Refugees and the Promise of Asylum in Postwar France, 1945–1995

- Provides comprehensive historical contexts to the problems surrounding immigration and refugees in recent French history
- Explores French immigration policy through the use of new archival research
- Reveals within the international refugee regime the flaw of states enforcing international law in consideration of their own priorities

This book recounts France’s responses to refugees from the liberation of Paris in 1944 to the end of the civil wars in the former Yugoslavia in 1995. It questions whether France fulfilled the promise of asylum for those persecuted for the ‘cause of liberty’ made in its Constitution of 1946. Post-war development and the demand for immigrant workers were favourable to refugees from the Communist east, from Franco’s Spain, from Hungary after Insurrection of 1956, and later from Latin America and Indochina. Asylum developed nationally in conjunction with international developments, the interventions of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, and the adoption of the 1951 Refugee Convention. Economic ruptures in the 1970s, however, and the appearance of refugees from Asia and Africa, led to the assertion of national priorities and brought about a sense of crisis, and questions about whether France could continue to fulfil its promise.