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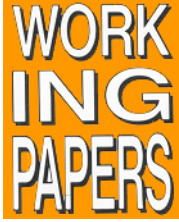
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## **Right-Wing Extremism in Frontier Regions: The French National Front and the Crisis of Alsatian Identity**

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Few European borderlands have been as contested as Alsace and Lorraine over the past centuries. Today, the Franco-German conflict over Alsace-Lorraine is but a distant memory and the region finds itself at the heart of the most integrated part of the European Union. Goods and people move across the former borders unhindered. Strasbourg, the home of the European Parliament and the Council of Europe, has become a symbol of Franco-German reconciliation. And sympathy for the European Union runs high: in the 1992 referendum, support for the Maastricht treaty on European Unification was far stronger in Alsace (66 percent in favor) than in any other French region. Over the past two decades, Alsace has been among the most prosperous French regions and has boasted an unemployment rate considerably lower than the national average.

Despite these indicators of calm waters, current political developments suggest that memories of conflicts of times past have resurfaced and merged with newer forms of social and cultural protest. Over the past two decades, Alsace (and to a lesser extent Lorraine) has become a stronghold of the nationalistic and xenophobic *Front national* (FN). In the 1995 presidential elections, Jean-Marie Le Pen's best nationwide scores came in the three Alsace-Lorraine departments (close to 25 percent of the vote – ten percentage points above the national average), and in the 2002 presidential elections, when Le Pen made it to the second round, his score in the three Alsace-Lorraine departments was slightly lower, at 23.5 percent of the vote; however, if one adds the vote of Bruno Mégret (*Mouvement national républicain*), his former right hand man and current nemesis, the extreme right reaches a disturbing 28%). Put another way, Le Pen's National Front captures one out of every four votes cast in the region. Why has the National Front established itself so successfully in this well-to-do border region which is

at the heart of one of the most fully integrated areas of the European Union? Alsace has gradually lost the central position in French nationalist discourse that it had occupied ever since the war of 1870, and the *Front national* has appealed to sectors of the electorate nostalgic for the patriotism of times past, attached to a mythic understanding of the region's history, and troubled by growing transnationality on the Franco-German border.

### The Rise of the National Front

In late March 1997 the *Front national* held its tenth national congress in Alsace's capital, Strasbourg. Some 2,500 National Front militants gathered over Easter week end – offending both Protestant and Catholic Churches -- to hear Jean-Marie Le Pen and other leaders, participate in workshops and prepare for upcoming elections. By holding a congress in its Alsatian stronghold, the *Front national* underlined that it was a national party with bases of support that ranged far beyond deindustrializing regions of northern and southern France, or the grim suburbs of Paris, Lyon, or Marseille where unemployment, racial tensions, the presence of immigrants, and social problems have destabilized communities and turned the political world topsy turvy. The FN's choice of Strasbourg also encompassed a marked symbolic component: ever since the war of 1870 Alsace (and Strasbourg along with it) has been viewed as the most patriotic of provinces - a symbol of French nationalism. But the town's symbolism has evolved over the past fifty years: Strasbourg is now home to the European Parliament, the Council of Europe, the European Court of Human Rights, and the Franco-German army brigade. Over the past decades, Strasbourg has transformed itself from being a site of French nationalism, to a symbol of France's Europeanness. By holding its congress in Strasbourg, the

National Front was “interfering” with Strasbourg’s symbolism,<sup>1</sup> and trying to revive the older patriotic imagery of border regions. Then, as now, Strasbourg is still a contested site and borderland.

National Front congresses are not dear to popular opinion, and Strasbourg’s proved to be no exception. Opposition to Le Pen’s arrival grew at a rapid pace in the months preceding the congress. On the second day of the congress some 50,000 demonstrators marched boisterously in Strasbourg’s largest demonstration since the 1944 Liberation. They displayed a multitude of banners inscribed with messages that read “Liberty, equality, fraternity” or “Elsass ohne Hass” [Alsace without hatred].<sup>2</sup> Opposition to Le Pen took on a symbolic character: in a symbol of mourning, students from Strasbourg’s school of decorative arts crossed all street signs with black tape. Protesters threw thousands of blackened paper shreds from the Cathedral’s towers to replicate the ashes that rained down on the city following the Nazi burning of the town’s synagogue.<sup>3</sup> In one of the more creative protests some 300 to 400 *Strasbourggeois*, some carrying cardboard suitcases and rucksacks, some pushing baby carriages, others holding a banner that read “L’affront national,” crossed the Rhine Bridge in a festive atmosphere to take refuge in the German town of Kehl. There they promptly uncorked some wine and set to work organizing the “resistance.” This spoof was but a remake of the evacuation of some 600,000 Alsatians and *Lorrains* who lived near the border during the early days of the phoney war in 1939 -- the salient difference, of course, was that in 1997 the French were fleeing *from* the National Front to a democratic Germany whereas some 60 years previously their flight from the Nazi military threat took them deep into central and southwestern France.<sup>4</sup>

This extensive grass roots movement, however, had no demonstrable effect at the polls. In fact, mass mobilizations against the FN have often served to provide the Party tremendous publicity (albeit negative), strengthen its unity, and provide it legitimacy as an oppositional force.<sup>5</sup> In late May 1997, less than two months following the mass mobilizations against the FN, Le Pen's party achieved yet another record breaking score in legislative elections (21 percent of the vote) throughout the region. Alsace, once again, had the dubious honor of being one of the regions where the *Front national* did best. But the Party's remarkable results could not be attributed to the charisma and connections of its candidates – outside of Gérard Freulet in Mulhouse and Yvan Blot in Saverne, National Front fielded few well known personalities, and a number of those who achieved high scores barely campaigned at all. "It's frightening," said Catherine Trautmann, Strasbourg's Socialist mayor "they didn't even need to run a campaign."<sup>6</sup>

The National Front's strength in Alsace was not a new phenomenon. When Le Pen's party first made its dramatic appearance on the political scene in the 1984 elections to the European Parliament, its Alsatian score (12.5 percent) was already above the national average. But it was the 1988 presidential elections that placed the *Front national* squarely on center stage in Alsace: Jean-Marie Le Pen led conservative candidates Jacques Chirac and Raymond Barre on the first round, gathering over 100,000 votes in Alsace (22 percent). The National Front had established itself as Alsace's leading political party on the right. Over the following decade the *Front national* expanded its strength throughout the region. In the 1995 and 2002 presidential elections Le Pen once again led *all* candidates on the first round. And in 1997, the National Front surpassed the 20 percent mark for the first time in legislative elections -- an important

turning point because it confirmed that long established centrist and conservative politicians faced increasing difficulty resisting the *Front national*, and it also suggested that there was more to the party's success than Le Pen's charismatic (and demagogic) appeal.

The 1995 elections had been a critical turning point: they had provoked an impressive outpouring of soul searching, collective shame, and finger pointing within Alsatian society -- an interesting point because nearby Lorraine, where the *Front national's* strength was also impressive, did not undergo the same process of self-criticism. Of all FN votes in France, Alsace's was the most disturbing. Election day 1995 became known in Alsace as 'black Sunday.' Daniel Cohn-Bendit, the former May 68 student leader turned Frankfurt municipal councilor, raised a storm when he declared with his usual candor that if "Alsace had remained German, it would undoubtedly behave in a more democratic fashion."<sup>7</sup> Journalists, representing the Parisian and the foreign press, descended upon Alsace, questioning academics, politicians, and conducting investigations in quaint and seemingly prosperous Alsatian villages. Intellectuals joined in as well: the influential regional periodical *Saisons d'Alsace* proclaimed in 1995 that it was time to "reinvent Alsace" and to rethink the region's relationship to its history and its identity; over the following two years groups of academics and trade unionists would publish two books on the topic and further public debate.<sup>8</sup>

What struck and puzzled observers and what still holds true in the present can be summarized as follows: the National Front scored well throughout the region, both in urban, deindustrializing areas beset by unemployment, racial tensions and a social crisis in the *banlieue*, and in parts of the Alsatian countryside among picturesque villages

where one found few immigrants and few critical social problems. The dual nature -- urban and rural -- of the *Front national's* geographical implantation has endured until the present, and for many observers has been a troubling sign of the movement's wide-ranging appeal. Since the factors used to explain the *Front national's* success in other parts of France did not always work in Alsace, journalists and academics turned to a dizzying range of explanations. Most agreed, however, that Alsatian particularism, in its complex and ill-defined manifestations, lay close to the heart of the problem. Analysts who favor a social interpretation have linked the *Front national's* success in urban areas to unemployment, hostility to immigrants, growing racial tensions, and the rise of urban violence. Those who favor a regional explanation emphasize the ongoing crisis of identity in Alsace -- a crisis born of the region's changing relationship to the French nation. Support for the FN's vote reflects questions about Alsace's uncertain position: whether it is a manifestation of "neo-autonomism" on the German border, an illustration of Alsatian particularism, or a reaffirmation of French nationalism at a time when the nation's interest in Alsace has declined, is the subject of considerable debate.<sup>9</sup>

It is clear that the National Front's support in Alsace is socially and geographically diverse, and that much like the rest of France, there is not one *Front national* vote, but *multiple* ones.<sup>10</sup> The FN's Alsatian strength, however, needs to be placed within a broader historical framework. Three interrelated factors are at the heart of the *Front national's* distinctive success: a growing nostalgia for Alsace's lost place in the French national imaginary, the dislocation produced by the region's increasing orientation toward a broader Rheinisch region within the European community, and the region's inability to come to terms with its recent past.



Of all French regions, Alsace has remained throughout the twentieth century, the most distinctive – culturally, politically, and socially. At the Great War’s end, German was the mother tongue of more than 90 percent of the population. Alsace-Lorraine had been outside the French nation during the crucial years of the establishment of French republicanism in the late nineteenth century – something that has had an enduring effect on Alsace’s relationship to the nation throughout the twentieth century. After 1918, the region retained its own legal system (inherited from Germany) and the Bismarckian social legislation that remained, well into the post World War II period, far more advanced than the French. To this day, there is no separation of church and state in Alsace. And ever since 1918, French men and women from the other side of the Vosges mountains have been referred to as *français de l’intérieur*, thus underlining the region’s understanding of itself as a “periphery.”<sup>11</sup>

The painful “reintegration” of Alsace-Lorraine following the Great War also shaped the region’s memory and its sense of place within the nation. When France regained control of the “lost provinces” in 1918, civil and military authorities quickly set about normalizing the region. They pressured over 100,000 Germans -- many of them longstanding residents -- to leave Alsace. They conducted wide ranging purge trials to sort out “good” and “bad” Alsatians. The purges, and the classification of the population according to its ethnic purity, divided Alsatian society and placed issues of citizenship, loyalty, and ethnicity at the center of public debate.<sup>12</sup> Authorities went further: they reimposed the French language in the educational system to a generation that had been schooled in German, and they sent in large numbers of civil servants unfamiliar with the

region, its culture, and its language. In short, the French rapidly squandered the capital of sympathy they enjoyed at the war's end.

Since the end of the Second World War the differences between Alsace and *la France de l'intérieur* have subsided. Today, Alsatian is spoken by only a minority of the region's inhabitants, German social insurance laws have been superseded by French and European Union law, and the Alsatian population, through intermarriage and immigration has become, socially and culturally, more like the French. The world of politics has changed as well. Throughout the interwar years political parties in Alsace retained strong links with the German model (notably the German Center Party), or flirted with autonomism. But five years of Nazi occupation made the filiation to German parties or autonomism impossible. The National Socialists did more to cement Alsace to France than did 20 odd years of reintegration. During the 1950s Alsace became a bastion of the Gaullist movement – and Gaullist nationalism further bound Alsatians to the nation, and gave them the opportunity to manifest the patriotism which the French always thought they embodied. Recent decades, however, have witnessed the decline of Gaullism and Alsatian social Catholicism and the consolidation of political parties along a mainstream French model.

The “normalization” of the relationship between Alsace and the nation has fueled a growing nostalgia for the privileged position Alsace had occupied within French patriotic discourse of times past, and a longing for a mythic Alsace that only exists today in tourist representations and popular iconography. The old model of the relationship between Alsace and France was based on Alsace's special place within the French nation – a point that requires us to go back in time to 1870. The myth of Alsace-Lorraine was

born between 1870 and 1914 and it was then that the German speaking province, whose important Protestant population also distinguished it from rest of the French nation, became constitutive of French identity and patriotism. Alsace-Lorraine became known in the popular imagination as the “lost provinces” or the “twin sisters” without which the nation could not be whole. This gave birth to the paradoxical situation of a non-francophone and culturally distinct province being invested with a degree of patriotic symbolism shared by no other French province. Over the past thirty years, however, this perception has gradually dissipated as the region increasingly became integrated within France and within the European Union.

Within certain sectors of Alsatian society there is more than a tinge of regret for Alsace’s special place within the French national imaginary. The quintessential French village in the twentieth century has, more often than not, been an Alsatian one, and the Alsatian costume was transformed in 1918 into a symbol of the region’s attachment to France.<sup>13</sup> The *Front national* has appealed to this imagery of a patriotic and mythic Alsace in its electoral propaganda and symbolism. To take one example, the FN has employed the symbolism of the Alsatian headdress that has played an important role in the national and the regional imaginary. Between 1870 and 1914 the headdress had been, in the eyes of the French, a symbol of Alsatian irredentism, and after 1918 it was transformed into a symbol of Alsace’s patriotic attachment to the French nation. In 1988, the *Front national*’s election poster depicted a sternly faced *alsacienne* in traditional black headdress (*coiffe*) whose face was covered by a Muslim veil in such a way that she appeared to be gagged; the minaret of a mosque was visible in the far background. Underneath the blunt caption read “Alsace, ‘our’ region... For how much

longer?”<sup>14</sup> The allusion was clear: Muslim immigration posed a distinct threat to Alsatian identity and to the province’s existence. In a 1995 leaflet announcing a meeting in Obernai, the National Front hijacked the well-known patriotic imagery of Hansi, the early twentieth century Alsatian illustrator who had become famous under German rule for his militantly pro-French (and rabidly anti-German) caricatures. The *Front national* used Hansi’s idyllic representation of costumed Alsatian children, waving French flags and holding tricolor bouquets, waiting for the French to liberate Alsace from German hands [thus the caption “on les attends” (“we await them”)] to deliver a substantially different message. Just as Alsatians had waited patiently for the French to liberate them, so too did they now await the *Front national* to free them from the groups polluting Alsatian society. And for those in doubt, the caption made it clear that to make Obernai “always more beautiful,” it had to be made “always more French.” Appeals to a mythical Alsace walked hand in hand with propaganda hostile to immigrants and the newly naturalized.

At the grassroots, the *Front national* links its program of French nationalism to the defense of Alsatian identity. The Front’s candidates (even those who speak not a word of dialect) stress the defense of bilingualism in the schools along with the protection of Alsatian identity and culture. Some of its representatives have also campaigned to protect the region’s historic and natural heritage, and promote Alsatian architecture. Preserving Alsace’s traditional urban and rural landscape is at the center of the FN’s program. In order to save its identity, the region needs to preserve its landscape and architecture “as it once was.” The *Front National* thus identifies with a mythic regional identity (the quaint flower decorated villages), and appeals to those who have a static

vision of their province, and are troubled about current sociological and cultural changes.

The longing for Alsace's mythic past is part of a broader revival of regionalist sentiments. As the place of the German dialect dwindles, as the region's importance in the French imaginary declines, and as Alsatian society undergoes profound social changes, so too, especially in the countryside, do people turn to a mythical past, a golden age when their regional identity was valued and revered. This new regionalism of the right expresses itself best in the rejection of outsiders.<sup>15</sup> Today, sectors of Alsatian society find threatening the presence of large numbers of immigrants from the Maghreb and Turkey in cities such as Mulhouse and Strasbourg – not to mention citizens from the “interior” of France who, after one generation or two, can still be considered “foreign,” especially in the countryside. The persistence of an ethnic vision of what it means to be Alsatian, has parallels to the *National Front's* view of a French citizenship based on blood. Jean-Marie Le Pen's watchword “France to the French” becomes in Alsace “Alsace for the Alsatians.”

### Confronting the Past and the Present

These themes might well be less attractive if Alsace had managed to come to terms with its difficult and sometimes unsavory past (in the same way the Germans have). Alsace – and this is cause for concern -- shares with Austria a profound failure to confront its troubled history during the Second World War; in both cases the German annexation has provided a convenient excuse not to examine the degree of complicity with the Nazi regime. Alsace-Lorraine's history during the Second World War was complex and painful, and its inhabitants found themselves on opposing sides: some hid

underground and fled to France, some were incorporated into the German army and fought on the Eastern Front, others were expelled or interned by the Germans, and finally some collaborated with the Nazis, joined the Nazi party and its ancillary organizations.<sup>16</sup> Thus from the Nazi occupation to the trial of Oradour-sur-Glane (which saw Alsatian members of the Waffen SS tried for war crimes against French civilians) and beyond, the Alsatians have been *victims* of events “outside their control.” In the postwar decades, de Gaulle and others endorsed this myth. The discourse of victimization has placed off limits a critical examination of Alsatian collaboration during the war and an evaluation of the province’s moral responsibility. Until the discourse of victimization has been demystified, and until Alsatians have a better understanding and take responsibility for their complex, contradictory history (a history not just imposed by the French and German states), the extreme right’s propaganda will find fertile soil. In Alsace, as in Austria, confronting the past is the *sine qua non* to challenging the discourse of the extreme right. In the meantime, the extreme right presents itself as the guardian of an unblemished and unproblematized history.

Alsace’s changing place within France and Europe also lies at the heart of the malaise that feeds authoritarian politics. The growing role of the European Union has both disturbed and reinforced regional identity. Alsace cooperates increasingly with Baden-Württemberg and other regions. But the border, which no longer exists in the form of customs and immigration checkpoints, is still profoundly anchored in people’s imaginary and their day to day practices. In the first years of the twenty first century, declining numbers of students on both banks of the Rhine study each other’s language and local newspapers and television stations have scant coverage of events on the other

side of the border. The sense of a common social, political, and cultural sphere is tenuous: attempts to forge a Rheinisch region and identity have stalled. According to a 1990 poll, the young from Baden and Alsace lived in within their respective national worlds: only 15 percent of all 15 year old Alsatians had been to Germany or Switzerland within the past three years, and they shared with their counterparts from Baden a pejorative vision of Rheinisch identity. At the local level some argue (and clearly more research is needed here) that there is less travel between both banks of the Rhine today than in the early years of the century when ferry service was readily available (and when the Rhine was a river, not a border). Today bridges are few and far between: there are more bridges over the Rhine in the town of Köln than between France and Germany.

The complex relation to Germany, the powerful and prosperous neighbor, has also fueled the National Front vote. Large numbers of Alsatians (70,000) work in Germany and Switzerland and their position as ‘immigrant’ workers has underlined Alsace’s junior position in the regional economy. Surveys indicate that these border workers, known as *frontaliers*, who live in France, but work in Germany and Switzerland, are among those most hostile to Turkish and North African immigrants -- perhaps because they remind them of their own status as immigrants.<sup>17</sup> And Germans are settling in increasing numbers in Alsace, and now constitute the second largest foreign community, after the Turks. Attracted by cheaper housing costs Germans have moved into housing developments in France and commute to work in Germany. This too has become an issue, and the *National Front* has sought to limit the right of all foreigners to acquire property in France.<sup>18</sup>

As the number of Germans settling in Alsace increases, and as the number of

German tourists continues to grow, as increasing numbers of Alsatian businesses are bought up by German competitors, some have the perception that Alsace will be little more than a 'museum' and tourist site. In other words, the regional realignments within the European Union produce both winners and losers and the perception exists, despite considerable evidence to the contrary, that Alsace is on the losing end. The *National Front's* Alsatian candidates are opposed to Europe because they want France to preserve control over its border, its laws, its immigration policies -- and not become a "province of a new German Empire having its technocratic capital in Brussels."<sup>19</sup> In Alsace, the *National Front's* wariness of the European project reveals a latent fear of Germany combined with a strong dose of French nationalism. The vote for the Front national can in part be understood as a vote of support for the old patriotism of frontier regions – a patriotism most heavily marked on the border with Germany.

Alsace is a fascinating case of a prosperous border region, highly integrated within the European Union, where new forms of right wing regionalism and patriotism have emerged. The province is no longer a critical crossroads where understandings of the French nation take shape and are contested. Now that Alsace has lost its privileged and symbolic place within the French nation some have turned to a form of insular regionalism in order to defend their interests. The *Front national* has responded shrewdly to the anxieties and fears engendered by social and cultural change by appealing to a mythical past. Today's malaise reflects the uncertainty of the region's place between France and Europe, its troubling positioning between the imagined ethnically and culturally pure region of times past, and the diverse melting pot of the future. Regional



identity is in a state of flux and this is disturbing to those wedded to an immobile view of the region's culture and past.

The *Front national's* strength in Alsace-Lorraine is part of a European-wide trend that has witnessed the birth and development of extreme right parties in border regions. Contrary to other European regions where the new space created by the European Union has fueled neonationalism and demands for greater autonomy (the Lega Nord in Italy, the Vlaams Blok in Belgium, or even Jörg Haider's Freiheitliche Partei Österreichs in Austria), there is no widespread demand for autonomy in Alsace and parts of Alsatian society regret the strong presence of a French state and of a mythic past.<sup>20</sup> But the contrast with the Alsatian case is that the Northern League and the Flemish Bloc remain regional parties (with a strong influence at the national level) with distinctive regional demands, whereas the National Front is a national Party that finds support in Alsace because it builds upon a nostalgia of the past and the fears engendered by Alsace's changing place in the nation – much more so than on a strong regional platform.<sup>21</sup> The contradiction between Alsace's strong commitment in favor of European unification and Le Pen's success in the region is not as sharp as many have argued. It is possible to recognize that Europe is key to Alsace's prosperity, while being troubled by transnationality and the corresponding loss of control and identity. The border checkpoints between France and Germany are now but a distant memory, but it will be much longer before the cultural and social barriers disappear. Borders may well be sites of hybridity and exchange, but they remain sites of conflict and tension even after they have been abolished. If the Alsatian example is any indication, the new place of regions and borderlands within national states and the European Union can provoke unexpected

and sometimes disturbing responses.

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<sup>1</sup> . Catherine Trautmann spoke of “parasitage,” see Dernières Nouvelles d’Alsace, 27 March 1997

<sup>2</sup> . Dernières Nouvelles d’Alsace, 28 March 1997.

<sup>3</sup> . “Pluie noire sur la cathédrale,” Dernières Nouvelles d’Alsace, 29 March 1997

<sup>4</sup> . “Le passage du Rhin,” and “L’évacuation de Strasbourg,” Dernières Nouvelles d’Alsace, 29 March 1997; “Les allemands solidaires,” L’Humanité 28 March 1997. For the 1939 evacuation, Claire Dietrich, “L’évacuation de l’Alsace du nord et ses problèmes (Sept. 1939 - Sept. 1940),” Mémoire de Maîtrise, Université des Sciences Humaines de Strasbourg, 1986; Saisons d’Alsace, “1939: L’évacuation,” no. 105 (1989); and my “Franco-Alsatian Conflict and the Crisis of National Sentiment during the Phoney War,” Journal of Modern History 71 (1999) : 552-584.

<sup>5</sup> . On this issue, Daniel Bizeul, Avec ceux du FN: un sociologue au Front national (Paris: La Découverte, 2003), esp. Chapter 4.

<sup>6</sup> . Le Monde, 27 May 1997.

<sup>7</sup> . Cohn-Bendit is cited in Bernard Reumaux, “Un néo-autonomisme frontalier alsacien?” Le Monde, 29 April 1995.

<sup>8</sup> . Issue entitled “Réinventer l’Alsace: Face aux dérives extrémistes et au repli identitaire.” Saisons d’Alsace, no. 129 (1995); L’Alsace et l’extrême droite: Comprendre pour agir (Strasbourg: bf éditions, 1996); Bernard Reumaux and Philippe Breton, L’appel de Strasbourg: Les régions aux prises avec l’extrême droite: Le Réveil des démocrates (Strasbourg: La nuée bleue, 1997).

<sup>9</sup> . For interpretations of the *Front national*’s strength in Alsace see Bernard Schwengler, Le vote Front national. L’Alsace : un cas particulier? (Strasbourg : Editions Oberlin, 2003) ; Daniela Heimberger, Der Front national im Elsass : Rechtsextremismus in Frankreich, eine Regionale Wahlanalyse (Wiesbaden : Westdeutscher Verlag, 2001) ; Alain Bihr, “Le Front national en Alsace,” Raison Présente 116 (1995): 67-91; Richard Kleinschmager, Géopolitique de l’Alsace (Strasbourg, 1987), 85-91 and, by the same author, “Le vote lepéniste alsacien au printemps 1988,” Hérodote no. 50-51 (1988): 22-37; Reumaux and Breton, L’appel de Strasbourg; Saisons d’Alsace, no. 129 (1995); L’Alsace et l’extrême droite; and the chapter on Mulhouse in Michel Wieviorka et al., La France raciste (Paris: Seuil, 1992).

<sup>10</sup> . The best studies of the *Front national* on a national level are Nonna Mayer, Ces français qui votent FN (Paris: Flammarion, 1999); Nonna Mayer and Pascal Perrineau eds., Le Front national à découvert (Paris, 1996), and Pascal Perrineau, Le symptôme Le Pen: Radiographie des électeurs du Front national (Paris: Fayard, 1997). See also Jean-

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Yves Camus, Le Front national: Histoire et analyses (Paris: O. Laevens, 1997); Michel Soudais, Le Front national en face (Paris: Flammarion, 1996).

<sup>11</sup> . On the “Alsatian problem” see Emile Baas, Situation de l’alsace (Strasbourg: Editions de l’Est, 1946); Frédéric Hoffet, Psychanalyse de l’Alsace, 2d ed [(Strasbourg): Alsatia, 1994]. For the region’s history in the twentieth century see, among others, Alfred Wahl and Jean-Claude Richez, La vie quotidienne en Alsace entre France et Allemagne, 1850-1950 (Paris: Hachette, 1993); the excellent essays in Freddy Raphaël and Herberich-Marx, Mémoire plurielle de l’Alsace: Grandeurs et servitudes d’un pays des marges (Strasbourg: Publications de la société savante d’Alsace et des régions de l’Est, 1991); Bernard Vogler, Histoire politique de l’Alsace (Strasbourg: La nuée bleue, 1995), and Histoire Culturelle de l’Alsace (Strasbourg: La nuée bleue, 1994); David Allen Harvey, Constructing Class and Nationality in Alsace, 1830-1945 (DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 2001); Malcom Anderson, “Regional Identity and Political Change: The Case of Alsace from the Third to the Fifth Republic,” Political Studies, XX, no. 1, pp. 17-30; Samuel Goodfellow, “From Germany to France? Interwar Alsatian National Identity,” French History 7 (1993): 450-71.

<sup>12</sup> . On the purges and the categorization of the population see my “From Liberation to Purge Trials in the ‘Mythic Provinces’: the Reconfiguration of Identities in Alsace and Lorraine, 1918-1920,” French Historical Studies 23 (2000): 129-162.

<sup>13</sup> . See Freddy Raphaël, “Grandeur et décadence de la coiffe alsacienne: Imaginaire social et mise en scène politique,” Revue des sciences sociales de la France de l’Est 20 (1992-93): 210-214.

<sup>14</sup> . “Des Alsaciens en proie au vertige,” Témoignage Chrétien, reproduced in “Le vote Le Pen en Alsace, 24 avril 1988,” Les cahiers du club Jacques Peirates 1 (1988), 14. The poster is reproduced in Raphaël, “Grandeur et décadence.” In Mulhouse, an overtly racist *Front national* tract (circa 1989) also depicted a veiled alsacienne, whose headdress was decorated with the muslim star and crescent. See Michel Wieviorka et al., La France raciste, 90.

<sup>15</sup> . Alsace is also home to a regionalist party of the extreme right, *Alsace d’Abord*, whose militants are often Front national defectors. *Alsace d’abord* appeals to the electorate on a regionalist, xenophobic and pro-European platform. The Party, which is far less influential than the Front national, supports regional autonomy and a decentralized “Europe of regions.”

<sup>16</sup> . For an overview of the war years, Pierre Rigoulot, L’Alsace-Lorraine pendant la guerre, 1939-1945 (Paris : PUF, 1997).

<sup>17</sup> . Bihr, “Le Front national en Alsace,” 80.

<sup>18</sup> . 300 mesures pour la renaissance de la France: Front national, programme de

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gouvernement (Paris: Editions nationales, 1993), 42-43. On German settlers see Alain Jund and Sylvie Jaecklé, “L’immigration Alsacienne dans le contexte Rhénan,” Hommes & Migrations, no. 1209 (1997), 20-28 ; *Frontaliers* data from INSEE ([www.insee.fr/fr/insee\\_regions/alsace](http://www.insee.fr/fr/insee_regions/alsace)). See also Véronique Soutif, L’intégration européenne et les travailleurs frontaliers de l’Europe occidentale (Paris: L’Harmattan, 1999).

<sup>19</sup> . Georges-Pierre Noth quoted in Dernières nouvelles d’Alsace, 16 May 1997.

<sup>20</sup> . See Anna Cento Bull and Mark Gilbert, The Lega Nord and the Northern Question in Italian Politics (New York: Palgrave, 2001); Pascal Delwit, Jean-Michel De Waele and Andrea Rea eds., L’extrême droite en France et en Belgique (Bruxelles: Editions Complexe, 1998); Hanz-Georg Betz, Radical Right-Wing Populism in Western Europe (New York: St Martin’s Press, 1994); Pascal Perrineau ed., Les croisés de la société fermée: L’Europe des extrêmes droites (La Tour d’Aigues: Editions de l’Aube, 2001).

<sup>21</sup> . Some argue, however, that the Vlaams Blok is not so much as regional party as it is a “nationalism without a state, a nationalism that seeks to constitute a nation state on an ethnonational basis.” Delwit et al., L’extrême droite en France et en Belgique, 20.