

Alsace-Lorraine, German Elsass-Lothringen, area comprising the present French départements of Haut-Rhin, Bas-Rhin, and Moselle. Alsace-Lorraine was the name given to the 5, square miles (13, square km) of territory that was ceded by France to Germany in after the Franco-German War.

We do not mean that he does not see the general use of such a policy, for in Alsace-Lorraine he has told all the world that he intends to pursue it, and has required the German Parliament to delegate the Government of that province to the Crown, precisely on the ground that the Crown will be able to treat Alsace-Lorraine with more tenderness and tact than would be possible were the province to be subjected to the central Legislature. But when Prince Bismarck comes to work out his own ideas of administrative tenderness, one sees at once the hardness of the Prussian temperament, and its incapacity for realising the meaning of a policy of indulgence. Take the case of the " Option " accorded by the Treaty of Frankfort to the Alsace-Lorrainers as to their future nationality. It seems to us perfectly evident that it would have been wise for the German statesmen to interpret that option in the largest possible sense, that there should have been no attempt to force Alsatians and Lorrainers into compulsory exile, that they should have been permitted to call themselves French subjects and to elect to have a French domicile, while driving their business as usual in Alsace or Lorraine, and not urged at all events till the breaking out of a fresh war, to strike their tents and go. But the German Government has not only refused to allow this intermediate state of affairs, and compelled all born Alsatians and Lorrainers to reside in whichever country they choose to abide by, but it has made the significance of this choice even more urgently painful by making all who do not elect to go into France before the 30th September next, liable to the law of German conscription, unless they have already actually served in the French Army or Navy. In other words, before the 30th September next, all inhabitants of Alsace-Lorraine must either choose exile from their homes, or see their sons and brothers incur the liability to be drafted into an Army which will, in all probability, have to fight against the country of their birth and of all their traditions. The decree of the General-Governor of Alsace-Lorraine, which was published at Strasburg on the 7th April, leaves no manner of doubt upon the matter. The only atom of indulgence shown is in the exemption of all who have served in the Army and Navy of France from liability to military service. All others who have been born in or later are from the 1st October next subject to the German military levies. This gives the option to be made before the 3rd September next a dreadfully grim significance. For it means the choice between exile, and besides exile, the sacrifice of all indemnity for the heavy private losses caused by the war, which the Germans have promised to those who remain on the one hand, and not merely alienation of nationality, but also the bitterness of seeing sons and brothers pouring out their blood for what they regard as a wicked cause, the cause of the conqueror of their land, on the other hand. This seems to us an alternative which it was extremely unwise to force at this date upon the inhabitants of a conquered province. It has of course resulted in a great and steady stream of middle-class emigration from these provinces to France, which will not only leave the trade of these flourishing and industrious lands greatly crippled, but is driving into France a great body of war-propagandists, who will have the enormous advantage of pointing to their own sacrifices as guarantees of their sincerity. The old landed gentry of Alsace and Lorraine are, it is said, showing much less of the emigrating zeal, and are for the most part disposed to put up with annexation. But the evil to Germany of this extraordinary rigour is that it will create even more bitterness in the hearts of those who stay than in the hearts of those who go, for it will mingle the poison of a certain amount of humiliation and cruel self-condemnation with their grief. If Prince Bismarck were bent on interpreting the option in this severe sense, he should at least have exempted Alsace-Lorraine for another five years from all military conscription. To make that dreadful liability for the inhabitants the immediate corollary of the option to stay in the province of their birth, was a refinement of cruelty which only the hardened martinetism of the Prussian regime could have regarded as consistent with indulgence. The German papers take immense credit for the extraordinary clemency which exempts Alsace-Lorrainers who have actually served in the French Army and Navy from the German conscription. To have done otherwise would have been the very acme of folly as well as severity.

Troops which must have considered their new service a sort of desertion from the old flag, would have had neither mettle nor discipline. They would in all probability have been centres of mutinous feeling. It will be well for Germany if the new troops to be levied in Alsace-Lorraine in October are not infected with the same dangerous spirit. It was the same excess of wilful and narrow strength which determined him to crush France by exacting such a war indemnity as the world had never before heard of, a war indemnity which has made Germany a positive gainer, and a gainer to a very large extent, by the war, even when all the private losses are deducted, a war indemnity which, if anything could do so, secured the renewal of the war, instead of preventing or deferring it. He is making just the same blunder in Alsace and Lorraine, leaving no safety-valve open for the escape of the passion which conquest causes, compressing it instead into a terrible and destructive force. His antagonists are so inferior to himself in hardness and strength that he learns to despise them, and thinks he can annihilate their rebellious feeling by sheer dead pressure, not seeing that even their inferior resisting might will be capable of great things, if it is once compressed to that point after which all bodies become incompressible. You may compress water within an iron globe till the water exudes through its tense iron case. Prince Bismarck is making precisely such an experiment with the Frenchmen of Alsace-Lorraine. And it is quite within the possibilities that it will be decided by the impartial critics of the future that the one blot upon his political statesmanship was that it was too strong, too incapable of elastic adaptation to the alternating weakness and strength of human hearts.

Chapter 2 : Alsace-Lorraine

The Imperial Territory of Alsace-Lorraine (German: Reichsland Elsaß-Lothringen or Elsass-Lothringen) was a territory created by the German Empire in 1871, after it annexed most of Alsace and the Moselle department of Lorraine following its victory in the Franco-Prussian War.

It should be noted that Alsace is a plain surrounded by the Vosges mountains west and the Black Forest mountains east. It creates Foehn winds which, along with natural irrigation, contributes to the fertility of the soil. In a world of agriculture, Alsace has always been a rich region which explains why it suffered so many invasions and annexations in its history. To protect this highly valued industry, the Romans built fortifications and military camps that evolved into various communities which have been inhabited continuously to the present day. Alemannic and Frankish Alsace[edit] Main article: The Alemanni were agricultural people, and their Germanic language formed the basis of modern-day dialects spoken along the Upper Rhine Alsatian, Alemannian, Swabian, Swiss. Alsace remained under Frankish control until the Frankish realm , following the Oaths of Strasbourg of 843, was formally dissolved in at the Treaty of Verdun ; the grandsons of Charlemagne divided the realm into three parts. Alsace formed part of the Middle Francia , which was ruled by the eldest grandson Lothar I. Lothar died early in 855 and his realm was divided into three parts. The Kingdom of Lotharingia was short-lived, however, becoming the stem duchy of Lorraine in Eastern Francia after the Treaty of Ribemont in 865. Alsace was united with the other Alemanni east of the Rhine into the stem duchy of Swabia. Alsace within the Holy Roman Empire[edit] At about this time, the surrounding areas experienced recurring fragmentation and reincorporations among a number of feudal secular and ecclesiastical lordships, a common process in the Holy Roman Empire. Alsace experienced great prosperity during the 12th and 13th centuries under Hohenstaufen emperors. Frederick I set up Alsace as a province a procuratio , not a provincia to be ruled by ministeriales , a non-noble class of civil servants. The idea was that such men would be more tractable and less likely to alienate the fief from the crown out of their own greed. The province had a single provincial court Landgericht and a central administration with its seat at Hagenau. Strasbourg began to grow to become the most populous and commercially important town in the region. In 1262, after a long struggle with the ruling bishops, its citizens gained the status of free imperial city. A stop on the Paris- Vienna - Orient trade route, as well as a port on the Rhine route linking southern Germany and Switzerland to the Netherlands, England and Scandinavia , it became the political and economic center of the region. Cities such as Colmar and Hagenau also began to grow in economic importance and gained a kind of autonomy within the "Decapole" or "Dekapolis", a federation of ten free towns. As in much of Europe, the prosperity of Alsace came to an end in the 14th century by a series of harsh winters, bad harvests, and the Black Death. These hardships were blamed on Jews, leading to the pogroms of 1306 and 1329. In 1329, Jews of Alsace were accused of poisoning the wells with plague , leading to the massacre of thousands of Jews during the Strasbourg pogrom. Prosperity returned to Alsace under Habsburg administration during the Renaissance. Petite France , Strasbourg Holy Roman Empire central power had begun to decline following years of imperial adventures in Italian lands, often ceding hegemony in Western Europe to France, which had long since centralized power. After the conclusion of the war, France was again free to pursue its desire to reach the Rhine and in 1633 a French army appeared in Lorraine and Alsace. It took up winter quarters, demanded the submission of Metz and Strasbourg and launched an attack on Basel. In 1633, following the Treaty of St. The latter was able to use this tax and a dynastic marriage to his advantage to gain back full control of Upper Alsace apart from the free towns, but including Belfort in when it became part of the demesne of the Habsburg family, who were also rulers of the empire. The town of Mulhouse joined the Swiss Confederation in 1633, where it was to remain until 1798. By the time of the Protestant Reformation in the 16th century, Strasbourg was a prosperous community, and its inhabitants accepted Protestantism in 1538. Martin Bucer was a prominent Protestant reformer in the region. His efforts were countered by the Roman Catholic Habsburgs who tried to eradicate heresy in Upper Alsace. As a result, Alsace was transformed into a mosaic of Catholic and Protestant territories. German Land within the Kingdom of France[edit] This situation prevailed until 1798, when most of Alsace was conquered by France to keep it out

of the hands of the Spanish Habsburgs , who by secret treaty in had gained a clear road to their valuable and rebellious possessions in the Spanish Netherlands , the Spanish Road. Beset by enemies and seeking to gain a free hand in Hungary , the Habsburgs sold their Sundgau territory mostly in Upper Alsace to France in , which had occupied it, for the sum of 1. When hostilities were concluded in with the Treaty of Westphalia , most of Alsace was recognized as part of France, although some towns remained independent. The treaty stipulations regarding Alsace were complex. Although the French king gained sovereignty, existing rights and customs of the inhabitants were largely preserved. France continued to maintain its customs border along the Vosges mountains where it had been, leaving Alsace more economically oriented to neighbouring German-speaking lands. The German language remained in use in local administration, in schools, and at the Lutheran University of Strasbourg , which continued to draw students from other German-speaking lands. The Edict of Fontainebleau , by which the French king ordered the suppression of French Protestantism , was not applied in Alsace. France did endeavour to promote Catholicism. Strasbourg Cathedral , for example, which had been Lutheran from to , was returned to the Catholic Church. However, compared to the rest of France, Alsace enjoyed a climate of religious tolerance. Louis XIV receiving the keys of Strasbourg in France consolidated its hold with the Treaties of Nijmegen , which brought most remaining towns under its control. France seized Strasbourg in in an unprovoked action. These territorial changes were recognised in the Treaty of Ryswick that ended the War of the Grand Alliance. Alsatians played an active role in the French Revolution. On 21 July , after receiving news of the Storming of the Bastille in Paris, a crowd of people stormed the Strasbourg city hall, forcing the city administrators to flee and putting symbolically an end to the feudal system in Alsace. In , Rouget de Lisle composed in Strasbourg the Revolutionary marching song " La Marseillaise " as Marching song for the Army of the Rhine , which later became the anthem of France. At the same time, some Alsatians were in opposition to the Jacobins and sympathetic to the restoration of the monarchy pursued by the invading forces of Austria and Prussia who sought to crush the nascent revolutionary republic. Many of the residents of the Sundgau made "pilgrimages" to places like Mariastein Abbey , near Basel , in Switzerland, for baptisms and weddings. When the French Revolutionary Army of the Rhine was victorious, tens of thousands fled east before it. When they were later permitted to return in some cases not until , it was often to find that their lands and homes had been confiscated. These conditions led to emigration by hundreds of families to newly vacant lands in the Russian Empire in 1794 and again in 1806. A poignant retelling of this event based on what Goethe had personally witnessed can be found in his long poem Hermann and Dorothea. In response to the "hundred day" restoration of Napoleon I of France in 1815, Alsace along with other frontier provinces of France was occupied by foreign forces from 1815 to 1817, [8] including over 100,000 soldiers and 90,000 horses in Bas-Rhin alone. This had grave effects on trade and the economy of the region since former overland trade routes were switched to newly opened Mediterranean and Atlantic seaports. The population grew rapidly, from 1,000,000 in 1790, to 1,500,000 in 1815, and 1,800,000 in 1830. The combination of economic and demographic factors led to hunger, housing shortages and a lack of work for young people. Thus, it is not surprising that people left Alsace, not only for Paris 1815 where the Alsatian community grew in numbers, with famous members such as Baron Haussmann 1815 but also for more distant places like Russia and the Austrian Empire , to take advantage of the new opportunities offered there: Austria had conquered lands in Eastern Europe from the Ottoman Empire and offered generous terms to colonists as a way of consolidating its hold on the new territories. Many Alsatians also began to sail to the United States, settling in many areas from 1815 to 1830. Some settled in Texas and Illinois, many to farm or to seek success in commercial ventures: Some Alsatian immigrants were noted for their roles in 19th-century American economic development. They were highly segregated and subject to long-standing antisemitic regulations. They maintained their own customs, Yiddish language, and historic traditions within the tightly-knit ghettos; they adhered to Talmudic law enforced by their rabbis. Jews were barred from most cities and instead lived in villages. They concentrated in trade, services, and especially in money lending. They financed about a third of the mortgages in Alsace. Official tolerance grew during the French Revolution, with full emancipation in 1791. However, local antisemitism also increased and Napoleon turned hostile in 1806, imposing a one-year moratorium on all debts owed to Jews. By 1806, the state began paying salaries to official rabbis, and in 1807 a special legal oath for Jews was discontinued. Antisemitic local riots occasionally occurred, especially during the Revolution of 1848. The merger of Alsace into Germany in 1871

lessened antisemitic violence. Alsace-Lorraine We Germans who know Germany and France know better what is good for the Alsatians than the unfortunates themselves. In the perversion of their French life they have no exact idea of what concerns Germany. The end of the war led to the unification of Germany. Unlike other members states of the German federation, which had governments of their own, the new Imperial territory of Alsace-Lorraine was under the sole authority of the Kaiser , administered directly by the imperial government in Berlin. In , however, the Saverne Affair French: Incident de Saverne showed the limits of this new tolerance of the Alsatian identity. An Alsatian woman in traditional costume, photographed by Adolphe Braun During the First World War, to avoid ground fights between brothers, many Alsatians served as sailors in the Kaiserliche Marine and took part in the Naval mutinies that led to the abdication of the Kaiser in November , which left Alsace-Lorraine without a nominal head of state. The sailors returned home and tried to found an independent republic. While Jacques Peirotes , at this time deputy at the Landrat Elsass-Lothringen and just elected mayor of Strasbourg , proclaimed the forfeiture of the German Empire and the advent of the French Republic , a self-proclaimed government of Alsace-Lorraine declared its independence as the " Republic of Alsace-Lorraine ". French troops entered Alsace less than two weeks later to quash the worker strikes and remove the newly established Soviets and revolutionaries from power. Germany ceded the region to France under the Treaty of Versailles. Policies forbidding the use of German and requiring French were promptly introduced. Although it was never formally annexed, Alsace-Lorraine was incorporated into the Greater German Reich , which had been restructured into Reichsgau. Alsace was merged with Baden , and Lorraine with the Saarland , to become part of a planned Westmark. Most perished on the eastern front. The few that could fled to Switzerland or joined the resistance. After World War II[edit] Today, the territory is in certain areas subject to some laws that are significantly different from the rest of France – this is known as the local law. Alsatian is taught in schools but not mandatory as one of the regional languages of France. German is also taught as a foreign language in local kindergartens and schools. However, the Constitution of France still requires that French be the only official language of the Republic.

Both France and Germany claimed it as their own. Germany won and young alsacians where forced to fight in the German army on pain of death for them and their families. After the war the.

This section needs additional citations for verification. Please help improve this article by adding citations to reliable sources. Unsourced material may be challenged and removed. In France, children were taught in school not to forget the lost provinces, which were coloured in black on maps. Painting by Albert Bettannier , a native of Metz who fled to Paris after the annexation of his hometown. The transfer was controversial even among the Germans: The German Chancellor , Otto von Bismarck , was initially opposed to it, as he thought it would engender permanent French enmity toward Germany. Karl Marx also warned his fellow Germans: It is unnecessary to go into the unholy consequences. From an ethnic perspective, the transfer involved people who for the most part spoke Alemannic German dialects. From a military perspective, by early s standards, shifting the frontier away from the Rhine would give the Germans a strategic buffer against feared future French attacks. However, domestic politics in the new Reich may have been decisive. Although it was effectively led by Prussia, the new German Empire was a decentralized federal state. The new arrangement left many senior Prussian generals with serious misgivings about leading diverse military forces to guard a prewar frontier that, except for the northernmost section, was part of two other states of the new Empire – Baden and Bavaria. Thus, by annexing Alsace-Lorraine, Berlin was able to avoid complications with Baden and Bavaria on such matters as new fortifications. Right up until the Franco-Prussian War, the French had maintained a long-standing desire to establish their entire eastern frontier on the Rhine, and thus they were viewed by most 19th century Germans as an aggressive people. In the years before , it is arguable that the Germans feared the French more than the French feared the Germans. Many Germans at the time thought that the creation of the new Empire in itself would be enough to earn permanent French enmity , and thus desired a defensible border with their old enemy. Any additional enmity that would be earned from territorial concessions was downplayed as marginal and insignificant in the overall scheme of things. The annexed area consisted of the northern part of Lorraine, along with Alsace. The neo-Romanesque Metz railway station, built in Kaiser Wilhelm II instigated the construction of various buildings in Alsace-Lorraine supposedly representative of German architecture. That small francophone areas were affected, was used in France to denounce the new border as hypocrisy, since Germany had justified the annexation on linguistic grounds. However, the German administration was tolerant of the use of the French language in sharp contrast to the use of the Polish language in the Province of Posen , and French was permitted as an official language and school language in those areas where it was spoken by a majority. This would only change with the First World War in The Treaty of Frankfurt gave the residents of the region until October 1, to choose between emigrating to France or remaining in the region and having their nationality legally changed to German. About , people, or around During the Reichstag elections, the 15 deputies of , , but one and were called protester deputies fr: The area was administered directly from Berlin, but was granted limited autonomy in Reichstag election results –[edit]

the problem of alsace-lorraine is in a very real sense an american problem. alsace-lorraine daniel blumenthal. into that land of alsace-lorraine that is so dear to us, you will march as liberators.

Always closely tied to the Rhine River, which forms its eastern boundary, Alsace has been a border region for most of its history. It was first conquered by Julius Caesar in the first century B. The region was conquered by the Alemanni, a Germanic tribe, in the fifth century A. Under his Merovingian successors the inhabitants were Christianized. In the ninth century, this region became part of the heartland of the Carolingian Empire of Charlemagne Charles the Great. Buffeted on both sides, the new kingdom did not last long and the region that was to become Alsace fell to the Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation as part of the duchy of Swabia in the Treaty of Meerssen in 919. At about this time the entire region began to fragment into secular and ecclesiastical lordships, a situation that lasted into the 17th century and was a common process in Europe. One of the most powerful secular families of Swabia was that of the Staufen or Hohenstaufen. In 1152, this family placed its leading member on the German throne as Friedrich I Barbarossa. Frederick was instrumental in recovery of the monarchy from its dissipation following the Investiture Contest. Part of the reason was his policy of building up imperial lands in support of the monarchy and in 1164, Alsace was organized for the first time as we know it today as one of those lands. Frederick set up Alsace as a province though not provincia but procuratio was used to be ruled by ministeriales, a non-noble class of civil servants. The idea was that such men would be more tractable and less likely to alienate the fief from the crown out of their own greed. The province had a single provincial court Landgericht and a central administration, with its seat at Hagenau. In 1262, after a long struggle with the ruling bishops, its citizens gained the status of free imperial city. A stop on the Paris-Vienna-Orient trade route, as well as a port on the Rhine route linking southern Germany and Switzerland to the Netherlands, England and Scandinavia, it became the political and economic center of the region. Cities such as Colmar and Hagenau also began to grow in economic importance and gained a kind of autonomy within the "Decapole" or "Dekapolis", a federation of 10 free towns. Around this time, German central power declined following years of imperial adventures in Italian lands, which ceded hegemony in Europe to France, long a centralized power. During the next century, France was to be militarily shattered by the Hundred Years War with England which prevented for a time any further tendencies in this direction. After the conclusion of the war, France was again free to pursue its desire to reach the Rhine, and in 1462 a French army appeared in Lorraine and Alsace. There it took up winter quarters, demanded the submission of Metz and Strasbourg and launched an attack on Basel. Modern history Coat of arms of the duchy of Lotharingia. Coat of arms of the county of Alsatia. In 1552, following the Treaty of St. Although Charles was the nominal landlord, taxes were paid to the German Emperor. The Emperor was able to wreak this tax and a dynastic marriage to his advantage to gain back full control of Upper Alsace apart from the free towns, but including Belfort in 1565 when it became part of the particular demesne of the Habsburg family, who were also hereditary rulers of the Empire. A little later, in 1633, the town of Mulhouse joined the Swiss Confederation, where it was to remain until 1798. By the time of the Reformation in the 16th century, Strasbourg was a prosperous community, and its inhabitants accepted Protestantism at an early date. The reformer Martin Bucer was a prominent Protestant reformer in the region. His efforts were countered by the Roman Catholic Habsburgs who tried to eradicate heresy in Upper Alsace. As a result, Alsace was transformed into a mosaic of Catholic and Protestant territories. This situation prevailed until when most of Alsace was conquered by France to prevent it falling into the hands of the Spanish Habsburgs who wanted a clear road to their valuable and rebellious possessions in the Netherlands. This occurred in the greater context of the Thirty Years War. So, in 1648, beset by enemies and to gain a free hand in Hungary, the Habsburgs sold their Sundgau territory mostly in Upper Alsace to France, which had occupied it, for the sum of 1. Thus, when the hostilities finally ceased in 1648 with the Treaty of Westphalia, most of Alsace went to France with some towns remaining independent. The treaty stipulations regarding Alsace were extremely Byzantine and confusing; it is thought that this was purposely so that neither the French king or the German Emperor could gain tight control, but that one would play off the other, thereby

assuring Alsace some measure of autonomy. Supporters of this theory point out that the treaty stipulations were authored by Imperial plenipotentiary Isaac Volmar, the former chancellor of Alsace. The Thirty Years War had been one of the worst periods in the history of Alsace and other parts of Southern Germany. It caused large numbers of the population mainly in the countryside to die or to flee away, because the land was successively invaded and devastated by many armies Imperials, Swedes, French, etc. After and until the mid-th century, numerous immigrants arrived from Switzerland, Germany, Austria, Lorraine, Savoy and other areas. Between Anabaptist refugees came from Switzerland, notably from Bern. Strasbourg became a main center of the early Anabaptist movement. France consolidated its hold with the Treaties of Nijmegen which brought the towns under her control. In 1681, France occupied Strasbourg in an unprovoked action. These territorial changes were reinforced at the Treaty of Ryswick which ended the War of the Palatinate also known as the War of the Grand Alliance or War of the League of Augsburg, although the Holy Roman Empire did not accept and sign the document until 1713. Thus was Alsace drawn into the orbit of France. However, Alsace had a somewhat exceptional position in the kingdom. The German language was still used in local government, school and education and the German Lutheran university of Strasbourg was continued and attended by students from Germany. The Edict of Fontainebleau which legalized the brutal suppression of French Protestantism was not applied in Alsace and in contrast to the rest of France there was a relative religious tolerance although the French authorities tried to promote Catholicism and the Lutheran Strasbourg Cathedral had to be handed over to the Catholics in 1713. There was a customs boundary along the Vosges mountains against the rest of France while there was no such boundary against Germany. For these reasons Alsace remained coined by German culture and also economically oriented towards Germany until the French Revolution. Alsatians played an active role in the French Revolution. On July 21, 1793, after receiving news of the Storming of the Bastille in Paris, a crowd of people stormed the Strasbourg city hall, forcing the city administrators to flee and putting symbolically an end to the feudal system in Alsace. In 1793, Rouget de Lisle composed in Strasbourg the Revolutionary marching song La Marseillaise, which later became the anthem of France. At the same time, some Alsatians were in opposition to the Jacobins and sympathetic to the invading forces of Austria and Prussia who sought to crush the nascent revolutionary republic. Many of the residents of the Sundgau made "pilgrimages" to places like Mariastein Abbey, near Basel, in Switzerland, for baptisms and weddings. When the French Revolutionary Army of the Rhine was victorious, tens of thousands fled east before it. When they were later permitted to return in some cases not until 1803, it was often to find that their lands and homes had been confiscated. These conditions led to emigration by hundreds of families to newly-vacant lands in the Russian Empire in 1803 and again in 1806. In response to the restoration of Napoleon I of France, in 1810 and 1811, Alsace was occupied by foreign forces, including over 100,000 soldiers and 90,000 horses in Bas-Rhin alone. This had grave effects on trade and the economy of the region since former overland trade routes were switched to newly-opened Mediterranean and Atlantic seaports. The population grew rapidly, from 1,000,000 in 1800 to 1,500,000 in 1815. The combination of factors meant hunger, housing shortages and a lack of work for young people. Thus, it is not surprising that people left Alsace, not only to Paris, where the Alsatian community grew in numbers, with famous members such as Baron Haussmann, but also to far away places like Russia and the Austrian Empire to take advantage of new opportunities offered there. Austria had conquered lands in Eastern Europe from the Ottoman Empire and offered generous terms for colonists in order to consolidate their hold on the lands. Many Alsatians also began to sail for the United States, where after slave importation had been banned and new workers were needed for the cotton fields. The transfer was controversial even amongst the Germans themselves - German Chancellor Otto von Bismarck was strongly opposed to a transfer of territory that he knew would provoke permanent French enmity towards the new state. However, German Emperor Wilhelm I eventually sided with Helmuth von Moltke the Elder and other Prussian generals and others who argued that a westward shift in the new Franco-German border was necessary and desirable for a number of reasons. From a nationalistic perspective, the transfer seemed justified since most of the lands that were annexed were populated by people who spoke Alemannic German dialects. From a military perspective, shifting the Franco-German frontier away from the Rhine would give the Germans a strategic advantage over the French, especially by early 19th century military standards and thinking. However, domestic politics of the new Empire might have been the decisive

factor. Although it was effectively led by Prussia, the German Empire was a new and highly decentralized creation. The new arrangement left many senior Prussian generals with serious misgivings about leading diverse military forces to guard a pre-war frontier that, except for the northernmost section was part of two other states of the new Empire - Baden and Bavaria. Creating a new Imperial Territory Reichsland out of formerly French territory would achieve this goal: Thus, by annexing territory Berlin was able to avoid delicate negotiations with Baden and Bavaria on such matters as construction and control of new fortifications , etc. The governments of Baden and Bavaria, naturally, were in favour of moving the French border away from their territories. It is important to note that memories of the Napoleonic Wars were still quite fresh in the s. Right up until the Franco-Prussian War, the French had maintained a long-standing desire to establish their entire eastern frontier on the Rhine, and thus they were viewed by most 19th century Germans as an aggressive, war-mongering people. In the years prior to , it is arguable that the Germans feared the French more than the French feared the Germans. Many Germans at the time thought creation of the new Empire in itself would be enough to earn permanent French enmity , and thus desired a defensible border with their old enemy. Any additional enmity that would be earned from territorial concessions was downplayed as marginal and insignificant in the overall scheme of things. The annexed area consisted of the northern part of Lorraine, along with Alsace. The fact that small francophone areas were affected was used in France to denounce the new border as hypocrisy, since Germany had justified them by the native Germanic dialects and culture of the inhabitants, which was true for the majority of Alsace-Lorraine. However, the German administration was tolerant of the use of the French language and French was permitted as an official language and school language in those areas where it was spoken by a majority this relatively tolerant policy contrasted with the policy of French authorities against the use of German after World War I. The Treaty of Frankfurt gave the residents of the region until October 1 , to choose between emigrating to France or remaining in the region and having their nationality legally changed to German. During the Reichstag elections, the fifteen deputies of , , but one and were called protester deputies fr: The area was administered directly by the imperial government in Berlin and was granted some measure of autonomy in The infamous Saverne Affair however showed that this status was of no high value in the eyes of the Berlin government. Reichstag election results

Chapter 5 : Alsace - Wikipedia

Alsace-Lorraine was symbolically taken from Germany and given (or in their interpretation returned) to France, and subsequently divided into the provinces of Alsace and Lorraine (as continues today). Lorraine quickly re-adapted to French rule again because there were comparatively few ethnic Germans there.

The terrace and foothills! Geography Natural boundaries in Alsace include the Vosges Mountains to the west and the Rhine River to the east. The massif of the Vosges gradually gives way eastward to the plain of Alsace, while to the south the region of Sundgau in southern Haut-Rhin rises to the Jura Mountains. Alsace is one of the more fertile regions in central Europe. The hills are generally richly wooded, chiefly with fir, beech, and oak. Annual precipitation is relatively low, ranging from 20 to 28 inches to mm. This is particularly true of the vineyards that dominate the foothills of the Vosges. Colmar is the principal centre of the wine-growing region, whose vineyards extend in a narrow strip along the lower slopes of the Vosges west of the city. Parts of the alluvial plain of Alsace e. The region is also known for its asparagus and foie gras. The industrial economy of Alsace is strong and diversified. Machinery production, in part related to textiles, and food and beverage industries milling, brewing, canning are also long established. More recent industries include automobile assembly and component manufacture, pharmaceuticals, electronics, and telecommunications. Much of the investment in industry originates outside France, notably in Germany, Japan, and the United States. A large number of workers from Alsace commute to factories in Germany and Switzerland. The service sector has grown rapidly in fields such as retailing, business services, higher education , and research. Strasbourg in particular has benefited from this trend. Outside the Vosges massif, Alsace is densely populated twice the national average and has a well-developed urban network dominated by the cities of Strasbourg, Mulhouse, and Colmar. Rural population densities are among the highest in France. A network of motorways traverses Alsace, and a regional airport is located in Strasbourg. There is also an extensive port and industrial zone bordering the Rhine. Apart from its use as a waterway, the Rhine is used to generate hydroelectric power , and a nuclear power station stands on its banks at Fessenheim. History The area was conquered by the Roman legions of Julius Caesar in the 1st century bce and had been profoundly Romanized by the time of the invasion of the Alemanni in the 5th century ce. The Alemanni, however, were conquered by the Franks under Clovis in , and Alsace became a Frankish duchy. Under Merovingian rule the area was Christianized and colonized. Alsace was incorporated into Lotharingia in the mid-9th century and was united with the German territories of the Carolingians by the Treaty of Mersen It was attached to what became known as the Holy Roman Empire until the 17th century. During that period its territory was divided into a number of secular and ecclesiastical lordships and municipalities, which remained significant until the French Revolution. The medieval period was also marked by the growing importance of its cities!e. Protestantism made important gains in Alsace during the Reformation , and Strasbourg , where the reformer Martin Bucer was especially prominent, became the centre of Alsatian Protestantism. French influence began to be felt in Alsace late in the 16th century, during the Wars of Religion. The Peace of Westphalia gave France an informal protectorate over Alsace, and full control was established during the reign of Louis XIV , after the French had occupied Strasbourg in In the 18th century Alsace enjoyed considerable autonomy under the French crown, and Alsatians took advantage of their status outside the French customs system to develop a flourishing transit trade. The people of Alsace continued to speak a German dialect known as Alsatian, but the use of French spread among the upper classes. From to Alsace actively participated in French national life. The introduction of universal suffrage and the building of railways helped to bind France and its eastern frontier province closely together. These links were shattered at the end of the Franco-German War !71 , however, when Alsace was detached from France and annexed to the German Empire. For the history of Alsace under German rule, see Alsace-Lorraine. In the postwar years, however, French hegemony reclaimed Alsace, though some cultural ties to Germany remained. Learn More in these related Britannica articles:

Chapter 6 : History of the Jewish community in Alsace and Lorraine

Title: The Alsace-Lorraine Question Created Date: Z.

History of Settlement, Culture, and Vaccilation of Nationality under France and Germany The regions of Alsace and Lorraine, straddling the shared French and German border, have been a source of political, cultural, and nationalistic dispute between the French and Germans in various forms for nearly 1, years. It was from this common yoke that the modern nations of France, Germany, and Italy gradually coalesced. Alsace to the east remained far more closely linked to Germany, and passed between the political, linguistic, and cultural influences of Baden, Austria, Germany, and Burgundy all bearing various forms of German culture. With the expansion of the mighty French Empire during the 17th century, the vulnerable border territories of Alsace and the Duchy of Lorraine became under threat as the unity of the German Empire increasingly fell into fragmentation and regionalism. Resistance and revolt continued until , when Lorraine and Alsace became firmly French-ruled territories despite their distinct ethnocultural identity and language. Due to its proximity to France and its highly cosmopolitan nature as a functional political and commercial polity prior to French annexation, Lorraine endured consistent ethnic French and non-German settlement over many centuries. Rapidly, Lorraine lost its Germanic character as reflected in the demographic shift from a German-speaking majourity to a French majourity, becoming as it remains a highly Francophone and Francophile region. The border territory of Alsace to the east and closer to Germany, however, retained a strongly distinct Germanic culture, heritage, language, and identity. The overwhelming majourity of the population French-ruled Alsace remained ethnic German. Of a total population of 1,, by , 1,, were staunch Catholics, and , were Lutherans deutsche-schutzgebiete. Of a total population of 1,, in , an overwhelming 1,, were ethnic Germans. The German language was not actively suppressed, nor was the Lutheran religion that was followed by many Alsatian Germans at the same time as French anti-Huguenot Protestant edicts were causing rampant persecution, civil war, and bloodshed in the rest of France. The partially independent social, linguistic, and political evolution of the Alsatians during French rule laid the foundations for a distinct Alsatian sub-national affiliation that endured even after annexation by the Second Reich of Bismarck in The passive behaviour of French rule also meant that the Alsatians remained distinctly Germanic and seldom assimilated into mainstream French or Latin cultural mores. This ethnic characteristic was exploited by the nationalistic reunified Germany to justify their claims on the region. So too, the fact that the French had allowed the Alsatians to administer their own affairs contrasted with the very militaristic and dominant rule of Prussian Germany, leading to a very precarious loyalty among the Alsatians between France and Germany that has endured ever since. Whilst Frenchmen emphasize that Alsace has, indeed, been a part of France for many centuries and thus deserves to be part of France, German nationalists emphasize that almost no Frenchmen even live in Alsace and thus it belongs with Germany or Switzerland, or should be independent. The largely placid period of French rule changed as Germany was finally reunified. Following the final defeat of Napoleon in , the foundations for a reunified Germany were set with the German Confederation. Austria and Prussia, two majour Germanic hegemons, fought over this claim until Prussia obliterated Austria in Most of the German states fell under Prussian rule. At the same time, France responded to this growing threat from the east by becoming a highly militarised dictatorship under Napoleon III. In , sabre-rattling between Prussia and France degenerated into full-scale war. Expecting a hasty victory, France was surprised to see their entire military capacity decimated by the Germans, leading to the collapse of the French Empire altogether. In their own palace in Versailles, Otto von Bismarck declared the reunification of Germany in as the Second Reich. Thousands of ethnic French fled Germany to France and to French colonial dominions, including Algeria. Although Lorraine had become a very ethnically and culturally French land, its capital Metz became dominated by the Prussian military after their crushing defeat of , French soldiers, and gained outward forms of German culture during German rule Weitz , 5. Ironically, the French would soon approach the Alsatians with a far-reaching campaign of expulsion and discrimination that portrayed the Alsatians as uniformly pro-German and anti-French. Due to its proximity to rival France and its geopolitical situation,

Alsace-Lorraine saw disproportionate occupation by German soldiers, leading to discomfort among the Alsatians who saw a vast contrast between the hands-off rule of France and the militaristic presence of Germany. The French language, hardly spoken by anyone anyway, was banned by the German government in the region, and any cultural or social manifestations of France including street names were Germanised. The German language was compulsory. This nascent hard-handed rule climaxed under the so-called Zabern Affair or Saverne Affair of 1871. Local Alsatian newspapers reported a Prussian soldier who spoke in derogatory terms about the local Alsatians, even advocating the use of violence to halt their perceived perfidy. Many Alsatians and Frenchmen in Alsace alike rallied in the streets and outside of Prussian military camps criticising the diminished level of local autonomy that Alsace-Lorraine enjoyed in comparison with the rest of the German Empire. The soldiers even responded with violence and arrests of over 20 people. Kaiser Wilhelm II, seeking to lionise the prestige of the German military, supported the crackdown. Goodrick-Clarke, Despite being German, the Alsatians felt an uncertain loyalty to either France and Germany. France had given them autonomy, whilst the current German regime of the Kaiser was instating martial law. As a result, most Alsatians turned to a type of pan-Germanic identity that sought reform of the German monarchy. Clark, Alsatians acknowledged their German heritage, but were greatly dissatisfied with the authority of Germany and the unequal political franchise of Alsace-Lorraine in the German Empire. The French minority had a blatantly second-class status under German rule that created friction between Alsatian Germans and Frenchmen that would later fuel the inter-ethnic tension during the French expulsions see below. Many Germans, too, perceived a second-class status in terms of national franchise within the German Reich. Alsace-Lorraine remained a very culturally German part of Germany until Alsace-Lorraine was symbolically taken from Germany and given or in their interpretation returned to France, and subsequently divided into the provinces of Alsace and Lorraine as continues today. Lorraine quickly re-adapted to French rule again because there were comparatively few ethnic Germans there. Alsace, however, endured a very problematic inter-ethnic social and political conflict that continued throughout the expulsions of over 1 million ethnic German civilians who were deemed to be uniformly hostile to the French state. When the French army entered Alsace after the war, they found an eclectic array of political and ideological allegiances. Others adhered to pan-Germanic and regional nationalist movements, and were outraged at their forced annexation by France. Importantly, no plebiscite was given to the people of Alsace by the French government because of the symbolic importance of the region to French history and the fact that the overwhelming majority of the region was German and would likely have refused merger with France. Despite the fact that 1 million, out of a population of 1.5 million, were Germans. Research Center.. Hitler would later describe this as a subversive attempt by the French to cause a rippling effect throughout Germany of regional independence movements that were designed to diminish the national cohesion of the nation. Hitler, In reality, in the eyes of the French, they were merely returning a province that was stolen from them by a predatory and expansionist Germany in 1871. Although cultural and ethnic antagonism greatly fueled the French expulsion project, it must be emphasised that the French government did not plan to expel or remove the entire German ethnicity on ethnoracial grounds as in the cases of the other expulsions of Germans in the 20th century. The expulsions officially lasted from 1919 to 1935. The French military classified the province into three categories: Because the distinctions between immigrant Germans and Alsatian German natives was so minute and nebulous, the French expulsion plan targeted both recently-settled German immigrants and the local Alsatians whose families had lived in the region for centuries. This entire segment of civilians was targeted for compulsory expulsion specifically because of their ethnic affiliation and a universal proscription of being inherently hostile irredentists or pan-Germanists. The French government ordered the formation of investigative military police courts in Alsace to respond to pervasive reports by the French minority in Alsace of the supposed perfidy of Alsatian Germans. The programme began by immediately firing over 11,000 German civil servants, workers, and civilian employees, who were subsequently marched to the border of wickedly-bankrupt and starving Germany, where they now had no jobs to feed themselves. Schoolteachers were expelled with vigour because they were perceived as an outlet for pan-German nationalism during the war. The German language was effectively banned in all political and public gatherings, and an intense process of academic, political, and cultural Francification began that greatly

contrasted from the previous hands-off era of French rule before Research Center.. The Commissions de Triage, led by such figures as Colonel Bourcart and Rene Koechlin, was the most salient official organ involved in the French expulsion programme. In total, over , German civilians were expelled from Lorraine and its broad environs Boswell , and at least , from Alsace Harvey , , with some estimates ranging as high as , WHKMLA. These figures do not include the undetermined number of Germans who fled the region due to fears of persecution, or in search of jobs elsewhere since Germans were effectively demoted to second-class status in the job market. The guilt of both immigrant Germans who settled after and native Alsatian Germans was determined informally and ad hoc, relying primarily upon a barrage of reports of individual suspicions. Because of the longstanding persecution of the small French minority in Alsace, and because of the intense anti-German hatred in France due to the brutalities of the war, French residents frivolously reported and many likely even fabricated claims of suspicious Alsatian Germans at the first chance of fiscal or personal opportunism. Due to the inability for France to hear all of the reports of suspicion by local French and pro-French Alsations, most expelled German civilians did not enjoy legitimate or fair judicial trials and were simply forced out of the country due to stereotypical or presumed assumptions. At most, only 4, formal court cases are recorded, meaning that the rest of the nearly , were expelled without being able to defend themselves or profess the preference for French rule that many felt. Most of the expellees were forced to forfeit their homes and property, and were only allowed to keep whatever possessions they could carry before being marched to the border of French-occupied Germany and the Ruhr valley. Many Alsations were shocked at the French campaign of indiscriminate and ad hoc expulsion of over , German civilians because they had no overriding loyalties to Germany at all, and preferred the famously autonomous French rule over the brutal militarism of the Wilhelmian monarchy, let alone its economic collapse. Much of the support that the French received from the Alsatian Germans quickly collapsed as a result of the expulsions, the discrimination and exclusion of the ethnic German minority in France, and the pervasive instability of post-war Alsace. Pro-French sentiment, sizable among the Alsations around , was to a significant extent replaced by nationalist, autonomist, and far-right pan-Germanic movements. This growing inter-ethnic and political conflict resulted in attacks on the French minority, the occupying soldiers, and the expelling military police commissions. The French responded by vandalising, confiscating, and raiding the property of ethnic Germans in Alsace Ibid. From the French perspective, they were merely mirroring the second-class status and persecution that they themselves endured since Concomitantly, far-left Communist, irredentist, and anarchist movements staffed mostly by the non-German minority brought Alsace to total collapse when they proclaimed the Alsatian Soviet Socialist Republic in This anarchist revolutionary state was crushed by the French army only a few months later, and French rule resumed. The inter-ethnic and political conflict created an environment in which civilians " both French and German alike " became innocent victims of expulsion, ethnic violence, instability and fiscal speculation, and property confiscation. The ethnic contumacy was, predictably, exacerbated to the extreme when the Third Reich re-conquered Alsace-Lorraine from France in , instating massive ethnic cleansings and expulsions of the French minority and the Jews to German prisoner camps like Schirmeck and French death camps in the independent Vichy dominion in the south. The native Alsatian German population was profiled and divided into four categories: Most of these classifications were unverified and imposed ad hoc. Over , German civilians were expelled from Lorraine and over , from Alsace. The French expulsion campaign officially ended by after the Versailles Treaty formalised the transfer of Alsace and Lorraine to France. However, ethnic conflict would endure, as manifested in Alsatian far-right and far-left politics that continued until the brutal atrocities and ethnic cleansings of the Nazis against the French and Jews in Alsace from Alsatian is recognized by the French government as an official regional but not national language. A statistic by the INSEE the national statistics bureau of France cited some , adult speakers of Alsatian out of a total regional population of nearly 2 million. Nonetheless, French language and culture have historical been and still today are officially sponsored to the indirect detriment of German culture and language to the point that Alsatian German heritage is gradually being elbowed out. There are only a few bilingual public schools, and the few that do offer German are required to teach 13 hours of German and 13 hours of French total Research Center.. The Alsatian German people have experienced a highly vacillatory

political and national evolution over their long history. France and Germany both have equally salient arguments to claim the region. Putnam and Sons, *Recasting French Identities in Alsace and Lorraine*, â€” Hill and Wang, *The Rise and Downfall of Prussia Reichland im deutschen Reich A Half Century of Survival*. Country Life Press, *The Occult Roots of Nazism: Translated by Ralph Manheim*.

(p. 1) The Problem of Alsace-Lorraine The problem of Alsace-Lorraine began with the Treaty of Frankfort made between the German Empire and the French Republic, May 10,

Cemeteries sank into oblivion, places of worship were abandoned or desecrated despite the recent past of World War II, and synagogues became storehouses or declined rapidly amidst more or less total indifference. The familial and cultural heritage irrevocably disappeared in the provinces. Fortunately since years non-profit organizations and regional cultural plans have been saving what still could be saved. In the last years politicians and culturally committed people became more and more aware that the Jewish heritage is undoubtedly an integral part of the general Alsatian history and partly of Lorraine. It is well known that the Alsatian Jewish community, mostly rural, was the biggest of whole France at the Revolution in and already differed from the Sephardim living in cities of southern France. The Region of Alsace began for few years ago an annual project in order to rediscover the Jewish presence in this region thanks to a big cultural plan including guided visits, concerts, exhibitions, one-day bus tours of Jewish sites, Jewish meals in restaurants etc. The first aim of this project based on consensus is to create renewed interest in the Jewish specificity of Alsace, in fact to clear up misunderstandings and to dispel entrenched irrational fears. All in all we get now more possibilities to get to know something about the Alsatian Jewish history and we will try to trace it now by relying on works and known authors in this field whom we will refer to in the bibliography below. In a first place we will rapidly trace the history of the Jews of Alsace and Lorraine, which is often common to all Ashkenazim from Eastern France, Southern and Western Germany. In a second place we will look into specific aspects of the Alsatian and Lorraine Jewry. In a third place we will describe the Alsatian Yiddish. Common history with all Jewish communities inside of the Roman Empire: Jewish laws from under Christian emperors, continued by councils of the State Church. Although formation of a specific, rather urban Jewish community of the Rhineland and intensive exchanges between the main centers. Century 9th The Jewish settlements of the Rhineland increased and became stable. Some cities became famous for their yeshivas and the whole area developed to the Minhag Rheinouss. One of the oldest French synagogues is in Metz, Lorraine, a town that also regularly exchanged rabbis and students with Frankfurt and Worms. No specific Jewish history in Alsace for this period. At that time Jews got their persistent image as usurers when the Church forbade loans with interests or pawn broking. Century 11th First stable communities in Alsace apart from travelers and hawkers who already passed through the region in the last centuries. These communities remained spared by the massacres in 1st crusade in the Rhineland and were under special protection of local lords such as bishops, abbots, city magistrates or the emperor himself. In a way there is here nothing specific for the history of the Alsatian Jews; they experienced the same advantages and especially the same inconveniences of a life in the Holy Roman Empire as all Jews scattered all over the territory. Thus the increase in the number of the seigneuries caused a big inequality between Jewries depending on whether the local lord was more or less benevolent to them or not! It must be admitted that the presence of Jews depended on the financial situation of the seigneurie; Jews were often there where they were needed. Nevertheless some Alsatian seigneuries differed from the majority because they protected "their" Jews over a longer period than it used to be at that time. Votive stone evoking a donation to the synagogue - Strasbourg 12th c. Centuries 12th - 13th Century 13th Period of persecution and emigration. This is common to the whole Jewish people in old Europe. In under Friedrich II the Jews got the status of "chamber servants" *servi camerae nostrae* which was developed and codified by the Roman law as the servitude of the Jews: The Jewish community of Metz probably disappeared entirely in the 13th century. Centuries 14th - 15th In and Official expulsion of the Jews from France. They first emigrated to the neighbor countries that are now French, but at that time still belonged to the Holy Roman Empire: Lorraine, Alsace, Provence, Dauphine, Avignon. The geographical location was relevant. Destitution, cyclic oppression and despair drove them to migrate, generally to Eastern Europe. It began with crusades and continued during the next centuries. Every seigneurie or city could decide to expel the new families without any opposition. The year has probably claimed the most casualties and the

consequence was the disappearance of the Jews in almost the whole Alsace, particularly in the cities such as Strasbourg , Colmar , Mulhouse , Selestat. A few Jews came back and tried to settle down despite a climate of violence or insecurity; there were expelled, robbed or pillaged for fallacious reasons when misfortune concerned the Christian people in the majority. The surviving families left Alsace. Though there was any official permission from the city authority, some Jews were tolerated. In the 14th century numerous Jews came from Eastern Europe to Metz and created there a ghetto near the port. The cohabitation between local Jews and East-European Jews was a little difficult because of different way of life and way of thinking. In the dukedom Lorraine Jews experienced the same arbitrariness of the politics and their fate obviously depended on whether they were useful or not. The next official permission for Jews to settle down in Lorraine happened only at the beginning of the 18th century. So wherever we are looking, there was always a gap in the Jewish presence: In Metz from the 13th to the 16th In Lorraine from the 15th to the 18th In Alsace from the 14th to the 16th. But the main Jewish communities lived at that time in cities. They were there more visible and in a way more vulnerable! Few isolated Jews were scattered all over the region in the provinces, but it is obvious that there were numerically very few of the whole Jewish population in Alsace. Century 16th In Alsace the urban communities of the big cities, we already mentioned, disappeared without a trace and the architectural heritage as well. Only a part of the synagogue of Bergheim , former center of the Alsatian rabbinate, still remains today to recall the Jewish past before the 17th century in this region. In Metz however the situation changed abruptly when the city became French or under French protectorate in Ten years later the Jews were officially allowed to settle down in Metz again. It might be for many people very contradictory regarding to the French attitude towards Jews in the main kingdom. But in fact France needed Jews to finance the numerous regiments that were garrisoned at Metz, known as the most fortified garrison town of France on foreign soil and close to the Holy Roman Empire as its main enemy. The end justified the means! Moreover it was in the 16th century that the word "ghetto" for Venetian "foundry" gave its name to all urban Jewish neighborhoods in Europe, which were bordered and sealed off from the Christian parts. Only 24 Jewish households were allowed to live in Metz at that time. About families lived in villages in the 16th century in Alsace. In a way Jews in Lorraine and Alsace were always in transit or on the alert. It is important to stress the fact that the Alsatian Jewry progressively changed from an urban community to a rural one for a very long period, that means from the 14th to the 19th century. Those who were driven out from the cities or left them by themselves found refuge in the provinces where the local population took less notice of them than in the ghetto. There were families in each village. In a way it is here a typical aspect of the Jewish history in Alsace, probably because it was a border region. There was a continual coming and going between West and East, right side and left side of the Rhine; everybody seemed to try his luck there where other people experienced injustice or misfortune. Adversity might be relative!

Chapter 8 : Alsace and Lorraine not annexed? | Alternate History Discussion

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Chapter 9 : Alsace-lorraine " Defining Anything

The Alsace-Lorraine region of present-day France has "belonged" to both France and Germany in the past. (Today, the region is called "Bas Rhin" [Lower Rhine] in France.) It originally was part of the Holy Roman Empire, but gradually became part of France from to , by way of conquest and diplomatic compromises.