WILLKOMMEN

German (Deutsch)
SIG
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Agenda

• Presentation – German Colonization of South America
• Group Discussion –
  • New Members
  • Individual Status
• Problem Solving
Genealogist Goal

Know Your Ancestors
Through The Knowledge Gained From Research and an Understanding Of Their History and Their Culture

Dale Heins, July 2013
German Colonization of South America

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German Colonization of South America

- Prior to 1800
- 1800 to WW II
  - Brazil
  - Northern South America & Middle Andes
  - Rio De La Plata Region
- Post WW II
King Charles V
1500-1558

- King of Holy Roman Empire
  - Also King Charles I of Spain
  - Archduke of Austria (Charles I)

- Inherited Spanish & Habsburg empire
  - Extended from Spain to Netherlands to Austria
  - Included Kingdom of Naples
  - Spanish America
King Charles V
1500-1558

- Defeated the French, the Pope, the Turks
- Opposed the Protestant Reformation & declared war on protestant princes of Germany
- Defeated the Aztecs, Mayans, and Incas in the New World
- Wars financed by German and Italian banker-merchants
Charles V
How to get out of debt?

• 1529 Granted land in New World
  – Lands south of the equator not pertaining to Pizarro to Fuggers
  – Venezuela to Welsers
Welsers & Fuggers

• Bankers and Merchants
• From Augsburg Germany
  – Located in southwest Bavaria
  – Intersection of trade routes to Italy
  – Known for woven goods, cloth & textiles
  – Fuggers donated Fuggerei, part of the city housing needy people in 1516, still in use
Venezuela Colony

- Required to conquer at own expense
- Enlist only Spanish & Flemish troops
- Fit out 2 expeditions with 4 ships
- Build 2 cities and 3 forts in two years

La Santa Trinidad, one of the ships which were part of the Welser expedition to Venezuela
Venezuela Colony

• Welser’s settled Klein-Venedig (Little Venice) 1528-1546
• Primary reason was to search for El Dorado
  --Fabled city of gold
  --Still searching as late as 1946
• Multiple expeditions
  – Ambrosium Ehinger
    • Founded Maricaibo 1529
Venezuela Colony – The End

- German attempts at colonization failed
  - More interested in searching the country for gold
- Colonists died from tropical diseases & hostile Indian attacks
- Spanish appointed governor captured & beheaded Bartholomeus VI Welser in 1546
- Ultimately 1556 Spanish Treasury declaration of bankruptcy & 30 Years’ War bankrupted the Welsers
Brazil

- Colonization started by King João VI of Portugal
  - Catholic farmers from Rhineland & Switzerland
  - 1818 Bahia
  - 1820 Novo Friburgo
  - Opposed by Brazilian planter aristocracy
  - Assimilated into Brazilian population
  - Least important of German colonies
German Colonization of Brazil
1824-1969

• 250,000 Germans emigrated to Brazil
  – Probably many more because current population of 10 million Germans or those of German descent would require at least twice this number
  – Immigrants and/or spouses not counted as entering the country

• 4th largest group after Portuguese, Italians, Spanish

• Most arrived between WWI and WWII
Reasons for German Colonization

• Brazilian government
  – Strengthen position on dispute southern frontier
  – Mercenaries to prevent secession of Uruguay
    • 1820 emperor Dom Pedro I needed soldiers
    • Sends Capt. Georg Shaffer to Hamburg
    • Recruits debtors and criminals
    • 1000s of indigents show up in Hamburg & Bremen to demand passage because of free land, but refuse to sign contract for military service
    • Shaffer receives OK from Rio de Janeiro to provide passage
German Settlements

- Primarily in southern Brazil
  - Rio Grande do Sur
    - Immigrants brought by government
  - Santa Catarina
    - Immigrants brought by private groups like Hamburg Colonization Society
    - Founded Blumenau & Joinville
  - Paraña
    - Immigrants from Santa Catarina
    - Volga Germans from Russia
São Leopolda

- Located in Rio Grande do Sur
- Settled in 1824 by 124 Germans
- Promised
  - Free land
  - Citizenship
  - Supplies
  - Temporary exemption from taxes & military service
São Leopolda

• Protestantism tolerated as long as meeting places did not look like a church
• First settlers from Hunsrück region of Rhineland
• Many settlers died due to tropical diseases
São Leopolda

• Over the next 50 years another 28,000 Germans were brought to Rio Grande do Sur to farm
• Also settled Novo Hamburg & Vale dos Sinos, now Porto Alegre metropolitan area
• Closed to new immigrants in 1848
Santa Catarina

- Private groups brought immigrants
- Planned communities
- Plenty of skilled laborers
- Today one of the wealthiest parts of Brazil
  - Lowest rates of unemployment & illiteracy
German Immigration Curtailed in 1850’s

• Prussian government bans immigration in 1859
  – Poor conditions for workers on coffee plantations

• Speculation frenzy 1854
  – Brazilian government gave less land & charged modest prices

• Protestant marriages not recognized

• Little or no public schooling
  – 1864 Rio Grande do Sul consents to instruction in German in colonists private schools

• Paraguayan War last half of 1864-1870
German Unification  
1864-1871

• Brazilian government wary of interference
• Rio Grande do Sul stops aiding German immigrants
  – Italians & Spanish favored
• Government planned settlements
  – Rio Grande do Sul restricts Germans to 1/3 of the population of new settlements
  – Germans settled among other ethnic groups to promote superior habits & techniques but in patterns less risky to national security
Paraña

- Focus switched from German to Eastern European immigrants
- German immigrants found no open lands
- Forced into urban areas or dispersed rural settlements
- Less likely to retain cultural uniqueness
Volga Germans

• Dom Pedro II, emperor of Brazil
  – Recruiting Germans to southern Brazil to stabilize region
  – Traveled personally to Europe to recruit immigrants
    • Appeals for direct immigration rebuffed by Germans
    • Power brokers in Rio Grande do Sul resist further German immigration
    • Successfully recruits Germans living in Russia
Volga Germans

• Germans recruited to Russia in 18th century by Catherine The Great
• Settled along the Volga River
• Allowed to keep German culture, traditions, language, churches (Lutheran, Reformed, Catholics, Mennonites)
• Returned to Germany in order to emigrate to South America after above privileges revoked
Volga Germans in Brazil

- Arrived in the 1870’s
- Most were Catholic
- Given free land in Paraña
- Attempted to raise wheat as in Russia
- President of Paraña described them as “extremely ignorant, fearful, lazy, envious, and in spite of being extremely religious, lacking in a sense of true charity.”

Koch, Fred C., The Volga Germans: In Russia and the Americas, 1763 to the Present
Volga Germans in Brazil

• Brazilian Revolution ended land grants in 1889
• Unfriendly neighbors and Paraña government resulted in re-emigration to Argentina, the US, or Europe
• Most relocated to cities or better farmland
German Immigration to Brazil
Post WWI

- Largest number of immigrants came in the 1920’s after WWI
- Most settled in large towns
- Most were middle-class laborers from German urban areas
- Contributed to industrialization & development of Brazil’s large cities like Porto Alegre & Curitiba
- 1920-1930’s saw large emigration of German Jews mostly to São Paulo
- Post WWII, President Vargas forbade the use of German language in Brazil after which German immigration became very low
Germans in Northern South America
Germans in Northern South America

• Columbia
  – Prussian born Juan Bernardo Elbers
    • 1820’s & 1830’s tried to establish steamer service on Magdalena River
  – Most immigrants farmers or professional workers
  – After WWI many opticians & businesses in Bogotá
  – After WWII some Nazi’s

• British Guyana
  – End of slavery in 1833 resulted in recruitment of indentured German farmers
  – 1842 Freiburg native Robert Schomburgk warned Germans against settling in British Guyana
  – Thousands of emigrants from Rhineland & Würtemberg died there
Northern South American Germans Try Again in Venezuela

- Venezuela tried to recruit free immigrant workers versus British slaves
- Colonel Agustín Codazzi & Manuel Tovar built infrastructure for Palmar del Tuy & recruited Germans from Kaiserstuhl in 1843
- Organized around coffee production
- 1852 President Monagas compelled Tovar to turn over certain lands to colonists
Colonia Tovar

• To maintain control, Tovar
  – Bestows land to those Germans
  – Announces colonists who marry Venezuelans will have land repossessed
  – Enacts a Law of Endogamy not rescinded until 1964
  – Colony isolated into the 20th century
  – Current economy dependent on tourism & agriculture (peaches, strawberries, beets, carrots)
Colonia Tovar

Gateway to Colonia Tovar

View of Central Town of Tovar
Germans in Northern South America 20th Century

• Immigration declined
  – First third of the century only 30,000 immigrants to Venezuela
  – Very few Germans

• Some European Jews 1930’s & 1940’s
  – Both countries required proof of Roman Catholic baptism
  – Jews fleeing Nazi Germany
    • Prosperous families
    • Produced documentation
Germans in the Middle Andes
Peru, Ecuador, Chile
Peru & Ecuador

• Agricultural colonies not successful

• 1857 Baron von Schütz-Holzhausen organized Peruvian colony Pozuzo
  – Recruited 200 Tyroleans & 100 Prussian Catholics
  – Year long trip with death & quarantine for cholera
  – 7 month trek over the Andes
    • Death & desertion
    • Barely half of the original settlers survived
Peru & Ecuador

• 1860 Friedrich Gerstäcker report
  – Employed to by German states to check on settlers
  – Pozuzo settlers reported abandonment by Peruvian government
  – Joined German settlers in inauguration of Ecuador Land Company’s colony in the northwest
  – Repulsed by life in Ecuador, especially filth of Quito
Peru & Ecuador

• Commercial enterprises much more successful than agriculture

• 1883 Gildemeister family bought Casa Grande plantation in northern Peru
  – Grew to become the largest sugar plantation in the world
  – Avoided black listing during WWII
    • Patriarch critical of Nazi Germany
    • Supplier of sugar for Britain

• Most German immigrants were single young men who married into Peruvian families
Germans in Bolivia

• Small population
  – 1900 only 500 residing
  – 1/10 female
• Involved in mining & commerce
• Germán Busch
  – Son of German father & Italian mother
  – War hero & president 1937-1939
Chile

- Bartolomé Blumenthal (Bartolomé Flores)
  - 1511 born in Nuremberg
  - 1\textsuperscript{st} German in Chile
  - Met Pedro de Valdivia
  - Participated in the defense of Santiago 1541
German Colonization of Chile

• 10,000 Germans came to Chile prior to WWI
• About half settled in agricultural communities in southern Chile
  – Clung to European heritage
• Remainder engaged in commercial or industrial pursuits in urban areas
  – Assimilated into communities
German Colonization of Chile

- 1818 Chile gains independence from Spain
- 1822 Valparaiso becomes major trading center with Hamburg
- 1838 Bernhard Philippi settles in Santiago
- 1844 forms partnership with Ferdinand Flindt, German merchant in Valparaiso
- 1846 Rodolpho Philippi recruits 9 families from Hesse to settle in southern Chile
  - Settle on Franz Kindermann land near Osorno

Bernhard Philippi
German Colonization of Chile

- 1848 B. Philippi appointed Chile’s colonization agent
- Directed to
  - Recruit 180-200 German Catholic families
  - Pay their own passage
  - Purchase land at auction
German Colonization of Chile
Philippi Recruitment Results

• Opposed by German Catholic Bishops
  – Few poor Catholic families from Württemberg
  – Settled in Valdivia province interior

• Chilean government allows Protestants
  – Settlers with economic means
  – Settled near Valdivia
German Colonization of Chile
Successful Southern Colonies

- Puerto Montt
  - Nucleus for interior settlements
    - Osorno, Valdivia, Llanquihue
  - Attracted privately immigrating Germans through 19th century

Example of German architecture in Puerto Varas
German Colonization of Chile
Philippi Recruitment Results

- Philippi reprimanded for bringing too many Protestants
- Appointed governor of Magallanes Region rather than desired Llanquihue
- Murdered by indigenous people 1852
German Colonization of Chile
Successful Southern Colonies

• Magallanes Region
  – 1885 90 Germans (4% of population)
  – 1914 Germans owned ~25% of Punta Arenas commercial assets
  – Helped to establish Chile’s claim to Patagonia

• Today least amount of poverty (5.8%) & one of the highest GDP per capita in Chile
Germans in Chile 20th Century

• 1900 Valdivia
  – Hoffmann Gristmill
  – Rudloff Shoe Factory

• Post WWI Krupps built munitions factory in Llanquihue

• Mid 1930’s German colonized large part of Chilean & Argentinean Patagonia
Nazism in Chile

• 1933 German youth organization with strong Nazi influence established
• Most German Chileans passive supporters of Nazism
• Local chapter of Nazi party started in Chile
• Strong support among German Lutheran Church hierarchy
Nazis in Chile Post WWI

• Walter Rauff
  – Standartenführer in SS – aide to Heydrich
  – Instrumental in the “Mobile Gas Chamber”
  – Died in Santiago 1984

• Paul Schäffer
  – Member of Hitler Youth
  – Founded Colonia Dignidad (renamed Villa Baviera)
    • Used by Chilean secret police as torture & detention center under Pinochet’s military dictatorship
  – Imprisoned on child sex abuse

• Horst Paulmann
  – Son of SS member Karl Werner
  – Founded Hipermercados Jumbo
Germans in Today’s Chile

• About 6,000 German’s living in Chile
• Estimated over 500,000 German descendants
• About 20,000 Chileans speak German
• German schools, newspapers, periodicals
  – Condor – weekly newspaper
German Colonization of Río De La Plata Region

- Argentina
- Paraguay
- Uruguay
German Colonization of Argentina

- Occurred in 5 time periods
  - Pre 1870
  - 1870-1914
  - 1918-1933
  - 1933-1940
  - Post 1940
German Colonization of Argentina Pre-1870

• 1818 Argentina gains independence from Spain
  • Early Germans – Banker Thiesen; ship builder Johann Reissig
  • Most Germans either proprietors of commercial establishments or employed by English firms

• 1850’s instituted a policy forbidding single ethnic colonies
  • President/Dictator Juan Manual de Rosa feared people other than Argentines
  • Limited German immigration until 20th Century
German Colonization of Argentina
Pre-1870

- Louis Vernet from Hamburg
  - Establishes trading company in Buenos Aires & marries a local
  - 1829 Becomes governor of Islas Malvinas (Falkland Islands)
  - Establishes a small colony
  - Attack by USS Lexington results in dissolution
German Colonization of Argentina 1870-1914

- Due to growth of port of Buenos Aires &
- Agricultural success in the pampas region
  - Wheat
  - Cattle
Pampas Region of Argentina
Volga Germans 1878

• Arrived in January 1878
• Settle 6 towns in Entre Rios province
  – Colonia General Alvear primary settlement
  – 5 towns Catholic; 1 Protestant
• Currently over 2 million Volga Germans
• Responsible for Argentina’s status as a major producer of grain
German Colonization of Argentina 1914-1930

• 1923 & 1924 greatest number of German immigrants

• Due to immigration restrictions in US & Brazil & deteriorating conditions in post WWI Europe

• Most settled in Buenos Aires

• Resulted in increased number of German schools (59-176) & attendance at German schools (3,300 to 12,900)
German Colonization of Argentina 1933-1940

• 45,000 German immigrants
  – 28% of total number of immigrants
• Most settled in Buenos Aires
• Mostly German Jews or German opponents of Nazism
Nazism in Argentina

- Party membership reserved for German nationals but sympathy cultivated among German-Argentines
- Most support came from lower ranks of employees of German firms
  - Directors of these firms acquiesced but did not support Nazis
- Frustrated German colonists in northern provinces received humanitarian aid from Nazis
- Evangelical La Plata Synod & Argentina’s Association of German-speaking Catholics received subsidies from German government
- A number of Evangelical pastors were proponents of Nazism
Argentine Opponents to Nazism

• Missouri Synod & United Lutheran Church missionaries

• *Argentinische Tageblatt*, German daily newspaper published since 1889
  – Continued opposition despite attacks on employees and property

• May 15, 1939 decree banned German political organizations

• 1941 Argentine government banned German instruction in schools
German Colonization of Argentina Post WWII

- Juan Peron’s ratline *Odessa*
- Assisted by diplomats, intelligence officers, the Vatican, Spain
- Recruited Nazis from science & technology sectors
- Peron’s boast, “The German Government has invested millions of marks into the development of these people, we only paid for the airplane ticket.”
- 12,000 German immigrants between 1946-1952
- Rapidly assimilated into Argentine culture
German Argentines

*Deutschargentinier*

*Germano-argentino*

- Account for 8% of Argentina’s population
  - 1 million descendants of German citizens
  - 2 million Volga Germans
- German – 5th most common language
- Assimilated into Argentine culture
German Colonization of Paraguay

- 1845 Heinrich von Morgenstern de Wisner, member of Brazilian military delegation
- Meets Paraguay’s dictator Carlos Antonio Lopez
- 1865 Advisor to Carlos’ son Francisco Solano Lopez & Irish mistress Eliza Lynch “La Madama”
- Survives the War of Triple Alliance
- 1871 Becomes Immigration Minister
German Colonization of Paraguay

- Morgenstern recruits Germans from Paraguay’s opponents – Brazil, Argentina, Uruguay
- 1875 colony southeast of Asunción collapsed
- 1881 San Bernardino established
  - Primary industry dairy farming
  - Became resort town for Paraguay’s elite
  - 1938 only 1 in 10 were German
German Colonization of Paraguay
Förster Colony

- Bernard Förster married to Elisabeth Nietzsche (sister to philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche)
- Contracted with Paraguay to bring 140 German families
- Goal to establish a colony based on Aryan ideal
- Nueva Germania established 1887
- Attracted only 40 families by 1888; 1890 population only 70
- Förster committed suicide 1890
- 1938 population 400 but only 130 Germans
German Colonization of Paraguay
Mennonites

- Most successful of German colonists
- More Russian than German
- Settled in Gran Chaco region and Eastern Paraguay
- Successful in agriculture & dairy output
German Colonization of Uruguay

- Not significant
- 1840 Colonel Spikerman settled Germans at Canelones
- 1850 Uruguay’s German population only 100
- 1870 Russian Germans settled along Uruguay River
- Post WWII accepted several hundred Mennonites from Prussia
German Colonization of South America

- Colonists were either involved in agriculture or business
- German influence can be found in many realms **but**
- Germans have assimilated into the culture & society
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