

## A Taste Of The Belgian Provinces Hardcover

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the focus of this study is on dutch antarctic policy in order to explain dutch antarctic policy from the late 1950s until 1990 and to place it in a broader context dutch policy will be compared with the antarctic policies of belgium and germany federal republic of germany frg in the same period 6 the comparison offers insights into the functioning of the ats and into the roles if any of the three countries in this international regime in the period under investigation this adds another central question to this research how does dutch antarctic policy compare with the belgian and german antarctic policies in the same period

the house of belgium and its many houses institutional and personal literal and metaphoric captured in a blend of social and cultural analysis that offers a microcosm of european society since world war ii sensitive perceptive revealing and delightfully readable eugen weber

introduction the history of the belgian nation is little known in england this ignorance or rather this neglect may seem strange if we consider the frequent relations which existed between the two countries from the early middle ages it is however easy enough to explain and even to justify the general idea has been for a long time that the existence of belgium as a nation dated from its independence and that previous to 1830 such a thing as belgian history did not even exist all through feudal times we are aware of the existence of the county of flanders of the duchy of brabant and of many other principalities but in no official act does the term belgique occur even after the unification of the fifteenth century when the country came under the rule of the dukes of burgundy the notion of a distinct nationality such as the french or the british remains hidden to the superficial student the netherlands forming merely a part of the rich possessions of the most powerful vassals of france through modern times the belgian provinces les provinces belgiques as they were called in the eighteenth century pass under the rule of the kings of spain of the emperors of austria and of the french republic to be finally merged after the fall of napoleon into the kingdom of the netherlands the word belgium as a noun is only found in a few books belgique is a mere adjective applied to the southern portion of the netherlands it must be admitted that the belgian official historians of the old school did very little to dispel this wrong impression in their patriotic zeal they endeavoured to picture belgium as struggling valiantly all the time against foreign oppression they laid great stress on caesar s words of all the gauls the belgians are the bravest and pictured the popular risings of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries in the same light as the 1830 revolution if we are to believe them the belgian people must have been conscious from their origin of their unity they considered national princes such as the burgundian dukes in the same light as philip ii or the austrian emperors and instead of clearing the air added to the confusion their interpretation of history according to the principles of national liberty of the romantic period could not be taken seriously and the idea prevailed that if the belgian nation was not merely a creation of european diplomacy its existence could only be confirmed by the future and rested on but frail foundations in the past this idea was strengthened by the knowledge that the country possessed neither strong natural frontiers like great britain france italy or spain nor the bond created by unity of

language like germany other european countries it is true like holland or poland did not constitute strong geographical units and lacked definite boundaries but their people talked at least the same idiom and belonged as far as the word may be used in a broad sense to the same race others like switzerland were divided between various languages but possessed geographical unity belgium could not claim any of these distinctive features her boundaries remained widely open in all directions from the cultivated plains of flanders to the wild hills of the ardennes she offered the greatest variety of physical aspects what is more her people were nearly equally divided by a line running from the south of ypres to the north of liege between two different languages two different races according to recognized standards the very existence of the belgian nation was a paradox and though the history of mankind presents many similar contrasts between the hasty conclusions of the untrained mind and the tangible reality of facts these cannot be recognized at first and require a deeper knowledge of the past than that which can be provided by the study of warlike conflicts and political changes

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