

Francia. Forschungen zur westeuropäischen Geschichte

Herausgegeben vom Deutschen Historischen Institut Paris

(Institut historique allemand)

Band 32/3 (2005)

DOI: 10.11588/fr.2005.3.64100

Rechtshinweis

Bitte beachten Sie, dass das Digitalisat urheberrechtlich geschützt ist. Erlaubt ist aber das Lesen, das Ausdrucken des Textes, das Herunterladen, das Speichern der Daten auf einem eigenen Datenträger soweit die vorgenannten Handlungen ausschließlich zu privaten und nicht-kommerziellen Zwecken erfolgen. Eine darüber hinausgehende unerlaubte Verwendung, Reproduktion oder Weitergabe einzelner Inhalte oder Bilder können sowohl zivil- als auch strafrechtlich verfolgt werden.

Pertti AHONEN, *After the Expulsion. West Germany and Eastern Europe 1945–1990*, Oxford (Oxford University Press) 2003, 313 p.

Ahonen states in the introduction that this book is based on his PhD dissertation at Yale¹. And this is where the book has its greatest strength. The historical analysis is focussed on the early period of the Federal Republic up to 1969, with the Adenauer years necessarily accounting for the largest part². During that time the accommodation and integration of the expellees were the most pressing social problems facing the infant Republic³. Ahonen's analysis reviews the historic reality and deals with the work of successive Adenauer governments in this field in considerable detail⁴. The relative homogeneity of the expellees soon found forceful political and institutional expression in the form of the Expellee organisations. On the one hand, they made every endeavour to ensure that the preservation of their territorial claims in the East should be a firm tenet of government policy. On the other hand, government support – financial or ideological – for the Expellee organisations was much criticised at the time as unwarranted and even corruptive, not least because their membership included a sprinkling of radical diehards, as well as former Nazis, and because their off the record rhetoric was sometimes strongly revisionist and violent. Nevertheless, Ahonen shows that Adenauer's plan to make the Expellee organisations docile and to control them through careful funding decisions and the provision of career opportunity for their – often able – leaders proved successful. The integrative and moderating success was clearly demonstrated in the text of the Charter of the Expellees, in which the latter pledged that they would never use force to achieve their right to self-determination and a home⁵.

Ahonen goes on to show that during Erhard's chancellorship government policy did not change much in relation to the Expellee organisations⁶. It was only with the advent of the CDU/CSU, SPD ›Grand‹ Coalition in 1966 that the tide began to turn against the Expellee organisations. The West German electorate was increasingly inclined to accept the realities of postwar international politics, and at the same time a more constructive *Ostpolitik* was being developed, mainly within the SPD. However, the period of the Grand Coalition (1966–1969) saw no serious reappraisal of West Germany's foreign policy. The CDU/CSU was still the dominant partner, blatantly obvious in the Chancellor Kurt Georg Kiesinger. Foreign policy, particularly towards the East and in relation to the expellees, was still the *domaine réservé* of the Chancellor – a practice well established since Adenauer – not of his Foreign Minister Willy Brandt. Brandt's ideas and initiatives towards a progressive *Ost-*

1 P. AHONEN, *The Expellee Organisations and West German Ostpolitik, 1949–1969*, Ph.D. dissertation, Yale University 1999.

2 Adenauer was Chancellor from 1949 to 1963.

3 In 1950, eight million expellees had settled in the FRG with a total population of about 50 million, see P. AHONEN, *After the Expulsion. West Germany and Eastern Europe 1945–1990*, p. 1.

4 With regard to Adenauer expertise, the dominance of Hans-Peter Schwarz – not just in the German academic establishment – is clearly discernible in this book. The only point where this raises problems is with Schwarz's thesis that Adenauer did not want and even obstructed reunification. Apart from countless occasions where Adenauer contradicted such suggestions, his idea of reunification was developed along well-defined lines in his ›Unity in Freedom‹ argument, i.e. as a matter of principle he saw freedom and democratic liberties as fundamental essentials on which German unity must rest. This explains why free elections and the freedom to determine the military attachment of a reunited Germany were a *sine qua non* for Adenauer. For the ›Einheit in Freiheit‹ argument see, Adenauer (CDU), Chancellor, in *Verhandlungen des Deutschen Bundestages, Wahlperiode I*, 204, p. 8758A, 8760D, 8761B, see also, Ehlers (CDU), *ibid.*, 191, p. 8218A.

5 *Recht auf Selbstbestimmung und Heimat*.

6 Erhard was Chancellor from 1963 to 1966.

politik came to nothing during that time, apart from sharpening the political profile of the SPD by highlighting that there was a rival foreign policy concept.

Although Kiesinger put out feelers for a rapprochement with the East, in particular with Yugoslavia, Poland and Czechoslovakia, they were swiftly withdrawn when the Expellee organisations cried foul. The government fell back on the post war mantra of the Federal Republic's foreign policy towards the East, i.e. the principle that ›Germany‹ still existed within the borders of 1937. Any changes to this fact could be made only in the framework of free negotiations of a peace treaty with the four Allies. Ahonen shows clearly how the cosiness between the Expellee organisations and the CDU/CSU inhibited any moves to develop a constructive policy towards the East and to work up the stamina to see such a policy through. The establishment of this link between foreign policy towards the East and the domestic balance which successive conservative governments tried to strike with the Expellee organisations is the best analytical point of this book. The Expellee organisations were for a long time successful in their effort to establish their revisionist or at least static position towards the East as the post-war policy consensus in the Federal Republic. Ahonen, however, also shows that such positions had lost much of their appeal to the electorate by the late 1960s, neither among groupings with predominantly expellee origins nor among the general population. The 1968 student protests had heralded the coming of a new generation who did not simply accept the wisdoms of their forbearers, who criticised their parents' generation for their commission and omission under the Nazi regime and demanding a right to be heard by those holding power. Despite their origins second-generation expellee children were also caught up in the wave of protest which swept across West Germany. Willy Brandt and his *Ostpolitik* became emblematic for this new age, which also meant the demise of the Expellee organisations, although only slowly. Their stranglehold on government policy towards the East was most obviously broken when the CDU/CSU, which had advocated traditional expellee positions in their election campaign, was defeated at the polls in 1969.

One possible weakness of this book lies in the lack of reference to primary sources. However, a glance at the bibliography shows that Ahonen has extensively consulted archives, libraries and unpublished sources. I assume this was reflected in the footnotes of his PhD thesis to a greater extent than in this book. Although this reduction takes away some of the scholarly splendour, it might well be a deliberate attempt to attract a wider audience than just academic circles. Overall it has become an easily accessible and very readable contribution, which, in its analysis of the expellee problem, fits well the current tendency to place rather more emphasis on the formidable scale of problems West Germany had to contend with in the early post war year.

Thomas HÖRBER, Victoria B. C.

Hope Milliard HARRISON, *Driving the Soviets up the Wall: Soviet-East German Relations, 1953–1961*, Princeton (Princeton University Press) 2003, XX–345 S. (Princeton studies in international history and politics).

Als Harrison 1993 ein Paper über die Beziehungen DDR-Sowjetunion während der zweiten Berlinkrise vorlegte¹, konnte man aufhorchen, zeigte die amerikanische Autorin doch, daß die DDR beträchtlichen Einfluß auf die sowjetische Politik ausübte und nicht reiner Befehlsempfänger war. Sie gehörte somit zu den ersten Autoren, die im verdienstvol-

1 Hope M. HARRISON, *Ulbricht and the Concrete Rose: New Archival Evidence on the Dynamics of Soviet-East German Relations and the Berlin Crisis, 1958–1961*, Cold War International History Project, Working Paper No. 5, Washington, Mai 1993.