes and shared cooking sessions, women's support networks, and mosque prayers, student exchanges and much more. Social media and innovative smartphone apps connected newcomers with those offering voluntary support (see Schiffauer and Karakyali, Chapters 12 and 8 in this volume respectively). Already before the events of 2015–16, Germany had a substantial population of residents with foreign passports, as well as German passport holders whose parents or grandparents had migrated to the country (the so-called 'migration background', or *Migrationshintergrund*) and who had brought new ways of life, religions, values, behaviours and customs to the country. Nonetheless, the refugee crisis led to intensified debates about difference and diversity, belonging and national identity.

Beyond grassroots support and activism, there were other responses. Hotels, guesthouses and other buildings earmarked to be converted into provisional emergency shelters were firebombed. In the East German region of Saxony-Anhalt, for example, the mayor of a small town, Tröglitz, resigned after rightwing groups, which included members of the neo-Nazi NPD party, had marched in front of his house to dissuade him from supporting accommodation plans for forty asylum seekers. A few weeks after his resignation, the attic of the designated shelter went up in flames before a group of Syrian asylum seekers could move in (MDR 2017). A website called *Mut gegen rechte Gewalt* (Courage against Right-Wing Violence) listed all reported acts of violence against refugees or asylum seekers, as well as attacks on shelters or other forms of accommodation. For 2016, the website detailed 595 attacks on asylum seekers, 123 arson attacks on accommodation for asylum seekers and refugees, and 3,056 further acts of violence. In that year, 434 asylum seekers were injured through arson or physical attacks.³ In 2017, 1,938 attacks on asylum seekers or their accommodation occurred. Furthermore, out of 3,774 attacks on asylum seekers and shelters in 2016, 1,610 were committed in East Germany. The formerly socialist part has only 16 million inhabitants, compared with the regions of West Germany, where 66 million people live (in 2018). Therefore, the part of Germany with less than 20 per cent of the population witnessed 43 per cent of acts of anti-asylum seeker and xenophobic violence. Especially in East Germany, rejection, often hatred, of foreigners was expressed in brutal attacks, and through electoral support for the anti-immigration Alternative for Germany (AfD) party. Discontent and anger were also directed at the political establishment and Chancellor Merkel in particular.

On 15 January 2017, the prominent MP of a Frankfurt constituency, Erika Steinbach, published an open letter that explained her decision to leave the CDU, Germany's Christian conservative party. For decades,

Steinbach had been a vocal law-and-order politician, a key representative of the CDU's rightwing faction, opposing same-sex marriage as much as the switch to renewable energies. Angela Merkel, the CDU's leader since 2000, had modernized the party and moved it into the political centre, to the dismay of Social Democratic Party (SPD) politicians, who struggled to distinguish their party from Merkel's progressive CDU (Resing 2013; Seils 2013; Zolleis and Schmid 2014). In her letter, Steinbach attacked Merkel for radically altering the party's core objectives and accused her of hollowing out conservative values as well as the rule of law. The most disturbing development that Steinbach underlined and that ultimately led her to cancel party membership and leave the CDU's parliamentary group regarded immigration:

All of this [Merkel's centrist policies] was eclipsed by the Chancellor's solitary decision to not simply allow over one million immigrants to enter Germany without control or checks for months, but even to transport them here on coaches and trains, despite the fact that many of them came from safe-origin countries and virtually all of them entered Germany via other third countries, and, according to EU law (Dublin Agreement), ought to have been pushed back . . . Our state authorities, nominally responsible, did and partly still today struggle with this mass immigration. Up to this day, we still do not know who exactly entered our country with this stream of people . . . With those immigrants – this is clear following terrible attacks – terrorists also came to Germany. National security and our way of life are in danger, as the two recent New Year's Eve celebrations have shown . . . The integration of this army of millions from diverse cultural backgrounds will take years, if it can be successful at all.⁴

Steinbach's letter captures the anxiety that the arrival of large numbers of foreigners induced. The idea that many were 'unknown' hints at a potentially sinister and threatening presence. Unspoken here is that many of those claiming humanitarian protection were Muslims, though other commentators were less reluctant to point this out, as we illustrate below.

Questions of integration and coexistence returned to the political agenda. They were discussed in the workplace and over the dinner table, in television shows and during election campaigns. Islam and its place in, and compatibility with, German society, as well as the presence or absence of shared values, came under scrutiny – a trend that was shared across European countries in the 2010s (Göle 2015). The well-known words by Germany's former President, Christian Wulff, made during celebrations to mark the anniversary of the country's reunification in October 2010, namely, that 'now Islam also belongs to Germany', were again openly contested. In this period of the mid 2010s, popular books on immigration-related topics appeared and were fiercely debated. Some widely read

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authors denounced Islam as violent, oppressive and patriarchal (Abdel-Samad 2015, 2016; Schwarzer 2016). Prior to the arrival of hundreds of thousands of Muslim asylum seekers in Germany in 2015–16, high-impact publications had criticized Germany's experiment with immigration and multicultural pluralism as flawed and detrimental to cohesion (Ateş 2007; Buschkowsky 2012; Sarrazin 2010). Other commentators, however, had criticized what they saw as a dangerous rise of Islamophobia and its threat to Germany's plural and secular democracy (Bax 2015; Benz 2010). Reactions to the refugee crisis intensified the increasingly divisive debate about the social implications of difference and diversity, and the complex manifestations of both.

In a country in which the history of the Third Reich powerfully shapes social and cultural debate (Linke 1999; Macdonald 2009; Pearce 2008), the prominent university professor and SPD politician Gesine Schwan could tell Günther Jauch, a talk-show host, in December 2014: 'what used to be Judaism in the past is Islam today. This is directed prejudice'. Her comparison drew criticism as much as support, illustrating that discussing cultural difference and diversity in Germany has particularly awkward dimensions. These derive, among other aspects, from the horrific history of the Holocaust, diverging democratic traditions following the division into a socialist east and a capitalist west, and the consequences of work immigration during the postwar economic boom years. In addition, neglect of minority communities and their aspirations for participation, a lack of engagement with German colonial history (eclipsed by the Third Reich and the Holocaust), division over the meaning of 'integration', the country's growing attraction for young Europeans, and its emergence as the leading power on the continent in the wake of the 2008 financial crisis contribute to the distinct situation of Germany. On 27 January 2016, Ruth Klüger, a Holocaust survivor and Professor Emerita of German Studies at the University of California, Irvine, addressed the German Parliament, the Bundestag, on the anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz. At the time, thousands of asylum seekers continued to arrive in Germany every day. Very shortly before her address, acts of sexual violence committed by foreigners in Cologne during the New Year's Eve celebrations had fanned criticism regarding the challenges associated with cultural difference, eliciting what many considered xenophobic comments (see Kosnick, Chapter 7 in this volume). Klüger, born in 1931, closed her address with the following words:

Ladies and gentlemen – I have now spoken for some time about modern slavery as forced labour in Nazi Europe, citing examples from the process of suppression that marked postwar Germany. But since then, a new generation – no,

even two or even three new generations, have grown up here. This land, which was responsible for the worst crimes of the century eighty years ago, has won the world's praise today, thanks to its open borders and the magnanimity with which you have accepted, and continue to do so, the number of Syrian and other refugees. I am one of the many people that have moved from surprise to admiration. And this was the main reason why I accepted your invitation with great pleasure, seizing the opportunity, in this event, in this capital city, to be able to speak about former wrongdoings – here, in this place in which a rival role model has emerged, following the seemingly humble and yet heroic motto: we will manage.

Her final three words – in German, *wir schaffen das* – had become a contested slogan. Uttered repeatedly by Angela Merkel as positive encouragement and reassurance, many engaged Germans put the motto into practice in pro-refugee initiatives. Those opposing the political elite's openness, however, saw the Chancellor's statement and its continuous repetition as intentionally provocative. Klügler's connection of the Nazi Holocaust with the moral implications of current political challenges, through a notion of historical responsibility (see also Karakayali, Chapter 8 in this volume), provides the antithesis to Erika Steinbach's insistence on the rule of law and the incompatibility of different cultural traditions. These two positions represent the poles of a spectrum of responses to the refugee crisis. Whereas some commentators invoked a 'bigger picture' – or the importance of reconciliation with the Nazi past and Germany's responsibility to welcome those fleeing war and persecution – others were frustrated with the lack of a government pushback, warning of descent into chaos and cultural conflict. Within such complicated social and historical parameters, responses to the refugee crisis variously created, or bolstered, social divisions. In doing so, these responses drew upon Germany's previous experience of immigration and resulting difference.

Germany's Experiences with Immigration and Difference

Situated at the centre of the European continent, Germany has a long history of immigration and settlement, accommodating linguistic, religious, cultural, ethnic and other forms of difference. This historical fact became reflected in the country's federalist traditions, with strong regional parliaments and the principle of subsidiarity, i.e. the devolution of state power to lower levels of governance, which are more in tune with views and expectations (Ritter 2007).⁵ In the late nineteenth century, when new factories and expanding industrial production offered greater economic opportunities, increasing numbers of foreigners settled in the newly-founded

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German Reich. The so-called Ruhr Poles (*Ruhrpolen*), from the Polish-speaking areas of Prussia, were one of the largest groups that shaped newly industrializing urban environments. Under state control, Ruhr Poles moved from rural areas in East Prussia, Silesia and Poznan to the industrializing Ruhr Valley, in the far west of the Reich. On the eve of the First World War, in 1914, over 400,000 *Ruhrpolen* lived in this area, with their own newspapers, associations and even trade unions, testifying to 'an unprecedented extent of local political influence for a minority group' (McCook 2008: 871). Still today, surnames and customs in the Ruhr Valley reveal the legacy of otherwise indistinguishable *Ruhrpolen* descendants. Labourers from other parts of Europe followed and staffed factories and plants before 1914, particularly Italians (Del Fabbro 2008). After the First World War, during the Weimar Republic, Berlin became a centre of Russian émigrés leaving the Soviet Union (Schlögel 1994). Expellees from Alsace-Lorraine, which became French territory again, as well as other displaced persons suffering from the redrawing of state borders across Europe, settled in the country. In many cases, they experienced a hostile reception. Weimar Republic governments, which tended to be short-lived and ineffective, sought to reduce the size of migration to calm social unrest (Oltmer 2005). With the exception of cosmopolitan urban centres, such as Berlin, migration was simply regarded as a pragmatic necessity for military and industrial production. During the Third Reich, millions of forced labourers from conquered territories across the continent worked in German factories and for German companies (Spoerer 2001). Many died from malnutrition or mistreatment. Despite the humiliating experience, a large number could not return home after Nazi Germany's defeat. They were absorbed in 'displaced persons' camps and then settled or moved on to other countries, following the Soviet occupation of Eastern Europe (Bauer 2015).

Well before the postwar boom years, Germany's industrial and economic success, and its Central European location without natural borders, had turned the country into a destination for work migrants, expellees, political refugees, and young men and families searching for better lives. The Nazi dictatorship then persecuted diversion from its ideals of Germanness. There was no space for spontaneous cultural, ethnic, social or political difference in the Third Reich. Victims of Nazi persecution included ethnic minority groups – Jews and Roma most prominently – and others whose lives, views or lifestyles the Nazis considered debased, such as disabled people, homosexuals, Marxists and communists, so-called anti-social elements or Jehovah's Witnesses (Bastian 2001; Garbe 1999; Pohl 2011). Hundreds of thousands escaped into exile to avoid internment and extermination (Sherman 1994). Where flight was impossible for whole

families, parents sent their children abroad (Gigliotti and Tempian 2016). The Nazi legacy shaped the new Germanies. Many countries had offered German Jews and non-Jewish German intellectuals and anti-Nazi activists protection – including the later social democratic Chancellor, Willy Brandt, who escaped to Norway, or the playwright Bertolt Brecht, who found refuge in the United States. After the Nazi regime, this history was the main reason for including Article 16 in West Germany's 1949 postwar Constitution. It simply states: 'Persons persecuted on political grounds shall have the right of asylum.'⁶ The Article reflected a postwar culture of anti-nationalism and *Vergangenheitsbewältigung* – variously translated as 'mastering the past', 'coming to terms with the past' or 'overcoming the past' – which many intellectuals saw as necessary for German society (Huysen 1994). The generous and unprecedented provision of asylum in West Germany remained in place until the early 1990s, when a surge in asylum seekers from the collapsing Eastern Bloc, political unwillingness in the conservative-led government and xenophobic street violence led to the highly contested 'asylum compromise' (*Asylkompromiss*). Under the new Article 16a, the authorities were able to deny protection when an applicant had crossed another safe country on his or her way to Germany (Angenendt 1997: Chapter 2) (for more on this, see below).

The largest migration experience in German history coincided with the end of the Second World War. Other countries in Western Europe shared Germany's experience with large-scale immigration at the end of the conflict, albeit with different characteristics.⁷ Whereas Germany lost its colonies at the end of the First World War and had witnessed limited early immigration from overseas territories (Mazón and Steingröver 2005; Oguntoye 1997),⁸ the end of Empire for Britain and France came with the new international order after the Second World War – and large numbers of former colonial subjects from all over the world moved to France and Britain respectively, where they were considered citizens. Germany's most significant migration movement, by contrast, consisted of people considered ethnically German, even though many of them had lived outside German lands in Central and Eastern Europe before the Second World War. Stalin's decision to move Poland westwards and expel ethnic Germans – copied by governments in other parts of Eastern Europe – meant that the now significantly smaller Germany, soon divided into East and West, had to absorb 14 million displaced persons, so-called *Vertriebene*. (Benz 1985). In 1945, these masses moved westwards with handcarts and stories of destruction, violence, killings, pillaging and mass rape at the hands of the Red Army (Kowalczyk and Wolle 2001). Many perished during the flight. With cities and towns in ruins, residents and expellees, after travelling hundreds of kilometres on foot, forcibly shared restricted living spaces,

often reluctantly on part of the owners, under supervision from the occupying powers and the newly established German authorities. The millions of expellees eventually settled across the country, allocated accommodation by the authorities, and contributed to the political and cultural life of West Germany in particular. Mainly Protestants, their settlement in Germany's Catholic south and the Rhineland led to contact between different Christian denominations and their respective customs and world-views, and thus often to conflict. Expellees set up clubs to celebrate the traditions of their former towns and villages, but they also remained an awkward presence – a constant reminder of Germany's defeat and the disproportionate suffering inflicted by the Nazi dictatorship on the country's eastern territories, whose inhabitants had forever lost their homelands (Franzen and Lemberg 2001). Residents in the villages and towns in which expellees arrived were often hostile: they feared a fight over limited resources and resented the presence of different customs, religious beliefs and lifestyles (Kittel 2007; Kossert 2008).

As expressions of longing for a return to the homeland, expellees' associations conserved culture in gatherings or festivals, which were soon considered backward or revanchist by many West Germans. Consequently, between the 1970s and 1990s, their clubs were increasingly marginalized, and the descendants of *Vertriebenen* soon blended into German society (Jakubowska 2012). During the recent refugee crisis, this experience with religious difference, flight and coexistence was instrumentalized and contested. Whereas some suggested that contemporary German society could manage the refugee situation since it had absorbed a large number of people considered culturally remote before, others claimed that the current asylum seekers' difference, and their religious identity in particular, rendered them more difficult to 'integrate' than postwar expellees (see Karakayali, Chapter 8 in this volume).

The uneasy reception of expellees perhaps foreshadowed West Germany's complicated relationship with foreigners. West German governments sometimes attempted to attract immigrants in accordance with the needs of German companies. Between 1955 and 1973, West Germany concluded agreements with Mediterranean countries to regulate the stay of so-called guestworkers, or *Gastarbeiter*, needed in industry and agriculture. The first agreement was signed in Rome on 22 December 1955, coordinating the work migration of unskilled Italian labourers. It became a blueprint for subsequent accords with other countries (Herbert 2001: 203). The economic boom necessitated government efforts to promote what was initially considered temporary migration, and not settlement. As a result of guestworker agreements, when refugees from the socialist German Democratic Republic (GDR) are included in the figures, no

region in Europe accommodated a greater number of foreign migrants in the second half of the twentieth century than West Germany (Münz et al. 1999: 17). In the 1960s, net labour migration reached the hundreds of thousands, mainly Italians, Spaniards and Greeks, but also Austrians and Dutch nationals. Two-thirds of them were male (Hubert 1998: 295). In 1961, West Germany signed an agreement with the Turkish government to coordinate the transfer of workers to West Germany. The agreement differed from previous ones with Italy, Spain, and Greece: the period of residence was limited to two years and there were no provisions to permit family members to join male labourers (Hunn 2005: 30). It was not even considered that the men who were invited to toil in factories could become German. The term *Gastarbeiter* illustrates political reasoning at the time: workers were considered guests in Germany, with a limited identity of temporary labourers, not citizens or citizens-to-be with rights comparable to those held by the native population. Their status as transient noncitizens may also account for the fact that they were accommodated in appalling conditions, as this description of a building in Düsseldorf in the 1970s reveals:

In a room of no more than 15m², six Turkish and Greek guestworkers live together. Even though it is only half past eight in the evening, they are all lying in their beds. But what else is there to do in this hole? There aren't even enough chairs. In the middle of the room, below an awkwardly dangling light bulb, there is a small table, with 'tablecloth' made from newspapers. The floor is bare and filthy, no different from the walls. You will search in vain for a picture or curtains . . . There is no stove for these men from the south, who miss nothing more than the sun and warmth here. One struggles to find the right words to describe the toilet: the floor covered in a dirty puddle, the bare bowl without a seat. (Herbert 2001: 215)

While arrival and distribution were painstakingly planned, little consideration was given to enabling supposedly temporary migrants to live dignified lives by establishing linguistic autonomy and political or social participation. In the 1960s, the Swiss author Max Frisch famously stated with regard to Swiss and German reactions to such supposedly short-lived work-migration: 'we called for workers, but human beings came'. Frisch captured the lackadaisical attitude towards non-Germans, who were confined to their status as foreign workers and whose aspirations, plans, desires and demands later surprised German society and politics. As the critical tone in the newspaper report from Düsseldorf testifies, journalists and the public soon began to pay more attention to the presence of guestworkers and the implications for German society. In the late 1960s, social challenges became more apparent in urban quarters. With the economic

crisis, guestworker agreements were stopped in 1973 (Berlinghoff 2013). A total of 14 million foreign workers had come to West Germany between 1955 and 1973, and 11 million returned home. The three million who stayed in West Germany were joined by their families and had more children, thus growing into a population of 4.8 million people by 1990.

In East Germany, the situation was different. Since many East Germans had fled the country, there existed a shortage of workers in the socialist Germany, too. In addition to Soviet troops living in barracks, without much contact to the local population (Kowalczyk and Wolle 2001), foreign labourers from fellow socialist countries were brought into the GDR to work in factories, including from Cuba, Vietnam, Mozambique and Algeria (Vogel and Wunderlich 2011; Zwengel 2011). In most cases, they were segregated from the GDR population – much more so than was the case in West Germany. Private contact was not allowed, workspaces were divided, and separate changing rooms in factories or plants were the norm (Geyer 2001). The number of these contract workers (*Vertragsarbeiter*) was small. In 1989, there were 59,000 Vietnamese contract workers in East Germany. They lived in state-sponsored and self-contained accommodation. Relationships with native Germans were not permitted: if female foreign workers became pregnant as a result of such contact, they were asked to have an abortion or leave the country (Wolle 2015). In addition to the Vietnamese, in 1989, significant groups of foreign migrants came from Poland (51,700), Mozambique (15,500) and the Soviet Union (14,900). Foreign students and socialists fleeing repressive regimes elsewhere were welcomed in the GDR – such as Greeks or Chileans. Their presence permitted some everyday interaction, even though the small numbers were often limited to urban centres, and the GDR regime emphasized national homogeneity over diversity (Behrends et al. 2003; Poutrus and Müller 2005). As a result, the total number of foreigners when the Berlin Wall fell was 191,200 – tiny compared to West Germany (Bade and Oltmer 2005). Leaving aside economic benefits, the living situation of migrants in the GDR was often difficult:

There was much talk about the friendship among peoples in the GDR. But peoples are an ideological abstraction. People, however, are more concrete. Foreigners were only needed as a propaganda tool in the GDR. They were tolerated as labourers. As humans, however, they were unwelcome. The legacy of this situation apparently requires more than a generation to be overcome. (Wolle 2015)

In the everyday lives of many East Germans, foreigners or temporary labour migrants did not play a role. Secluded and isolated, they worked their shifts and kept to themselves. The small number of foreigners, who

were in the main discouraged from mixing with the majority East German population of white industrial and agricultural workers, left a legacy of unfamiliarity with challenging types of cultural or other difference that could have undermined the GDR's ideal of homogeneity and resulting solidarity.

Finally a Country of Immigrants?

Until the 1980s, and despite the unmistakable social reality of immigration and settlement, particularly in West German cities, there was little political recognition of, or engagement with, the lives of foreigners. The social reality had not been intended: political leaders had pursued temporary migration to fill labour shortages, and migrants themselves had not expected their stay to turn into long-term settlement with their families (Fassmann et al. 1997: 60; Hunn 2005: Chapter 3). Because of Germany's restrictive citizenship law, immigrants could not easily become 'German' and struggled for political representation (Brubaker 1998). In the late 1970s, the growing association of immigrant presence with social challenges marked a negative public discourse on *Überfremdung*, literally 'over-foreignization' or 'over-alienization' – a term suggesting that a large number of foreigners could threaten social harmony and native identity (Mandel 2008: Chapter 2). In response, in 1978, the social democratic federal government appointed a Delegate for the Promotion of Integration of Foreign Workers and Their Families (Beauftragter zur Förderung der Integration der ausländischen Arbeitnehmer und ihrer Familienangehörigen). The new office's first incumbent, Heinz Kühn, challenged assimilationist demands, which were prevalent even in his own left-wing SPD party. The use of the term 'integration' here is significant: it was part of a conscious change from assumptions that migrants would either return or should assimilate (*anpassen*) and therefore erase difference. If settlement was to be inevitable, previous political consensus had held, then immigrants should become indistinguishable from Germans. The new approach to integration supported greater degrees of difference and cultural autonomy. Heinz Kühn insisted that 'integration is also possible without assimilation (*Anpassung*) and surrender of one's own identity' (Hunn 2005: 402). Many Turkish former guestworkers in particular expected to return to Turkey and were reluctant to surrender cultural traditions, language and customs; they also had little interest in acquiring citizenship, which would have entailed giving up Turkish passports (Hunn 2005: 404). Kühn's successor, Liselotte Funcke, sought to raise the position's profile further. She published an annual report – *Statistics and Facts Regarding the Situation of Foreigners in Germany (Daten*

und Fakten zur Ausländersituation in Deutschland) – and highlighted the need for immigration in an ageing society in order to maintain social and welfare standards, as well as economic competitiveness. Funcke brought together regional and local Delegates for Foreigners (*Ausländerbeauftragte*) in regular meetings (Die Bundesregierung 2017). Other politicians, however, did not match her interest in the lives of immigrants and foreigners. Frustrated, Funcke resigned in 1991, in protest over a lack of support from the federal government (*Der Spiegel* 2012).

This ambivalence with which successive West – and East – German governments, and then those of the unified Germany, addressed the presence of immigrants continued. The first eight years of the four consecutive conservative-led governments under Helmut Kohl's leadership, between 1982 and 1998, changed little, as Funcke's resignation in the early 1990s demonstrated. Instead of integration measures and proactive policies, the CDU and CSU parties sought to limit migration and immigration, and ran election campaigns with anti-immigration promises. Even in 1998, Bavaria's conservative CSU party – which, at that point, had been part of the federal coalition government for sixteen years – could state in its election manifesto that 'Germany and Bavaria are not countries of immigration' (Hell 2005: 77). This was a visibly false assertion given that, the previous year, over 7.5 million people with non-German passports had residence in Germany (Wagner et al. 2000: 66). The CSU's claim was in stark contrast with the social reality not only of the time when the claim was made in the manifesto, but indeed of previous decades. It revealed, however, the political currency that anti-immigration sentiment still had in Germany just before the turn of the millennium. Such anti-immigration rhetoric also contradicted the then valid (1990) version of Germany's *Ausländergesetz* (literally 'foreigners' legislation'). This granted those living in Germany with non-German passports a new legal status of 'immigrant' – a status that entailed guaranteed residence and limited voting rights. It also rendered the acquisition of German citizenship for the children of former guestworkers at least theoretically more straightforward. Furthermore, guestworkers could now apply for German citizenship after fifteen years in the country.

In the 1980s and early 1990s, the numbers of refugee migrants grew. In the face of this, conservative and social democratic politicians alike portrayed themselves as hard-nosed and tough on asylum seekers. Long before the summer of migration in 2015, public discourse and the media deployed a hysterical language of 'floods' and 'waves', describing Germany as a 'sinking boat' (Briest 2015; Gaserow 2012; Prantl 1993). After 1990, the collapse of the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia led to an unprecedented arrival of asylum seekers asking for protection with

reference to Article 16 of Germany's Constitution. In 1992, just short of 440,000 people demanded asylum in Germany (Briest 2015). Covers of the highbrow weekly news magazine *Der Spiegel* from the time illustrate public unease shortly after the tumultuous events of reunification. Issue 15, from 1992, showed an open border gate, stormed by men with dark hair, overwhelming a handful of hapless border guards. The headline was: 'Asylum – Politicians are Failing'. Later that year, issue 31 featured the image of an elderly woman with a headscarf, surrounded by children glaring at the camera with sad eyes. The headline: 'Onslaught from the Balkans. Who Takes the Refugees?' The success of the Republikaner (Republicans) – a far-right party demanding an end to 'asylum abuse' (*Asylmissbrauch*) – led mainstream political parties to adopt harsher positions (Pagenstecher 2008). This *Asyldebatte* ('asylum debate') polarized German society shortly after the largely optimistic reception of reunification (Bade 1994a). In 1992–93, the government rallied different parliamentary parties to push through constitutional change to amend Article 16, the so-called *Asylkompromiss* ('asylum compromise').⁹ The new Article 16a gave the government the power to declare certain countries 'safe places of origin' (*sicheres Herkunftsland*) and therefore to deny protection to people fleeing from there. Most importantly, it legislated that those who had crossed through a so-called safe third-party state (*sicherer Drittstaat*) on their way to Germany could no longer claim asylum, but ought to be returned to that safe country.

Coinciding with the debate about the 'asylum compromise', violent mobs attacked asylum reception centres and accommodation for foreign labourers in the East German city of Hoyerswerda (Jarusch 2004: Chapter 9; Wowtscherk 2014). Skinheads and neo-Nazis terrorized those they perceived to be 'foreign' – as well as their civil society supporters – across the territory of the former GDR, where socialist state structures had collapsed and authority was absent. Disillusioned and unanchored young people from the former GDR were attracted to aggressive youth cultures (Heinemann and Schubarth 1992). The events in Hoyerswerda and the East German city of Rostock were, however, only the most prominent examples of numerous racist attacks on people singled out as 'non-German' across East and West Germany (Panayi 1994; Partridge 2012). At the same time, protests against xenophobia and neo-Nazi violence illustrated that Germany's newly unified society was splintered along a spectrum ranging from those defending the 1949 Article 16 and anti-Nazism to violent promoters of a blood-based and exclusive nationalism (Funke 1993). For Klaus Bade – a leading scholar of integration in Germany – xenophobia was conditioned by the unwillingness of the political class to approach integration properly and finally acknowledge that Germany

had long been a country of immigration (Bade 1994a: 203). In the 1990s, Bade denounced political irresponsibility with regard to immigration and integration, and rallied sixty scholars to demand more political openness and an acknowledgement of the factual reality of immigrant settlement, as well as a more honest debate about the consequences of diversity and difference for coexistence, urban and religious life, public culture, education policies and citizenship (Bade 1994b).

During that same turbulent period, other significant developments added pressure to debates around immigration and coexistence. Immediately after the war, people from Eastern European countries who could demonstrate German ancestry – many of whom were not expelled in the 1940s – were given the chance to move to Germany and be granted citizenship. These were the so-called *Aussiedler* (literally ‘out-settlers’). With the opening of the Eastern Bloc under Gorbachev, their numbers increased. In the 1990s, over two million *Aussiedler* moved to Germany (BPB 2018). The *Aussiedler* were not considered immigrants, but Germans, and experienced a very different official treatment from those who asked for asylum but could not demonstrate German origin – even though their social reception was often equally frosty (Römhild 1998). Newly arrived *Aussiedler* were entitled to the kind of political inclusion through German citizenship that was still beyond the reach of many guestworkers and their descendants, many of whom had now spent decades in the country. German citizenship law, based on descent rather than place of birth, created complicated categories of inclusion and exclusion, belonging and Germanness (see Linke, Chapter 1 in this volume). Despite their ethnic identity as ‘Germans’, a study found that: (1) most *Aussiedler* had been brought up in Soviet society and held outdated views of Germany; (2) the main reason to leave Eastern Europe was the collapse of the Soviet Union and economic uncertainty rather than a longing to return; (3) having been labelled as ‘Germans’ or ‘Nazis’ in the Soviet Union, the *Aussiedler* were considered ‘Russians’ in Germany and experienced discrimination; (4) especially those who arrived around 1990 knew little to no German, and in many cases experienced a deterioration of their social situation compared with their former homeland, which, in turn, intensified social problems (Schader Stiftung 2007). The 1990s were a turbulent period for the unified country. The co-presence of different kinds of immigrants complicated debates about German identity, belonging and nationhood. While work or other migrants – i.e. foreigners who had, for some reason, come to Germany – were progressively seen by some as immigrants with a right to long-term settlement, many others, including conservative politicians, refused to acknowledge that Germany had become an *Einwanderungsland*, a country of immigration. For them, migrants remained migrants, not

immigrants, and were expected to 'return' to the places they, or their parents or grandparents, had once left. Meanwhile, other facets of difference received less attention. One ramification of the presence of Muslims in the united Germany was conversions to Islam in the East, where former GDR citizens were seeking spiritual opportunities that their closed and homogeneous society had not afforded them (Hoffmann 1995; Özyürek 2015). The coexistence of religions, values, traditions and customs produced a wide-ranging diversification of ideas about what it means to live well, producing multilayered and complicated super-diversity (Vertovec 2007). At the same time, the political response remained inconclusive and tentative in the early to mid 1990s, even though the children of former guestworkers had now grown up in Germany to start their own families, alongside many other groups of foreigners, migrants, immigrants and refugees.

With the 1998 elections, the situation changed. The Social-Democrat/Green coalition government under Chancellor Gerhard Schröder recognized the need to engage with the lives of foreigners and minorities, and initiated political change: it was accepted that immigration to Germany had occurred, would remain an important social fact, and that local, regional and national governments ought to promote integration and participation. Schröder's reform of Germany's citizenship law challenged the exclusive character of *ius sanguinis* – citizenship based only on blood or descent – through the introduction of *ius soli* – citizenship based on one's place of birth or long-term residence. The reform meant that if a parent had lived in Germany for at least eight years and had permanent residence, his or her newborn child was entitled to German citizenship. Limited options for dual citizenship were also introduced. Guestworkers and others who had lived in Germany for at least eight years could apply for a German passport. In most cases, however, applicants for German citizenship were still required to surrender their other passport. The reforms altered traditional German views on citizenship, according to which only individuals with a German parent could also be German (Storz and Wilmes 2007). Schröder established an independent expert commission to suggest changes regarding immigration and integration policy (*Unabhängige Kommission Zuwanderung*). The commission's report highlighted the positive impact of immigration and encouraged supportive political action. Even though the eventual all-party compromise watered down the commission's suggestions and disappointed many experts, the new legislation (*Gesetz zur Steuerung und Begrenzung der Zuwanderung und zur Regelung des Aufenthalts und der Integration von Unionsbürgern und Ausländern*) seemed to end decades of political denial of Germany being a country of immigration (Busch 2007: 410–12). Political recognition, even though belated and partial,

and contested by some pundits and organizations, initiated new debates about belonging and coexistence. The Green Party, buoyed by government responsibility, advanced positive views on multiculturalism and diversity (Vollmer 2009: 210, 346, 375f). Marieluise Beck, a Green Party member and the new federal government's Delegate for Foreigners – in 2002, the position was renamed Delegate for Migration, Refugees and Integration – raised awareness with the annual Migration Report (*Migrationsbericht*) and advanced progressive views on society. She highlighted the growing diversification within immigrant populations along socioeconomic and other lines, and criticized simplistic reductions to supposed ethnic community identities. Her 2005 Memorandum stated:

Germany is a society of immigration. Immigration over the past 50 years has changed our society fundamentally. Around 14 million people with a migration background live in Germany today: they are immigrants themselves or immigrants' children, born in Germany. The official statistics on foreigners do not sufficiently mirror changing social realities. The official register tells us that currently 6.7 million people with foreign passports live in Germany. Over the past years, however, also four million *Aussiedler*, who hold German passports, moved to this country. 1.5 million children from bi-national marriages are growing up here, holding German citizenship. And since the reform of the citizenship law [in 2000], over one million foreigners have been become German . . . Foreigners, naturalized citizens, *Aussiedler* or children from bi-national or foreign marriages – the population of Germany has become more diverse, ethnically, linguistically, culturally and religiously. One in five marriages is bi-national. One in four new-born children have at least one foreign parent. One in three young people in West Germany have a migration background. In some larger urban areas, 40 percent of young people come from immigrant families – and the percentage is growing. (Beck 2005)

Beck's Memorandum at the end of the Red-Green coalition government in 2005 – the autumn elections led to the first Merkel chancellorship – was an acknowledgement of a social reality that previous governments had refused, particularly the conservative CDU and CSU parties. In 1998–99, Roland Koch, who ran for premier in the state of Hesse, organized a political campaign against Red-Green's planned reform of German citizenship law, which would have permitted dual citizenship for the children of guestworkers born in Germany. Koch polarized the debate and won the elections against the SPD premier. Many voters rejected the progressive broadening of citizenship definitions and greater social inclusion (Klärner 2001). In regional elections in North-Rhine Westphalia in 2000, the CDU contender, Jürgen Rüttgers, attacked the Schröder government plans for a German Green Card, aimed at facilitating highly skilled immigration from Southeast Asia to boost the growing IT sector,

with the slogan: '[German] children rather than Indians' (*Kinder statt Inder*). Thus, the changing social reality did not produce a consensus on political responses to difference around the turn of the millennium. Immigration continued to be exploited for divisive politics. Nonetheless, even the grand coalition government of the SPD and the CDU that came to power in 2005 could not turn back the clock. In 2006, the then Interior Minister, Wolfgang Schäuble, a conservative politician, established the Islam Conference (*Islamkonferenz*), seeking to construct a platform for exchange between the large number of Muslim associations and government (Busch and Goltz 2011). The Conference institutionalized a space for dialogue between politicians and Muslims, who were represented by particular Islamic organizations. The format seemed to testify to the normalizing of participation in democratic processes, but critics have shown that the Conference intensified a sense of alienation among immigrant communities that were reduced to their 'other' religious identities as Muslims, neglecting the complex and layered identities of contemporary Germans (Bayat 2016; Tezcan 2012). Discussions around the Islam Conference illustrated how the public debate on diversity and pluralism was shifting to an almost exclusive concern with those residents, some German citizens, who were increasingly reduced to their Muslim-ness, as their place in German society remained contested.

Being German and Belonging to Germany

Besides their economic importance, the contribution of immigrants and their descendants to social and cultural life in Germany can no longer be ignored. They have entered debates about living and belonging in Germany. Writers such as Navid Kermani, Rafik Schami or Wladimir Kaminer, for example, describe the challenge of living in a society in which the idea of hybrid identities or cultural difference continues to be perceived as threatening (for example, see Kaminer 2000; Kermani 2010). Fatih Akin's 2004 film *Gegen die Wand* (*Against the Wall*) problematized the clash of conservative Turkish values with the aspirations of guestworkers' children, caught in-between family constraints and the values of their younger peer groups. *Gegen die Wand* won the Golden Bear at the Berlin Film Festival and shaped debates about the negotiation of cultural customs and self-making in a heterogeneous and plural society. Scholars have suggested dropping the term 'migrant' – as in 'migrant background' – from describing the lives and identities of people who have spent decades in Germany and ought to be considered 'post-migrants', defined by their political and social attitudes, not ascribed ethnic identities (Bojadžijev and

Römhild 2014; also Foroutan and Tinius, Chapter 6 and Chapter 10 in this volume respectively).

German cities have been visibly changing as a consequence of long-term immigration and settlement (Schönwälder et al. 2016). New and grand mosques have been built across the country and Islamic cultural centres have moved into attractive buildings, rather than being hidden away in backyard rooms or disused garages (see Kuppinger, Chapter 4 in this volume for an account from the city of Stuttgart). In 2005, the Sehlik mosque in Berlin was inaugurated, complete with proud displays of Islamic ornamental art and two large minarets, signalling the self-confidence among Berlin-based German Turks or Turkish Germans. Similar projects have been launched across the country. Cultural associations, theatres, companies, enterprises, political demands and other forms of engagement from immigrants and their descendants shape urban life across the country. At the same time, however, anti-immigration protest and often violence have accompanied pluralism. Muslims in particular, increasingly portrayed as 'other' and alien, have been on the receiving end of both physical and political attacks (Bax 2015; Benz 2010; Çakir 2016). Muslim men are popularly depicted as oppressors of wives, sisters and daughters, complicating the identities of male Muslims in a diversifying Germany while denying female agency, accompanied by accusations of an 'integration failure', usually understood as nonassimilation (Pratt Ewing 2008). At the same time, other attempts to conceptualize difference have also led to orientaling hypersexual fantasies about the supposedly superior stamina of nonwhite men in particular (Partridge 2012). Differences also remain uneven: the Vietnamese or Chinese communities in Germany, for example, have long been considered 'good immigrants' and have popularly been viewed as hard-working and rewarded with educational success (Rüther 2010), in contrast to the more negative perceptions of Turkish or Arab groups, who are usually stereotyped indiscriminately as unsuccessful 'Muslims' (Çakir 2014; Loginov 2017). The expansion of citizenship as a project of political inclusion, launched in 2000 with Schröder's citizenship reform, did not stop debates about belonging. New divisions, categories and practices of exclusion have emerged, such as 'linguistic citizenship' and the policing of speech boundaries (see Linke, Chapter 1 in this volume).

Furthermore, as in other parts of Europe, Germany has experienced a 'multiculturalism backlash' (Vertovec and Wessendorf 2010). In 2010, Chancellor Merkel declared that multiculturalism had 'failed' as a principle of social organization, while nonetheless assuring that Islam was a part of Germany (*Spiegel Online* 2010). This led to debates about what this alleged failure of multiculturalism should entail and which policies

might replace it, as well as how it could go along with the claim that 'Islam belongs to Germany' (Detjen 2015). As an alternative to *Multikulti* – the German version of multiculturalism – ideas about a *Leitkultur* were resurrected. The term is difficult to translate, but it suggests the existence of a dominant set of values, views and behaviours – a culture – that should guide or lead, and be shared by, all members of a given society. Introduced in 1996 by the Syrian-born German political scientist Bassam Tibi, *Leitkultur* was needed, he argued, as a shared set of values to provide cohesion in a diversifying society. This was especially crucial in Germany, Tibi suggested, since the country's ethnicity-focused view of identity would continue to prevent immigrants and their descendants from becoming recognized as 'German'. Values and ethics must thus act as the glue of such an otherwise unstable society (Tibi 1996). The concept was soon simplified by conservative politicians demanding assimilation and the adaptation of 'German' values. Popularly introduced in 2000 by Friedrich Merz, a CDU politician, the term still informed responses to the so-called refugee crisis when Thomas de Maizière, the then conservative Interior Minister, renewed the demand for a *Leitkultur* in 2017 (Wittrock 2017). In the wake of the 2017 general elections, which saw the anti-immigration Alternative for Germany (AfD) party surge to 12.6 per cent, various conservative politicians and pundits demanded a reorientation towards this supposed *Leitkultur* – the content of which has remained undefined and vague, but that serves to exclude certain minority values and those of Muslims in particular.

The multiculturalism backlash was also revealed in vitriolic debates about immigration and diversity following the initial discussion about *Leitkultur*. Publications by two SPD politicians incensed the public discourse. Thilo Sarrazin's (2010) *Deutschland schafft sich ab (Germany Does away with Itself/Germany Abolishes Itself)* suggested how immigration was undermining cohesion and weakening German society. Muslims, whom Sarrazin considered to be generally inferior to non-Muslims in economic and educational performance, were seen as the main culprits (Geyer 2010). Sarrazin's book tour across the country attracted protests as well as large audiences; some accused him of racism, while others defended the controversial author as a voice of truth against political correctness (Fahrenheit 2011). The Sarrazin-debate polarized or highlighted existing polarization, with various experts, politicians and public commentators supporting or attacking minorities (Abadi et al. 2016). Two years later, the then Mayor of Berlin's Neukölln district, Heinz Buschkowsky, published *Neukölln ist überall (Neukölln is Everywhere)*. Buschkowsky, who resigned in 2015, had become a prominent critical voice on integration and multiculturalism. At the time of the publication, ethnically diverse Neukölln had a negatively

inflated nationwide reputation for its sizeable Turkish and Arabic minorities, high welfare dependency, poverty and crime. Buschkowsky's straight-talking and old-West-German demeanour, coupled with a grating Berlin accent, made him a talk show regular. In *Neukölln ist überall* (2012), he warned that multiculturalism forestalled integration and that too few second- or third-generation immigrants worked hard enough to escape poverty. The book was as popular and divisive as Sarrazin's (see e.g. Heine 2012).

As debates raged about the best responses to the presence of immigrants, and especially Muslim immigrants, violence against them continued. In 2011, the East German neo-Nazi National-Socialist Underground (NSU) terror organization was discovered (Gensing 2012; Schmincke and Siri 2013). The group had killed nine men considered 'foreign' between 2000 and 2006, and carried out a number of attacks on immigrants and their businesses. For years, the authorities had failed to detect a pattern and assumed that inner- or intra-ethnic conflict among minority groups was the reason for the killings. Scholars suggested that the unsatisfactory response to the murders revealed the prevalence of stereotypes and rightwing thinking inside the German state (Bade 2013b; Funke 2015). In subsequent years, as the numbers of asylum seekers arriving in Europe, and in Germany in particular, rose quickly, debates intensified. The newcomers reached a country in which ideas about what it means to live with difference, and about political and civil society responses to social pluralism, were already variously marked by contradictions, populism, fear, rejection, normalization and ambivalence. Even before the long summer of migration in 2015–16, the situation had been complex, and the corresponding debates divisive, with some drawing on notions of historical responsibility, humanitarianism and the enriching aspects of diversity to justify enthusiasm and engagement with difference, while others saw cultural coexistence in negative terms, leading to social decay and a depletion of Germany. The refugee crisis interjected more complexity and raised the question of how welcome migrants or immigrants – and especially refugees – really were.

The Chapters in This Volume

Refugees Welcome? brings together international experts to analyse this complexity. Across four parts, the volume situates the events of 2015–16 in their social and historical context. This context was shaped by a particular history of immigration, the Holocaust, defeat and occupation after 1945, ethnic visions of citizenship, and the East-West division, among

other factors. Other important facets regard the long-term stabilization of supposedly temporary work migration turning into immigration and settlement, as well as belated attempts at – and debates about – integration and post-reunification struggles over creating a new Germany out of two societies (Borneman 1992). Our authors present a range of interpretations that uncover more complex realities. Some, such as Linke and Partridge, suggest a persistence of mechanisms of exclusion aimed at those considered ‘foreign’. Schiffauer, Karakayali and Heckmann, by extension, explore possibilities of new forms of solidarity and civic engagement. Many of those asylum seekers and refugees who arrived in 2015–16 will become the new Germans. Their experiences might be similar to those of the earlier generations of immigrants and their descendants, analysed by, for example, Tize and Reis, Foroutan, Tinius and Kuppinger. In some cases, what our authors describe is a persistence of ‘othering’ forms of differencing, as is shown to be the case even by some younger generation migrants themselves (Tize and Reis), but in others, difference itself is viewed positively as part of a vibrant diversity (Kuppinger). More than anything, what the chapters collectively show is that there is undoubtedly change underway, but that the direction of travel is not fully settled; there remain reasons for pessimism, but there are hopeful signs too.

The first half of this book – Parts I and II – covers longer-term situations and developments relating to difference and diversity in Germany, while the second – Parts III and IV – looks more directly at the refugee crisis of 2015 and 2016.

Part I, ‘Making Germans and Non-Germans’, begins with Uli Linke’s discussion of how Germanness has been construed historically and into the present both through powerful – and often racialized and gendered – iconography, as well as through what she calls ‘linguistic nationalism’, in which a lack of fluency in the German language can act to reinforce exclusion and act as a proxy for other forms of non-German difference. Located in a discussion of the rise of a wider rhetoric of diversity within Europe, Linke’s chapter opens up important questions about how far apparent change is belied by enduring or even revived nationalism and populism. It is followed by Friedrich Heckmann’s outlining of legal developments within Germany, which formally define citizenship, and wider changing institutional responses to cultural difference and diversity. He shows that federal, regional and local levels of government have responded to the reality of an increasingly diverse society with the establishment of special offices and delegates, complemented by EU and civil society actors, including minority communities and their associations – thus importantly pointing out the range of agencies and actors involved. Gökce Yurdakul then takes us into an example of dealing with more specific difference, in

this case how religious difference has been addressed, specifically in relation to ritual male circumcision, as practised by both Jews and Muslims. Beginning with a court case involving a botched circumcision, which disfigured the genitalia of a boy and was considered bodily harm by a judge, she argues that the German state continues to stigmatize minority practices, and thus Jews and Muslims in general, placing supposedly secular values over the cultural and religious autonomy of non-Christians. Despite moments of apparent change, then, Yurdakul argues that Jews and Muslims tend to remain socially excluded.

Part II, 'Potential for Change', brings together chapters that suggest possible ways in which difference and diversity may be changing in Germany, albeit not without reservations. Petra Kuppinger's chapter draws on her long-term fieldwork with Turkish Muslims in Stuttgart to point out the flourishing of what she calls 'vernacular creativity' in relation to cultural practices associated with Islam. Changes in *iftar* ceremonies – ritual feasts that are part of Ramadan – as well as certain examples of Islamic architecture and art become, she shows, further elements in diverse cities that embrace the pluralism of multiple religious as well as secular expressions. New practices are also the focus of Carola Tize and Ria Reis in their ethnographic research with young people inhabiting urban spaces in Berlin's Neukölln district. While the children or grandchildren of former guest-workers, many of whom hold German passports, still struggle to refer to themselves as 'German', the authors show that these new generations identify strongly with their neighbourhoods. On a day-to-day basis, they negotiate their identities, including the difficulty of bridging traditional expectations with their own aspirations. We end this part with Naika Foroutan's setting out of the 'post-migrant' paradigm as both an aspiration and a descriptor of a social reality in which the identities of people in Germany should not, she claims, be limited by the migration biographies of their ancestors. Her argument is not that those who were once labelled 'migrants' should now be called 'post-migrants', but rather that contemporary German society should be viewed through a lens in which the realities of migration experiences and histories are recognized, but not used as fixed markers of difference to categorize and define.

Part III, 'Refugee Encounters', looks at how the events of 2015–16 challenged and transformed social realities. Kira Kosnick explores the heated debate surrounding attacks on women during the 2015 New Year's Eve celebrations in Cologne. She argues that what she calls the 'scandalization of deviant behaviour', with many pundits calling for urgent intervention to restore the social order, amounted to a 'moral panic'. Simplistic racist and colonial representation cast perpetration as a result of ingrained cultural behaviour. Involved here were, she suggests, longstanding ways of

thinking about cultural 'others' and indeed about culture itself. Serhat Karakayali focuses on a very different dimension of refugee encounter during 2015 and 2016, namely the culture of welcome. Based on substantial quantitative and qualitative research, he provides an in-depth analysis of civil society responses to the arrival of asylum seekers. This shows that the desire of local inhabitants to help inspired social action across the country, but that there was a wide range of motives involved. Of special interest here is the way in which political memory – though not direct intergenerational family memory – was often invoked in support of such action. In Jan-Jonathan Bock's chapter, by contrast, historical memory is deployed by the anti-Islam Pegida movement in Dresden to support a sense of victimhood and marginalization, which, he argues, is part of a more complex background to their position than is usually recognized. Looking also at volunteers involved in welcoming asylum seekers, in this case in the refugee church (*Flüchtlingskirche*) in Berlin, he draws on ethnographic fieldwork to highlight the more complex realities of encounters in practice, such as the development of more critical views on cultural difference by church volunteers through their encounter with refugees.

The final part of the book, 'New Initiatives and Directions', includes further chapters that describe in depth initiatives undertaken with refugees and that in various ways suggest possible future directions, albeit rather differently. Jonas Tinius takes a longer view, as well as looking at the more recent involvement of refugees, to examine the importance of theatre for the negotiation and performance of difference and diversity. His ethnography of two public theatre groups shows how these could act as 'interstitial agents', reflecting on civil society as well as providing participants with possibilities for trying out new forms of connectivity and transcendence of existing identities. Partly on the basis of experience of a film project with refugees or those he calls noncitizens, Damani J. Partridge examines the politics of hospitality involved in the culture of welcome. He argues that this often involved the idea of pity, claiming that this does not contribute to the development of solidarity, which he regards as a more appropriate ambition and one that might indeed transcend a focus on difference and diversity. Also examining the culture of welcome, Werner Schiffauer explores it as a social movement, offering new possibilities for political action. He shows that hundreds of thousands of Germans joined support projects and sought to shape the social response to a political challenge, creating thick local networks that could react flexibly to new expectations and demands. Schiffauer is optimistic that the enormous civil society effort was not a short-lived response to an emergency, but rather indicates a durable social trend in the face of a growing diversification of life-worlds.

Refugees and other newcomers have been both welcomed and rejected, and these two responses and the many variations in-between seem likely to continue. What the contributors here collectively show is that ways of dealing with the so-called refugee crisis were part of longer histories and memories than is usually recognized. Equally, as the volume also makes clear, they are part of more extensive and complex change. We are not only seeing accommodation or integration into existing German society, but also change in that society itself. Moreover, as we see in many of the chapters, this change is not only being formed by policy-makers, but is also being actively crafted into being on the ground. It takes place in localities and everyday encounters, and in spontaneous interactions and initiatives, as well as in more formal political processes. Attending to these and showing how deeply and thoroughly they matter is, we believe, a major contribution of this book.

Using the question of whether refugees are welcome as our springboard, then, our volume seeks to show how this question has relevance beyond the events of 2015–16. This was undoubtedly an important moment in German history, and indeed in the history of Europe, and deserves the documentation and analysis that we provide here for that reason. But it also takes us into more enduring social questions of how people can live with and across difference, and of the concepts and practices that can enable more convivial collective futures. By bringing together chapters that variously reflect directly on the refugee crisis and the wider histories and contexts of which it was part, we seek to provide new insight into both the specific context and its broader social and analytical ramifications. Looking in depth in this way is, we believe, vital to trying to grasp the implications and direction of travel of transformations that are still being worked out. Moreover, it is crucial as a contribution to ongoing debates about the kind of society that we want in the future – and about how best to achieve it.

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Notes

1. On the media impact of the death of Alan Kurdi, see: <http://visualsecialmedialab.org/projects/the-iconic-image-on-social-media> (retrieved 2 July 2018).
2. <http://www.bmi.bund.de/SharedDocs/Pressemitteilungen/DE/2017/01/asylantraege-2016.html> (retrieved 2 July 2018).
3. <https://www.mut-gegen-rechte-gewalt.de/service/chronik-vorfaelle> (retrieved 2 July 2018).
4. All translations are those of the authors, unless stated otherwise.
5. One example of historical immigration movements would be the Huguenots, French Calvinists who left predominantly Catholic France during a century-long religious war in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Some 40,000–50,000 of them settled in German regions (von Thadden and Magdelaine 1985). Around 20,000 of them moved to Prussia, and first of all to Berlin, which prospered culturally as a result of Huguenot labour and creativity, developing from a rural backwater into one of Germany's leading cities (Gahrig 2000).
6. In German: 'Politisch Verfolgte genießen Asylrecht'.
7. Other colonial powers, such as France or Britain, witnessed the arrival of large numbers of African, Caribbean and South Asian migrants following the dissolution of Empire. These immigrants were granted citizenship, unlike in Germany, where legal notions of citizenship remained closely tied to descent (Brubaker 1998; Hansen 2000: Part I; Weil 1991).
8. During the Third Reich, the Nazi regime pursued the forced sterilization of the small minority of black Germans – around 20,000–25,000 people – as part of its national purification efforts (Pommerin 1979). On the uneasy legacy of colonialism in German cities, see, for example, Ulrich van der Heyden's analysis of Berlin's street names and architecture (2008)
9. The SPD, CDU/CSU and FDP parliamentary groups supported the change and provided the necessary two-thirds majority. The Greens (Bündnis 90) and PDS (post-GDR socialist party) rejected the change.

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