

# Jewish Emancipation Reconsidered

Edited by  
MICHAEL BRENNER  
VICKI CARON and  
URI R. KAUFMANN

*Schriftenreihe  
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**Mohr Siebeck**

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# Jewish Emancipation Reconsidered

The French and German Models

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Michael Brenner, Vicki Caron and  
Uri R. Kaufmann

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MICHAEL BRENNER

## Introduction

Rabbi Shlomo ben Isaac, better known as Rashi, was a wanderer between different worlds. Born in Troyes in 1040, he studied in Worms and Mainz, the centres of medieval German Jewish learning, before moving back to the valley of the Seine. Rashi's Bible and Talmud commentaries have served as the basis for rabbinical interpretations up to our own day. His writings were known not only to the Jewish world, however. Through Nicholas of Lyra they reached Martin Luther and thus influenced Protestant thought during the German Reformation. On a different level, contemporary scholars of the French language rely on Rashi's writings, which used numerous vernacular expressions in Hebrew transcription, as an important source for learning about the pronunciation of medieval French.

In the Middle Ages, neither France nor Germany were well-defined national entities, and medieval Ashkenaz encompassed a Jewish community stretching from the western parts of the Holy Roman Empire to the northern regions of France, thus defying any "national" definition. After the successive expulsions of the Jews from France in the fourteenth century, which were motivated by economic greed, religious fanaticism and the desire of the French monarchs to create a greater sense of national unity, only isolated pockets of Jewish settlement survived. Jews continued to live in the papal enclaves around Avignon and the Comtat Venaissin, and beginning in the sixteenth century New Christians from the Iberian peninsula, who subsequently returned to Judaism, began to settle in the southern port cities of Bordeaux and Bayonne. In the Holy Roman Empire, by contrast, with its hundreds of principalities and independent cities, there was never a complete expulsion of Jews, despite numerous local expulsions. As a result of the severely diminished size of the Jewish communities in France after 1394, as well as their relative isolation, relations between French and German Jewish communities remained insignificant for almost three centuries.

The renewal of relations between French and German Jews in the seventeenth century was the direct outcome of the redrawing of the European map in the aftermath of the Thirty Years' War. After the Treaty of Westphalia in 1648, the territories of Alsace and Lorraine increasingly came under French sovereignty, which meant that France again became home to a large Ashkenazi Jewish community. Culturally these Jews were indistinguishable from other southwestern German Jewries, and for most of the eighteenth century they shared a common language – Yiddish – and common religious customs and traditions. It was only in the after-

math of the French Revolution and the Napoleonic wars that the fates of these Jewish communities began to diverge. By the early nineteenth century the idea of a single Ashkenazi Jewish community residing in the heart of Europe, united by common religious practices and customs, began to give way to a new concept – the notion of Jews as either French or German citizens of the Jewish faith.

This volume, which grew out of a conference held in Tutzing, Germany, in May 2001 titled, “Two Paths of Emancipation? The German and French Jewish Models Reconsidered”, focuses on the history of French and German Jews from the late eighteenth to the early twentieth centuries, a period commonly referred to as the emancipation era. These two Jewish communities are often seen as paradigms of the two different paths of emancipation, one that arose out of revolution as opposed to one that arose out of evolution.<sup>1</sup> While French Jews were emancipated within the span of a year (1790/91) during the French Revolution, German Jews had to fight for their legal equality until 1871, when emancipation was formally incorporated into the constitution of the new German Reich. French Jews, it is often claimed, received their equality early and subsequently had to prove that they were worthy of it, while German Jews were promised equality as the ultimate reward for their successful integration and acculturation into German society.

The contributions to this volume aim to investigate critically this widely accepted paradigm of the two main paths of Jewish emancipation in Europe. They do so by comparing different aspects of Jewish life from the end of the eighteenth century, when debates over Jewish emancipation first began to acquire currency, until the era of extermination under the Nazis. We therefore hope that this volume will make a contribution both to the nascent field of comparative Jewish history as well as to the rapidly growing literature comparing the French and German historical experiences in general.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> See especially Reinhard Rürup, ‘Jewish Emancipation and Bourgeois Society’, *Leo Baeck Institute Year Book* 14 (1969), pp. 67–91.

<sup>2</sup> In recent years several collected works have attempted to provide a comparative view of Jewish history. See, for example, Jacob Katz (ed.), *Toward Modernity: The European Jewish Model*, New Brunswick 1987; Frances Malino and David Sorkin (eds.), *From East and West: Jews in a Changing Europe, 1750–1870*, Oxford 1990; Todd M. Endelman (ed.), *Comparing Jewish Societies*, Ann Arbor 1997; Pierre Birnbaum and Ira Kaznelson (eds.), *Paths of Emancipation: Jews, States, and Citizenship*, Princeton 1995; Jonathan Frankel and Steven J. Zipperstein (eds.), *Assimilation and Community: The Jews in Nineteenth-Century Europe*, Cambridge, England 1992; Rainer Liedtke and Stephan Wendehorst (eds.), *The Emancipation of Catholics, Jews and Protestants: Minorities and the Nation State in Nineteenth-Century Europe*, Manchester 1999.

Similarly, a number of works offering a comparative perspective on French and German history have recently appeared. See especially Michael Jeismann, *Das Vaterland der Feinde: Studien zum nationalen Feindbegriff und Selbstverständnis in Deutschland und Frankreich, 1792–1918*, Stuttgart 1992; Rogers Brubaker, *Citizenship and Nationhood in France and Germany*, Cambridge, MA 1992; Etienne François, Hannes Siegrist and Jakob Vogel (eds.), *Nation und Emotion: Deutschland und Frankreich im Vergleich: 19. und 20. Jahrhundert*, Göttingen 1995; Charlotte Tacke, *Denkmal im sozialen Raum: Nationale Symbole in Deutschland und Frankreich im 19. Jahrhundert*, Göttingen 1995; Jakob Vogel, *Nationen im Gleichschritt: Der Kult der “Nation in Waffen” in Deutschland und Frankreich, 1871–1914*,

Topics range from the early modern encounter between Alsatian and south German Jewries, the Jewish Enlightenment movements in the French and Prussian contexts, and the impact of emancipation on Jewish scholarship and the Jewish press, to discussions of new forms of synagogue architecture, and a comparative analysis of the antisemitic movements in both countries, as well as Jewish responses to those movements. These essays concentrate mainly on the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, when the emancipation discourse was still very much alive. We intentionally decided to exclude essays dealing with the persecution of Jews and the reversal of emancipation under Nazi Germany and Vichy France. Research on this period has reached such immense dimensions that it could have been covered only very superficially here. Instead, we opted to include an epilogue by Diana Pinto comparing the French and German Jewish communities as they embark on the twenty-first century. Since the Second World War and the immigration of millions of Jews from North Africa in the 1950s and 60s, France has supplanted Germany as the principal centre of Jewish life in Western Europe. Nevertheless, despite the Holocaust, Germany, too, serves as a destination for Jewish immigrants, primarily from the former Soviet Union.

Some of the contributions may surprise the reader, such as the emphasis on the role played by Jews themselves in the struggle for emancipation, or the rise of Paris as the capital of Jewish political activity in the nineteenth century, far surpassing Berlin. Other contributions will reinforce traditional interpretations, such as the greater social and cultural freedom afforded Jews by the more liberal French policy, which granted Jews relatively unimpeded access to political and scholarly realms, in contrast to the far more restricted access afforded by the German states prior to unification and even by Imperial Germany after 1871. In this sense, some contributions of this volume tend to reinforce more traditional views regarding Germany's *Sonderweg*, or special path, in the modern period.

All the contributors are keenly aware of the manifold problems involved in comparing two national entities, which are complex in and of themselves: on the one side, for example, there was a unified French state; on the other side, at least for much of the nineteenth century, there were numerous German states and hence a variety of Jewish policies. But also in terms of Jewish life, it is important to remember that we cannot speak of monolithic French and German Jewish communities: the Sephardi Jews of Bordeaux scarcely resembled their Ashkenazi coreligionists in Alsace and Lorraine; traditional rural Jews in Franconia shared little with the assimilated Jewish burghers of Berlin. One result of this collective enterprise, therefore, is to challenge many of the accepted truisms that have informed our understanding of French and German Jewish history. In order to provide readers with a sense of the

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Göttingen 1997; Moritz Föllmer, *Die Verteidigung der bürgerlichen Nation: Industrielle und hohe Beamte in Deutschland und Frankreich 1900–1930*, Göttingen 2002. See also the collaborative work of Etienne François and Hagen Schulze (eds.), *Deutsche Erinnerungsorte*, 3 vols., Munich 2001, which in many ways stands as the German counterpart to Pierre Nora (ed.), *Les Lieux de mémoire*, 3 vols., Paris 1984–1992.

ongoing scholarly debates over these issues, we have decided to include the comments originally delivered at the Tutzing conference. By including these remarks, we hope to provide a forum for discussion in which readers are invited to participate further.

In this respect this volume follows the lines of two earlier enterprises, which compared the historical experiences of Jews in Germany with those in Italy and in Britain respectively.<sup>3</sup> As is always the case with collaborative efforts like this one, obviously not all topics could be covered. Much scholarly work still needs to be done, especially in areas of religious life, women's history, communal structures and the role played by East European Jews in both countries.

The conference which inspired this volume was organised by the Wissenschaftliche Arbeitsgemeinschaft of the Leo Baeck Institute. This conference marked the first time that the Leo Baeck Institute, which is dedicated to preserving the memory of the German-Jewish past and hosts offices in the United States, Great Britain, Israel and Germany, has undertaken a systematic attempt to integrate French-Jewish historical scholarship into its compass. The editors would like to express their gratitude to the Robert-Bosch-Stiftung and the Bayerisch-Französisches Wissenschaftszentrum for having sponsored this conference and to the Evangelische Akademie in Tutzing for having served as our host. We are also grateful to Dr. Michael Heinzmann for having assisted in the organisation of the conference, and to David Rees for his enormous editorial work of rendering texts by French, German, Italian and Hebrew native speakers into British English. Without his efforts this volume would not have been possible.

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<sup>3</sup> Mario Toscano (ed.), *Integrazione e identità: L'esperienza ebraica in Germania e Italia dall'Illuminismo al fascismo*, Milan 1998; and Michael Brenner, Rainer Liedtke and David Rechter (eds.), *Two Nations: British and German Jews in Comparative Perspective*, Tübingen 1999.

SIMON SCHWARZFUCHS

## Alsace and Southern Germany: The Creation of a Border

A traveller visiting southwestern Germany and the adjacent French region of Alsace before World War II would have been struck by the resemblance between the two regions. The architectural features, such as the half-timbered village houses, the red sandstone of the public buildings, and the similarities among the churches, would have suggested to the traveller that these two regions, although physically separated by the Rhine, actually constituted two components of a single region, the Rhineland.

If the traveller had been Jewish, he would have immediately noticed other affinities between the small, rural communities scattered across these two regions: a common language (now known as Western Yiddish), common customs, the likeness of family names, and a great resemblance in the appearance of the synagogues and cemeteries. During his visits to the synagogue, or when taking part in family events, he would have observed the same folklore, customs, *minhag*, and liturgy along both banks of the Rhine. Even had our traveller not been Jewish, he would have noticed in both regions the great economic presence of Jews in retail business and in cattle trading. The traveller would also have noted large Jewish populations in those cities that prior to Emancipation had tolerated few, if any Jewish families.

Were these Jewish communities of the Rhineland direct descendants of the medieval Jewish communities of these regions, which had managed to survive and recover from the massacres and waves of expulsion that had followed the Great Plague? Although there can be no doubt that a small Jewish population managed to survive these events, modern historical research does not support the notion of a direct link between the medieval and later Jewish communities.

It is now evident that the Jewish population on both sides of the Rhine greatly increased during the 150 years preceding the French Revolution and the Emancipation of the Jews in France. What caused this population growth? Were the striking similarities that united these two regions real and enduring? Did Rhineland Jewry resist the change of regime resulting from the uninterrupted annexationist policy of the French monarchy and the ensuing parting of ways between the German Rhineland and Alsace?

The horrors of the Thirty Years' War, which ended in 1648 with the Treaty of Westphalia, and the subsequent persecutions and destruction of the great Polish and Russian Jewish communities, which accompanied the Chmielnicki revolt of 1648–1649, were undoubtedly a turning point in the history of the Jewish communities

of Europe, both Eastern and Western. No Jewish community remained unaffected. The great flight before the Cossack hordes from the East pushed masses of Jews westward to those depopulated regions of Germany that had suffered so terribly and had nearly been destroyed during the last years of the Franco-German hostilities. Now these regions were crying out for new settlers, who would help to reconstitute the population of recently depopulated cities and villages and would revitalise the sagging economies of the region. This wave of immigration from the East was part of a world-wide trend of renewed Jewish settlement in the West, which had repercussions even in the New World: a Jewish community was set up in New Amsterdam, and in 1656 a new Jewish community emerged in London.

Did these waves of immigrants join and strengthen the already existing local settlements along the Rhine? Or did they ignore the older settlements altogether and create entirely new ones? The names of many settlers may offer clues to their geographical origins, but one has to remember that during this period most Jews did not use permanent family names. Even in cases where Jews did possess family names, the names do not readily indicate the history of their bearers, since we do not know how long a particular name had belonged to a particular family. Whatever the case, the year 1648 must be looked at as a watershed in the history of central European, particularly German, Jewry. This year marks in many ways the second beginning of the Jewish communities of *Ashkenaz*. It should be emphasised that *Ashkenaz* was at this time still a purely geographic term that referred to the German speaking countries generally.<sup>1</sup> Needless to say, the changes did not always occur right away: the year 1648 represents not a revolutionary moment but rather the initiation of a process of westward Jewish migration that may be continuing even today.

In order to understand the new situation of German Jewry during this period, we shall have to rely on a number of local statistics, since there is no general survey available.<sup>2</sup> We see from these figures, for example, that in 1648 there were no Jews in the Margravate of Baden-Baden. Fifty years later, in 1697, there were already Jewish settlements in Ettlingen, Kuppenheim and Bühl. The following figures show the extent of this evolution:

Ettlingen:	0 families in 1648, 5 in 1700, 19 in 1801
Bühl:	0 families in 1648, 14 in 1700, 22 in 1739, 26 in 1797 (119 persons)
Gailingen:	18 families in 1734, 40 in 1779

<sup>1</sup> It may be mentioned here that the fourth part of the *Germania Judaica* (in preparation) has also chosen the year 1648 as its *terminus ad quem*. The recently published English version of *German-Jewish History in Modern Times*, ed. by Michael A. Meyer, vol. 1, New York 1996, begins in 1600 “although arguments can be made for beginning our account with the ... settlement of fifty Jewish families, expelled from Vienna, in the Margravate Brandenburg in 1671 ...”, p. xi.

<sup>2</sup> The figures are taken from Joseph Walk (ed.), *Pinkas Hakehillot, Germany*, (Heb.), vol. 2, *Württemberg, Hohenzollern, Baden*, Jerusalem 1986, pp. 175–176, under the heading of the different communities. For the margravate of Baden-Baden, see also J.A. Zehnter, ‘Geschichte der Juden in der Markgrafschaft Baden-Baden’, *Zeitschrift für die Geschichte des Oberrheins*, vol. 11, no. 3, 1896, p. 375.

Kuppenheim: 0 families in 1548, 15 in 1697 (66 persons)  
 Schmieheim: 3 families in 1709, 28 in 1758  
 Sintzheim: 2 families in 1705, 9 in 1722, 27 in 1782 (121 persons)

The figures for Mannheim and Karlsruhe are even more illuminating:

Mannheim: 5 families in 1650, 15 in 1663, 84 in 1691, 50 in 1761 (225 persons)  
 Karlsruhe: 9 families in 1720, 62 in 1733 (282 persons), 75 in 1750

The decline in the number of Jewish families in Mannheim between 1691 and 1761 can be explained by the continuation of westward Jewish migration even from Germany, as evidenced by the growing number of Mannheimers in Alsace during the second half of the eighteenth century.

In Hessen we can observe the case of Bingen, where we find 21 families in 1700, and 76 families (343 persons) in 1765.<sup>3</sup> In what is today Württemberg, the community of Crailsheim grew from 16 families in 1714 to 78 in 1752, and a number of its Jewish inhabitants could shortly thereafter be found in Alsace. The general picture is no different in Franconia.<sup>4</sup> Bamberg (Upper Franconia) grew from ten families in 1633 to 107 in 1763 (483 persons), and a sprinkling of Bambergers ultimately also settled in Alsace. In Munich, too, the number of Jews rose from four families in 1728 (17 persons) to 49 families in 1798 (220 persons). In Swabia we find in Oettingen (the homeland of the Alsatian Ettingers?) 18 families in 1665 and 85 families in 1785 (385 persons). In Harburg, there were 11 families in 1671 and 71 in 1794 (322 persons).

Although further examples could easily be given, these suffice to show that the continuous population growth experienced in these regions of Germany cannot be explained by natural increase alone: a general trend was obviously at work. It is to be hoped that figures for many more communities will soon be gathered and synthesised in order to further our understanding of German-Jewish demography. This work has already been done for Alsace, which makes it much easier to keep track of and analyse these population changes as they occurred in the Jewish communities there.<sup>5</sup> With the Treaty of Westphalia, the French monarchy, which had received from the Habsburg Empire their possessions in the Sundgau and Upper Alsace, felt free to pursue its policy of "reunification", thereby aiming to bring the remainder of the province of Alsace under its authority. Alsace thus became progressively French. The religious status quo was maintained as a matter of policy in order to placate the Alsatian Protestant communities, which thus received official recognition from the same monarchy that would soon decree the expulsion of Protestant believers from the rest of France. The basic principle of French policy in Alsace was

<sup>3</sup> Henry Wassermann (ed.), *Pinkas Hakehillot, Germany*, (Heb.), vol. 3, *Hesse, Hesse-Nassau, Frankfurt*, Jerusalem 1992, p. 101.

<sup>4</sup> The following figures will be found in Baruch Zwi Ophir (ed.), *Pinkas Hakehillot, Germany*, (Heb.), vol. 1, *Bavaria*, Jerusalem 1972, under the heading of the different communities.

<sup>5</sup> Georges Weill, 'Recherches sur la démographie des Juifs d'Alsace du xvi<sup>e</sup> au xviii<sup>e</sup> siècle', *Revue des études juives*, vol. 130, no. 1, 1971, pp. 51–90 and the map at the end of the volume.

not to infringe upon the already established practices in the province.<sup>6</sup> It is more than likely that the French governor did not have the Jews in mind when he formulated this policy, since there was no need to please them to guarantee the peace of the province. Nevertheless, the Jews unintentionally benefited from it. The acquired rights of the local nobility were also confirmed, which meant that the seigneurs maintained the privilege of granting the *droit de réception*, or right of settlement, which allowed them to invite foreign Jews to settle in their domains. This arrangement was, of course, to the advantage of the nobility, since immigrating Jews had to pay the usual taxes. A problem eventually arose, however, when the monarchy also tried to force the Jews to pay a special tribute into the King's treasury. Notwithstanding this conflict between the monarchy and the aristocracy over the taxation of the Jews, Jews continued to enjoy the right to settle in Alsace.

It should be emphasised that during this period all governing powers in Alsace were interested in stimulating immigration to the province in order to rehabilitate its shattered economy. In addition to Jewish immigrants, many Catholic and, more surprisingly, many Protestant immigrants found their way to Alsace as well.<sup>7</sup>

There can be no doubt that until 1648 the Jews of Alsace felt that they were an integral part of the *Ashkenazi*, that is, the larger German-speaking Jewish community, and they were not inclined to identify themselves with France. In contrast to the Jewish community of Metz, they were not yet engaged in the business of providing the French army with military supplies, nor had they developed a Paris-oriented mentality. These changes would inevitably come afterwards, when the Jews of Alsace eventually recognised that the King of France had replaced the Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire as their master. Alsatian Jewry would then develop a new perspective as a result of the confrontation between its *Ashkenazi* background and its impending integration into the French world.

The demographic situation in Alsace underwent considerable change between 1648 and the French Revolution. It has been estimated that there were no more than 100 to 115 Jewish families in the whole province in the mid-sixteenth century.<sup>8</sup> This number, after a decline towards the end of the sixteenth century, may have increased somewhat during the first part of the seventeenth century. In 1689, there were between 525 and 587 families, which would bring the total Jewish population to about 2,700 persons, if we assume the average family size was 4.5 persons. In 1697 according to the Intendant of Alsace, Jacques de la Grange, there were 3,655 Jews in the province.<sup>9</sup>

Nineteen years later, the Intendant of Angervilliers organised an official census of the Jews of Alsace in order to ascertain whether the Jewish population had perhaps

<sup>6</sup> See especially Georges Livet, *L'Intendance d'Alsace sous Louis XIV, 1548–1715*, Strasbourg 1956, and the chapters by the same author in *Histoire de l'Alsace*, ed. by Philippe Dollinger, Toulouse 1970.

<sup>7</sup> Livet, *L'Intendance d'Alsace*, pp. 467–472; Livet, 'La Guerre de Trente ans et les traités de Westphalie: La Formation de la Province d'Alsace', in *Histoire de l'Alsace*, p. 287.

<sup>8</sup> Weill, 'Recherches sur la démographie', p. 53.

<sup>9</sup> Rodolphe Reuss, *L'Alsace au xvii<sup>e</sup> siècle*, Paris 1898, vol. 2, p. 576.

grown too much so as to justify a possible expulsion of those Jews who had settled in the province during the previous twenty-five years. According to his published statistics, there were between 1,269 and 1,348 Jewish families living in Alsace in 1716, which corresponded to a total Jewish population of about 6,000 people. There is every reason to believe that this census was fairly accurate, even though it revealed a Jewish population increase – in less than half a generation – of 35 percent. Whatever has been said about the early age of marriage of Jewish women and the allegedly large size of Jewish families, it is impossible to explain this demographic leap solely as the result of natural increase. It must be largely explained as the result of continual immigration.

This trend continued over the course of the eighteenth century. Subsequent censuses show the following results:<sup>10</sup>

1732:	1,675 families (approx. 8,300 persons)
1744:	2,104–2,125 families (approx. 10,500 persons)
1754:	2,565 families (approx. 13,000 persons)
1780–1:	3,600 families (18,330 persons)
1784:	3,913 families (19,707 persons)

It is necessary to add, however, that as a consequence of the continual increase of the Jewish population the censuses became less and less reliable, since the unsettled Jewish population – peddlers, beggars, vagabonds, etc. – grew as well. It may be assumed that the real Jewish population of Alsace in 1784 was at least 20 percent higher than that listed in the official census. All these statistics confirm the decisive role of immigration in this Jewish population explosion, which was part of a general, although less intense phenomenon. According to the Intendant La Grange, Alsace had a total population of 257,000 in 1697. By 1784 the population had increased by 243 percent to 624,000.<sup>11</sup>

No less interesting than this population explosion was the geographic redistribution of Jewish settlements throughout the province. In 1689, 76 percent of the recorded Alsatian Jewish families lived in about a hundred localities in Lower Alsace. In 90 of these localities there were fewer than ten families. Westhoffen had 37 families and Marmoutier had 20, and these were the largest communities in the province. In seven other towns there were between 10 and 19 families. In Upper Alsace, where 24 percent of all Alsatian Jews lived, only three of the recorded 34 settlements – Ribeauvillé, Hégenheim, and Bergheim – counted ten or more Jewish families, and none of the remaining 31 settlements had more than six Jewish families.

A century later, in 1784, the picture had again changed: 74 percent of the Jews now lived in 129 different localities in Lower Alsace. Bischheim, with 473 Jews of 79 families, had become the largest Alsatian Jewish community. The Jewish population of Upper Alsace had decreased from 54 communities with 1,142 families in 1766, to 50 communities with 1,107 families in 1784.

<sup>10</sup> Weill, 'Recherches sur la démographie' pp. 62–65.

<sup>11</sup> Livet, *L'Intendance d'Alsace*, p. 623.

These figures make it clear that by the end of the eighteenth century Lower Alsace counted far more Jewish settlements than Upper Alsace, and that the Jewish settlers were much more scattered here than in the south. The settlers were to be found in all districts that had granted them the right of residence, and many among them would try to set up communities near the highways leading to the great cities, where they were forbidden to stay at night but were allowed to enter during the day to conduct business. The right of residence was not granted with the same generosity in the southern part of Alsace, and the Jews there tried to set up their settlements in the vicinity of the cities, which were forbidden to them, and along the Swiss border, which was now open to local and international trade.

The Jewish population had increased – not taking into account the “invisible Jews” – from about 2,800 persons in 1689 to 19,107 in 1784, that is, nearly seven-fold. During the same period, the number of Jewish settlements had grown from 134 to 179: a mere third. It seems that while the *seigneurs* who had shown a lenient attitude towards the Jews did not change their policies and continued to grant the *droit de résidence* to newcomers, those who had always opposed Jewish immigration continued to do so as well. That is why the great surge in the Jewish population manifested itself in the strengthening of already existing communities and not in the creation of new ones. In all of Alsace at the end of the eighteenth century there were about 1,150 towns or villages, of which about 900 belonged to noblemen who could potentially have granted the right of residence to new Jewish settlers. It is a fact that only 20 percent decided to do so. The remainder continued to exhibit hostility towards the Jews. The major cities – Strasbourg, Colmar and Mulhouse – as well as some cities of lesser importance, continued to keep their gates closed to Jews, even when they endured their presence from morning to dusk to enable them to conduct business. The refusal of the Alsatian nobility to allow Jews to settle in the major cities, in contrast to the situation in the German Rhineland, resulted in the presence of Jews in villages and small towns that continued to exhibit the characteristics of rural life. Under these conditions, the Jewish communities that emerged were necessarily small: as we have seen, the largest community, that of Bischheim, numbered only 473 persons in 1784. Only two other communities in Upper Alsace counted more than 400 Jewish settlers in the same year: Wintzenheim with 430 persons, and Hegenheim with 409 persons. It should be emphasised in this regard that despite its smaller Jewish population Upper Alsace counted no fewer than 15 communities with over 200 Jewish inhabitants. In Lower Alsace there were only ten communities of this size. Therefore, the major part of rural Alsace and nearly all of its urban centres remained off-limits for the Jews. Although the Jews of Alsace became much more urbanised after Emancipation, many rural Jews continued to live in rural villages and small towns. The number of new Jewish settlements remained minimal during the first half of the nineteenth century.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Weill, ‘Recherches sur la démographie’, p. 66–67. On the urbanisation of Alsatian Jews during the first half of the nineteenth century, see Paula E. Hyman, *The Emancipation of the Jews of Alsace: Acculturation and Tradition in the Nineteenth Century*, New Haven 1991, ch. 6, pp. 86–97.

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