Portraits of the Nation

Stamps, Coins and Banknotes in Belgium and Switzerland

1880-1945

Thesis submitted for assessment with a view to obtaining
the degree of Doctor of the European University Institute

Jury:

- Prof. Urs Altermatt, Université de Fribourg
- Prof. John Brewer, EUI (supervisor)
- Prof. Martin Conway, Balliol College, Oxford (ext. supervisor)
- Prof. Luisa Passerini, EUI

Florence, October 1997
Alexis Schwarzenbach

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"In Italy for thirty years under the Borgias they had warfare, terror, murder, bloodshed but they produced Michelangelo, Leonardo da Vinci and the Renaissance. In Switzerland they had brotherly love, they had five hundred years of democracy and peace and what did they produce - the cuckoo clock."

Orson Welles as Harry Lime in The Third Man, London 1950

Preface

An awareness of national identity is a widespread element of personal identity in modern Europe. In my own case, my reflection on the role that national identity plays in personal identity began when I was doing my undergraduate degree in Oxford. I was frequently faced with the fact that I am Swiss and I was confronted with questions, arguments and stereotypes about the country of which I happen to hold the passport. Since surely there was more to it than skiing, chocolate and Orson Welles’ ever recurring reference to cuckoo clocks, I began to be interested in what it meant to be Swiss. This led to an undergraduate thesis about the construction and development of Swiss national identity between 1895 and 1945. The central argument of this undergraduate thesis was, that the imagery displayed on stamps, coins and banknotes were manifestations of national identity.²

I had the idea of extending this short undergraduate thesis into a PhD thesis by comparing Switzerland to Belgium when studying the battle of Kortrijk in 1302 where the French army of Philippe le Bel was decisively defeated in the course of a Flemish insurrection. It struck me that there were many parallels with the Swiss defeat of the Habsburgs at Morgarten in 1315, not only in military technique, but also in the fact that these battles became lieux de mémoire for

¹ Quotation in Barber, Peter et al. (eds.), Switzerland 700, London 1991, p. 60
identity building in both countries, more successfully on a national level in Switzerland and more effectively on a Flemish regional level in Belgium. Because the study of stamps, coins and banknotes had proven to be a very fruitful means of studying Swiss national identity, I decided to compare the construction and development of Belgian and Swiss national identity by means of analysing the production and the imagery of the two countries' stamps, coins and banknotes.

From the very beginning of this project I had the support of my tutor and supervisor Martin Conway, Balliol College, Oxford. I am very grateful to him for his professional guidance, his stimulating comments and his knowledge of Belgium which made my stays there so much more easy and interesting. His constant moral encouragement, however, was the most important aspect of support without which I could not have written this thesis. Furthermore I would like to thank my supervisors at the European University Institute in Florence, Prof. John Brewer and Prof. Luisa Passerini for their support. In Belgium I would like to thank the staff of the archives of the Banque Nationale de Belgique, the Monnaie Royale de Belgique the Musée Postal in Brussels for their cooperation, Prof. Jean Stengers, the members of the Centre d'Etudes et de Documentation, Guerre et Sociétés contemporaines and Judith Ogonovsky for their academic help, Carmen Verstraete for teaching me enough Flemish to undertake this thesis and Jacqueline Kyriasy-Bielmair for her generous and entertaining hospitality every time I stayed in Brussels. In Switzerland I would like to thank the Bundesamt für Bildung und Wissenschaft in Berne for the financial support of this thesis, the staff of the Bundesarchiv, of the archives of the PTT Generaldirektion and of the Schweizerische Nationalbank in Berne and of the PTT Wertzeichenabteilung in Ostermundigen for their cooperation, Dr. Joseph Jung for his useful comments, Herry Schaefer for letting me use his very interesting philatelic collection and Anne Scott for helping me with the
illustrations of this thesis most of which were generously provided by the Banque Nationale de Belgique, the Monnaie Royale de Belgique, the PTT Wertzeichenabteilung and the Schweizerische Nationalbank. In Italy I would like to thank the European University Institute for the financial support of this thesis and Annemarie and François Wille, Castellina Martittima, for their generous hospitality. Finally I would like to thank my friends and family for their constant personal support which I enjoyed throughout the period of working on this thesis.
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1. Introduction

A sense of national identity is one of the most pervasive elements of the modern condition. Throughout Europe since at least the late 19th century, the awareness of membership of a community which extends beyond the visible horizon and which is defined by history, language or ethnicity has been common to all but the most isolated of populations. The inhabitants of old western European states came to feel increasing allegiance towards their fellow countrymen and their common nation, long-established central and southern European states disappeared in the course of national unifications in Germany and Italy, and in the east an increasing number of national states emerged from the old multiethnic empires of the Ottomans, Habsburgs and Romanows beginning with the Greek struggle for independence in 1821 and culminating in the establishment of numerous new states ranging from Finland to Czechoslovakia during and after the First World War.

Yet, despite its ubiquity, there is nothing inevitable or natural about this sense of national belonging. Nations, as disabused historians never tire of demonstrating, are invented communities unordained by any overriding historical logic. Similarly, there is no inevitable interconnection between modernity and a sense of national belonging. If processes of economic change and social modernisation served to encourage among individuals a sense of their interconnectedness, they also gave rise to new forms of religious, class and gender identities which to a greater or lesser degree cut across a sense of national belonging. Thus, the sense of nationhood felt by millions of Europeans during the late-19th and 20th centuries (and which underpinned both many of the cultural glories and the brutal military conflicts of the era) was not preordained. Rather it was a complex process which has to be studied in its own terms without any overriding sense of a teleological goal.
Belgium and Switzerland are good means of doing this. Neither is superficially the most glamorous of subjects. In textbooks of modern Europe, they rarely gain anything more than the most perfunctory of mentions. They are overshadowed by their larger neighbours and, with a few exceptions, the history of these staid and peaceable lands has been viewed with a mixture of humour and condescension by historians of modern Europe. They are, however, both important societies. Strongly tied into a larger European context both countries have independent and distinct modern histories which offer fascinating and highly relevant insights which an exclusive study of larger European states fails to offer. Belgium, for example, was the first continental country which underwent large-scale industrialisation mainly mining and textile, its King Leopold II personally acquired the Congo, about 80 times larger than Belgium, in 1885, while at the turn of the century the first ever Art Nouveau buildings were constructed in the Belgian capital Brussels which developed into one of the most thriving cultural centres of the European fin-de-siècle. Switzerland, on the other hand, was the only country in which the revolutionary movements of the mid-19th century were endowed with lasting success and the Swiss constitution of 1848 was the first in Europe to grant universal male suffrage. Switzerland, together with some German city states, remained the only European republic until 1870 and was the moulding home or refuge to a great number of influential Europeans ranging from Jacob Burckhardt to Lenin.

The two countries have important differences, the most important being their constitutional arrangements: Belgium was a centralised constitutional monarchy and Switzerland was a decentralised federal republic. Their denominational structure also differed: the Belgians are almost entirely Catholic while the Swiss are divided almost equally between Catholics and Protestants. The absence of access to the sea and the lack of a visionary monarch prevented Switzerland from engaging in imperial adventures and finally, the rise of
Flemish nationalism has no parallel in Switzerland. Yet, these differences between Belgium and Switzerland do not undermine the value of a comparison for which the two countries are in many ways ideally suited. They are roughly the same size in terms of their geographical area and population and, more importantly, both countries were essentially 19th century creations. While they replaced earlier political entities in the same geographical area dating back into the Middle Ages, Belgium became independent in 1830 and Switzerland only became a permanently unified confederation in 1848. Both had a parliamentary system which underwent similar party political developments; both witnessed an early and indeed rapid industrialisation in the 19th century; and both had a devolved structure with a number of strong local urban, economic and cultural centres.

More importantly, Belgium and Switzerland also provide excellent case-studies for a comparative analysis of the construction of national identity. Both are multi-ethnic countries sharing their major languages (Romansh being the exception) with their larger neighbours. National identity could thus not be constructed on the basis of a single national language as in other European countries. While many of the old, western European countries such as Spain, France or Britain were multilingual, all of them had an exclusive national language which could be used for the construction of national identity. In central and eastern Europe, languages such as German, Hungarian or Lithuanian became central means for the construction of a national identity before the achievement of national unity or independence. These examples have been widely studied but the cases of Belgium and Switzerland, which achieved unified statehood after the old western European states but before the national unifications and emancipations of central and eastern Europe, have unfortunately been neglected, especially outside of their national historiographies. Due to the low international profile of the history of both
Belgium and Switzerland, some introductory remarks are necessary in order to undertake the extremely interesting task to find out how national identity developed in these two multi-lingual European countries.

Belgium

The small and, apart from the hilly Ardennes in the south, flat geographical area (30,513 km²) which modern Belgium occupies was divided between two important early modern political entities. The larger part of the area was united under Burgundian rule in the 15th century including the principalities of Flanders, Hainaut, Brabant and Luxembourg. After the collapse of the Burgundian state in 1477 the principalities came under Habsburg rule, in its Spanish branch between 1555-1715 and the Austrian branch between 1715-1794. The other significant political entity was the episcopal principality of Liège established in the 8th century, acquiring worldly jurisdiction over its territories under Emperor Otto II (961-983) and declaring its neutrality as a buffer state between the Empire and France in 1492. It remained independent until 1795 when, along with the Austrian Netherlands, it was annexed to revolutionary France which divided the territories into nine provinces. The congress of Vienna attached them to the enlarged Kingdom of the United Netherlands in 1815.

While the nine southern provinces benefited economically from the union with The Netherlands, the political dominance of the North caused increasing grievances in the South. This led to an alliance of the urban and predominantly liberal bourgeoisie with the land-owning and mainly Catholic aristocracy against King William I of Orange’s authoritarian regime, his laicising educational projects and his attempt to introduce Dutch as the exclusive official language. Sparked off by the French July Revolution in 1830 the South rebelled against the North and a Great Power diplomatic compromise allowed for the
The year 1831 saw both the establishment of a bicameral parliamentary system based on a very limited male suffrage and the creation of a constitutional monarchy: Prince Leopold of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha was elected as the first King of the Belgians (1831-1865). Brussels became the capital of a centralised country divided into nine provinces. The new country was almost entirely Catholic and witnessed a considerable population growth (1846: 4.3 m, 1890: 6.1 m, 1930: 8.1 m). The country had two linguistic regions, French-speaking Wallonia in the South and Flemish-speaking Flanders in the North. While French was also widely spoken among the Flemish bourgeoisie, Brussels developed into a bilingual but increasingly francophone city within the Flemish speaking part of Brabant. Through the annexation of the German cantons of Eupen and Malmédy in 1920, Belgium furthermore acquired a small German speaking minority (1930: 51.1% Flemish, 37.2% French, 0.7% German, 11% bilingual Brussels).

After the formation of political parties in the 1840s, Belgian politics was largely dominated by the Liberals until 1884. Thereafter the Catholic party ruled until 1914. Belgium witnessed rapid industrial development in the course of the 19th century concentrated in the francophone provinces of Hainaut and Liège and in East Flanders, the other provinces remaining predominantly agricultural. Economic crises and recessions beginning in 1873 exacerbated social problems and unrest leading to the formation of the Socialist party in 1885 and the major strikes of 1886 in Wallonia's coal districts. Universal plural suffrage was introduced in 1893 and the first Socialists were elected to parliament a year later.

Belgian neutrality, imposed and guaranteed by the Great Powers, led the country to remain aloof from armed conflict in Europe until the First World War. The second Belgian King, Leopold II (1865-1909), however, was determined
to acquire colonies for his country despite the widespread lack of interest in such adventures within Belgium. In 1885 Leopold became sovereign of the Congo Free State, his personal property about 80 times larger than Belgium. While he intended to bequeath it to Belgium in his will of 1889, the Congo became a Belgian colony in 1908.3

Political Map of Belgium

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3 For Belgium’s general history see Pirenne, Henri, *Histoire de Belgique*, 7 vols., Bruxelles 1902-1932 and Witte, Els; Craeybeckx, Jan, *La Belgique politique de 1830 à nos jours*, Bruxelles 1987
Linguistic Map of Belgium

Belgian Dynastic Tables

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Switzerland

Switzerland covers an area of 41,288 km² most of which is mountainous: the important mountain ranges of the Alps in the centre-south (c. 60%) and the Jura in the north-west (c. 10%). Within these mountain ranges lay the relatively flat and densely-populated lowlands. The country is unequally divided linguistically (1900: 69.7% German, 22.0% French, 6.7% Italian, 1.2% Romansh) and almost equally on denominational lines (1980: 50.4% Protestants, 43.6% Catholics).6

The origins of Switzerland lay in the late 13th century when the three Alpine cantons of Uri, Schwyz and Unterwalden formed a series of treaties of alliance culminating in the victory over the Habsburgs at the battle of Morgarten in 1315. Subsequently joined by a number of cantons and city states, the so-called Old Confederation composed of 13 states and several associate political communities emerged over the course of the following two centuries. It was a loose league of very diverse political entities including rural cantons with direct democracy, city states ruled by guilds or patricians and even religious and secular principalities. Switzerland became a sovereign political entity by leaving the Holy Roman Empire in 1648, by the Peace of Westphalia, and came under considerable French influence for the remainder of the Ancien Régime.

Only in the course of the 19th century did Switzerland undertake the transformation from a loose league of independent states into a unified confederation, not unlike its northern and southern neighbours. In 1798 France conquered the Old Confederation and installed the short-lived Helvetic Republic, a centralised state based on the French model. After its failure, Napoleon gave the country a federal constitution in 1803, known as the Mediation. The congress of Vienna (1815) restored Switzerland as a loose league of states and stipulated its

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perpetual neutrality. However, many of the former associate states and previously unfree territories (*Untertanengebiete*), administered by one or several cantons, now formed independent cantons with equal rights, such as Geneva or Ticino. As in neighbouring countries, Switzerland thereafter witnessed a period of conservative restoration from 1815 until 1830 followed by a period of intensified conflicts between, on the one hand, progressive and industrialised cantons and, on the other hand, conservative and agricultural cantons. Unlike in most of Europe, however, this conflict ended with the victory of the Liberals against the conservative *Sonderbund* in the civil war of 1847 and led to the constitution of 1848.

The modern confederation was composed of 22 cantons, of which three were subdivided into demi-cantons. While the confederation acquired some rights previously held by the cantons notably the coin monopoly, each canton still enjoyed wide-ranging autonomous rights and had its own constitution and government. Berne became the federal capital and the seat of both chambers of parliament, the national chamber (*Nationalrat*) and the federal chamber (*Städterrat*) elected by universal male suffrage. Both chambers together formed the federal assembly (*Vereinigte Bundesversammlung*) which elected the executive, the federal council (*Gesamtbundesrat*). The government was composed of seven ministers, the so-called federal councilors (*Bundesräte*) who headed their respective ministries and collaborated on a collegiate basis. On a yearly basis, one of the federal councilors also occupied the position of president of Switzerland, but apart from representative duties had no additional powers.

The radical Liberals dominated Swiss federal politics until the revision of the constitution in 1874 which by introducing the federal referendum gave smaller opposition groups and coalitions, mainly the Catholics and the emerging Socialists, greater political influence. The Socialist party was founded in 1888 and its first members elected to parliament in 1890 while the election of the first
Catholic-Conservative minister in 1892 terminated 42 years of Liberal hegemony in the federal government. Switzerland's population grew considerably (1850: 2.4 m, 1888: 2.9 m, 1930: 4.1 m\textsuperscript{7}) and its economy underwent rapid change in the 19th century: the development of industry (mainly textile and machinery) and tourism transformed a predominantly agricultural country into a largely industrial and service-oriented state, industrial workers outnumbering those engaged in agriculture by the 1880s.\textsuperscript{8}

Political Map of Switzerland

Cantonal abbreviations:

- AG: Aargau
- AI: Appenzell Innerrhoden
- AR: Appenzell Ausserrhoden
- BE: Berne
- BL: Basel Landschaft
- BS: Basel Stadt
- FR: Fribourg
- GE: Geneva
- GL: Glarus
- GR: Grisons
- LU: Lucerne
- NE: Neuchâtel
- NW: Nidwalden
- SG: St. Gallen
- SH: Schaffhausen
- SO: Solothurn
- SZ: Schwyz
- TG: Thurgau
- TI: Ticino
- UR: Uri
- UW: Unterwalden
- VD: Vaud
- VS: Valais
- ZG: Zug
- ZH: Zurich

\textsuperscript{7} See Eidgenössisches statistisches Amt (ed.), \textit{Eidgenössische Volkszählung, 1. Dezember 1941}, vol. 1, Bern 1948, p. 3

\textsuperscript{8} For a Swiss general history see Comité pour une Nouvelle Histoire de la Suisse (ed.), \textit{Geschichte der Schweiz und der Schweizer}, Basel 1986
Linguistic Map of Switzerland\textsuperscript{9}

\textsuperscript{9} Source: Huber, Alfred, \textit{Staatskunde Lexikon}, Luzern 1988, p. 168
Stamps, Coins and Banknotes as Portraits of the Nation

Stamps, coins and banknotes all have a primarily practical function in facilitating financial and postal transactions but emerged in different historical periods: the first western coins appeared in Lydia in Asia Minor around 635 B.C. while the first stamp, the famous Penny Black appeared in Britain in 1840. Western paper banknotes developed out of deposit and credit bills in the 17th century but only in the course of the late 19th and indeed the 20th century did they gradually develop from bills of exchange which had an auxiliary monetary function to a widespread means of everyday monetary use.10

Coins and stamps are usually issued by institutions dependent on the national government: already in Antiquity the minting of coins became a traditional right of kings or city governments, a prerogative taken over by modern states, while stamps were usually issued by national postal organisations already under governmental control. Governmental banknote monopolies, however, developed only in the course of the 19th and 20th century: the Banque Nationale de Belgique was founded in 1850 with the exclusive right to issue Belgian banknotes, the Swiss federal government acquired the banknote monopoly in 1891 and the Schweizerische Nationalbank exclusively responsible for issuing Swiss banknotes was only founded in 1907.11

Stamps, coins and banknotes are almost always decorated with images and texts indicating their value, allowing for the recognition of identical pieces and rendering counterfeit more difficult. However, stamps, coins and, in most cases, banknotes were issued by national institutions and their decoration and


11 For Belgium see Banque Nationale de Belgique (ed.), Le franc belge, Bruxelles 1989 and for Switzerland see Zimmermann, Rolf, Volksbank oder Aktienbank?, Zürich 1987
especially their iconography was always associated to a greater or lesser degree with the state and its nation. Richard Cobb gave a very vivid and entertaining description of his first encounter with Latvia through the country's coins, presented to him and his fellow school friends by an old boy visiting their preparatory school: "... I could now reasonably feel that I had something in common with the Latvians, even if I was two years older than any of them." The visit of the old boy also "... set off a brisk trade at The Beacon in Latvian stamps; indeed there was such a run on them that it was soon impossible to find anyone willing to do a swap." The Swiss novelist Hermann Burger, on the other hand, noted that Switzerland never had to display the portrait of a king on its coins and ironically commented:

"Das numismatische Symbol unseres Goldvrenelis (fig. 55) ist eine reiche Bauerntochter aus dem Emmental. Und auf dem Fünfliber (fig. 175) erinnert uns der Sportschütze Tell daran, dass unsereins weder vor einem österreichischen noch vor einem grossdeutschen Hut je den Bückling gemacht hat."13

As I hope to show in this thesis, stamps, coins and banknotes are perceived as more than simple means for postal and financial transactions, but as bearers of some visualised expression of national identity and memory. In other words, the imagery on them visualises national identity and memory like other lieux de mémoire such as national monuments or architecture. They can thus rightly be called Portraits of the Nation.14

For the study of nations, stamps, coins and banknotes have several advantages over other visual manifestations of the nation. As Eric Hobsbawm has pointed out, images on postage stamps constitute "... that most universal form of public imagery other than money, ...".15 While national architecture, for example, is immobile, the mass-produced stamps, coins and banknotes circulate

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13 Burger, Hermann, Die Künstliche Mutter, Frankfurt am Main 1986, p. 126
14 I would like to thank Martin Conway for suggesting this term.
not only throughout the national territory but also carry an image of the country to the entire world. They are thus the bearers of the image which a country presents to the world. Created by national institutions, they are also less likely to be influenced by regional and local interest unlike many national art galleries which are frequently based on royal or princely collections and their development is often significantly influenced by the city in which they are located.\textsuperscript{16} Since there are frequent new issues of stamps, coins and banknotes, they also offer an ever evolving and thus adaptable set of images in contrast, for example, to much more static national monuments.

For the study of national identity in multilingual states such as Belgium and Switzerland, visual manifestations of the nation have the further key advantage of being comprehensible regardless of the language spoken by the individual viewer. The Swiss heraldic symbol, a white cross on red ground, represents the country which its citizens call \textit{Schweiz}, \textit{Suisse}, \textit{Swizzera} or even \textit{Swizra}, while the portrait of a Belgian monarch represents \textit{Le Roi des Belges}, \textit{De Koning der Belgen}, and after 1920 (and initially somewhat reluctantly), \textit{Den König der Belgier}. Stamps, coins and banknotes therefore offer an ideal means of studying the development and construction of national identity, especially in multilingual countries, which is what this thesis seeks to do for the cases of Belgium and Switzerland.

\textbf{Terminology}

\textbf{Stamps, Coins and Banknotes}

A thesis about stamps, coins and banknotes requires a specific terminology.

The German term *Wertträger* aptly describes stamps, coins and banknotes as objects bearing a specific monetary or postal value and thus its approximate English translation *bearers of value* will be used throughout the thesis when referring to stamps, coins and banknotes. Bearers of value always appear in reproducible *series* and are valid for a certain period laid down by the issuing bodies. The date assigned to individual series always refers to the first issue although many of them were reissued for reasons of necessity at various later stages. Both coins and banknotes have two sides referred to as obverse and reverse the definition of which is, if possible, identical with the one given in specialised catalogues.\(^{17}\)

There are several groups of coins and stamps which have to be differentiated. *Legal tender coins* are coins which contain exactly the percentage of precious metal per currency unit which is stipulated by the monetary system. *Divisionary coins* are usually of a smaller denomination than legal tender coins and contain a percentage of precious metal per currency unit which is inferior to the percentage stipulated by the monetary system. Among stamps, the most frequent and oldest group are the so-called *definitive stamps* or *definitive series* used for everyday postal use and usually valid for a considerable period of time, the first example being the 1840 *Penny Black*. The second group are *commemoration stamps* issued for commemorative purposes. The first such series appeared in Peru in 1871 marking the 20th anniversary of the country’s first railway from Lima to Callao. Related to the commemoratives are *advertisement stamps* advertising and at the same time commemorating current or future events such as exhibitions or international conferences, the first example being a Belgian series in 1884 advertising the 1885 Antwerp

international exhibition. The last significant group of stamps are *fund-raising stamps* which were sold with an extra charge in addition to their postal value usually levied for the benefit of a charity. The acquisition of fund-raising stamps was a conscious decision on the part of the consumer to support the organisation to which the stamp was dedicated since cheaper definitive stamps could always also be bought. The first fund-raising stamps appeared in New South Wales in 1897 to raise money for a home for consumptives. In contrast to definitive stamp series, commemoration, advertisement and fund-raising stamps had smaller print runs and shorter periods of validity, usually only a couple of months.18

Identity and Memory

The terms identity and memory both evade clear definitions. However, since this thesis is not primarily concerned with the study of identity and memory as such, but with the study of stamps, coins and banknotes as portraits of the nation, the terms identity and memory and relevant studies employing them will mainly be used as practical tools in the course of this study. Thus at this point only a rough outline defining these terms will follow, while more specifically appropriate references to other works dealing with identity and memory are included into the main body of text of this study.

Identity and memory are closely linked and interrelated concepts. As John Gillis put it: "The core meaning of any individual or group identity, namely, a sense of sameness over time and space, is sustained by remembering; and what is remembered is defined by the assumed identity."19 Human memory, "things inside our heads"20, is thus the precondition for any form of identity but it is also

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18 On the various groups of stamps and their history see Altman, Dennis, *Paper Ambassadors*, North Ryde (Australia) 1991, pp. 5-36. Altman does not include the category of advertisement stamps.
20 Fentress, James; Wickham, Chris, *Social Memory*, Oxford 1992, p. 1
susceptible to influences emanating from identity. The two concepts thus stand in a reciprocal relationship to each other, or in other words, they are often the two sides of the same coin. Due to this close link between the two concepts a clear distinction between them is often impossible.²¹

Despite the evasive nature of the terms, five major characteristics have to be pointed out. Firstly, both memory and identity exist in individual and collective forms and this thesis primarily focuses on a collective, namely the national, form of identities and memories. Secondly, neither memory nor identity are ever entirely stable and indeed they change and evolve over time. The factors which are able to bring about changes in national memories and identities include commemorations such as national days or national history curricula, the media or state propaganda emphasising or neglecting certain aspects of national history but they also include personal experiences of individuals or groups such as direct involvements in wars or economic crises.²² Thirdly, because of the significant influence of personal experience, identities and memories are subjective rather than objective mental constructs. For example, dogmatic teachings of a religious institution about the afterlife are objective mental constructs but the view of the afterlife produced by an individual such as the 16th century heretic miller Menocchio was a subjective mental construct which combined personal experience such as popular religion with the dogmatic teachings of the Church.²³ Since national identities and memories are based on a number of individual, subjective identities they too are thus subjective, or to paraphrase Anderson, imaginations.²⁴

²⁴ See Anderson, Benedict, Imagined Communities, London and New York 1992
Fourthly, individuals or groups tend not to have one single identity or memory, on the contrary, they usually have multiple identities. A single individual, for instance, can be a citizen of a state, belong to a certain religion, be a fan of a local football team and have a specific skin colour. Depending on the circumstances, any of these aspects can become a major means of identification for this individual. This thesis is primarily concerned with national identity but it is important to be aware of the fact that national identity is only one of a great variety of possible collective identities. The other principal forms of collective identity relevant for this study include local, regional, linguistic, religious, class and gender identities, since, as will become evident during this study, all of them influenced significantly the perception of the meaning of imagery displayed on bearers of value. Finally, representations of identities and memories, including texts and images, tend to be ambiguous and often combine internally contradictory elements. A good example are the American and the British flags. Iconographically they are both composed of elements alluding to the composite nature of the two countries, the American flag representing each of the confederate states by means of a star while the Union Jack combines the crosses of the patron saints of England, Scotland and Ireland, namely St. George, St. Andrew and St. Patrick. Under most circumstances, however, the main purpose of the display of these flags is not an allusion to the structure of Britain or the United States but rather a representation of the nation as such. To complicate matters, the flags can either represent the nations in a positive way, for instance on national days, but also in a negative way, for example if they are burnt in places like Iraq or Northern Ireland. Although many studies have pointed out internal contradictions and ambiguities of national identity, they often failed to

go beyond pointing out logical incompatibilities and discrepancies between national symbols or myths and the so-called reality. It is however, important to note that such ambiguities and internal contradictions are not an oddity of national identities but one of their key characteristics. National identities are imaginations based on selective collective memory which, like the human beings who imagined them, are far from exclusively rational.

**Primary Sources**

The primary sources consulted for this thesis consist of two sets of sources: visual and textual. The bulk of the visual sources, Belgian and Swiss bearers of value issued between 1880 and 1945, are conveniently reproduced in philatelic and numismatic catalogues. The remainder of the sources mainly consists of texts directly related to bearers of value but also includes unpublished proposals for stamps, coins and banknotes. Most of them can be found in the archives of the issuing bodies. The *Musée Postal* (MP) in Brussels keeps a well-organised and rich archive on all Belgian stamp issues as well as a collection of all laws and ministerial decisions concerning the Post Office. The sources concerning Swiss stamps are slightly less complete, possibly in part because they are distributed among three archives: the bulk of the documents is located in the *PTT Bibliothek* of the *PTT Generaldirektion* in Berne (PTT Bib.) covering the period 1900-1945; the *Bundesarchiv* in Berne (BA) has several dossiers covering the period of 1882-1909 and the *PTT Wertzeichenabteilung* in Ostermundigen (PTT Wertz.) stores some important documents dating from 1941-1945 as well as numerous

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27 For the ambiguities of national identity see Bhabha, Homi K. (ed.), *Nation and Narration*, London 1990

28 See above p. 18, note 17

29 Administration des Postes (ed.), *Recueil chronologique des lois et des arrêtés concernant la Poste*, Bruxelles 1964 will be referred to as *Recueil*
unpublished stamp proposals. The PTT Bibliothek also has a collection of the Post Office's trilingual news sheet, the Postamtsblatt.

While the Monnaie Royale (MR) in Brussels keeps a rich and well-organised archive on Belgian coins, its Swiss counterpart, the Eidgenössische Münzstätte in Berne has transferred all documents dating from the period 1880-1945 to the Bundesarchiv. Possibly due to this dislocation, the sources concerning Swiss coins are less complete than those concerning Belgian coins.

The archives of both national banks, the Banque Nationale de Belgique in Brussels (BNB) and the Schweizerische Nationalbank in Berne (SNB), are less well organised. The SNB has offices in Berne and Zurich; however, documents relating to banknote production are kept only in Berne. The Bernese archives of the SNB contain several dossiers related to banknotes, while the highly interesting jury protocols relating to the commission of the first series of Swiss banknotes, albeit unclassified, were found in the same archives despite the SNB's initial statement that they were, unfortunately, lost. The BNB's recently moved archives centrales (BNB ac) contain little information on banknotes and their design. Indeed, an important collection of sources related to banknotes, seems to be lost, while all but one volume of the correspondence of the Service des Billets are missing. An unclassified and almost forgotten archive in the cellar of the Service des Collections, however, contains numerous interesting documents (BNB SdC u.a.). The same Service also has a catalogue containing a large collection of banknote projects called Iconographie, Billets de Banque, Belgique, Avant-projets (BNB SdC cat.), while the Musée de la Banque Nationale de Belgique has a large collection of First and Second World War banknotes.

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30 All that remains of this collection is a 1956 register entitled Billets, BNB ac, 3240, Box Druckerij. The collection included dossiers entitled Compositions artistiques, Bilinguisme, Emissions de guerre and Critiques concernant les billets de banque. Ironically the register stated that these documents should be kept for an unlimited period of time but after numerous futile attempts to locate this collection I have come to the conclusion that they were either misplaced or destroyed when the archives were moved.

31 Service des Billets, Correspondance et Documents, 5 Oct. 1876 - 30 June 1885, was found somewhere in the office of the archives centrales.
Finally, further documents and some banknote projects are kept in the \textit{Imprimerie}'s "Coffre du papier blanc", a heavily-secured safe where banknote paper and, due to storage limitations, printed but uncut sheets of current Belgian banknotes are stored (BNB Imp.).\textsuperscript{32}

The documents in the archives of the issuing bodies contain a rich and varied collection of sources including administrative and governmental correspondence, unpublished proposals for bearers of value, jury protocols, letters to and from artists and the general public as well as numerous newspaper articles, some of which unfortunately only consist of cuttings without indications of a date or a reference to the name of the newspaper. Additionally I consulted some contemporary newspapers, numismatic or philatelic journals, as well as some dossiers of the Swiss embassy in Brussels in the \textit{Bundesarchiv} in Berne and some parliamentary records in the \textit{Archives Générales du Royaume} (AGR) in Brussels. Finally I consulted the Belgian sections of Herry Schaefer's very rich philatelic collection in Zurich (coll. Schaefer).

\textbf{Methodology}

The historical study of bearers of value so far has been largely neglected; they were not studied, for example, in Pierre Nora's monumental study on France's \textit{lieux de mémoire}.\textsuperscript{33} If bearers of value appear in academic works, they are mostly used for illustrative purposes or occupy only a marginal space in larger texts. Carl E. Schorske mentions the fact that the Secessionists designed Austrian bearers of value but concentrates on public art and architecture, while Debora L. Silverman discusses some reasons and implications for the change in

\textsuperscript{32} This was by far the most exciting archive I have ever been to, always under the surveillance of two BNB employees and surrounded by millions and millions of Belgian francs!

\textsuperscript{33} Nora, Pierre (ed.), \textit{Les lieux de mémoire}, Paris 1986
French coin design in the French Third Republic in a few paragraphs.\footnote{See Schorske, Carl E., *Fin-de-Siècle Vienna, Politics and Culture*, New York 1981, p. 239; Silverman, Debra L., *Art Nouveau in Fin-de-Siècle France*, Berkeley 1989, pp. 174-175} This neglect of the study of bearers of value may well be connected to the fact that especially philately is associated with a childhood passion which, when still indulged in in adult years, is widely perceived to be an odd if not slightly embarrassing collectors' addiction almost like trampspotting.

There are, however, a number of works dealing extensively with bearers of value. One group of texts is primarily inspired by philatelic or numismatic interest and the authors include specialists of bearers of value and employees or former employees of issuing bodies.\footnote{See for example Krüger, Karl Heinz, a philatelist: *Deutschlands Geschichte im Spiegelbild seiner Briefmarken*; Rivaz, Michel de, former director of the Swiss National Bank: *Ferdinand Hodler, Eugène Burnand und die schweizerischen Banknoten*, Wabern-Bern 1991} Another group of works is primarily attracted by the imagery on bearers of value and their authors include historians, art historians and design specialists.\footnote{See for example Altman, op. cit.; Scott, David, *European Stamp Design, A Semiotic Approach to Designing Messages*, London 1995; Asche, Kurt, *Das Europäische Postwertzeichen als Kunstwerk. 1840-1914*, Karlsruhe 1977; Hewitt, op. cit.; Van der Straeten, Marie-Noël, *Le Billet de banque belge au début du XXème siècle: du projet à la réalisation*, unpublished mémoire, Université Catholique de Louvain 1985; Delbart, Philippe, *L'évolution du billet de banque belge (1850-1979) du point de vue historique, technique et esthétique*, Bruxelles, 1979; Jacot, Leni, *Landschaften auf Briefmarken* in Kunstgeschichtliches Seminar Zürich (ed.), *Schweiz im Bild-Bild der Schweiz?*, Zurich 1974, pp. 68-73} All of them, however, concentrate on the visual sources and neglect or inadequately cite textual sources directly related to the images on bearers of value. While such an approach does not necessarily lead to bad results (Dennis Altman’s book on the politics of stamps is a rather successful work on a vast topic\footnote{Altman, op. cit., analyses world wide stamp imagery.}) other authors, despite using refined analytical techniques such as David Scott, come to conclusions which seem unsatisfactory and even wrong in the light of the textual sources directly related to the bearers of value discussed.\footnote{Since I only know the Swiss sources I can only judge his chapter on Swiss stamps, for example, the comments about the 1932 general stamp contest which Scott claims was organised in order to receive "stamps promoting Swiss scenery", see Scott, op. cit., p. 62 and compare below, pp. 149-150, 213-219}

The novelty about this thesis is therefore the fact that bearers of value are at the centre of a historical study. Unlike previous studies devoted to bearers of
value, this thesis analyses not only the visual aspects of bearers of value, but also concentrates on the analysis of written documents directly related to them. The analysis of the sources consulted for this thesis is divided into two different sets of questions. The first concentrates on questions relating to the decision-making process of bearers of value and the second focuses on questions relating to the meaning of the imagery displayed on bearers of value. It is only by considering both of these issues that a full understanding can be arrived at.

**Decision-Making**

If we consider stamps, coins and banknotes as portraits of the nation then it follows that the decision-making process around bearers of value is one of the processes whereby national identity is constructed. While there is consensus about the fact that national identity is a mental construct, there is considerable disagreement as to how national identities are constructed. Many historians assert that national identities and memories are almost exclusively constructed by élites, mainly the bourgeoisie, in order to legitimise their dominant economic and political position in society. Fentress and Wickham argue that memories of national communities: "... almost always represent the group memories of a bourgeois intelligentsia." Eric Hobsbawm argues that nations and nationalisms developed in stages from the age of the French Revolution turning from anti-royal and liberal to authoritarian and conservative in the course of the 19th century. He links this process directly to social change and the class structure of the respective societies. Miroslav Hroch too focuses on social groups, mainly defined by class but also by geography, as the key forces in the construction of nations.

39 See Fentress; Wickham, *op. cit.*, p. 91
Other studies, however, defend the view that national identities and memories are to a lesser extent consciously created by a certain group or class but state that there could be room for consensus and emphasise that other, non-social forces can be very influential. Ernest Gellner, for example, believed that nations are directly linked to modernity but that they developed alongside the industrial revolution and were not the fabrication of a single class. Rogers Brubacker emphasises the role of citizenship and its legal manifestations in the context of nationhood while Eugen Weber stresses, among other factors, the importance of so-called agents of change in form of roads, railways, military service and schooling, means by which he sees national identity being imposed on a provincial level. While Anthony Smith analysed the ethnic origins of nations, both Peter Sahlins and Celia Applegate point out the importance of territorial boundaries combined with multiple, often local identities which can, voluntarily, become national under certain circumstances.

The purpose of the decision-making sections of this thesis is to analyse the rich and varied archives of the bodies responsible for the issuing of bearers of value in order to shed light on one of the processes whereby national identity was constructed in Belgium and Switzerland. It is hoped that this will illuminate the wider debate concerning the construction of national identity. It is also - to the best of my knowledge - a new means of analysing this phenomenon.

This study analyses the decision-making process related to the production of new types of bearers of value, i.e. bearers of value which displayed new imagery as opposed to the reproduction of existing series. This process was always divided in two different steps. Firstly a decision to create new bearers of value had to be taken and only subsequently the imagery for the new stamp, coin or

42 Gellner, Nations and Nationalism, Oxford 1990
43 Brubacker, Rogers, Citizenship and Nationhood in France and Germany, Cambridge (Mass.) 1992
banknote had to be selected. The analysis of this decision-making process is thus conveniently divided into two questions, the first analysing the reasons which led to the decisions to create new bearers of value and the second analysing the commissioning and choice of the imagery displayed on them.

Bearers of value were created by specific issuing bodies, namely national post offices, banks or mints. While every decision to create new types of bearers of value necessarily involved the issuing bodies, it is also interesting to find out whether they were exclusively responsible for the decision to create new bearers of value or whether there might have been other influencing factors which were situated outside of the issuing bodies. Such influencing factors could either come from outside of the issuing bodies, for example from the press, lobby groups or private individuals or from above, from ministries or the government to which the issuing bodies were subordinate.

In order to analyse the reasons leading to the decision to create new bearers of value, we have to differentiate between two main reasons: either it was decided that new types were needed regardless of the imagery to be displayed on them or it was decided to create new types because of the imagery to be displayed. I decided to differentiate between these two reasons by calling the first practical reasons and the second aesthetic reasons. Practical reasons could include the counterfeit or the possible counterfeit of existing series, changes in postal fares or changes in the monetary system. Fund-raising objectives were also practical reasons leading to the decision to create fund-raising stamps. Aesthetic reasons, on the other hand, could include changing taste which could make the imagery displayed on existing series appear to be in need of change, or, in monarchies, dynastic reasons which after the death of a monarch led to the need to create stamps and coins bearing the portrait or the symbols of the new monarch. Furthermore, bearers of value which were issued for commemorative or advertisement purposes were issued for aesthetic reasons since their imagery was
meant to commemorate or advertise an event of national importance. The differentiation between practical and aesthetic reasons will allow for the assessment of their relative importance; in other words, the analysis will show whether the majority of bearers of value was issued because they were needed for postal or financial reasons or because of the imagery they displayed.

After the decision to create new bearers of value followed the process of commissioning and choosing the imagery to be displayed. Several sets of questions can be asked about this step of the decision-making process. Who commissioned the imagery? In what way was the imagery commissioned, i.e. was a single artist directly commissioned or were there contests among a number of artists? Who were the principle artists receiving commissions? Who chose the imagery proposed by the artists, who had to approve of the imagery selected and what possible outside factors could influence the choice of the final imagery? As in the case of the reasons leading to the decision to create new bearers of value, the process of commissioning and choosing of the imagery necessarily involved the issuing bodies, but it will be interesting to assess the influence of factors such as the press, artist or philatelist associations, ministers, the government or, in the case of Belgium, the King.

Given the absence of previous works on the subject the most appropriate way of dealing with these questions seemed to be an empirical analysis of the decision-making process on the basis of the primary sources of the issuing bodies. Since stamps, coins and banknotes were issued by three independent issuing bodies it also seemed appropriate to deal with each of these bearers of value separately. Due to the incompleteness of the archival sources, especially those of the Banque Nationale de Belgique, a comprehensive reconstruction of the decision-making process is impossible. Nevertheless, we shall see that the sources provide sufficient evidence for a satisfactory analysis. This analysis will inevitably be rather detailed, however, only on the basis of an in depth analysis
of the decision-making process in both countries, it will be possible to make a comparison between Belgium and Switzerland. This comparison will not only offer interesting insights into parallel developments and particularities in the two countries but it could also serve as a first step towards a more general, international study of the decision-making process of bearers of value.

Finally, it is necessary to mention two international institutions, the Latin Monetary Union and the Universal Postal Union, which have a relevance to any discussion of the decision-making process of bearers of value in the period covered by this thesis. The discoveries and the mining of large new Californian and Australian gold reserves in 1848/49 led to a fall in gold prices with respect to silver. This adversely affected the monetary circulation in countries using currency based on silver, or worse, based on silver and gold. Bimetallist France and monometallist Belgium, Switzerland and Italy attempted a variety of measures to keep up their monetary circulation. After their failure France organised an international monetary conference leading to the foundation of the Latin Monetary Union (LMU) between France, Italy, Belgium and Switzerland in 1866, Greece joining two years later. The Union’s treaty unified and standardised the countries’ coins and stipulated their free circulation between the member states. While the members were free to mint gold coins, their silver coins below a value of 5 fr. were designated as divisionary coins while only the 5 fr. coins remained legal tender coins and their minting was subject to the Union’s approval.46

The Universal Postal Union (UPU) was founded in 1874 by the Treaty of Berne and has its headquarters in the Swiss capital. It bound each member state to carry the mail of all other member states with the same speed and efficiency it provided for its own and to deliver mail without cost. This was done on the

assumption that letters generally lead to responses and thus there would be a balancing of costs. The UPU also laid down certain basic postal rates, forbade the production of non-governmental stamps and also at times issued regulations for the design of stamps, mostly their colour; blue, for example, being used for stamps for international mail. Since membership of the union grew so quickly in the years following its creation the institution changed its name from General Postal Union to Universal Postal Union in 1878.47

Portraits

Like any images, the images displayed on bearers of value have no inherent meaning. Rather, meaning is only created by a viewer interpreting an image and thus endowing it with meaning. Due to the different personal knowledge, experience and interpretative skills of each individual viewer, images thus never have a single meaning, instead there is always a multiplicity of potential meanings.48 Art history often establishes a hierarchy between the different meanings in which the intention of the artist is accorded a paramount importance but this is not the aim of this historical study.49 Given that individuals and groups tend to have multiple identities, the analysis of the meaning of the imagery on bearers of value is not done by means of recreating the “period eye” or past “ways of seeing” used by some art historians50, but by means of analysing a variety of at times contradictory contemporary interpretations of the imagery displayed on bearers of value.

The contemporary interpreters of imagery on bearers of value included

47 On the UPU see Bureau international de l’Union postale universelle (ed.), L’Union postale universelle, Sa création et son développement, Berne 1991 which includes a list of more detailed studies.
48 For a good introduction to this phenomenon see Baxandall, Michael, Painting and Experience in Fifteenth Century Italy, Oxford 1974, pp. 29-32
50 See Baxandall, op. cit., pp. 29-108 and Berger, John et al. (eds.), Ways of Seeing, London 1972
artists but also civil servants, politicians, journalists and members of the general public. The meanings which they attached to the imagery displayed on bearers of value was not always identical and thus they allow for a distinction to be made between contested and uncontested portraits of the nation. Furthermore, both the existence of a variety of interpretations of the same image and the reasons for such different interpretations can be highly revealing for the analysis of the constituting elements of national identity which, as we have seen above, tends to be represented by means of ambiguous symbols.

In the period between 1880 and 1945 an abundance of new bearers of value appeared in Belgium and Switzerland; philatelic and numismatic catalogues list 460 new issues for Switzerland and 903 for Belgium. Furthermore, this thesis also includes the study of numerous unpublished proposals and private or semi-official issues of bearers of value. Due to the great number of images, an individual analysis of each of them is clearly impossible. Therefore, the period will be divided up into chronological chapters covering the Fin-de-Siècle (c. 1880-1913), the First World War (1914-1918), the inter-war period (1919-1939/40) and the Second World War (1939/40-1945). Due to the numerous new issues of bearers of value during the inter-war period, this period is divided into two chapters. The first covers the last years of the reign of King Albert (1909-1934) in Belgium, while in Switzerland it covers the period before the short-lived electoral success of Swiss fascist movements (Frontenfrühling 1933). The second inter-war chapter covers the tumultuous years of the mid 1930s until September 1939 in Switzerland when the army was mobilised and until May 1940 in Belgium when the country was invaded by Nazi-Germany. Within these chronological chapters the imagery displayed on the bearers of value will be discussed by analysing the major iconographic themes appearing on stamps, coins and banknotes.

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51 See above, p. 18, note 17
While a chronological division remains inevitably somewhat arbitrary it has the advantage that it allows for an analysis of the ever evolving national identities and memories in both countries. New themes such as the memory of a war or the commemoration of a sovereign can become means of national identification while other elements such as outmoded national myths or allegories can disappear from or significantly change their meaning within the repertoire of national self-representation. A chronological approach also allows for an assessment of the influence of outside historical factors, such as the economy and international politics, on the development of national identity and memory.

* * *

National identity remains one of the most ubiquitous and at the same time intriguing phenomena of European history. In the years following the collapse of communism in 1989 four European states have ceased to exist and a total of thirteen new or successor states have emerged. Most of these tremendous changes were ultimately justified in the name of the nation ranging from the Estonian on the shores of the Baltic Sea to the Macedonian in the southern Balkans. In turn, the subject of national identity continues to be a major field of historical research attracting a great amount of academic interest and it is hoped that this study sheds some light on this phenomenon.

Inevitably this thesis is only a limited attempt at analysing the cases of national identity in Switzerland and Belgium. Despite the considerable number of previous studies on the subject of national identity in Belgium and Switzerland, in both cases, a great amount of work remains to be done on the images of the nation and their place within the broader process of the

52 On the recent developments in central and eastern Europe and their historical context see, for example, Altermatt, Urs, Das Fanal von Sarajevo, Ethnonationalismus in Europa, Zürich 1996
construction of national identity. Apart from bearers of value, other fields of national self-representation such as national exhibitions, museums or monuments have not yet been comprehensively covered, while other fields such as uniform, passport or public transport design or indeed official and private photography have largely been neglected by historical research.

Also, this study is clearly only a first attempt at the general study of bearers of value as portraits of the nation. Stamps, coins and banknotes were issued by most modern states, but for most countries, case studies or comparative work based on archival research is still lacking. Yet I am convinced that the analysis of the archives of the issuing bodies of stamps, coins and banknotes in other countries than Belgium and Switzerland could lead to highly interesting results for the study of the construction of other nations, while such further studies would also generate the basis for a general history of stamps, coins and banknotes. It is thus hoped that this thesis will help in a modest way to stimulate work both on the subject of images of Belgian and Swiss national identity and the general historical study of stamps, coins and banknotes as portraits of the nation.
2. Decision-Making 1880-1913

2.1 Belgium

Reasons for the Creation of Bearers of Value

Coins

The first coins issued in this period were 1, 2 and 5 fr. silver coins and 100 fr. gold coins commemorating the 50th anniversary of Belgian independence in 1880. They were created at the initiative of the Société royale de numismatique which in 1879 asked the government to issue a special series of coins commemorating the anniversary. Commemoration coins endowed with monetary value rather than purely commemorative medals had already been created in Belgium: coins commemorated the marriage of Prince Léopold (II) with Archduchess Marie-Henriette in 1853 and in 1856 the 25th anniversary of the inauguration of King Léopold I. For at least two further occasions, commemoration coins were planned but never realised. In 1890, the Société royale de numismatique attempted to convince the government to issue coins commemorating the 25th anniversary of the inauguration of King Léopold II and a drawing of a coin intended to commemorate the 75th anniversary of Belgian independence in 1905 survives. However, neither of these coins was produced.

The 50 ct. and 1 fr. coins originally created in 1866 were issued with Flemish inscriptions in 1886. These were the first Belgian non-commemoration coins to employ Flemish thus breaking with the previous rule of exclusively French inscriptions. Gradually until 1902 the 1, 2, 5 and 10 ct. coins, also designed

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1 See Revue belge de numismatique, 1890, pp. 449-463
2 See ibid. and ibid. 1905, anon. coin proposal, MR, 601/12
in the 1860s, appeared in Flemish versions.3 No documents explaining this change could be found in the archives of the Monnaie Royale. However, the fact that only the inscriptions but not the design of the coins was changed shows that they were created solely because of their Flemish inscriptions. This conscious break with Belgium’s unilingual numismatic past was clearly an outcome of the successful parliamentary lobbying on the parts of the Flemish campaigners concluding a series of legal changes enhancing the position of Flemish within Belgium. These laws include the use of Flemish in penal law (1873), in public administration in Flanders (1878) and in some disciplines of state secondary schools (1883).4 All newly-created coins after 1886 existed in both French and Flemish versions.

In 1899 the Latin Monetary Union allowed Belgium to mint new silver coins and "... le Gouvernement a jugé utile de provoquer la création d'un nouveau type monétaire qui, ..., réponde mieux que notre type actuel aux exigences du sentiment artistique."5 Thus by the turn of the century changing artistic taste made the 1866 coins (fig. 10) appear to be outdated and even provoked “diverses critiques“6 which led the government to commission a new series of coins.

Between 1901 and 1908 copper-nickel 5, 10 and 25 ct. coins were issued with a hole in the middle in order to make them more easily distinguishable from the new silver coins. This practical decision, however, was criticised: "Il était bien inutile de forer un trou dans les pièces de nickel comme cela existe dans celles en usage chez les Congolais, pour la rendre plus reconnaissable et éviter par là la confusion avec la monnaie d'argent." Instead surface relief would have been sufficient, the critic argued.7 Thus these coins were created out of practical

3 See Banque Nationale de Belgique (ed.), Le franc belge, Bruxelles 1989, pp. 40-41
5 Minister to Commissaire des Monnaies, 13 Sept. 1899, MR, 601/11
6 Rapport au Roi, no date [1900/4], MR, 601/11
7 Nickelman to Commissaire des Monnaies, 19 Oct. 1901, MR, 603/4
considerations which were, however, seen by some as suitable means for underdeveloped Africans but somewhat unworthy for advanced Belgium.

In 1909 King Leopold II died and his nephew Albert became King of the Belgians. Subsequently, all coins were replaced by new ones bearing the new sovereign’s portrait or his monogram. Due to the Latin Monetary Union, no Belgian gold coins had been minted since 1882 and French gold coins had been used instead. In 1911 there were plans to mint Belgian gold coins using French coins and minting them into coins bearing Albert’s portrait. The design of the gold coins was commissioned in 1910, however, no gold coins were minted prior to the outbreak of the First World War. The Monnaie Royale decided against this issue because no gold coins were circulating at this time and new models would therefore become overpriced collectors’ items.

Stamps

At the beginning of the 1880s the Belgian Post Office issued two new definitive stamp series. The reasons for their creation were mainly technical and practical. The Commission des timbres postaux et télégraphiques was created in 1879 with the aim of preventing stamp counterfeiting and the reuse of obliterated stamps. The problem of the reuse of obliterated stamps was quickly solved by imitating a successful Italian ink and after international enquiries about stamp printing techniques the commission decided to charge a British company with

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8 See for example Devreeze to Commissaire des Monnaies, 14 Jan. 1910, MR, 600/8, accepting the commission for new 50 ct., 1 and 2 fr. coins.
9 See Commissaire des Monnaies to minister, 28 Nov. 1911, MR, 600/8
10 See Devreeze to Commissaire des Monnaies, 4 Oct. 1910, MR, 600/8, accepting the commission for 10, 20 and 100 fr. gold coins.
11 See Commissaire des Monnaies to minister, 28 Nov. 1911, MR, 600/8
12 See protocol, Commission des timbres postaux et télégraphiques, 25 June 1879, MP, 1879: P. V. Séances de la Commission
13 See protocol, Commission des timbres postaux et télégraphiques, 28 Jan. 1880, ibid.
the creation of the 1883 series using typography.\footnote{14 See protocol, Commission des timbres postaux et télégraphiques, 27 Dec. 1880, \textit{ibid.}}

By the mid 1880s Belgian stamps still bore exclusively French inscriptions a fact which led to numerous complaints by Flemish campaigners among them \textit{De Vrije Vlamingen}, \textit{Vlaamsche Macht} and the \textit{Verbond der Vlaamscche Grievenkomiteiten}.
\footnote{15 See dossier MP, 1889; Revendications des Flamands au sujet des inscriptions des timbres-poste}

The Post Office made inquiries regarding the practices of other multilingual countries including Austria, Switzerland, Luxembourg and the USA (sic!) and initially suggested imitating the Swiss case by using Latin inscriptions on stamps.
\footnote{16 Note. 2 Oct. 1889. \textit{ibid.}} Finally, however, the Post Office told the Flemish campaigners that all future series would be bilingual.
\footnote{17 Directeur général to Garde flamande and \textit{De Vrije Vlamingen}, 13 Jan. 1893, \textit{ibid.}}

The first bilingual stamps appeared in 1893 and were composed of a definitive stamp to which the so-called \textit{talon} was attached. It bore the inscription “Not to be delivered on Sundays” in both French and Flemish (fig. 2). If the \textit{talon} remained attached to the stamp the letter was not delivered on Sundays while if it was detached Sunday delivery was ensured.
\footnote{18 See Arrêté Ministériel, 15 May 1893. \textit{Recueil}}

The introduction of labour-free Sundays, including for postal employees, was an aim of the Catholic government. However, due to widespread demands for Sunday mail delivery especially from industry and commerce, the Postal Minister Vandenpeereboom decided to introduce the detachable \textit{talon} representing a political compromise leaving the choice up to the individual postal user.

The \textit{talon} stamps, however, led to complaints in parliament. Deputy Hanssens thought that there had been no public demand for new stamps and considered them to be an expression of “... l'idée sectaire qui hante depuis longtemps le cerveau de l'honorable ministre.”
\footnote{20 Hanssens, 3 Aug. 1893, AGR, Annales parlementaires de Belgique, Chambre, Session 1893 April - Aug., p. 2052}
Hanssens’ claim that the introduction of the talon had been excessively expensive by arguing that due to the enthusiasm of philatelists the new stamps had in fact been a profitable business for the administration raising 35,000 francs.\textsuperscript{21} He subsequently stated that only old-fashioned people were still using ordinary letters instead of faster express letters, telegrams or indeed the telephone and declared: “Il n’y plus d’adversaires du repos dominical. La cause est gagnée.”\textsuperscript{22} Talons remained attached to Belgian stamps until 1914.\textsuperscript{23}

In 1893, the \textit{Ligue “Anvers en Avant”} successfully applied to the Post Office for permission to have special advertisement stamps produced for the 1895 Antwerp universal exhibition.\textsuperscript{24} This was the first Belgian stamp series created to advertise a future event and, to my knowledge, this was also a world-wide novelty. It set the precedent for a similar series advertising the Brussels international exhibition in 1896.\textsuperscript{25}

In 1903 the Ministry of Industry and Labour proposed to issue advertisement stamps for the universal exhibition in Liège and commemoration stamps for the 75th anniversary of Belgian independence in 1905. The Liège exhibition stamps were refused by the Post Office because the Universal Postal Union had forbidden the use of special stamps for international use in 1899 thus eliminating the stamps’ international advertisement appeal. The idea of commemoration stamps, however, was welcomed by the Post Office which hoped to replace the existing stamps “... par d’autres auxquels on chercherait à donner un caractère plus artistique.”\textsuperscript{26}

In 1910 yet another new kind of stamp appeared for the first time in

\textsuperscript{21} Vandenpeereboom, 18 Aug. 1893, \textit{ibid.}
\textsuperscript{22} Vandenpeereboom, 9 May 1894, AGR, Annales parlementaires de Belgique, Chambre, Session 1894 April - June, p. 1365
\textsuperscript{23} Arrêté Ministériel, 30 Sept. 1914, introduced stamps without the talon, \textit{Recueil}
\textsuperscript{24} See \textit{Ligue “Anvers en Avant”} to minister, 20 Dec. 1893, MP, 1894
\textsuperscript{25} No documents survive showing who applied for these stamps although the idea probably came from the exhibition organisers.
\textsuperscript{26} See Note, 14 April 1903, MP, 1903: émission nouveau timbre-poste de 10 ct. à 2 frs.
Belgium: the Post Office issued fund-raising stamps in favour of the *Ligue Nationale Belge contre la Tuberculose*. The stamps were sold at the 1910 universal exhibition in Brussels and the money thus raised was used for the creation of sanatoria for needy women and children. Finally, after the death of King Leopold II in 1909, not only the coins but also the stamps bearing the new King's portrait were commissioned and after some difficulties between the Post Office and the artist issued in 1912.

**Banknotes**

Due to the absence of most written documents concerning the creation of banknotes the reasons leading to the decision to create new banknotes have to be established on a rather speculative basis. Most banknotes seem to have been produced because of practical necessity. Like all banks, the *Banque Nationale de Belgique* (BNB) worried about the counterfeiting of banknotes and tried to prevent this by issuing ever safer notes, especially in the face of the development of photographic reproduction techniques. In 1894, for example, the BNB produced the first quadrichrome print banknotes (20 fr.) proudly using a “revolutionary” technique executed on a recently acquired Lambert press and thus rendering counterfeiting more difficult. In 1889 the first bilingual banknote appeared, clearly marking the success of Flemish complaints. However, the primary reason for the creation of this new banknote was not its bilingualism but again security. The BNB explained the need to introduce the new banknotes: the preceding series “... est malheureusement contrefait.”

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27 See Arrêté Royal, 18 May 1910, *Recueil*  
28 See dossier MP, 1912: création timbres-poste à 5 frs.  
29 See Banque Nationale de Belgique (ed.), *Le franc belge*, Bruxelles 1989, p. 124  
30 Ermel to Service des Billets, 11 Nov. 1884, BNB ac, SdB Correspondance et Documents 1876-1885, p. 464
Commissioning and Choice of Imagery

Coins

In the case of the issuing of a Flemish version of existing coins, no new imagery was needed and the Monnaie Royale probably simply had the inscriptions changed by the coin workshop. If new imagery was required, the Monnaie Royale usually directly commissioned an artist with the creation of new coin designs. The 1880 commemoration coins were created by Léopold Wiener (1823-1891), a renowned artist who was graveur général of the Brussels mint from 1864 onwards and had created numerous Belgian coins before. Similarly the Monnaie Royale commissioned the well-known sculptor and medalist Godefroi Devreese (1861-1941) with the creation of new coins bearing King Albert’s portrait. For the centimes coins created between 1901 and 1913 and devoid of a royal portrait, the Monnaie Royale commissioned the engraver Alphonse Michaux.

When the parliamentary deputy Delbeke proposed to change the existing silver coins for aesthetic reasons in Parliament in 1897, he suggested organising a general contest open to all Belgian citizens offering high prizes in order to attract all major artists. The government, however, decided to give the commission exclusively to Thomas Vinçotte (1850-1925), another well-known sculptor.

While not organising a contest, the Finance Ministry nevertheless created a special commission to deliberate upon the aesthetic and monetary qualities of

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31 No documents were found illustrating this process.
32 See Wiener to Commissaire des Monnaies accepting the commission, 24 April 1880, MR, 601/8 and Banque Nationale de Belgique (ed.), La monnaie et le portrait royal, Bruxelles 1991, pp. 75-76
33 See Devreese to Commissaire des Monnaies accepting commission, 4 Oct. 1910, MR, 600/8 and Banque Nationale de Belgique (ed.), La monnaie et le portrait royal, Bruxelles 1991, pp. 103-105
34 See Banque Nationale de Belgique (ed.), Le franc belge, Bruxelles 1989, p. 14
35 See Revue belge de numismatique, 1898, p. 212
36 See minister to Commissaire des Monnaies, 13 Sept. 1899, MR, 601/11 and Banque Nationale de Belgique (ed.), La monnaie et le portrait royal, Bruxelles 1991, pp. 91-93
Vinçotte’s proposals. This commission was composed of three parliamentary deputies, among them deputy Delbeke who had proposed the creation of the new coins and the duc d’Ursel, president of the Société des Beaux-Arts, as well as Viscount de Jonghe, president of the Société Royale de numismatique, J. Allard, the head of the Monnaie Royale and three members of the finance administration among them the Commissaire des Monnaies. Usually, however, only the Commissaire des Monnaies was in contact with the artists and he at times expressed criticisms in order to improve the proposals. The final proposals were subject to approval by the Finance Ministry and, in the case of a royal portrait, by the King. The surviving royal and ministerial reactions to new coin imagery all approved of the submitted proposals.

Stamps

One of the tasks of the Commission des timbres postaux et télégraphiques created in 1879 was to improve the artistic aspect of stamps. From its first session onwards, however, the commission decided that the artistic aspects were directly linked to the quality of stamp production and thus mainly focussed on examining the most appropriate print techniques. For the creation of the royal portrait the commission initially proposed to charge the Classe des Beaux-Arts de l’Académie royale with the organisation of a limited contest among Belgian artists. Despite the competition and greater experience of the foreign, mainly

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37 See minister to Commissaire des Monnaies, 13 Sept. 1899, MR, 601/11 and Revue belge de numismatique, 1900, p. 131
38 See for example correspondence Commissaire des Monnaies with Devreese 1910-11, MR, 600/8
39 See for example Palais de Bruxelles to minister, 19 March 1910, MR, 603/5 and minister to Vinçotte, 26 July 1900, MR, 601/11
40 See protocol, Commission des timbres postaux et télégraphiques, 25 June 1879, MP, 1879: P. V. Séances de la Commission
French and British, engravers in the field of copperprint engraving, the *Commission* thought that: “Il serait hautement désirable à raison de l’intérêt particulier auquel les nationaux ont droit et dans le but d’encourager notre école de gravure ...” to commission a Belgian citizen with the engraving. Later in the same year the commission, however, decided to charge the British *De la Rue* company with the creation of the new stamps. This commissioning of a foreign company in turn led to complaints and the subsequent series (1884) was both engraved and printed in Belgium.  

There is no evidence that the Post Office organised a contest for the creation of the three stamp series issued between 1884 and 1894, instead there are some letters documenting the cooperation with individual artists or engravers. Thus the Post Office is likely to have directly commissioned well-known artists and engravers with the design of these series. Two of them, Henri Hendrickx and Albert Doms, also created banknotes for the BNB.

On a private basis, however, a nationwide contest among all Belgian artists was organised in 1887 by the Antwerp *Société du Palais de l’Industrie, des Arts et du Commerce* in order to create bilingual stamps. The Post Office showed interest in the winning proposal of this contest “dont la composition - conçue avec inscriptions dans les deux langues - aurait été jugée fort remarquable” and for the 1896 Brussels exhibition stamps the Postal Ministry organised a general stamp contest open to all Belgian artists. A jury judged the proposals and was

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42 Protocol, Commission des timbres postaux et télégraphiques, 16 April 1880, MP, 1879: P. V. Séances de la Commission.  
44 For details see below, pp. 71-73.  
45 See for example directeur général to Doms, graveur de la Banque Nationale, 26 May 1882, MP, 1877: Réclamation graveur belge ... and note, 3 Oct. 1890, about proposals by Hendrickx, MP, 1891: gravure du timbre bilingue à 35 ct.  
46 1884: Hendrickx (image), Doms, Mouchon (engraving); 1893: Mouchon, Hendrickx (image), Doms (engraving); 1894: Hendrickx (image), Lemaire (engraving), see COB, pp. 47-48.  
47 See Concours privé pour la gravure d’un timbre-poste, 15 April 1887, MP, 1877: Réclamation graveur belge ...  
48 Directeur d’administration to chef de service des postes, Anvers, 24 May 1887, ibid.
composed of the director of the Antwerp Académie des Beaux-Arts, the administrator of the Brussels exhibition, two members of the Oeuvre nationale de l'art appliqué, three postal civil servants and was headed by the president of the Société philatélique. A total prize sum of 3000 francs was distributed among the winning artists.

For several reasons, however, the Post Office refused to organise a contest for the creation of the 1905 commemoration series. Not only had the 1896 contest proved to be a relative failure, one Flemish inscription being badly legible and provoking widespread criticism, but the Post Office also noted that contests were relatively expensive and that “Les artistes de grande valeur ne participent pas aux concours.” Instead of organising a contest the Post Office thus directly commissioned an artist and an engraver with the creation of the 1905 commemoration series.

The commissioning and choice of the imagery for the 1910 fund-raising stamps is badly documented. One newspaper, however, noted that two artists, Constant Montald and H. Lemaire, were charged with creating the stamps on the basis of Van Dijck's famous painting Le Saint Martin. Thus the theme of the stamps seems to have been set and, based on the 1905 precedent when the Post Office refused to organise a contest, it is likely that the two artists were directly commissioned by the Post Office.

For the new stamps showing King Albert in 1910, the Post Office commissioned the artist L. Evely who in turn collaborated for some sections of

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50 See directeur d’administration (télégraphes) to directeur d’administration (postes), 4 April 1896, MP, 1897: mise au concours du dessin
51 See Note, 20 Aug. 1896, MP, 1896/7
52 See Note, 14 April 1903, MP, 1903: émission nouveau timbre-poste de 10 ct. à 2 frs.
53 Note on margin of Ministre de l’Industrie et du Travail to Postal Minister, 22 Oct. 1903, ibid.
54 H. Meunier (image), M. Pellens (engraving). No letters between the Post Office and either of the artists survive. See COB, p. 49
55 See L’Etoile belge, 29 April 1910, MP, 1910: timbres-poste "Caritas" reserve
the stamps with the engraver M. Pellens. It is interesting to note that the royal portrait was made on the basis of a photograph sent by the Post Office to the artist. The themes of these stamps seem to have been set: heraldic or numeral symbols for the lower values and the royal portrait for the higher values. These stamps were frequently considered ugly and L'Etoile Belge published a demand from the Fédération des Philatélistes calling for better stamps to be created by means of a contest among Belgian artists. The stamps remained, however, unchanged until the First World War.

We can therefore see that there was no institutionalised procedure concerning the commissioning and choice of Belgian stamp imagery. Usually, the Post Office directly commissioned an artist with the creation of set imagery while contests organised among Belgian artists proved to be costly and rather inefficient. In the case of contests, a special jury judged the proposals and distributed prizes among the participating artists. The final choice of the imagery, however, lay with the postal administration, while the stamps also needed ministerial or, in the case of a royal portrait, royal approval.

Banknotes

Due to the quasi-absence of any written documents relating to the commissioning and choice of banknote imagery this process has to be reconstructed mainly on the basis of the surviving visual sources. The banknotes issued in 1880 (20 fr.) and 1888 (50, 500 fr.) were created by the painter Henri Hendrickx (1817-1894), director of the Academy of Saint-Josse-ten-Noode in Brussels who had created all banknotes for the BNB since 1869. The BNB is thus likely to have directly commissioned this proven and reliable artist with the

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56 See Evely to directeur, 9 June 1910, MP, 1905: Dossier concernant les dessins de gravures-mères ...
57 L'Etoile Belge, 28 Nov. 1912, MP, 1877: Réclamation graveur belge ...
58 See Banque Nationale de Belgique (ed.). Le franc belge, Bruxelles 1989, p. 123
creation of these notes.

After the death of Hendrickx in 1894, the bank had to find new artists for the creation of its banknotes. The 1897 20 fr. notes were created by Louis Titz (1859-1932), professor at the Ecole d'art de bijouterie and at the Académie de Bruxelles, while the 1909 50 and 100 fr. notes were created by the painter and sculptor Constant Montald (1862-1944), professor at the Académie des Beaux-Arts in Brussels. Both of these artists seem to have been directly commissioned by the BNB; however, they were not the only ones. A number of further unpublished banknote projects by other artists remain in the possession of the BNB, an indication that the bank acquired these works by means of direct commissions rather than by means of contests where the non-winning proposals usually remained the possession of the artists.59

While there are no documents relating to the choice of the imagery, the fact that neither jury protocols nor references to a jury survive indicates that this choice was probably made on an administrative level within the BNB rather than by creating a special jury judging the proposals. This theory can further be supported by a critical article about the 1897 20 fr. notes in the Revue belge de numismatique. While criticising the new notes, especially its colour "... qui n'a rien de bien agréable à l'oeil ..." the Revue, otherwise very interested in contests and juries, made no reference to the commissioning and choice of the imagery.60 Thus in general the BNB probably directly commissioned new banknote imagery. Yet after the death of Henri Hendrickx in 1894, the bank seems to have commissioned several artists with the creation of banknote proposals, acquiring them and choosing a suitable proposal for execution without the assistance of a special jury.

59 Proposals by nine different artists survive for the period 1894-1913, see BNB SdC cat.
60 Revue belge de numismatique, 1898, pp. 243-44
2.2 Switzerland

Reasons for the Creation of Bearers of Value

Coins

The main reason for the creation of new Swiss coins was practical necessity, namely the fact that existing coins were counterfeited and that new minting techniques allowed for security improvements. In 1875 parliament asked the government to withdraw and devalue the 20 ct. coins because the existing model was frequently forged. New 20 ct. coins were, however, only minted in 1881 after the Federal Mint had made a series of essays using various nickel alloys finally deciding to mint pure nickel coins which had a high intrinsic metal value and which were easily distinguishable from counterfeit coins made out of different metals due to nickel's magnetic reactions.61

In 1883 Switzerland issued its first gold coin. Unfortunately, there is little documentation concerning this 20 fr. coin.62 The 1888 5 fr. silver coins are, however, better documented. An 1885 amendment of the Latin Monetary Union treaty granted Switzerland permission to withdraw and remint 2 million of its 5 fr. coins. This became necessary because the old models were minted employing an out-dated technique making counterfeiting more likely, especially in combination with an extremely low silver price.63

The 1897 20 fr. gold coins, however, were not created for practical but rather because of aesthetic reasons. In 1890 Parliament had ordered the government to examine the possibility of introducing a unified shield carrying

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61 See Platel, Edm. [Director of the Federal Mint], *Das Schweizerische Zwanzigrappenstück*, Genève 1890, BA, 6200 (B)
62 The dossier *Prägung eidgenössischer Goldmünzen, 1870-1914* has a gap between documents dating from 1872-1886, see BA, E 12/15
63 See Auszug aus dem Protokoll ... des schweizerischen Bundesrates, 21 June 1886, BA, E 12/18
the Swiss coat of arms on both the 5 and 20 fr. coins because the existing models did not seem to correspond with heraldic rules. An expert commission suggested the introduction of a simple form, the so-called Spanish shield in 1892. While a project of amending the coat of arms on the 1888 5 fr. coins had been abandoned already in 1889, probably because of the costs involved, the government decided to change the coat of arms on the 20 fr. coins. However, the initial plan to limit the changes to introducing the Spanish shield provoked "... des critiques plus ou moins vives ... au sein des conseils législatifs ..." and led the government to organise a limited contest among artists in order to "... arriver ... à un nouveau modèle-type pour nos monnaies répondant aux exigences de la science héraldique et de l'art décoratif, ...".65

Between 1893 and 1897 Switzerland minted a total of 73 20 fr. coins made out of gold from the Swiss mine in Gondo.66 No documents have been located referring to the only coins made out of Swiss gold. However, it seems clear that these coins were not minted for practical reasons but rather in order to commemorate the fact that there was a Swiss gold mine, albeit a very small one.67 Finally the idea for the introduction 10 fr. gold coins in 1911 came from a parliamentary commission suggesting the introduction of this new value. After a broad inquiry among the administration, state and private banks and industrial and agricultural associations the government decided to mint the new coins in 1909.68

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64 There are no indications for the abandonment of this plan which would have involved the reminting of this recently-introduced coin. See Auszug aus dem Protokoll ... des schweizerischen Bundesrates, 31 Dec. 1889, BA, E 12/18
65 Finance Minister Hauser in Protocole du jury, 14 May 1895, BA, E 12/19
67 On Gondo see Froment, M., *Rapport sur les mines d'or de Gondo*, Gondo 1893
68 See Auszug aus dem Protokoll ... des schweizerischen Bundesrates, 5 Jan. 1909, BA, E 12/15

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Stamps

As in the case of coins, new definitive stamp series were either issued for practical or for aesthetic reasons. Two new definitive stamp series (2 ct.-15 ct. and 20 ct.-3 fr.) appeared in 1882 replacing the previous series dating from 1862. While the documents fail to reveal the reasons for the introduction of these series, in 1900 the government decided to replace the lower of the 1882 series and the Postal Ministry stated that at the time of its creation: "... offenbar weniger Gewicht auf künstlerisch schöne Ausstattung als auf praktische Erfüllung des Zweckes gelegt wurde."70

In 1900 the Post Office issued the first Swiss commemoration stamp celebrating the 25th anniversary of the Universal Postal Union. Between 1869 and the turn of the century, the Swiss government had encouraged and financially supported the foundation of several international organisations in Berne among them the Universal Postal Union and one of its former members, Eugène Borel, even headed the organisation between 1875-1892.71 This explains why the idea for its commemoration came from the government which ordered the Postal and the Interior Ministry to create special commemorative post-cards and stamps for the anniversary.72

The gradual replacement of all definitive stamp series between 1907 and 1914 was initiated for aesthetic reasons. The press criticised the existing stamps as lacking in originality and aesthetic appearance. One paper exclaimed: "Die Würde des Landes leidet darunter" and further maintained that due to the world-wide dissemination of stamps no other institution was more apt "... von der Denkart und dem Grade der Selbstachtung einer Nation Zeugnis zu geben,

69 Ordre de service, 8 Mach 1882, simply announces the introduction of the new series, BA, E 51/577-587
70 Postal Ministry to government, 18 Oct. 1900, ibid.
72 See Postal Ministry to government, 4 Sept. 1900, BA E 51/577-587
als diejenige der Briefmarke.” The government thus decided to replace the existing series (2 ct.-15 ct.) because its iconography “... in Bezug auf die ästhetische Seite zu wünschen übrig lasse und den Anforderungen des Schönheitssinnes nicht gebührende Rechnung trage” (fig. 25). It approved of the Post Office’s proposal to organise a general stamp contest among Swiss artists, thus starting the process which finally led to the series issued between 1907 and 1914.74

Finally, the first Swiss fund-raising stamps were issued in 1912 for the benefit of the Pro Juventute charity. Founded in 1912 the charity’s aim was the protection and support of children and mothers by means of the collaboration of a great number of local charities and social organisations working each year for a specific social project. The Postal Minister was ex officio a member of the charity’s board of directors. The charity’s founders, Carl Horber, secretary of the tuberculosis commission of Zurich, and Major Ulrich Wille proposed to the Postal Minister the issuing of fund-raising stamps for the new charity. He apparently replied: “Das ist eine gute Sache - sie wird gemacht!”75

Banknotes

Although the minting of coins had become a federal prerogative in 1848, no Swiss national bank existed throughout the 19th century and thus local banks issued a variety of Swiss banknotes. The suspension of the minting of 5 fr. silver coins in 1876, imposed by the Latin Monetary Union due to falling silver prices, expanded banknote circulation and led to attempts by the government to gain control over paper money. A first attempt for this purpose failed in 1880 due to the resistance of the federalists, the law of 1882 regulating aspects of the issuing of banknotes proved inefficient and finally the confederation acquired the banknote

73 Quotation of Zuger Volksblatt in Tagblatt der Stadt St.Gallen, 6 March 1900, BA, E 51/577-587
74 See Postal Ministry to government, 18 Oct. 1900, ibid.

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monopoly and the right to found a national bank in 1891. The Schweizerische Nationalbank (SNB) was, however, only founded in 1907. In the meantime, local banks continued to issue banknotes using a unified design from 1883 onwards.

In a first phase between 1907 and 1910, the SNB issued the so-called Interimsnoten based on the same unified design as the standardised notes of the local banks adding the trilingual inscription of its name and an overprint in form of a Swiss cross. However, the government decided to create new notes for its new institution and formed a commission for this purpose. During its first session, the Finance Minister defined the priorities of the commission’s work: “... in jedem Falle soll die technische, insbesondere die sicherheitstechnische Seite der Frage massgebend für die Entscheidungen der Kommission sein, wogegen Erwägungen ästhetischer Natur nur eine sekundäre Bedeutung beizumessen ist.” Thus the desire for secure banknotes which were difficult to counterfeit was the main reason for the creation of the second SNB banknote series while aesthetic reasons were initially of a clearly secondary importance.

76 On the foundation of the Swiss national bank see Zimmermann, Rolf, Volksbank oder Aktienbank?, Zurich 1987
78 Protokoll, 20 March 1908, SNB u.a.
Commissioning and Choice of Imagery

Some preliminary remarks about the development of Swiss cultural politics are necessary before analysing the commissioning and choice of the imagery on bearers of value. Due to the cultural and more especially the denominational diversity of the cantons, one of the reasons for the civil war of 1847, culture remained a predominantly cantonal domain after the foundation of the federal state in 1848.79 In the 1880s, however, demands for federal cultural politics were increasingly raised, especially by artist associations, the press and Liberal politicians. The Liberal federal government in turn began to perceive culture as a means of bringing about the unification of the country especially in the face of the growing social and political tensions enhanced by the effective use by the Catholic-Conservative opposition of the newly introduced referendum.80 A series of federal actions were taken in order to compensate for the lack of any cultural activity by the federal state. 1887 saw the creation of the Eidgenössische Kunstkommission (Federal Art Commission); it was followed by the foundation of the Schweizerisches Landesmuseum (Swiss National Museum) in Zurich in 1890 and the Schweizerische Landesbibliothek (Swiss National Library) in Berne in 1894.

For our purpose, the Eidgenössische Kunstkommission (EKK) is of special importance because it frequently participated in the decision-making process of the imagery on bearers of value. The EKK had three main tasks: the periodic organisation of national art exhibitions, the acquisition of art for the adornment of official buildings and assistance in the creation of monuments of a historical or national character. The eleven members of the commission were appointed by the government and had an annual budget of 100,000 francs.

79 An attempt to add a cultural article to the constitution failed as recently as 1994.
In the years up to the First World War the EKK was embroiled in major scandals and its history was one of constant struggles for influence in the composition of the commission. After the disastrous first national art exhibition of 1890, several members of the EKK resigned. In the following year, the *Neue Zürcher Zeitung* launched a press campaign against the commission and, after corruption allegations had emerged, the government was forced to set up a parliamentary investigation commission and subsequently the budget of the EKK was reduced by half in 1899.

Meanwhile, two rival artistic groups struggled for influence over the EKK and over access to the annual art exhibitions organised by the *Schweizerischer Kunstverein* (SKV): the *Gesellschaft Schweizerischer Maler, Bildhauer und Architekten* (Society of Swiss Painters, Sculptors and Architects, GSMB(A))81 founded in 1865/66 and the *Sezession*, which seceded from the increasingly modernist GSMB(A) in 1906 and which was, in contrast to its famous Viennese namesake, conservative in nature. While at the beginning of the century, the GSMB tried to monopolise access to the exhibitions organised by the SKV for its own members, the SKV also cooperated with the conservative *Sezession*. After the election of the *Sezession*’s president to the EKK, the GSMB feared conservative domination of the commission. The controversy between the GSMB and the *Sezession* thus intensified and finally the government had to reorganise the commission in 1910 and 1915. The demands of the traditional, conservative circles were largely fulfilled. The GSMB lost its right of proposal for the juries of the national exhibitions and the government had to ensure that representatives of all artistic styles and linguistic groups were represented in the EKK and the juries for national exhibitions.82

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81 Architects were included in 1904/05.

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There is no evidence that the Post Office organised contests among artists for the creation of the two stamp series of 1882. Since the Post Office subsequently stated that the imagery on the 1882 stamps had been chosen for practical rather than aesthetic reasons, it is likely that the imagery was directly commissioned, as in the case of the 1900 commemoration stamps of the Universal Postal Union created by Eugène Grasset, a Swiss artist living in Paris.

For the creation of new definitive series, however, the Post Office proposed to organise a general stamp contest among Swiss artists living in Switzerland and abroad which was to be announced in Schweizer Kunst, L'Art Suisse, the official publication of Swiss artists. Originally, the Post Office intended to use the EKK as the jury to judge the proposals; however, this was subsequently crossed out and replaced by "... einer vom Bundesrat zu wählenden Expertencommission." This decision clearly reflects the disputed position of the EKK at this time. Two members of the EKK, the artists Hans Sandreuter and Charles Giron, were, however, members of the jury which also included two postal civil servants, the director of the Federal Mint, a philatelist and a parliamentary deputy. Furthermore the Post Office renounced its right to make a final choice "... angesichts des allgemeinen Interesses, den diese Frage in Anspruch nimmt, [überlassen wir] die endgültige Auswahl des neuen Markenbildes dem Bundesrat ...".

Since the results of the general contest had not brought satisfactory results,
in 1905 the Post Office organised a limited contest among three artists at the proposal of Charles Giron, president of the general contest commission. The results of this contest were judged by Giron, two postal civil servants and the director of the Federal Mint who were again not convinced by any proposal. Two further artists were thus invited to a limited contest, one proposed by Giron and one by Minister Comtesse. The government chose the final imagery of the two series issued in 1907 and created by Albert Welti and Charles L'Éplattenier. For the creation of the remaining definitive stamp series created by L'Éplattenier (1908), Richard Kissling and Eugène Grasset (both 1914), the Post Office does not seem to have organised a contest but rather directly commissioned them from the artists.

Finally, the imagery of the *Pro Juventute* stamps was commissioned and paid for by the charity while the Post Office paid for their production and had to approve of the imagery chosen by the charity. While the artist of the 1912 series is unknown, the 1913 series was created by Eugène Grasset who already designed the Universal Postal Union stamps of 1900.

**Coins**

Before deciding on the final version of the new 1881 20 ct. coins the Federal Mint experimented with two unpublished coin proposals of 1871 and 1873 for the obverse of the new coins. While the 1871 proposal was by the Bernese engraver Durussel, interestingly, the 1873 model was by Léopold Wiener engraver general of the *Monnaie royale* in Brussels. The final version of the new obverse, however, was created by the famous German engraver Karl Schwenzer

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89 See Auszug aus dem Protokoll ... des schweizerischen Bundesrates, 17 Jan. 1906, *ibid.* and Zusammenstellung der Ideenkonkurrenzen ... 1900-1929, 12 Sept. 1930, PTT Bib., BG 0119
90 No documents relating to these series survive, however, there is no mention of a contest for their creation in a list of all of the contests organised between 1900 and 1929. See Zusammenstellung der Ideenkonkurrenzen ... 1900-1929, 12 Sept. 1930, PTT Bib., BG 0119
who also created the 1883 20 fr. coins. "Da wir in der Schweiz einen eigentlichen Münzgraveur nicht besitzen ..." the Federal Mint probably directly commissioned Schwenzer to design both the 20 ct. and 20 fr. coins.

For the creation of the 1888 5 fr. coins the Finance Ministry organised two coin contests, a general contest in 1886 and a limited contest among professional medalists in 1887. The government charged a jury including a parliamentary deputy, an artist, a heraldist and the director of the Federal Mint with judging the results of the contests. Neither of the contests, however, led to satisfactory results. The government finally adopted a modified version of Schwenzer's 1887 proposal for the obverse and commissioned the Swiss heraldist Bühler, a member of the jury, with the design of the reverse.

"... [M]algré les experiences peu encourageantes de 1887 ..." the government organised a further contest in 1895 for the creation of the new 20 fr. coins. 38 Swiss artists and applied art schools were invited and produced a total of 21 proposals. The EKK complained about having been left out of the organisation of the contest, however, one of its members was part of the jury which included two parliamentary deputies, two artists, an engraver, and two numismatic experts. While the Finance Minister was present at some of the jury sessions, the final choice of the imagery was again left to the government.

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92 See Platel, Edm. [Director of the Federal Mint], *Das Schweizerische Zwanzigrappenstück*, Genève 1890, pp. 12-15, BA. 6200 (B) and anon. [Eidgenössische Münzstätte], *Das neue schweiz. Fünffrankenstück*, no date [1888], p. 8, BA, E 12/18
93 anon. [Eidgenössische Münzstätte], *Das neue schweiz. Fünffrankenstück*, no date [1888], *ibid*.
94 See Eidgenössisches Finanzdepartement, Ausschreibung, 22 June 1886, and Auszug aus dem Protokoll ... des schweizerischen Bundesrates, 29 June 1887, BA , E 12/18
95 See Auszug aus dem Protokoll ... des schweizerischen Bundesrates, 28 Sept. 1886, *ibid*.
96 See Juryreport 12 Oct. 1886 and Juryreport 2 Dec. 1887, *ibid*.
97 See Auszug aus dem Protokoll ... des schweizerischen Bundesrates, 23 May 1888 and anon. [Eidgenössische Münzstätte], *Das neue schweiz. Fünffrankenstück*, no date [1888], p. 4, *ibid*.
98 Protocole du jury, 14 May 1895, BA, E 12/19
99 See protocole du jury, 14 May 1895 and list with invited artists, no date [1895], *ibid*.
100 See Protokoll der Eidgenössischen Kunstkommission, 29 Aug. 1895, BA, E 12/19. The EKK representatives were Paul Robert succeeded by Albert Anker in the sessions of Sept. 1895, see Protocole du jury, 24 Sept. 1895, *ibid* and Staub, op. cit., pp. 180-181
101 See Auszug aus dem Protokoll ... des schweizerischen Bundesrates, 12 Jan. 1897, BA, E 12/19
Banknotes

The unified banknote design used by Swiss banks after 1883 and by the newly founded SNB from 1907 to 1911 was directly commissioned by the government who collaborated with the Viennese artist Josef Stock, creator of several banknotes for Austria-Hungary, and the German artist Albert Walch who was working in Berne. For the creation of the second series of SNB banknotes, however, the government created a special commission including the Finance Minister, three senior directors of the SNB and one of the directors of Crédit Suisse in Zurich. They believed that a general contest would not bring satisfactory results: "... da die Gefahr besteht, dass an einer solchen gerade die hervorragendsten Künstler sich nicht beteiligen würden." After initially considering a limited contest among the artists Ferdinand Hodler, Paul Robert and Albert Welti the jury decided to commission only the painter Ferdinand Hodler. However, the collaboration with the latter proved difficult and time-consuming so that the commission decided to collaborate also with the painters Albert Welti and Eugène Burnand. Finally Hodler’s proposals appeared on the 50 and 100 fr. notes while Burnand’s proposals appeared on the 500 and 1000 fr. notes.

102 See Rivaz, Michel de. Ferdinand Hodler, Eugène Burnand und die schweizerischen Banknoten, Wabern-Bern 1991, p. 18
103 For a detailed analysis of the jury members see Rivaz, op. cit., pp. 24-35
104 Protokoll, 20 March 1908, SNB u. a.
105 Protokoll, 13 July 1908, ibid.
2.3 Conclusion

In both Belgium and Switzerland practical necessity was the main reason leading to the decision to create new bearers of value in this period. All issuing bodies were deeply concerned with the possibility of fraud which became an increasing problem due to ever improving and more affordable means of reproduction, especially in the field of printing due to the development of photography. Therefore they frequently replaced existing series of bearers of value with new models employing more refined techniques ensuring greater security. In both countries fund-raising was a further practical reason leading to the creation of new bearers of value: in the beginning of the 1910s both national Post Offices issued their first fund-raising stamps. Finally, the Latin Monetary Union had considerable influence on the issue of coins in both countries since the Union regulated both the quantities and the qualities of coins and because its approval was necessary if a member state wanted to mint new silver coins.

Changing aesthetic taste, on the other hand, influenced and at times caused the creation of new bearers of value, but this was relatively rare. The new Belgian coins of 1901 were created because the Latin Monetary Union allowed their minting and because there was the desire to have coins more in line with contemporary aesthetics, while in Switzerland the 20 fr. coins of 1897 and the definitive stamp series issued between 1907 and 1914 were created in order to replace their predecessors widely perceived to be aesthetically unsatisfactory. Furthermore, both countries issued bearers of value for commemoration purposes. Both issued their first commemoration stamps at the beginning of the century, while the Monnaie Royale continued its tradition dating back to the 1850s of issuing commemorative coins on the occasion of Belgium’s 50th anniversary of national independence in 1880.

There were several reasons which led to the creation of new bearers of
value only in Belgium. The Belgian Post Office issued the first ever advertisement stamps announcing the 1894 Antwerp universal exhibition. While this set the precedent for a similar stamp announcing the 1897 universal exhibition in Brussels, the Universal Postal Union forbade the international use of special stamps in 1899 which put an early end to the Belgian innovation of the advertisement stamps which, like commemoration stamps, were introduced for aesthetic rather than practical reasons. The introduction of bilingual inscriptions on Belgian bearers of value from 1886 onwards and the introduction of the talon in 1893 were both politically motivated, the first marking the success of the Flemish campaigners, the second the political compromise concerning the labour-free Sunday struck by the Postal Minister Vandenpeereboom. Dynastic reasons due to the succession of a new monarch finally also led to the introduction of new Belgian bearers of value, a phenomenon which of course never occurred in the Swiss republic.

The decisions to create new bearers of value were in most cases taken within the issuing bodies. However, decisions were also made from above and influenced from the outside. In Belgium, Postal Minister Vandenpeereboom introduced the talon stamps, the idea for the more aesthetic coins of 1901 came from the government and the commemoration stamps for Belgium’s 75th anniversary of national independence in 1905 were suggested by the Ministry of Industry and Labour. The new Swiss coins issued in 1881, 1897 and 1910 were all created because of parliamentary initiatives, while the idea of the commemoration stamp for the Universal Postal Union’s anniversary in 1900 came from the government. In both countries, private interest groups including charities, numismatic associations, exhibition organisers and linguistic campaigners successfully applied to the issuing bodies for the creation of new bearers of value, while the introduction of new Swiss definitive stamps in the 1900s was essentially the outcome of complaints about the previous series raised
in the press.

In both countries there were two possibilities for the commissioning of the imagery on bearers of value: either a direct commission of an artist, including specialised engravers and medalists but also well-known painters, or the organisation of a contest among a variety of participants. In both countries there was a fear that prominent artists would not participate in contests and both Belgian and Swiss issuing bodies came to the conclusion that contests were rather inefficient and expensive and did not necessarily lead to good results. However, while the Belgian Post Office refused to organise further contests after the negative experiences of 1896, contests were widely used when creating new Swiss stamps and coins.

The design of bearers of value was an obvious case of active state support of artists who benefited, of course, in larger numbers if a contest was organised. However, while in Belgium where there were a number of other means to support national artists including national art collections and académies, commissioning the design of bearers of value was one of the relatively few federal means of supporting Swiss artists. It is therefore likely that the frequency of contests in Switzerland was linked to the increasing interest in federal cultural policy and the 1887 creation of the Eidgenössische Kunstkommision. The EKK indeed managed to be involved in the jury judging the results of the 1895 coin contest, although the scandals surrounding the commission at the turn of the century probably somewhat limited its influence in the organisation of the 1900 general stamp contest.

The choice of directly-commissioned imagery usually lay with the issuing body, with the exception of the case of the 1901 coins commissioned in Belgium.

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107 On the main Belgian art collection, the Musées royaux des Beaux-Art de Belgique in Brussels, see Roberts-Jones-Popelier, Françoise, Chronique d’un Musée, Bruxelles 1987 and on the Belgian academy see Académie Royale de Sciences, des Lettres et des Beaux-Arts en Belgique (ed.), Cent ans de vie artistique: Documents et témoignages d’académie, Bruxelles 1980. No federal academy of the arts nor a fully fledged national art collection exists in Switzerland, its national museum being primarily a historical museum, see Furger, Andres, Das Schweizerische Landesmuseum im Wandel, in Plessen, op. cit., pp. 200-209
and the second Swiss banknote series of 1910. There, as in the case of all contests, the choice of the imagery was transferred to a jury. The juries were usually appointed by the issuing bodies and were composed of members of the issuing bodies, numismatic, philatelist or heraldic experts, artists or representatives of artists’ associations and occasionally parliamentary deputies and technical experts. Only the jury judging the second banknote series of the Swiss national bank included a government minister, while all its other members were bankers. The varied composition of the juries always ensured a diversity of opinions and the surviving protocols show a prominent desire to find solutions satisfying not only all members of the jury but also the general public. The proposals were submitted and judged anonymously thus ensuring equality among the participating artists. Despite the fact that the commission of the reverse of the 1888 5 fr. coins went to a member of the jury who had judged the two fruitless contests preceding the direct commission of the imagery,108 the use of juries nevertheless appears to have been regarded as the most appropriate and fair way of choosing imagery for bearers of value.

The final approval of the imagery usually lay with the issuing bodies and the responsible ministers, while in Belgium the display of a royal portrait required the approval of the King. In the case of the Swiss coin contests of 1886, 1887 and 1895 and the general stamp contest of 1900 the final choice was explicitly reserved for the government.

We can thus see that neither country had institutionalised procedures for the commissioning and choice of the imagery on bearers of value. On the contrary, decisions seem often to have been taken on an ad hoc basis. Given the fact that the creation of new bearers of value was clearly not the main task of either the Belgian or the Swiss national banks, national mints or postal administrations, this rather improvised procedure is hardly surprising.

108 The heraldic expert Bühler created the reverse of this coin essentially composed of a shield carrying the Swiss cross, see above, p. 56
Nevertheless, over time certain customary procedures based on empirical experience or influenced by wider political debates appear to have developed, namely the absence of contests in Belgium and their frequency in Switzerland.
3. Portraits 1880-1913

3.1 Belgium

The King of the Belgians

The portrait of the ruling Belgian monarch occupied a primary position on the higher values of coins and stamps ever since their introduction in 1832 and 1849 respectively, while the lower values displayed his initials or heraldic symbols. Banknotes never displayed a royal portrait in this period. The text displayed on them, however, at times indicated that Belgium was a monarchy, and furthermore banknotes frequently showed a crown, a prime symbol of royal power albeit in the Belgian case imaginary: There is no crown for the Belgian king and instead of a coronation ceremony a new sovereign swears an oath in parliament.1

The representations of King Leopold II always showed him with a beard which in the course of his reign he wore increasingly long so that the 1905 stamp series was even called “Grosse barbe” (fig. 3).2 Although Leopold II was by no means a universally popular king, a recognisable portrait was nevertheless expected to appear on Belgian coins and stamps. One paper claimed that the portrait appearing on the 1883 stamp series did not resemble Leopold but rather his brother, the count of Flanders, and thus exclaimed: “Avons-nous fait une révolution et sommes-nous gouvernés par un nouveau monarque?” (fig. 1).3

The pre-war representations of King Albert I did not differ markedly from those of his uncle Leopold, although Albert appeared more prominently in

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2 COB, p. 49
3 La Chronique, 6 Oct. 1883, MP, 1883. On Leopold II see Emerson, Barbara, Leopold II of the Belgians, King of Colonialism, London 1971
parade uniform than his predecessor. Albert’s portrait on stamps was frequently
criticised as being rather ugly prompting the Post Office to comment: “... les
nouveaux timbres-poste ne sont pas beaux, mais ils ne pourraient l’être ... à
defaut d’une tête caractéristique et d’une vignette réellement artistique.”4 While
these remarks were later crossed out, they nevertheless indicate that at the
beginning of Albert’s reign his prestige was not particularly high. Albert seemed
to lack character, at least in terms of his visual appearance (fig. 4).

Although they lacked widespread popularity or prestige and despite their
non-Belgian father and grandfather Leopold I, born prince Saxe-Coburg-Gotha
and elected first King of the Belgians in 1831, both Leopold II and Albert I
incarnated and represented the Belgian state. Like Leopold I, they provided
recently created Belgium with a widely acceptable and recognisable national icon
which was successfully used for collective identification. The display of a
sovereign’s portrait on coins was of course neither new nor exclusively Belgian.
Ptolemy I was apparently the first king to put his own portrait on coins after
gaining the title of King of Egypt in 305 B. C., while most monarchies continue to
display their sovereigns’ portraits on coins until today.5

The 1880 Cinquantenaire

In 1880 Belgium celebrated the 50th anniversary of national independence
marked by the first national exhibition held at the specially created Parc du
Cinquantenaire in Brussels.6 For this anniversary the Monnaie Royale minted
special commemoration coins at the exhibition and offered the first coins to King
Leopold II at the inauguration of the fair.7 Two types of commemoration coins

4 Direction technique to Direction générale, 25 Feb. 1913, MP, 1912; création timbres-poste à 5 frs.
5 See Banque Nationale de Belgique (ed.), La monnaie et le portrait royal, Bruxelles 1991, p. 25
6 On the Cinquantenaire see Deltour-Levie, Cl. and Hanosset, Y., Le Cinquantenaire et son site, Bruxelles 1993
7 See Directeur de la fabrication to Commissaire des Monnaies, 9 June 1880 and Commissaire des Monnaies to
graveur, 25 May 1880, MR, 601/8

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were minted, a 100 fr. gold module and 1 and 2 fr. silver coins. Both showed on the obverse the double portrait of King Leopold I and Leopold II while the reverse of the silver coins showed the Belgian coat of arms and the dates 1830-1880.

The reverse of the gold coins (fig. 11) was more complicated showing a female allegorical figure of Belgium holding with the right hand the tables of the constitution and a laurel wreath and placing the left hand on the seated Belgian lion. The background showed two important national monuments by the architect Joseph Poelaert (1817-1879) erected in Brussels under the reign of the two first Belgian kings. On the left appeared the Colonne du congrès a 48 metre high column holding a statue of King Leopold I. Commissioned in 1849 "... en commémoration du Congrès national qui nous avait doté de la Constitution la plus libre de l'Europe ..." the monument was "... le symbole de la royauté constitutionnelle couronnant l'édifice de nos libres institutions." On the right appeared the Palais de Justice built between 1866 and 1883, covering an area of 26,000 square meters and costing approximately 45 million francs. It celebrated not only the Belgian legal system based on the constitution of 1831 but was also intended to symbolise the pride of the young Belgian nation as such. Although it was frequently considered to be extremely ugly, especially by French critics, the Palais de Justice repeatedly appeared as means of collective identification on Belgian bearers of value. It appeared on banknote proposals in 1909 and 1945 and on stamps in 1930.

The iconographic emphasis of the 1880 commemoration coins was thus on the celebration of the Belgian constitution incarnated by the Belgian dynasty and

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8 On Poelaert see Vandendaele, Richard (ed.), Poelaert et son temps, Bruxelles 1980
9 Piret, N., La Belgique, Cours d'histoire générale à l'usage de l'enseignement moyen et de l'enseignement normal primaire, Liège 1937, p. 237
10 On the Palais de Justice see Leblanc, Yvon, Les deux Palais de Justice de Bruxelles au XIXe siècle, in Vandendaele, op. cit., pp. 245-296
11 See Massant, Raymond, Images de l'architecture en Belgique dans les lettres de langue française de 1830 à 1914, in Vandendaele, op. cit., pp. 307-312
12 See BNB SdC cat., I. 14.589, fig. 280 and COB, p. 265

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represented by means of monuments that were simultaneously national and official. The importance of the constitution appears even clearer on an interesting unpublished coin proposal probably for a reverse of a coin. It shows the constitutional tables with the inscription “Constitution Belge” surrounded by sun rays and framed by olive and palm branches symbolising peace and stability and topped by a crown and the commemorative dates 1830 and 1880 (fig. 12). The identification with the constitution not only manifested itself during the 1880 anniversary, on the contrary, it was one of the oldest and most important themes of Belgian collective identification: Leopold II opened the parliamentary session of 1892 stating: “Messieurs, La Constitution belge est aujourd’hui la plus ancienne du continent. Elle a valu à notre cher Pays une longue série d’années de paix et de fécond développement; j’en ai plus d’une fois, comme vous, proclamé la sagesse.”

Already the first Belgian copper coins of 1832 showed a Belgian lion holding the tables of the constitution with the inscription “Constitution Belge 1831” an image which was used again under both Leopold II (1869) and Albert I (1911) (fig. 9).

La Belgique, l’amie du progrès

Ever since the creation of the Belgian state, progress in general and industrial development in particular was an important means of Belgian collective identification. At the centre of this “paradigme industriel” was the idea of labour rationalisation by means of new technologies frequently symbolised by the machine and the factory, while public statues, national and international exhibitions, prestigious publications on Belgium’s industrial progress and economic statistics were the central means of propagating this theme of collective

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13 This opening was followed by an urge to adapt and improve the constitution, see Discours du Roi, 8 Nov. 1892, AGR, Actes de la Chambre des Représentants, Session de 1892-1893, 1, no. 1-28
14 See Banque Nationale de Belgique (ed.), Le franc belge, Bruxelles 1989, pp. 21, 42, 60
identification. However, the same theme of industrial progress was also prominently displayed on bearers of value, especially on banknotes, from an early date onwards. Gearwheels and smoking high chimneys appeared on banknotes in 1851, even more prominent smoking chimneys appeared on banknotes in 1853 together with the inscription “INDUSTRIE”. Belgium’s commitment to progress was so strong that it was even inscribed on banknotes in 1869. The 100 fr. notes showed on the reverse on the right a male allegorical figure standing on a chariot pulled by two winged horses and directed towards the sun entitled “Progrès”, while on the left appeared an allegorical female figure with the constitutional tables of 1831 and the Belgian lion entitled “Sécurité” (fig. 14). As in King Leopold II’s speech of 1892 quoted above, the iconography of these banknotes thus emphasised the importance of the Belgian constitution in ensuring continual progress.

Patricia Hilden argues that the *hiercheuses*, Belgian female coal miners who disappeared from the coal mines after the introduction of gender legislation in the 1880s became Belgium’s prime national icons incarnating the country’s identification with industrial progress and success in the Belgian fin-de-siècle. However, I do not believe that the *hiercheuses* became “Belgium’s Marianne”. Firstly, Belgium’s prime personified national icon was always the king and never an allegorical figure which was often used in the king’s place in republics and confederate monarchies such as France or the German Empire. Secondly, while on a national level Belgium clearly did identify with its industrial success, it did not do so by means of the *hiercheuse*. Hilden noted that the *hiercheuse* never


16 See Banque Nationale de Belgique (ed.). *Le franc belge*, Bruxelles 1989, pp. 145, 153


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appeared on stamps\textsuperscript{18} but failed to note that a \textit{male} coal miner appeared on the reverse of banknotes in 1870 (fig. 15), while industry was normally referred to by means of material symbols such as gearwheels and smoking chimneys or by means of classical female allegorical figures bearing no resemblance to the \textit{hiercheuses}. While Hilden clearly showed that the \textit{hiercheuses} did become icons, they were thus not national icons but rather expressions of local identity, not even of the whole of Wallonia but rather only of its industrial heartland, the \textit{pays noir}. Indeed, the only representation of a \textit{hiercheuse} on bearers of value is located on the reverse of the 1921 100 fr. banknotes dedicated to the province of Liège.\textsuperscript{19}

Belgium thus identified with progress which was, however, never exclusively represented by industry alone. Indeed the concept of progress, while always including industrial development, was much larger. The economic journal \textit{La Belgique industrielle} stated in 1852: "Le progrès, c'est la quantité des choses utiles qui sont produites, ..., c'est le perfectionnement de tous les arts qui sont la conquête de l'homme. ... Un peuple civilisé, un peuple avancé, un peuple en progrès est celui qui non seulement est relativement le mieux nourri, le mieux habillé, le mieux logé, mais encore [celui] qui a le plus de littératures et le plus d'artistes."\textsuperscript{20}

It was this larger concept of progress as a cultural process of advancement which strongly influenced the iconography on most Belgian banknotes until the First World War. Symbols of industry were always combined with other symbols most notably commerce. The 1851 20 fr. banknotes, for example, showed as a pendant to the industrial symbols on the left symbols of commerce on the right, ships and the rod of Mercury. Furthermore symbols of liberty, justice, agriculture,
the sciences and the arts appeared on banknotes before 1880.21

The banknotes issued between 1880 and 1893 continued to display variations on the theme of progress, rather unsurprisingly since they were also due to Henri Hendrickx who created all Belgian banknotes from 1869 onwards. The 1888 500 fr. notes (fig. 16) included allegories of arts, sciences and literature, the 1888 50 fr. notes (fig. 17) displayed agricultural symbols including representations of Ceres, goddess of fertility, while the 1893 20 fr. notes combined allegories of agriculture, commerce, industry and the arts.

The 1897 20 fr. notes by Louis Titz also interpreted the progress theme (fig. 20). The *Revue belge de numismatique* commented: "Le principal motif d'ornementation ... est une Minerve debout. La déesse s'appuie sur une sorte de trophée composée de divers instruments de travail, elle tient de la main gauche un caducée. A ses pieds, le lion Belgique repose. TRAVAIL-ÉCONOMIE, dit la légende, résumant en ces deux mots la sagesse des nations."22 The tools of work included the gearwheel, the archetypal symbol of industry. Thus the commitment to progress by means of industrial work and economy was not seen as an exclusively Belgian virtue but as the universally valid wisdom of nations. Although this idea thus had a supra-national character, it could effectively be used for the construction of Belgian national identity because Belgium represented itself as a specially good and eager example of a nation committed to progress.

The last two banknote series produced in this period were created by Constant Montald and issued in 1909. The 100 fr. notes (fig. 22) showed on the obverse a seated Belgian lion surrounded by nymphs carrying symbols including a palm branch, a retort, Mercury’s rod and a gearwheel. In the background figured the carriages of Ceres and Neptune symbolising the earth and the sea. The reverse displayed an allegorical agricultural scene with three women engaged in

21 See Banque Nationale de Belgique (ed.), *Le franc belge*, Bruxelles 1989, pp. 136-172
22 *Revue belge de numismatique*, 1898, pp. 243-44
agricultural work and in the centre four nymphs. For the 50 fr. notes (fig. 23) a letter of Montald survives explaining the imagery: “Au recto[:] Le faucheur à gauche ... signifie ‘le travail’ en collaboration avec ‘l’intelligence’ représentée à droite par la femme assise indiquant le texte d’un livre ouvert soutenu par une jeune fille. Au verso[:] A gauche le lion figurant la Belgique et la figure de femme assise indique également ‘le labeur’ et ‘l’intelligence’. Tandis qu’à droite le groupe des femmes symbolise les arts et les sciences.”23 Interestingly, Montald did not mention the fact that the book referred to by the allegory of intelligence on the obverse is not just any book but a legal code entitled “LEX”, while the allegory of labour is not represented by means of industrial but rather agricultural symbols, a scythe and ploughing oxen in the background.24 This emphasis on agriculture may have reflected the rural emphasis of the Catholic government ruling between 1884 and 1914 which made much of its defence of agricultural interests.25

The surviving unpublished banknote proposals of this period all employed a largely allegorical style and also predominantly focussed on the theme of progress. Several artists chose to represent industry and agriculture by means of geographically unidentifiable background landscapes showing for example smoking high chimneys and hay stacks26, while trade and commerce were twice associated with Antwerp, Belgium’s most important port.27 Finally, a 1000 fr. banknote proposal by Montald showed metal workers and the inscription: “La machine = l’ouvrier géant des temps modernes”(fig. 21).28

While iconographic references to progress were absent on the coins produced in this period, some of the stamps did include references to progress.

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23 Montald to Aussems, BNB, no date 11936J, BNB ac, 3240 11.04.01.00
24 See also the iconographic descriptions in Van der Straeten, Marie-Noël, Le billet de banque belge au début du XXème siècle, unpublished mémoire, Université Catholique de Louvain 1985, pp. 39-41
26 See Titz, 1907, I 14.427, BNB SdC cat.
27 See Mayné, no date [1908], I 14.148 and Gaillard, 1907, I 14.455, BNB SdC cat.
Some of the frames of the 1884 series included ancient symbols of wealth and commerce, namely cornucopias and the rod of Mercury, the frames of the 1893 series (fig. 2) included a gearwheel and an anchor, symbol of overseas trade, while the two series dedicated to the exhibitions in Antwerp (1894) and Brussels (1896) were part of the general celebration of progress at these fairs.

International Technique, National Production

Not only the iconography of bearers of value but also the technique by which they were produced was important. The Commission de timbres poste et de timbres télégraphiques created in 1879 in order to prevent stamp counterfeiting, the reuse of stamps and "... à perfectionner les timbres au point de vue artistique" decided in its first session that the artistic aspect was sufficiently covered by means of the search for the most appropriate print technique which preoccupied the commission for most of their meetings. In 1867 Belgium had replaced copperprint engraving by typography "... à l'imitation de la plupart des pays d'Europe." By 1879 this means of printing also had to be reconsidered, in the face of the potential danger of photographic reproduction. Gathering information about stamp production in other countries among them France, Britain, Austria-Hungary and the USA the commission proposed to charge, like the British Post Office, the renowned De La Rue printers in London with the creation of new stamps using typography, still employed by most Post Offices apart from the American which employed collotype print.

The aesthetics of bearers of value was thus perceived to be not only the result of an artist's work but also and almost more importantly the result of the

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29 Protocol, Commission des timbres postaux et télégraphiques, 25 June 1879, MP, 1879: P. V. Séances de la Commission
31 See British to Belgian Post Office, 16 Oct. 1880, MP, 1879: Procédé de fabrication timbres-poste
32 See protocol, Commission des timbres postaux et télégraphiques, 27 Dec. 1880, MP, 1879: P. V. Séances de la Commission
use of advanced technology. And indeed the Post Office announced the 1883 series as having: "... un caractère vraiment artistique ... c'est un progrès réel, ..." (fig. 1).33 This link between technology and art is thus directly related to the perception of progress as a universal cultural advancement of society whereby the use of ever improving technologies was central.34

The 1883 series engraved in London, however, also led to widespread criticisms, because of the fact that the stamps were created abroad. In the Senate Count Limbourg-Stirum for instance stated: "Je prie M. le Ministre de veiller à ce qu'on ne donne plus, ..., la préférence aux étrangers et qu'on réserve ces commandes pour nos nationaux." The Catholic minister replied that the stamps were commissioned under his Liberal predecessor and promised to consider the remark of the senator for future stamp creations.35 And indeed, the following series (1884-1891), was both engraved and printed in Belgium.36

The insistence on the national production of stamps is part of a phenomenon whereby bearers of value were the objects of international comparison and competition. The Banque Nationale allowed Belgian banknotes to be shown at exhibitions abroad including France, Austria and The Netherlands37; while Belgian coins were also compared, notably to their French equivalents which had legal value and circulated freely in Belgium due to the Latin Monetary Union.38

We are therefore faced with a paradox. On the one hand, progress was perceived to be an internationally valid virtue illustrated by the fact that national administrations frequently cooperated and exchanged technological information, on the other hand, international competition led to the desire to produce bearers

33 La Chronique, 4 Nov. 1883, reproduces extracts of the Post Office's press announcement, MP, 1883
34 See Steffens, op. cit., p. 151
35 Discussion de budget de 1885 - Sénat, 12 June 1885, MP, 1884/1915
36 See COB, p. 47
37 See BNB ac, SdB, Correspondance et Documents 1876-85, pp. 138, 354, 379
38 See the reference to France by deputy Delbeke in parliament in 1897, in Revue belge de numismatique, 1898, pp. 212-213
of value at home by national citizens. This somewhat paradoxical intermingling of international progress and national patriotism in Belgian national identity coincides with a greater general awareness of the importance of citizenship from the beginning of the 1880s onwards and might also be linked to the political transition from Liberal to Catholic rule in 1884. While internationalist belief in progress was clearly a Liberal idea, the Catholics were determined to present a more national image than their Liberal predecessors thus also ensuring the national production of stamps.

Belgique and Belgie

We have seen that in the 1880s, due to the efforts of the Flemish campaigners, Belgium broke with its tradition of unilingual French inscriptions on bearers of value, producing coins (1886), banknotes (1888) and stamps (1893) with Flemish inscriptions. These were, however, not the first bearers of value with Flemish inscriptions. Already in 1856 Belgium issued the gold, silver, copper and bronze medals commemorating the 25th anniversary of the accession of King Leopold I both in French and Flemish versions. On that occasion the initiative had come from the Interior Minister who had argued that: "... il serait agréable aux populations flamandes du pays, qu'il fût frappé également des médailles-jetons commémoratives ... avec l'inscription rédigée en leur langue maternelle." Interestingly, none of the gold medals bore Flemish inscriptions while more than twice as many French than Flemish medals were created from silver, copper and bronze.

Even after the introduction of the rule of bilingual bearers of value in the 1880s linguistic complaints continued, usually centreing about questions of

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40 Interior Minister to Finance Minister, 30 June 1856, MR, 602/5
41 See Commissaire des Monnaies to directeur, 9 July 1856, MR, 602/5
orthography. Due to the awkward combination of the letters I and J, the 1896 Brussels exhibition stamps seemed to spell *Posteruen* instead of *Posterijen* (fig. 7). Although this was noted by the Director General before the issue of the stamps, the Postal Minister stated that there was not enough time for changes.\(^{42}\) When a newspaper complained about this perceived spelling mistake, the Post Office commented on the margin: “mettez vos lunettes”.\(^{43}\) The inscription *Koninkrijk* on the 1902 10 ct. coins provoked numerous critiques claiming that the word had to be spelled *Koningrijk* leading to the decision to halt the minting of these coins.\(^{44}\) However, the *Commissaire des Monnaies* consulted official Belgian dictionaries and stated that *Koningrijk* was an ancient spelling and explained: “La confusion vient de ce qu’en Hollande, les monnaies portent le mot avec un *g*, contrairement à ce qui est admis dans notre pays.”\(^{45}\)

It is therefore clear that there was an awareness on the part of the administration and government of the importance of (correct) Flemish inscriptions of bearers of value, at least after the electoral success of the Catholic party in 1884.\(^{46}\) However, Flemish had not yet achieved an entirely equal position to French. French inscriptions occupied superior positions on bearers of value, appearing on the obverse of banknotes and at the top of stamps. At least the latter was a conscious decision since the Postal Minister decided: “... de placer la légende française en tête et la légende flamande au bas, ...”.\(^{47}\) When the first Flemish coins were issued in 1856, Flemish had been referred to as a *langue maternelle*.\(^{48}\) By 1892, the translation of the term *volksspraak* used in a letter to the Post Office by a Flemish organisation posed a problem: initially translated as

\(^{42}\) See directeur général to minister, 20 Aug. 1896 and minister to directeur général, 21 Aug. 1896, MP, 1896/7
\(^{43}\) *Petit bleu*, 16 Oct. 1896, MP, 1896/7
\(^{44}\) Note, 22 Feb. 1902, MR, 603/4
\(^{45}\) Commissaire des Monnaies to minister, 12 March 1902, MR, 603/4
\(^{46}\) Between 1882 and 1914 the Flemish movement was closely associated with the Catholic Party, see Wils, Lode, *A Brief History of the Flemish Movement*, in Theo Hermans (ed.), *The Flemish Movement*, London 1992, pp. 13-17
\(^{47}\) Note, 16 Dec. 1890, MP, 1891: gravure du timbre bilingue à 35 ct.
\(^{48}\) Interior Minister to Finance Minister, 30 June 1856, MR, 602/5
These sources illustrate well the improving but still uncertain and ambiguous position of Flemish in a Belgian national context. Belgium was no longer considered to be a predominantly French-speaking country with a traditionalist Flemish minority; however, Belgium was not yet perceived to be a bilingual country with two equal national languages. Rather, French was considered to be the first (and superior) and Flemish to be the second (and inferior) national language of Belgium.

Local Identity

Visual representations of Belgian provinces and cities frequently appeared on Belgian bearers of value. Already in 1852 a 500 fr. banknote displayed the coats of arms of all nine Belgian provinces while its 1887 replacement showed them on the reverse (fig. 16). In both cases Brabant appeared in the middle. The coat of arms of Brabant, the only truly bilingual Belgian province and the seat of the national capital Brussels, also symbolised Belgium as such, since its heraldic symbol, the standing lion to the left, is identical to the Belgian heraldic symbol.

While the reverse of the 1896 20 fr. banknotes by Louis Titz displayed the coats of arms of 39 Belgian cities (fig. 20),50 the 1894 and 1896 stamps announcing the exhibitions in Antwerp and Brussels both displayed heraldic themes of the host cities of the fairs. The Antwerp stamps displayed the city’s coat of arms, while the two Brussels stamps showed the city patron St. Michael striking the demon (figs. 5-7). These stamps were thus primarily the expression of the cities’ local identities, the Brussels stamps even failed to indicate their country of origin

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49 See original and translation of De Vrije Vlamingen to minister, 30 Dec. 1892, MP, 1889: Revendications des Flamands au sujet des inscriptions des timbres-poste
50 No documents were located indicating which cities these coats of arms belong to and explaining their choice and number. The official catalogue of the national bank simply states that the symbols are 39 city coats of arms, see Banque Nationale de Belgique (ed.), Le franc belge, Bruxelles 1989, p. 182
and the 10 ct. stamp included a view of Brussels in the background. The 5 ct. stamps concentrated on the heraldic theme but nevertheless led the Liberal paper *La Chronique* to complain: “Le timbre est violet - comme la robe d’un évêque. Ça peint exactement le pays, sous sa vraie couleur”\(^{51}\) alluding to the Catholic government in power in Belgium since 1884. We have seen above that Liège, arguably the third most important Belgian city, only failed to be honoured with a stamp issue when hosting the 1905 international exhibition because the Universal Postal Union had forbidden the international use of advertisement stamps.

Thus while Belgium’s linguistic communities were only represented by means of the bilingual text displayed on bearers of value, symbols of provincial and city identities frequently appeared on them. Local identities were therefore prominently used as positive means for the construction of Belgian national identity. This was especially effective if several symbols of local identity were grouped together, for example the provincial coats of arms. This representation of the nation by means of its constituent local parts not only used the strong local identities of Belgium but also avoided the potentially divisive linguistic issue since local identities represented areas which were smaller than the areas inhabited by Belgium’s linguistic communities.

**Art in Fin-de-Siècle Belgium**

During the three decades preceding the First World War Belgium and more especially its capital Brussels were the location of remarkably varied and intense cultural activity in all fields but focussing mainly on painting and architecture. During the 1880s Brussels also developed into a cultural centre of international importance due to the innovative annual salons of the artists’

\(^{51}\) *La Chronique*, 17 Nov. 1896, MP, 1896/7
group *Les XX* including James Ensor, Henri Van de Velde and Fernand Khnopff and many others frequently associated with symbolism, while the *Maison Tassel* built in 1892/3 by Victor Horta is usually considered to be the first ever *Art Nouveau* building. In the course of the 1890s Brussels quickly developed into the capital of *Art Nouveau*, however, soon after 1900 *Art Deco* began to prosper in Belgium, for example in form of the *Palais Stoclet* built by Josef Hoffman between 1905 and 1911.52

These artistic movements were not exclusively aesthetic in purpose; on the contrary, art and politics were often directly linked. The Socialist Party, the *Parti Ouvrier Belge*, especially saw art as an important means of social reform, commissioning Horta with the construction of the *Maison du Peuple* in Brussels (1895-99) and organising cultural events for a working-class audience in its *Section d'art* including concerts of Wagner and lectures by Henri van de Velde on William Morris and by Jules Destrée on Van Eyck and Emile Zola.53 Although *Art Nouveau* started with a clear left-wing and social commitment, it soon lost its initial political ambitions and became respectable: Paul Hankar and Henri van de Velde together with others created the 1897 Congo pavilion glorifying the colonial achievement of King Leopold II, while Horta eventually became a baron.54

In the more specific context of bearers of value their aesthetic aspect was increasingly criticised both in parliament and in the press. While *La Chronique*

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desired stamps with "... un aspect un peu plus artistique"\textsuperscript{55}, according to \textit{L'Etoile Belge} stamps should: "... contribuer au renom de bon goût, d'actualité et d'élégance que nos artistes-peintres, dessinateurs et graveurs ont ... su lentement acquérir en raison de leurs efforts constants."\textsuperscript{56} Senator Wiener called the existing Belgian stamps "... tout à fait anti-artistiques."\textsuperscript{57}, while on a different occasion the Post Office was asked: "On demande des timbres-poste artistiques (comme ceux du Congo). Les nôtres sont grossiers en comparaison de ceux des autres pays."\textsuperscript{58}

And indeed the aesthetic aspect of bearers of value became increasingly important. The Post Office noted that the frames of the 1905 75th anniversary stamp series were "... conçu[s] ... suivant une esthétique toute récente, ..."(fig. 3).\textsuperscript{59} The banknotes created by Louis Titz (1897), while still using some classical iconographic elements, nevertheless showed clear \textit{Art Nouveau} influences in the elaborate background patterns and the plant elements especially on the lower right corner of the obverse (fig. 20). The banknotes by Montald (1909), an artist who in the course of his career employed a variety of styles, were of an idealist-decorative style, the allegories being one of the favourite elements of idealist artists while the elaborate frames and general decoration of the banknotes correspond with the artistic tendencies of \textit{Art Deco} (figs. 22, 23).\textsuperscript{60} Finally, we have seen that in 1899 "... le Gouvernement a jugé utile de provoquer la création d'un nouveau type monétaire qui, ..., réponde mieux que notre type actuel (fig. 10) aux exigences du sentiment artistique."\textsuperscript{61} Commissioning Thomas Vinçotte (1850-1925) the government, however, did not choose an artist belonging to one

\textsuperscript{55} \textit{La Chronique}. 17 May 1895, MP, 1897: mise en concours du dessin ...
\textsuperscript{56} \textit{L'Etoile Belge}. 28 Nov. 1912, MP, 1877: Réclamation graveur belge ...
\textsuperscript{57} Sénat, 8 Sept. 1901, MP, 1890-1910: Interpellations à la chambre au sujet des timbres-poste
\textsuperscript{58} The Post office replied that the Congo stamps were produced by means of the expensive copperprint engraving. See Question posée par la section centrale chargée de l'examen du budget des chemins de fer pour 1910, 31 Jan. 1910, \textit{ibid.}
\textsuperscript{59} Rapport de la direction technique, 10 Oct. 1903, MP, 1903: émission nouveau timbre poste de 10 ct. à 2 frs.
\textsuperscript{60} On Montald and for an art historical analysis of his banknotes see Van der Straeten, \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 59-74
\textsuperscript{61} Minister to Commissaire des Monnaies, 13 Sept. 1899, MR, 601/11
of the Belgian avant-garde movements but a rather conservative artist who was particularly popular among the aristocracy and the upper bourgeoisie (fig. 13).62

It therefore appears that apart from international competition the intense artistic activity in fin-de-siècle Belgium also led to the desire to have more “artistic” bearers of value. What was meant by “artistic”, however, was ill-defined. Unlike in Austria-Hungary, there was no official implementation of any particular style or sponsoring of prominent avant-garde artists.63 Rather, the Belgian fin-de-siècle art movements seem to have created a widespread awareness of the importance of contemporary art and especially taste in the face of which the predominantly classical-allegorical style of existing bearers of value came to be seen as old-fashioned and in need of being replaced by new ones corresponding to the “exigences du sentiment artistique.”64
3.2 Switzerland

Foundation Myths: William Tell and the Rütti Oath

William Tell is the most important Swiss hero of liberty and is mainly known as a brilliant crossbow marksman who was forced by the Habsburg governor and tyrant Gessler to shoot an apple posed on his son's head. Despite the successful shot, Gessler had Tell arrested but the hero fled and finally killed the tyrant with his crossbow. Representation of the Tell myth are one of the oldest means of Swiss collective identification, the apple shot scene appearing for the first time in the illustrated chronicle of Petermann Etterlin in 1502. In the 19th century Friedrich Schiller dedicated one of his plays and Gioacchino Rossini one of his operas to Tell, while in Switzerland the canton of Uri, where Tell is meant to have lived, commissioned two important lieux de mémoire inspired by the myth. In 1879/80 the canton rebuilt the Tell chapel erected on the shore of the lake of Lucerne, on the spot where Tell is supposed to have escaped from the boat taking him to prison, and Uri organised contests both for the decoration of the chapel and for the creation, in 1890, of a Tell monument in its capital Altdorf, where the shooting of the apple is reputed to have taken place.

Representations of the Tell myth appeared on two definitive stamp series in 1907 and 1914. The first series was created by Albert Welti and showed Tell's son behind a crossbow and holding the pierced apple (fig. 27). The jury commented: "... une très jolie œuvre, d'une conception neuve, sentiment d'art exquis et d'une pensée poétiquement évocatrice, sans fadeur, de la plus belle


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légende de notre histoire et puis aussi le symbole de notre affranchissement. Cet enfant est encore le symbole de l’avenir libre.”67 The 1914 series, however, displayed an existing image. Richard Kissling, the creator of the Tell monument in Altdorf (1892-95), adapted the portrait of his statue for the stamp series (fig. 29). Kissling’s Tell was “... ein wirklicher Urner Bauersmann, kein Theaterheld, ... , kurz ein Tell, wie er einst leibte und lebte, wie er die Freiheit aus den Urner Bergen ins Thal gebracht hat ...”.68

Thus both Welti’s and Kissling’s references to the Tell myth were relatively independent of previous traditions, most notably that of Schiller. While Welti combined existing iconographic elements of the myth into a new, symbolic image of freedom, Kissling’s representation of Tell wearing a traditional shepherd’s shirt with a hood instead of a hat emphasised Tell’s rural Uri origins.69 Furthermore, Kissling’s stamp transformed an immobile and predominantly local, namely Uri means of identification into a truly national lieu de mémoire, used throughout Switzerland until 1934.70

By choosing representations of the Tell myth, the Swiss Post Office also chose the internationally most well-known Swiss myth. Even before Schiller, Tell was widely known in Europe partly due to Uri’s geographical position on the important Gotthard route.71 While there is no explicit indication in the sources that Tell was chosen because he was a good way of representing Switzerland abroad, even to foreigners Tell seemed an appropriate choice for Swiss bearers of value. The Kaiserlich Deutsche Reichsdruckerei in Berlin, for example, suggested Tell as a theme for the first Swiss banknotes.72

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67 Auszug aus dem Protokoll ... des schweizerischen Bundesrates, 17 Jan. 1906, BA, E 51/577-587
68 Gustav Muheim, Uri politician and president of the Denkmalkommission, quoted in Matta, op. cit., p. 156
69 The monument jury had insisted on the “landesübliche Bauemtracht seiner Zeit”, see ibid., p. 154
71 On the international dissemination of the Tell myth see Stunzi, Lilly, Tell in der weiten Welt, in Du, Aug. 1971
72 See Bericht von J. Ernst ... über seine Reise nach Wien und Berlin ..., 15 Jan. 1907, p. 8, SNB u. a.
The other Swiss foundation myth was the Rütli oath which according to 16th century chronicles was sworn by three representatives of cantons of Uri, Schwyz and Unterwalden on the Rütli meadow above the lake of Lucerne in 1307. Although the representation of the three swearing confederates had an equally long iconographic tradition as the Tell myth and was still very popular in the 19th century it did not figure on Swiss bearers of value in this period.73 The display of the three swearing confederates was, however, extensively discussed by an 1886 jury judging proposals for new 5 fr. coins.74 Georg Kreis argued that the decision not to represent them was the outcome of a competition between this old means of Swiss self-representation and the new allegory of Helvetia.75 On the other hand, when reconstructing the invention of the Swiss national day, Kreis showed that there was a competition for the status of the true foundation date of Switzerland between the dates 1307, associated with the Rütli oath, and 1291, the date of the earliest surviving document testifying an alliance between Uri, Schwyz and Unterwalden. The 1291 document, rediscovered in the 18th century, became increasingly known in the second half of the 19th century and gave rise to the idea of a Swiss 600th anniversary commemoration in 1891 which won parliamentary approval in 1890.76

Thus it seems that the absence of the three swearing confederates on Swiss bearers of value was not only caused by the rise of Helvetia but was also due to the fact that they were associated with the Rütli myth deconstructed and replaced in the late 19th century by another, the myth of 1291. Nevertheless, the Rütli oath and especially its location, the Rütli meadow, owned by the Confederation since 1859 as a national monument, never disappeared completely as a means of Swiss collective identification appearing, for example, on a definitive stamp.
series in 1914 (fig. 31). However, the Rütli meadow was not only a national *lieu de mémoire* but also an important touristic sight. Its representation thus not only symbolised the myth of the 1307 oath but was also linked to a further important theme of Swiss collective identification which needs to be analysed: the identification with the Alps.\textsuperscript{77}

The Alps

Swiss landscape and in particular the Alps also had a long tradition as a means of Swiss collective identification, one of the most important examples being the poem *Die Alpen* (1729) by Albrecht von Haller (1708-1777) who praised the mountains as the source of Swiss freedom and liberty and who contrasted its inhabitants with the degenerate urban populations of the lowlands.\textsuperscript{78} The three first Swiss cantons, frequently called *Urschweiz* and scene of the Swiss foundation myths, are all Alpine, while the fact that the Alps are inhabited by all linguistic groups made them additionally attractive as means of national identification.\textsuperscript{79}

The Alps frequently appeared on bearers of value in this period, often in the background - for example, of the definitive stamp series of 1907, 1908 (fig. 28), and 1909 - or they were alluded to by means of Alpine flowers such as the Edelweiss on the 1897 20 fr. gold coin. Furthermore, the Jungfrau mountains on these coins were intended as a symbol of freedom by the artist Landry thus echoing Haller’s theme of the Alps as the origins of Swiss freedom (fig. 55).\textsuperscript{80} In 1909 one member of the banknote commission of the SNB stated about the

\textsuperscript{77} No documents relating to the 1914 stamps were located.


\textsuperscript{80} See Landry to Hauser, 26 Aug. 1895, BA, E 12/19

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proposals for the 100 fr. notes: “Um der Figur deutlich schweizerischen Character zu geben, ist ein schweizerisch-landschaftlicher Hintergrund erforderlich.”81 Since the artist failed to improve the background of this note, another member of the jury, the banker and artist Rudolf Wäber “… hat … versucht, selbst den landschaftlichen Hintergrund zu ergänzen” (fig. 58).82 Thus an Alpine theme was important to give a Swiss character to any image, while the Alps were also perceived to be related to freedom and independence.

The perception of the Alps was, however, also influenced by their increasing function as the country’s main tourist attraction. While the monumental painting Die Wiege der Eidgenossenschaft (1902) by Charles Giron in the National Chamber, showing an Alpine view of the Rütli meadow, Schwyz and the Mythen mountains, was influenced by patriotism, tourism and the then fashionable panorama technique, 19th century foreign tourists and artists conceptually created the Matterhorn as an especially beautiful mountain, even as the Swiss equivalent to the Egyptian pyramids, and it quickly became “Swiss icon strongly linked to tourism, especially alpinism.”83

In 1907 the association of Swiss tourist offices asked the government to issue stamps portraying Swiss landscapes and especially the Alps for advertisement purposes.84 While there are no documents shedding light on the government’s attitude to this proposal, the 1913 Pro Juventute stamps displayed the tourist icon of the Matterhorn (fig. 33) and the 1914 landscape series (fig. 30-32) showed views of the Jungfrau and Mythen mountains and the Rütli with its Alpine background combining national myths, tourism and the panorama technique in a manner strongly reminiscent of Giron’s parliamentary painting.

81 Reinhart in amendment of Protokoll, 26 Nov. 1909 in Protokoll, 26 Jan. 1910, SNB u. a.
82 Protokoll, 26 Nov. 1909, SNB u. a.
84 See Verband Schweizerischer Verkehrsvereine to government, 22 March 1907, BA, E 51/577-587
The Swiss identification with the Alps was, however, not completely uncontested as a critique of the 1897 20 fr. coins (fig. 55) published in the *Revue suisse de numismatique* shows. The article argued that while Switzerland was clearly one of Europe's most mountainous countries, most of its inhabitants lived on the plains and that the Alps, apart from tourism, had had little influence on the recent, mainly economic development of Switzerland. Therefore: "... il ne convient pas de propager quasi officiellement l'erreur trop accréditée dans certaines contrées voisines, où l'on s'imagine que presque tous les Suisses sont, ou bien des montagnards occupés exclusivement du soin du bétail, ou bien des hôteliers dont l'industrie consiste à écrocher les touristes." Furthermore the article argued that the insistence on Switzerland's beauty was immoral since identification with national landscape was ubiquitous and irrespective of the landscape's beauty: "... le Groenlandais aime ses icebergs, le Hollandais ses prairies basses ..., l'Arabe ses déserts" and argued that the Swiss would even love their country if the Alps were transformed into productive, arable plains.85

Representing People

The most frequent human figure on bearers of value was the allegory of Switzerland, Helvetia. Appearing for the first time in the 17th century, Helvetia witnessed increasing dissemination in the course of the 19th century appearing on federal coins and stamps from 1850/54 onwards (figs. 49, 24).86 Between 1880 and 1914, Helvetia appeared on definitive stamp series in 1882, 1907, 1908, 1909 and 1914 and on the 1881 unified Swiss banknotes (figs. 26, 28, 32, 56). The female profiles on the 1881 20 ct. and the 1883 20 fr. coins were based on classical representations of the goddess Ceres and wore a diadem inscribed with *Libertas*

85 Extrait de la *Revue suisse de numismatique*, vol. 7, 1897, BA, E 12/19
(fig. 51). The jury judging the proposals of the 1888 5 fr. coins, however, praised a proposal without diadem: "Was uns gefällt ist ... der Wegfall eines Diadems, das nun doch einmal ein monarchisches Emblem ist ...". The final version of these coins showed a classical profile adorned with a wreath of Alpine roses, a decoration which the jury also explicitly praised (figs. 52).

The female portrait on the 1897 20 fr. coins was not, as the jury member Imhof-Blumer pointed out, just another allegory: "[L'artiste] nous donne une fois autre chose que ces têtes antiques au moyen desquelles on avait l'habitude jusqu'ici de représenter les républiques." Instead, the artist Landry studied: "... un type très pur de femme du Hasli, ...". The final version of his coin showed a young girl adorned with Alpine flowers in front of an Alpine background (fig. 55).

The increasing appearance of female allegories of the nation in the course of the 19th century was not an exclusively Swiss phenomenon. Female allegories appeared in most countries but especially in republics, France's Marianne being the most prominent example. In the Swiss case there was an interesting iconographic development of the national allegory, namely an increasing emphasis on Helvetia's Swiss character. While the first allegories were classical portraits based on representations of Ceres or full body representations of female allegories in classical dress, the 1888 5 fr. coins were intended to be more republican due to the absence of a diadem and were rendered more Swiss by means of the Alpine flowers. Alpine symbols were even more prominent on the 1897 20 fr. coins with the Jungfrau mountains appearing in the background while the portrait was in this case based on physiognomical studies executed in an

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87 Jury to Finance Minister, 12 Oct. 1886, BA, E 12/18
88 Jury to Finance Ministry, 2 Dec. 1887, ibid.
89 Protocol du jury, 24 Sept. 1895, BA, E 12/19
90 Hasli is in the Bernese Alps. Landry to Hauser, 26 Aug. 1895, BA, E 12/19. The Neuchâteloise Françoise Kramer-Egli (1859-1946), however, has also been suggested as the model for these coins, see Rosen, Josef, 60 Millionen Vreneli, in Bulletin der Schweizerischen Kreditanstalt, vol. 7, 1976, pp. 34-37
91 On Marianne see Agulhon, Maurice, Marianne au combat, Paris 1979 and idem, Marianne au pouvoir, Paris 1989
Alpine valley. The woman on this coin even subsequently acquired a typically Swiss (German) name, Vreneli, in the same rather inexplicable way as its French equivalent came to be called Marianne.92

As in the case of the 1897 20 fr. coins, authentic Swiss people were suggested and used as models for the creation of the banknote series issued in 1910. The banknote jury considered, for example, the reaper on one proposal to be a “Savoyarde mit dem allemandischen Typus” and told the artist: “Den Kopf des Sennen müssen Sie absolut etwas mehr schweizerisch und sympathischer wählen. Denken Sie daran, wie viele Tausende die Note sehen werden, und die wollen sich an einem guten Schweizerkopf - und es gibt deren doch gewiss auch hübsche und dennoch charakteristische und markige - freuen.” In order to achieve this the artist was invited to look for a model in central Switzerland, the Entlebuch or in rural Berne.93 94 95

The jury was, however, even more dissatisfied with the portraits of the Appenzell women proposed for the 500 fr. note. The jury member Reinhart criticised their faces as “zu wenig appenzellerisch.”94 In the following session the jury heard of an excursion of a particular kind:

“Herr Dr. Reinhart hat Herrn Burnand auf seiner Reise nach dem Appenzellerland begleitet, um den Appenzellertypus zu studieren. Sie haben auch eine erhebliche Zahl von wahren Charakterköpfen getroffen, welche sich ausgezeichnet geeignet hätten, dem Bilde die richtige lokale Farbe zu verleihen. Herr Burnand habe sich aber nicht davon überzeugen lassen, dass nicht alle von ihm gezeichneten Köpfe den Appenzellertypus wiedergeben, wiewohl gesagt werden müsse, dass die vorn links sitzende Stickerin diesen Typus durchaus nicht aufweise.”95

The proposal was therefore left in this unsatisfactory state (fig. 59).

Two aspects are noteworthy about this interest and at times obsession with

92 The name Vreneli appeared in print for the first time in 1943, see Rosen, op. cit., p. 37
93 Wäber to Hodler, 1 April 1909, in Rivaz, op. cit., p. 89
94 Juryprotokoll, 26 Jan. 1910, SNB u. a.
95 Juryprotokoll, 23 May 1910, ibid.
physiognomy. Firstly, there was no search for a universally Swiss type or race, rather the emphasis was on "pure" local or cantonal types; thus the nation was constructed by means of its constituent local parts. Secondly, the symbolic individuals chosen were predominantly rural and Alpine and they were contrasted with low-land and urban types. The government, for example, commented on one stamp proposal: "... die weibliche Figur habe nichts schweizerisch Charakteristisches und sei schwächlich gehalten, sie atme eher Pariser Grossstadtluft statt der Schweizer-Alpenluft." The Alps thus had a further significance for the Swiss nation, they acted as a unifying force forging out of a variety of local populations the Swiss nation.

Gender

There are interesting similarities and differences between the representation of Swiss men and women on bearers of value. Men either appeared as national heroes or their sons, Tell and Walter, or as woodcutters, reapers or foundry labourers. In the eyes of the banknote commission member Reinhart, Hodler’s woodcutter was "die Nationalschweizerisches darstellende Männlichkeit" (fig. 57). Swiss maleness was thus expressed by mythological Alpine heroes or by men engaged in physical work including both traditional and modern forms of economic activity.

The working women portrayed on the same banknote series, however, were engaged in traditional embroidery work (fig. 59). The anonymous female portraits on the obverse of this series, on the other hand, were an imitation of an Austrian practice. The Druckerei für Wertpapiere der Österreichisch-Ungarischen Bank in Vienna suggested that banknotes should display: “Einen

96 Auszug aus dem Protokoll ... des schweizerischen Bundesrates, 17 Jan. 1906, BA, E 51/577-587. Unfortunately the proposal appears to have been lost.
97 Reinhart to Hodler, 11 March 1909, in Rivaz, op. cit., p. 81
The portrait of the woman on the 1897 20 fr. coins gave rise to long debates. The jury commented on the original project (fig. 53): “… la tête de vierge devrait être remplacée par la tête d’une mère qui rendrait mieux l’idée que nous nous faisons de la patrie suisse” and commented with satisfaction on the second version (fig. 54): “… la tête a un caractère plus sérieux et plus mûr, les cheveux autrefois flottants sont réunis en une tresse et la couronne de rhododendrons autour du col a été remplacée par une couronne d’edelweiss.”

The painter Albert Anker, however, opposed this project: “La tête du projet Landry est une sorte de Saint-Cécile, une figure pastorale.” National councillor Wild thought: “… le front de la tête du projet Landry devrait être plus haut, ce qui donnerait à l’ensemble de la tête un caractère plus fort et plus âgé.” The coin collector Imhof-Blumer defended the project: “C’est une erreur de croire que pour donner un air noble et intelligent à une tête féminine, il faille absolument la doter d’un front haut. Bien au contraire, nous voyons que les portraits de beaucoup de femmes célèbres accusent des fronts peu élevés.” And he argued, as mentioned above, in favour of breaking with the tradition of representing republics by means of classical allegories. Finally the project passed with 3 votes against 2. However, when the government commissioned the artist with the final execution of the coin it demanded “… dass, … das rechts vom Kopf hervortretende Stirnlöckchen beseitigt werde” thus eliminating the last trace of the originally open hair (fig. 55).

99 On the creation of this coin see also Kreis, Georg, Helvetia - Im Wandel der Zeiten, Zürich 1991, pp. 53-54
100 Protocol du jury, 15 May 1895, BA, E 12/19
103 Auszug aus dem Protokoll ... des schweizerischen Bundesrates, 12 Jan. 1897, ibid.
In response to the new coins the *Revue suisse de numismatique* organised a small survey interviewing various people and receiving a total of 26 written replies. One of the main points of criticism was still the woman’s young age. “L’Helvétia aurait du être une femme ayant passé par la maternité, belle encore, cela va sans dire, mais arrivée au point culminant de son développement, sur la limite de la jeunesse et de l’âge mûr, une mère de famille, pas de jeune fille.” At first sight the woman seemed to be pleading for divine protection for the fatherland: “... mais en y regardant de plus près, on voit que ce n’est pas cela; il semble - plusieurs personnes nous l’ont dit indépendamment les unes des autres - que l’attente de la jeune fille a pour objet quelque chose de plus terrestre, son fiancé ... ou peut-être son père, ... . Nous trouvons ... que cette tête charmante appelle des baisers et des propos d’amour et pas du tout l’hommage des sentiments d’une nature bien différente, mêlés d’amour filial et de respect, qu’on éprouve pour sa mère et que le bon citoyen doit avoir pour sa patrie.”

Although not everybody agreed with such harsh criticisms, both the critiques about the woman’s hair and expression aimed at preventing the portrait from expressing female sexual power and desire.

With respect to women’s portraits on bearers of value we are thus faced with a paradox which is paradigmatic for the ambiguous attitude of the all-male juries towards women. In order to improve banknote-security, female physical attractions were consciously used by means of the display of female portraits on the notes’ obverse. In contrast to this, the female portrait of the 1897 20 fr. coins was consciously stripped of much of its sexual power in order to receive a tame, mother-like personification of the nation.

104 Extrait de la *Revue suisse de numismatique*, vol. 7, 1897, *ibid*.

105 A letter to the *Revue suisse de numismatique* defended the young girl arguing that Switzerland itself was still young and progress associated with youth. See *Revue suisse de numismatique*, vol. 7, 1897 pp. 408-409, *ibid*.
Linguistic, Cantonal and Confessional Diversity

The linguistic diversity of Switzerland posed few problems for the design of Swiss bearers of value. Since the Swiss constitution of 1848 defined German, French and Italian as Switzerland’s official languages, there was a general aim to represent all three languages equally, the only problem being the limitations of space on bearers of value. Inscriptions on Swiss coins were always in Latin, using either Helvetia or Confoederatio Helvetica to indicate the country of origin. While stamps first appeared in French and German versions in 1850 and with trilingual value indications in 1854, all stamps issued from 1862 onwards displayed Switzerland’s name in Latin using the short term Helvetia. The two exceptions were the first Pro Juventute series appearing in three different linguistic versions (1912) and the 1900 Universal Postal Union stamps displaying the organisation’s name only in French, then still the universal diplomatic language. The use of Latin was thus practical since it used less space than trilingual inscriptions and avoided linguistic disputes due to Latin’s universality and neutrality.

The unified banknotes of 1881 existed with inscriptions in all three languages depending on their place of issue while the first series of the SNB showed trilingual inscriptions of their value and of the name of the bank (fig. 56). The German inscriptions, however, appeared dominantly while further inscriptions such as legal references appeared in German alone. The banknote commission charged with the creation of the second banknote series noted this dominance of German and thought “... dass es nötig ist, auf den definitiven Noten der Gleichberechtigung der Landessprachen mehr Rechnung zu tragen.” After discussing several possible solutions including printing 70% of the notes in German, 20% in French and 10% in Italian, the commission decided, mainly because of space problems, to print only the value and the name of the bank in
all three languages, while the other inscriptions appeared again only in German, but it stipulated that the space occupied by the German text had to be smaller than the space occupied by the French and the Italian texts combined.\textsuperscript{106} It is thus important to note that the banknote commission wanted to represent Switzerland not only as an officially trilingual country but also alluded to the percentage distribution of the Swiss languages (1900: German 69.7\%, French 22.0\%, Italian 6.7\% Romansh: 1.2\%).\textsuperscript{107}

Switzerland was, however, not only diverse in terms of its languages but also in terms of its component cantons and confessions. An important traditional means of representing Switzerland was the combination of all of the cantonal coats of arms arranged in the chronological order of entry into the confederation except for the three important city states of Zurich, Berne and Lucerne situated at the beginning.\textsuperscript{108} The unified banknotes of 1881 showed on the belt of the standing Helvetia the coats of arms of Zurich, Berne and Lucerne while the sequence of cantonal coats of arms appeared to continue around the waist of the allegory (fig. 56). On stamps and coins, however, there was no space for all cantonal coats of arms. Instead, 22 stars symbolising the 22 cantons frequently appeared, for the first time on coins in 1874 and on stamps in 1882 (figs. 50, 26), both times surrounding a standing Helvetia.\textsuperscript{109} Rather inexplicably a 1914 stamp displayed 24 stars (fig. 32).\textsuperscript{110}

The cantons were, however, also represented by means of their inhabitants. While some cantons such as Appenzell, were expected to have physiognomical particularities, in other cases the canton was defined by means of cantonal costumes. The artist Burnand represented the women on his banknotes

\begin{itemize}
\item[\textsuperscript{106}] Protokoll, 20 March 1908, SNB u. a.
\item[\textsuperscript{108}] See Tavel, Hans-Christoph von, \textit{Nationale Bildthemen}, Disentis 1992, p. 15
\item[\textsuperscript{109}] Representing a federal state in such a way was not particularly Swiss. The American flag, for example, includes a star per state.
\item[\textsuperscript{110}] Compare Tavel, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 181
\end{itemize}
in traditional Appenzell and Vaudois costumes and the banknote commission criticised in particular the Appenzell costumes insisting on their correctness: "Überdies weist auch die Tracht Verstösse gegen das Appenzeller Kostüm auf" (fig. 59). The reasons for the choice of these two particular cantons is not documented, however, it is possible that the artist wanted to represent the two major linguistic groups, German and French, by means of two representative cantons, Appenzell and Vaud.

While cantonal traditions appeared on Swiss banknotes, the new 20 fr. coins commissioned in 1895 were meant to have a "caractère vraiment national" independent of cantonal traditions. One jury member refused a proposal because "... le costume bernois n'est pas compatible avec une figure idéale représentant la Suisse" and argued "Il ne peut pas être question d'un costume national suisse, puisque nous ne possédons que des costumes cantonaux." Furthermore there were discussions about the design of the side of this coin. The side inscription on the existing 5 and 20 fr. carried the Latin slogan Dominus providebit which had been criticised: "1) Von freidenkerischer Seite stösst man sich an der Devise Dominus providebit, da die Anrufung der Gottheit die religiöse Überzeugung einzelner Bürger verletze. 2) Von anderer Seite wird eingewendet, obige Devise sei den alten Berner Münzen entlehnt und passe deshalb nicht auf eine schweizerische Nationale Münze." Since the Latin translation of the alternative "Einer für alle, alle für Einen" was considered to be clumsy the Finance Ministry proposed instead of an inscription "... die Anbringung von 22 Sternchen, welche die 22 Kantone symbolisieren", a procedure of which the government approved.

Therefore the linguistic diversity of Switzerland did not pose problems for

111 Protokoll, 26 Jan. 1910, SNB u. a.; for the Vaudoise see Protokoll, 27 Sept. 1909, ibid.
112 Protocole du jury, 14 May 1895, BA, E 12/19
113 Imhof-Blumer in Protocole du jury, 24 Sept. 1895, BA, E 12/19
114 Finance Ministry to government, 26 Dec. 1895, and Auszug aus dem Protokoll ... des schweizerischen Bundesrates, 6 Jan. 1896, BA, E 12/19
the representation of the nation, on the contrary, it was used as a positive means of collective identification. Switzerland also identified with its cantonal diversity by grouping representations or symbols of several or in most cases all of the 22 cantons together. The prominent display of the symbol of a single canton or indeed a reference to Switzerland's confessional diversity, however, was consciously avoided. The latter shows that confessional diversity seemed inappropriate for the construction of a collective Swiss identity despite the inclusion of the Catholic-Conservative opposition into the government from 1891 onwards.

Artists and their Styles

Coins were usually created by artists like Landry who were professional medalists and relatively detached from contemporary artistic and stylistic disputes. However, stamps and banknotes carried images created by professional visual artists. The creators of Swiss stamps were Eugène Grasset (1845-1917), Albert Welti (1862-1912), Charles L'Éplattenier (1874-1946) and Richard Kissling (1848-1919). The works of all of them included national themes, Kissling, for example, was labelled a national sculptor while Welti decorated one of the federal chambers of parliament with a monumental fresco. Their style, however, did not seem to have led to greater discussions, possibly because none of them was overly associated with modernism. The vehement press war between the Post Office and Welti in 1907, for example, was essentially a dispute caused by technical problems of engraving.

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115 For this period, no letters of complaint about the linguistic issue survive.
116 On Swiss Catholics and their politics see Altemiati, Urs, Der Weg der Schweizer Katholiken ins Ghetto, Zürich 1991 and idem, Katholizismus und Moderne, Zürich 1989
117 The creators of the 1882 series and of the 1912 Pro Juventute stamps are unknown.
119 Post Office to government, 9 Sept. 1907, PTT Bib., PAA 02046, gives an account of the dispute.
One of the creators of the second Swiss banknote series, however, was Ferdinand Hodler (1853-1918), arguably the most important and divisive exponent of the modernist stratum of Swiss fin-de-siècle art. Hodler was born in Berne but lived for most of his life in Geneva. His main themes, besides allegories and portraits, were the Swiss Alps and adaptations of historical or mythological themes often taken from the Swiss Middle Ages. In 1896 the EKK awarded Hodler the first prize in a competition for the frescoes in the new Swiss National Museum in Zurich. The predetermined theme of the frescoes was Rückzug aus Marignano (Retreat from Marignano) where Switzerland’s great power aspirations in Northern Italy collapsed after the defeat by French troops in 1515. Hodler portrayed the wounded soldiers in their retreat and their heroic defence of the national symbols. The decision of the EKK provoked intense opposition causing the longest and most encompassing art controversy in Swiss history. While the soldiers’ dress and armour was criticised as historically incorrect, the main divisive aspect was Hodler’s modern style clashing with traditional norms of history painting. Hodler was compelled to spend several years constantly changing his sketches. Only a government intervention eventually ensured the execution of the altered frescoes in 1899.

Thus the decision of the banknote commission to collaborate with Hodler for the creation of the new banknotes was a clear choice in favour of the modern style. This decision was mainly influenced by one jury member, the banker, industrialist and art collector Theodor Reinhart who constantly defended the unreliable and slow-working Hodler and who considered him to be the greatest contemporary Swiss artist and even “... der grösste der ganzen schweizerischen Kunstgeschichte.” Despite Reinhart’s efforts to give the commission for the

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120 On Hodler in general see Hirsh, Sharon L., Ferdinand Hodler, München 1981
122 Reinhart to Hodler, 11 March 1909, in Rivaz, op. cit., p. 81
banknotes exclusively to Hodler, the banknote commission also charged Eugène Bumand, a painter employing a classical style, and in many ways Hodler’s opposite, with the creation of two of the notes.123

In a press release the SNB emphasised the stylistic issue: “Indem man zwei bekannte Künstler wählte, welche unserem Lande durch ihre Werke Ehre machen, die aber zwei ganz verschiedenen Kunstrichtungen huldigen, trachtete man danach, den beiden ausgeprägten Strömungen der zeitgemäsßen Kunst, den Modernen und der mehr klassischen Schule, gerecht zu werden.”124

This banknote series was therefore a compromise between two conflicting artistic styles. The overall theme of the banknotes was “Arbeit in der Schweiz”, whereby Hodler’s woodcutter (fig. 57) symbolised “Arbeit in den Bergen”, his reaper (fig. 58) “Arbeit in der Ebene” while Bumand’s Appenzell embroiderers and foundry workers (figs. 59, 60) symbolised industry.125 Interestingly therefore, style and iconographic themes did not correspond. On the contrary, traditional labour was represented using modern artistic style, while pre-modern and modern industry appeared in traditional artistic style.

The stylistic controversy over modern and classical art has to be set into the larger context of modernisation and progress, where an interesting paradox becomes apparent. On the one hand, there was a certain commitment to progress not only by choosing Hodler and representing a modern foundry, but also by choosing the most efficient print technique for the new banknotes. The Postal minister Comtesse, for example, even accompanied the Swiss civil servant charged with gathering information in Austria and Germany on his journey to Vienna.126 On the other hand there were strong signs of nostalgia for a disappearing, rural and pre-industrial Switzerland. The banknotes not only

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123 One of the reasons for Hodler’s fresco controversy was the fact that at the time of their exhibition in Zurich, Bumand’s traditional history painting Flucht Karls des Kühnen was a public success in the same city, see Schmid, op. cit., pp. 41–42
124 Der Bund, 18 Sept. 1911, SNB Banknoten/CH 19. JH-V.EM, 1511
125 ibid.
126 See Bericht von J. Ernst ... über seine Reise nach Wien und Berlin ..., 15 Jan. 1907, p. 2, SNB u. a.
showed predominantly traditional forms of labour but the SNB also suggested representing "... die heute allerdings in der Mehrzahl der Landesgegenden verschwundene oder wenigstens im Schwinden begriffene Geste des Fahnenschwingens ...".127

1900 General Stamp Contest and Humour

In 1900 the Post Office had organised a general stamp contest open to any Swiss citizen.128 It received a total of 541 proposals by 336 participants including Swiss people living in France, Germany, England, Portugal and even Argentina (fig. 37).129 The large number of participants was unexpected130 and testifies to the high public interest in stamp iconography. Two reports on all of the proposals and 289 proposals themselves which survive allow for a detailed analysis of this contest.131 The report of the jury includes a quantitative analysis of the iconographic themes of all 541 proposals whereby the calculation was probably based on the proposal’s main iconographic themes.132 On the other hand, I have attempted to analyse the surviving 289 proposals by classifying and calculating the individual iconographic elements displayed on the proposals. Both the figures of the jury report and from my calculations are of course only approximate, since frequently the images are unclear or ambiguous.

Most of the themes already discussed in this chapter are confirmed by the results of the contest. The Alps appeared as the main theme or in the background

127 Schweizerische Nationalbank to Welti, 27 Aug. 1909, SNB, 301.6. Welti declined the offer since he was occupied with the frescoes in parliament, see Welti to Schweizerische Nationalbank, 28 Aug. 1909, ibid.
128 See Ideen-Konkorrenz zur Herstellung eines neuen Bildes für Frankomarken, 16 Nov. 1900, PTT Bib., PAA 02042. The contest did not produce satisfactory results leading to direct commissions of new stamps, see above pp. 54-55
130 See Bericht der Expertenkommission ..., 27 March 1901, PTT Bib., PAA 02042
131 The surviving proposals are numbered and glued on 11 large cardboards in the PTT Wertzeichenabteilung in Ostermundigen. I refer to them as Proposals 1900.
132 Bericht der Expertenkommission ..., 27 March 1901, PTT Bib., PAA 02042
of more than half of the surviving proposals (fig. 45);\textsuperscript{133} the Tell and Rütli oath
frequently referred to by representations of the myths (figs. 34, 40) or by
geographical places related to them (Tell's chapel, Rütli meadow);\textsuperscript{134} while
female allegories, often Helvetias, appeared on about a third of both the total and
the surviving proposals (figs. 39, 41).\textsuperscript{135} More than 20\% of the surviving
proposals alluded to Switzerland's federal structure by means of 22 symbols such
as stars, crosses, dots and at times, despite the lack of space, cantonal coats of arms
(fig. 40).\textsuperscript{136} The most frequent Swiss symbol was the Swiss cross included in
almost three quarters of the surviving proposals.\textsuperscript{137} Easily integrated into a
stamp of any style, the cross was not only one of the oldest Swiss symbols\textsuperscript{138} but
also the most convenient way to define any proposal as a Swiss image, a way in
which many proposals primarily employed the Swiss cross. However, there were
also numerous proposals which gave the cross additional meaning mainly by
surrounding it by rays. Often the cross appeared shining like the sun over a Swiss
landscape or in a manner strongly reminiscent of Christian crosses sending out
divine rays (figs. 44, 45).

New contemporary artistic styles such as \textit{Art Nouveau} and its German
equivalent \textit{Jugendstil} influenced several proposals, while Ferdinand Hodler and
his pupil Cuno Amiet participated in the contest, both of them, however,
unsuccessfully.\textsuperscript{139} The jury noted: “Die moderne Schule ist vertreten in der
\textbf{Ehrenmeldung IV.} von Schmidt-Helmbrechts in Nürnberg; dieser Entwurf

\textsuperscript{133} I calculated 155 [53.6\%], the report counted "circa 140" landscapes and mountains [=25.9\%].
\textsuperscript{134} The report counted representations of the Tell myth "circa 25 Mal", the Tell's chapel 15 times, the Rütli
oath 25 times, the Rütli meadow 24 times. This translates into 7.4 \% referring to Tell and 9.1 \% referring to the
Rütli oath.
\textsuperscript{135} The report stated “Am häufigsten - 181 Mal [=33.5\%] - treffen wir den Freiheitskopf oder die Gestalt der
Helvetia, ...”, while I counted 110 [=38.1\%] female allegorical figures.
\textsuperscript{136} I counted 62 [21.5\%] proposals alluding to the 22 cantons.
\textsuperscript{137} I counted 209 [72.3\%] proposals including the Swiss cross.
\textsuperscript{138} At least since the Burgundian Wars (1474-76) the white cross was the symbol identifying Swiss troops. See
\textit{Im Hof, op. cit.}, pp. 34-35
\textsuperscript{139} Hodler: 1, 113; Amiet: 8, 322, in \textit{Proposals 1900}, PTT Wertz. Other known but not necessarily modernist
artists include Richard Kissling, Hans Beat Wieland and Charles L'Eplattenier.
dürfte aber beim allgemeinen Publikum kaum Anklang finden” (fig. 35). Identification with modernity and progress appeared on at least 7 surviving proposals showing telephone wires and railways without, however, winning a prize (fig. 46). The only iconographic reference to industry I found are smoking chimneys in the background of a proposal (fig. 38). Thus by 1901 modern styles were still considered to be not easily appreciated by a larger public while portraits of Switzerland as a modern, industrial nation were relatively rare and were not considered by the jury.

23 of the surviving proposals were created by women and a proposal by Hedwig Scherrer even received an honorary prize: “Originell in Zeichnung und nicht unschön ist auch die Ehrenmeldung IX von Frau Scherrer in St. Gallen, eine weibliche Figur mit Fahne, resp. Flagge im Hintergrunde Berge, darstellend” (fig. 36). Most of these proposals do not appear to have specific female gender connotations, the proposals by E. Masson even showed a male Alpine farmer and an early-modern Swiss mercenary, one of the most traditional representations of Swiss men (fig. 42). The 12 very varied proposals by Anneli Sprüngli and Clare Suter “Schülerinnen der Damenakademie in München” are, however, innovative proposals which stand out compared to the other surviving proposals. Stylistically influenced by Jugendstil Sprüngli and Suter proposed among other themes to represent a young girl with open hair, a female, non-allegorical portrait, telephone wires as symbols of modernity and progress, and views of quiet rural roads flanked by trees (fig. 43). Despite the great variety of proposals, the jury failed to find a truly convincing proposal and thus awarded no first prize. The prized proposals consisted of five allegorical Helvetias while the second prize went to Charles L’Éplattenier for a rather pathetic Tell image

140 Also because Schmidt-Helmbrechts was not a Swiss citizen, the Post Office could not use his proposal, see Oberpostdirektion to Postal Ministry, 20 May 1901, PTT Bib., PAA 02042
141 ibid.
143 Proposals 1900, VI, 285-296, PTT Wertz.
Two anonymous proposals from the contest survive displaying caricatures of Switzerland. One shows seven donkeys eating from a feeding trough displaying the Swiss cross (fig. 48). Its title "Die Sieben..." clearly suggests that the donkeys represent the Swiss government composed of seven ministers. The other shows a cow, representing Switzerland, milked and indecently touched by numerous hands (fig. 47). These caricatures are in line with other satirical and humorous comments on Swiss bearers of value, especially the new Swiss banknotes. The *Journal de Genève*, for example, ran a long and very funny article commenting on the new banknotes. Hodler's woodcutter seemed to cut telegraph pylons while his reaper appeared so clumsy that he was considered a danger to for passers by (figs. 57, 58). The meaning of the female portraits on the reverse, however, were most puzzling, the author asked whether they might stand for the SNB, the finance industry or capitalists. The justification of the woman on the 1000 fr. note (fig. 60) was her beauty and her companion on the 100 fr. note (fig. 58) was labelled the beautiful perfume seller. "Le pompon revient toutefois à la dame des 50 francs. C'est une dame en robe échancrée comme on en voit aux concerts d'abonnement et à laquelle chacun de nous peut donner un nom. C'est cousine Irma, ou ... Mlle X. la maîtresse de piano, ou Mme Schmidt la masseuse. Cette dame, c'est la voix du peuple" (fig. 57).

The best example of such comments is, however, an article in *Die Ostschweiz* entitled *Französinnen in Appenzellertrachten oder die neuen 500 Franken-Noten* (fig. 59):

"St. Galler: Was sagst du zu den Appenzellerinnen auf der Rückseite der neuen 500 Franken-Noten?
Appenzeller: Ich habe noch keine solche Banknote gesehen; sie sind in unserem Ländchen auch recht selten zu treffen!
St. Galler: Man sagt, die Handstickerinnen in dem Stübli seien gar

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144 See Markenentwürfe 1901, No. 459, Die Sieben ..., and No. 485, PTT Wertz.
145 *Journal de Genève*, 11 Oct. 1911
keine Innerrhödlérinné!

Appenzeller: Das kann nicht sein, denn vor der Anfertigung der Banknoten hat unser Landammann und seine liebenswürdige Gemahlin die schönsten Töchter im ganzen Ländchen zu sich kommen lassen. Zweimal ... erschienen auch einige fremde Herren; diese haben wieder die Schönsten aller Schönsten herausgezogen und sie für die neuen Banknoten skizziert oder photographiert.

St. Galler: Das mag alles wahr sein, aber dann hat man mit den Innerrhödlérinnen 'Schindluder' getrieben! Schau einmal die Gesichter dieser Handstickerinnen an, gleichen diese Appenzellerinnen?

Appenzeller (ärglicher): Nein, aber auch gar nicht!

St. Galler: Also kann es wahr sein, was man in wohlinformierten Kreisen sagt; in diesen Appenzellerkostümen stecken fremde Personen, die Stickerin hinten im Stübchen sei eine bekannte Waadtländerin, rechts und links von ihr sitzen befreundete Damen aus Montpellier (Südfrankreich)!

Appenzeller: Pfui T . . . . über ein solches Spiel, das man mit uns und der ganzen Schweiz wieder getrieben hat."

We can therefore see that on the one hand the themes represented on Swiss bearers of value in this period largely corresponded with the expectations of a larger public expressing itself in the the results of the 1900 general stamp contest. On the other hand, the humorous comments and suggestions for Swiss bearers of value show that the portraits of the nation displayed on bearers of value were not exclusively seen as a sober and earnest issue. On the contrary, representing the nation provoked a certain amount of humorous self-critique, the nation was thus also seen in its ironic mirror.

146 Die Ostschweiz, 1 March 1913, SNB Banknoten/CH 19. JH-V.EM, 1511-. The Vaudois Burnand initially portrayed his cousins in Montpellier for the notes. He planned to adapt the proposals after his journey to Appenzell using photographs of Appenzell embroiderers. See Rivaz, op. cit., pp. 168-9
3.3 Conclusion

The late 19th century was a crucial moment in the construction of national identities in Western Europe. The study of the cases of Belgium and Switzerland has shown that this construction was achieved not only by means of education, law codes, conscription, public statues, national buildings, museums or exhibitions but also by means of the imagery displayed on bearers of value. Belgian stamps, coins and banknotes showed a progress-oriented constitutional monarchy identifying with its dynasty, its constitution and its industrial and artistic success, a country which was also composed of nine provinces, numerous proud and old cities and two linguistic groups. Switzerland was represented as an Alpine confederation with roots in a medieval and mythical past, a country identifying with predominantly pre-modern, rural means of economic activity and to a lesser extent with modern industry and disposing of beautiful mountains attracting tourists and at the same time uniting a trilingual confederation of 22 cantons.

As in most cases of collective identity the construction of Belgian and Swiss national identity contained a considerable degree of tensions and contradictions. In Belgium there was a considerable degree of tension between the identification with international progress and technological advancement and the desire to create national bearers of value exclusively by national citizens. Unilingual French inscriptions led to complaints by Flemish campaigners and to the introduction of bilingual inscriptions on Belgian bearers of value in the 1880s. Finally, Belgium’s identification with industry and progress stood in contrast with the image of Belgium as a country of historic cities and communes. Similarly there was considerable tension between Switzerland’s allegory Helvetia competing with representations of the 1307 Rütli oath, a foundation myth which

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147 See Hobsbawm, Eric; Ranger Terence (eds.), The Invention of Tradition, Cambridge 1983
itself was contested by the myth of the foundation of Switzerland in 1291. The strongest tension within Swiss national identity was, however, between a rather nostalgic and somewhat tourist oriented image of Switzerland as an Alpine country inhabited by peaceful mountain dwellers and a country based on industry.

The linguistic diversity of Switzerland and Belgium affected the countries' bearers of value in different ways. It did not give rise to problems for the construction of a Swiss national identity by means of bearers of value. Inscriptions were either in neutral Latin or appeared in all three official languages. In Belgium, however, the Flemish campaigners achieved the introduction of Flemish inscriptions on all bearers of value in the 1880s but French nevertheless remained the first and implicitly superior national language while Flemish became only a secondary and somewhat inferior Belgian national language. This difference between the two countries seems to me to originate in their mid-19th century constitutional arrangements. While the Swiss constitution of 1848 declared German, French and Italian to be the official Swiss languages, Flemish was not recognised as a national language equal to French by Belgium's constitution of 1831. The equality of Flemish became a political issue raised by Flemish campaigners who only managed to improve the position of Flemish within a Belgian national context in a gradual way; the solution of the Flemish question on Belgian bearers of value was thus only one step in the slow and imperfect process of equalisation of Flemish in a Belgian national context.

We can therefore see that in neither Switzerland nor Belgium was linguistic diversity a paramount obstacle to the construction of national identity by means of imagery on bearers of value. However, while the linguistic communities were not represented in any other form than by means of the inscriptions, both countries represented themselves by means of combining strong symbols of local and sub-linguistic identities including provincial,
cantonal or city coats of arms and symbols on their bearers of value. Thus it seems that in this period, local identities were equally if not more powerful than linguistic identities and they were certainly used as a positive means for the construction of the nation.

The two countries’ constitutional arrangements caused a further major difference between the two cases. While the Belgian monarchy disposed of an uncontested, if not universally popular, personification of the nation in form of the king, the Swiss confederate republic had no such obvious candidate. However, two rather successful alternative personifications appeared on Swiss bearers of value in place of a king: the allegorical figure of Helvetia and the mythological hero Tell. While in the course of this period the representations of Helvetia acquired an increasingly Swiss (i.e. rural, Alpine and republican) character, Kissling’s Tell too focussed on the hero’s rural Uri origins as opposed to the classical and romantic idealisations of earlier periods.

Finally, the imagery on both Belgian and Swiss bearers of value issued in this period were relatively tame and peaceful and lacked strong displays of aggressive or arrogant nationalism. The Swiss iconography emphasised Tell as a symbol of freedom rather than a symbol of armed opposition to oppression, it showed Swiss people engaged in a variety of economic activities and increasingly emphasised the touristic aspect of Switzerland’s idyllic geography. The Belgian iconography was similarly peaceful; it lacked, for example, any direct reference to its colonial expansion, a phenomenon which in many other colonial countries such as Germany or Britain was extensively used for the construction of national identity in the later 19th century. While some of the Swiss iconography, especially the representations of the Tell myth, was clearly patriotic, in Belgium openly patriotic imagery was at times even rejected: an interesting alternative banknote proposal for the 50 fr. notes issued in 1888 survives displaying instead of the portraits of Ceres the portraits of King Leopold I and King Leopold II and
instead of the agricultural background a patriotic scene, possibly a reference to the 50th anniversary of Belgian independence in 1880 (figs. 18, 19). No documents survive explaining the reason for this decision of the BNB, but fact that the allegory was chosen instead of the patriotic proposal shows that an allegory of Belgium’s agriculture was clearly more appealing than the display of open patriotism.

This lack of outspoken nationalism and patriotism on the imagery of Belgian and Swiss bearers of value might well be related to the general climate of peace existing in Western Europe in the decades preceding the First World War. Antagonistic nationalism was not an indispensable requirement in such an age of peace, especially not for two neutral countries, and it can thus be argued that Belgium and Switzerland represented themselves as small, peaceful but nevertheless distinct members of the larger family of western civilised nations. Thus despite the obvious tensions within the representations of the nation and despite the differences between the cases of Switzerland and Belgium, the imagery on their bearers of value were powerful means by which the two countries tried to go beyond being a recently united confederation (Switzerland 1848) or the outcome of diplomatic manoeuvrings (Belgium 1830) into being integrated nation states in the later 19th century both in a domestic and in an international context.
4. The First World War

4.1 Belgium

On 4 August 1914 German troops invaded Belgium after the refusal of the German ultimatum by the Catholic government under de Broqueville. Patriotic feelings predominated, Liberals and Socialists joined forces with the Catholics by forming a national government and King Albert took up personal command of the army. In the face of the overwhelming and destructive German attacks, the Belgian government and army first retreated to Antwerp on 17 August, Brussels being occupied three days later. The government left Antwerp on 6 October for Le Havre where it remained for the remainder of the war, while the Belgian army under King Albert retreated to West Flanders where, on Belgian soil, it defended the Yser front until 1918. On 28 September 1918 the Belgian army joined the Allied offensive finally leading to the armistice of 11 November 1918.1

Influence of the War on Bearers of Value

The First World War directly affected the circulation of bearers of value. In view of the global crisis, the international gold standard collapsed in the summer of 1914 leading to a widespread panic: “[L]es guichets de la Banque Nationale étaient assaillis par une foule énorme qui venait réclamer l’échange des billets contre de la monnaie métallique.” From 27 July until 1 August the BNB handed out more than 50 million francs in silver coins. “Mais loin de circuler, cette masse de monnaie, jointe à celle qui se trouvait déjà en circulation,

The coins were thus hoarded for their intrinsic silver value leading, within a couple of days, to the disappearance of almost all coins from circulation.

This phenomenon was not unexpected since the BNB had taken precautions by printing, in 1912, 5 fr. banknotes to be issued in the case of war, designed on the basis of the 1892 20 fr. notes. They were issued from 3 August onwards, the day of the introduction of a fixed exchange rate. On 27 August, the bank issued a series called “série comptes courants” primarily for reimbursements to creditors by the bank. In an attempt to react to the disappearance of coins this series also included banknotes of 1 and 2 francs. The higher values of this series showed for the first time the portrait of a Belgian monarch, King Leopold I, a gesture which “... en ces mois de guerre, on interpréta ... comme une manifestation de patriotisme” (fig. 74).

Considering this foresight of a scarcity of coins by the BNB it is rather surprising that the bank issued 20 fr. gold coins in 1914. In 1911 the BNB had decided against a costly transformation of French into Belgian gold coins because gold coins were not circulating and thus new gold coins would become overvalued collectors’ items. In February 1914, however, a royal decree stipulated the creation of new Belgian gold coins and 250,000 pieces of 20 fr. gold coins were minted in March 1914. They showed on the obverse King Albert “... revêtu de l’uniforme de chef de l’armée, le manteau jeté sur les épaules, ...” and on the reverse “... un écu aux armes du royaume, entouré du collier de l’Ordre de Léopold, sous un pavillon ou manteau fourré d’hermines et comblé de la couronne royale.” The side inscription on the coins was the Catholic formulation of *Dieu protège la Belgique* or *God bescherme België* (fig. 70).

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2 See note Billets de fr. 5, no date, BNB SdC u. a., *Do: Billets B.N et Etat*. For a vivid description of the financial panic see Rency, Georges, *La Belgique et la guerre*, vol. 1, Bruxelles 1920, pp. 34-37
3 See Banque Nationale de Belgique (ed.), *Le franc belge*, Bruxelles 1989, pp. 191-194
4 *ibid.*, p. 191
5 See Commissaire des Monnaies to minister, 28 Nov. 1911, MR, 600/8
6 See Arrêté Royal, 18 Feb. 1914, in *Revue belge de numismatique*, 1914, pp. 189-190
Issued against economic wisdom, these coins were thus minted "... dans un but patriotique ...". King Albert appeared in his function as the head of the Belgian army as if to show him ready to go out onto the battlefields. This is important in so far as the personal command of the Belgian army by the King was a right acquired by means of custom by the Belgian sovereigns and not directly derived from the constitution. Albert’s decision to take up personal command of the Belgian army in August 1914 was thus preceded by his symbolic appearance as the head of the army on the gold coins minted in March 1914. Albert commanded the Belgian troops throughout the war without ministerial control and was only slightly challenged in this role in 1918.

After the German invasion, the government in its retreat in Antwerp decided to issue the first of a total of three series of fund-raising stamps in favour of the Red Cross. This organisation was particularly important during the war and enjoyed active royal patronage, especially from Queen Elisabeth who, for example, transformed the royal palace in Brussels into a hospital directly subordinate to the organisation in August 1914. The series was composed of two different images, a portrait of King Albert (fig. 69) and the monument of Frédéric de Mérode (1792-1830) (fig. 68). Mérode who lived in Paris voluntarily joined the Belgian revolution and died of injuries inflicted upon him during the battle of Berchem against the Dutch in 1830. He immediately became one of the, admittedly few, martyrs of the Belgian revolution and together with others he was buried on the Place des Martyrs in Brussels in December 1830.

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7 Commissaire des Monnaies to minister, 10 Sept. 1919, MR, Administration des Monnaies, Documents 1915-1921, Supplement
8 On earlier coins Albert had appeared in plain profile without uniform.
9 On the command of the army by the King see Stengers, Jean, L’action du Roi en Belgique depuis 1831, Paris and Louvain-la-Neuve 1992, pp. 89-105
10 Arrêté royal, 30 Sept. 1914, Recueil. Further Red Cross series appeared in 1915 and 1918.
12 A good example of the use of Mérode’s memory for national purposes can be found in Piret, op. cit., pp. 230-231
rendered homage to the fallen Belgian patriots of 1830 and statues of Jenneval (1803-1830), the author of the Brabançonne, the Belgian national anthem, and of Mérode were erected on the same square in 1897 and 1898 respectively.\textsuperscript{13} The combination of a portrait of King Albert and the reference to the 1830 revolution by means of one of its major martyrs was thus meant to invoke "... l'indépendance de la Belgique."

\textbf{Bearers of Value in Occupied Belgium}

For four years almost all of Belgium was under German occupation. The occupying power introduced heavy war taxes and forced labour for the war industry. Despite philanthropic efforts, most notably by the industrialist Ernest Solvay, living conditions were difficult, especially during the last two years of the occupation. On 1 October 1914, the German authorities introduced the use of definitive German stamp series with the overprint \textit{Belgien} and the value indicated in French.\textsuperscript{15} These stamps mostly showed an allegorical Germania while some higher values represented allegories of German unity, the Kaiser Wilhelm Museum in Berlin and the inauguration of the emperor, the latter with the inscription "Ein Reich, ein Volk, ein Gott". Furthermore postmarks mentioned place names in German (figs. 80, 81).

During August 1914, the BNB evacuated all of its banknotes, print plates, and metal stock via Antwerp to Britain. The German authorities in turn suspended the BNB’s right to issue banknotes and created a banknote department in a private bank, the Société Générale de Belgique, which from 1915 onwards printed banknotes exchangeable into banknotes of the BNB after the conclusion of a peace treaty.\textsuperscript{16} Furthermore, the German authorities introduced the German

\begin{footnotes}
\item[14] Arrêté ministériel, 30 Sept. 1914, \textit{Recueil}
\item[15] See COB, p. 327
\item[16] See Banque Nationale de Belgique (ed.), \textit{Le franc belge}, Bruxelles 1989, p. 191
\end{footnotes}
Mark as legal means of payment at a fixed, overrated exchange rate of 1.25 fr. per Mark in October 1914.17

The banknotes of the Société Générale showed Queen Louise-Marie, wife of Leopold I, on the 1, 2, 5 and 100 fr. notes (fig. 75) while Rubens appeared on the 20 and 1000 fr. notes. No written documents relating to these banknotes seem to have survived, however, unpublished banknote proposals suggest that the BNB planned a series showing Leopold I and Louise-Marie before the war. A 1910 proposal by Frans Smeers showed Leopold I while Jean Mayné created several proposals showing Leopold I or Louise-Marie, one of them dated 23 July 1914.18 Some of Mayné’s portraits of the monarchs closely resemble those appearing on the “série comptes courants” and on those of the Société Générale (figs. 72, 73)). It is thus likely that the Société Générale, using the print machines of the BNB, adapted existing imagery left at the bank for the creation of its banknotes. The German authorities do not seem to have had much interest in the iconography of the Société Générale banknotes. While Rubens could be considered to belong to the German cultural heritage due to his birth in Germany, Louise-Marie was certainly not a German-friendly symbol, since she was the daughter of Louis-Philippe, King of France.

Apart from the Société Générale and German notes, however, a large number of local banknotes circulated throughout the war. Due to the scarcity of coins and increasingly also of banknotes, approximately 630 Belgian communities issued so called “billets de nécessité”, in most cases valid only in and around the place of issue. While most written documents relating to these notes were destroyed, substantial collections of the communal banknotes

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17 See Van der Wee, H.; Tavemier, K. La Banque Nationale de Belgique et l’histoire monétaire entre les deux guerres mondiales, Bruxelles 1975, p. 24. The market value of the mark was 1.2345 francs. See Banque Nationale de Belgique (ed.), Le franc belge, Bruxelles 1989, p. 56
survive, among them an important collection of the BNB. While some of these local banknotes displayed no iconography, most of them carried some form of decoration. Their iconography was mainly composed of local imagery including communal coats of arms, views of important monuments or other local symbols. Sint-Truiden, for example, displayed a representation of one of its medieval coins. Most inscriptions were unilingual and Belgian iconography was almost entirely lacking apart from an interesting banknote of Menin which bore the bilingual inscriptions including the reference *Royaume de Belgique* and displayed the Belgian lion and a crown. The fact that a large number of Belgian communities found it relatively easy to create powerful and effective iconography for their self-representation shows the strength and importance of local identities in the country (figs. 76-79).

Since also the nickel centimes coins were hoarded for their intrinsic metal value, the German authorities allowed the minting of 5, 10 and 25 ct. coins in zinc, a metal not used by the war industry, in 1915, while 50 ct. zinc coins appeared in 1918. The 1915 coins showed on the obverse the value and on the reverse a heraldic lion, while the 1918 coins showed a 5 legged star on the obverse and a heraldic lion on a laurel wreath on the reverse.

No interpretative documents could be found relating to the 1918 coins the star of which has an interesting resemblance with the five legged star of the Congo. A German press release, however, commented on the 1915 coins (fig. 71): "Au revers se trouvera l’effigie du Lion de Flandre, que l’on connait par d’autres pièces belges." This interpretative transformation of the Belgian into the Flemish lion can be seen as an aspect of the German *Flamenpolitik*, aimed at securing Flemish collaboration. The Germans, for example, encouraged radical

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20 See Musée de la Banque Nationale de Belgique, Salle 4, *Billets de nécessité*
21 See Commissaire des Monnaies to directeur, 10 Aug. 1915, MR, 605/2 and Banque Nationale de Belgique (ed.), *Le franc belge*, Bruxelles 1989, p. 55
22 German press release in *La Belgique*, 28 Aug. 1915, MR, 605/2
Flemish movements such as the *Raad van Vlaanderen*, a Flemish council aiming at an increasing separation of Flanders from Belgium, and allowed the introduction of Flemish at Ghent University.23

**Bearers of Value in Unoccupied Belgium**

Throughout the war, an independent Belgian postal system remained in function serving the 23 Post Offices in unoccupied West Flanders, the Belgian enclave Baarle-Hertog within neutral Holland and a Belgian Post Office set up for Belgian refugees at St. Adresse in Le Havre.24 Initially using existing stamp series, the Belgian Post Office issued a new definitive stamp series in October 1915 apparently because “de grandes quantités de timbres-poste ... ont été volées dans les bureaux de poste belges.”25 A different source, however, suggests that the stamps were confiscated by the German authorities and replaced by the German overprinted series.26 The new series replaced all previous Belgian series except for the Red Cross stamps.

The imagery displayed on the 1915 stamps had strong war propaganda objectives. The lower values showed a portrait of King Albert, while the higher values showed a variety of themes which the Post Office explained for a 1919 stamp exhibition in Tokyo. The three city views, it reported, represented architectural monuments in Ypres (halles), Dinant (vue de la collegiale) and Louvain (bibliothèque) all “... détruit[s] par les allemands” (figs. 61-63). The port of Antwerp (fig. 64) was meant to: “... commémorer le plus important évènement économique survenu en Belgique: l’affranchissement de l’Escaut en 1862” while the colonial scene (fig. 65) was meant to serve as a reminder of the

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23 See Witte; Craeybeckx, *op. cit.*, pp. 144-148
24 See COB, p. 52
25 See Arrêté Royal. 16 Sept. 1915, MP,1915: émission timbre-poste à l’effigie du Roi - vues de villes
26 See post-card reproducing a letter sent with the prewar series. It commented: “Collection des anciens Timbres-Postes Belges dont l’édition est épuisée, le stock qui en existait en Belgique au début de la Guerre, ayant été confisqué par les Autorités Allemandes.”, Le Havre, 15 April 1915, coll. Schaefer
Belgian annexation of the Congo (1908): "... l'évènement le plus remarquant de la politique extérieure belge." The restitution of the Belgian flag to the troops by King Albert in Furnes in 1914 (fig. 66) was a "symbole de guerre" and the final theme was: "... la devise nationale: 'L'union fait la force' personifiée par les trois premiers rois de la Belgique libre et indépendante" (fig. 67). 27

While in Japan such detailed information was necessary, in neighbouring France the images were easily decipherable. During a 1917 discussion about new French stamps the Chambre des Députés heard of the example of: "... l'héroïque Belgique [qui célèbre] ses trois souverains, les vues des villes martyrisées par l'Allemand: Louvain, Ypres, Furnes, Dinant." 28 Thus on the one hand, the Belgian Kings, most notably King Albert, the commander of the Belgian troops, appearing in the centre of the royal triptych on the 10 fr. stamps, became associated with Belgium's military heroism against the German invaders. On the other hand, the important architectural sights destroyed by the Germans became the international symbol of Belgium's wartime martyrdom.

Apart from these new means of Belgian collective identification directly related to the First World War the series included two further means of collective identification. The commemoration of the liberation of the Escaut from Dutch toll in 1862 which transformed Antwerp into a true sea port was clearly part of the 19th century tradition of Belgian identification with modernity and progress. 29 Belgium's 1908 annexation of the Congo on the other hand was a relatively new means of collective identification. After increasing international, especially British, criticisms of the cruel exploitation of the country, the Belgian state acquired the Congo from Leopold II in 1908 and it became increasingly seen as a source of wealth and hope for the endangered motherland and as an area of positive civilising efforts by exponents of all main political parties, including

27 Belgian embassy in Tokyo to Foreign Ministry, 10 Jan. 1919 and annexe, no date, MP, 1915: émission timbre-poste à l'effigie du Roi - vues de villes
28 See Chambre des Députés, Proposition de Résolution, 14 Dec. 1917, MP, 1919: timbre "Roi Casqué"
29 The event was still celebrated in inter-war school books such as Piret, op. cit., pp. 270-271
prominent socialists such as Vandervelde. In 1914 the BNB used gold from the Congo for the minting of the 20 fr. coins "... car la Banque Nationale de Belgique a tenu à ce que les premiers pièces d'or, à l'effigie du Roi Albert, ... , proviennent de l'or de notre Colonie." Therefore, further national importance was attached to these coins by minting them from gold from the newly-acquired national colony.

The scene represented on the 1915 stamp commemorating the annexation of the Congo showed a Belgian in white colonial dress somewhat reminiscent of King Albert, especially due to the moustache (fig. 65). He held a large Belgian flag protecting a Congolese family on the left and pointed down to the right at a kneeling person dressed like an Arab. In the background appeared a Congolese village including a church. Interestingly, the philatelic title of this stamp is *lutte anti-esclaviste*. The annexation of the Congo was thus represented as a positive humanitarian act by Belgium which protected the indigenous populations against the slave trade alluded to by the kneeling Arab. Furthermore the stamp referred to Belgium's missionary activity represented by means of the village church. In the face of the previous international critique of King Leopold II's exploitation of the Congolese this stamp was thus an attempt to promote a positive image of Belgian colonialism under the internationally very popular King Albert who in contrast to his uncle visited the Congo on several occasions.

During the war both the Belgians and the German occupying power thus used stamps extensively for propaganda reasons. The German occupation appeared visually on every letter sent in occupied Belgium by means of the German postmarks and overprinted stamps. The pre-war Belgian stamps became

31 See *Les nouvelles monnaies d'or belges* in *Revue belge de numismatique*, 1914, p. 191. The article was signed by Ch. Le G., very likely Charles le Grele, Commissaire des Monnaies.
32 COB, p. 54
national symbols, as a letter sent with the old stamps proves. It stated: "Chères effigies, Emblèmes de la Patrie, venues de Sainte-Adresse (Le Havre), nous vous saluons." On the other hand, the new Belgian stamp series of 1915 summed up the Belgian nation with a strong emphasis on Belgium's military heroism and war-time martyrdom. On both sides this postal propaganda effort was supported by privately produced means of national propaganda. Belgian and allied post-cards showed destroyed Belgian cities, heroic images of King Albert or allegories of martyred Belgium (fig. 85). An interesting Belgian non-postal stamp series entitled: "Belges souvenez-vous! Rien d'allemand des allemands!" was added to some letters and showed, for example, Ypres' burning halles or Edith Cavell, La nurse martyre (fig. 84). German post-cards, on the other hand showed the entry of German troops into Brussels or ridiculed King Albert and his troops in their retreat in Antwerp (fig. 83), while special envelopes praised German victories (fig. 82). Similar to present-day television images, images of the war were thus widely distributed by means of the postal system.

The First World War thus was a highly important period in the development of Belgian national identity, mainly because Belgium acquired a number of powerful symbols of patriotism and international prestige which had been largely lacking before the war. We have seen above that in the pre-war years Belgian self-representation had focussed on the celebration of the monarchy, the constitution and progress neglecting patriotic themes such as colonial expansion or the memory of the events of 1830. The 1914 Red Cross stamps were intended to be patriotic but the only symbols available seem to have been representations of a young King still lacking distinction and the representation of a monument commemorating a hero of 1830. In contrast to the rather inglorious revolution of 1830, the First World War provided Belgium with a number of truly patriotic symbols such as national heroes, first and foremost King Albert, and

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33 Post-card reproducing letter sent with the pre-war series, Le Havre, 15 April 1915, coll. Schaefer

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internationally known sights of national martyrdom such as the library of Louvain which were furthermore combined with a positive representation of Belgium's so-called model colony, the Congo. While especially from the outside Belgium's *raison d'être* before the war had often been reduced to the diplomatic compromise of 1830, Belgium's martyrdom and heroism during the First World War was propagated throughout the world and thus Belgium emerged from the war endowed with all the attributes of a fully-fledged nation.34

34 Well-known Belgian writers, for example, published texts on Belgium's martyr cities which were also translated into English. See Maeterlinck, Maurice, Verhaeren, Emile et al., *Belgium Hero and Martyr*, Paris 1915.
4.2 Switzerland

Although Switzerland escaped direct military involvement in the First World War, the war nevertheless had a considerable influence on the country. The Swiss militia army mobilised in August 1914 leading to the absence of most adult men from their jobs and homes for very long periods. The government failed to perceive the economic aspect of the war which directly affected the Swiss economy which was integrated into the economies of both the Allied and the Central Powers eventually leading to an increasing influence of Allied economic interests. The 1918 influenza pandemic further added to the social hardship especially of the working classes.

The war also caused considerable political problems between the two main Swiss linguistic groups: while public opinion in the German area was predominantly pro-German, its French Swiss counterpart was predominantly pro-Allied. The sympathy with Germany evident among the leadership of the army under General Wille further added to this domestic problem which continued throughout the war despite the conciliatory appeals by the government and important personalities, most notably the speech of the writer Carl Spitteler in December 1914.35

War-Time Bearers of Value

The collapse of the international gold standard in the summer of 1914 also affected Switzerland, leading to the hoarding of coins and banknotes. However, the SNB was better prepared than its Belgian equivalent having printed 5 and 20 fr. banknotes of a value of 40 m. fr. in 1913. The SNB issued these so-called Kriegsnoten from 30 July onwards while federal bond notes,

35 On Switzerland and the First World War see Comité pour une Nouvelle Histoire de la Suisse (ed.), op. cit., pp. 762-765
Bundeskassenscheine, of 5, 10- and 20 fr. were issued from 11 August onwards as banknote equivalents. Furthermore, the Dahrlehenskasse der Schweizerischen Eidgenossenschaft, an institution created for credit security, issued 25 fr. notes from September 1914 onwards.36 In 1918, the SNB issued new 100 fr. notes printed in Switzerland in order to be less dependent on the unreliable supply of notes of the Hodler/Burnand series still printed in London.37 In contrast to banknotes, no new coins or definitive stamp series appeared during the war. In 1914 no Pro Juventute fund-raising series appeared, probably because of the outbreak of the war; the series begun in 1912, however, continued in 1915.

Themes on First World War Bearers of Value

The war-time Pro Juventute stamps lacked any iconographic reference to the war. The charity represented a variety of Swiss cantons comprising all three linguistic regions by means of their inhabitants dressed in traditional costume. The 1915 and 1916 series showed portraits of girls and boys from the cantons Appenzell, Lucerne, Fribourg, Berne and Vaud while the 1917 series showed Valais, Unterwalden and Ticino women, thus alluding to the main beneficiaries of the charity, children and mothers (figs. 86, 87). The peaceful rural themes stand in contrast to the increasing social hardship, especially of peasant women who frequently had to farm their land without their husbands who were absent on military duty.38

The war-time banknotes all included a representation of the Swiss cross. Furthermore, the obverse of the Kriegsnoten displayed on the 5 fr. note a representation of Tell while the 1897 20 fr. note reproduced Landry’s portrait of

36 See Ruoss, Eveline, Die Geldpolitik der Schweizerischen Nationalbank 1907-1929, Zürich 1992, pp. 70-78
38 An interesting collection of women’s texts glorified the Swiss women’s role as the ‘second army’ in the First World War in the 1930s, see Schmid-Itten, M; Meili-Lüthi; Wyler, Eugen (eds.), Der Grenzdienst der Schweizerin, 1914-1918. Von Frauen erzählt, Bern no date [circa 1934]
the Hasli woman of the 20 fr. gold coins created by Landry. Their remaining
decoration and the reverse was ornamental. The 1918 100 fr. notes were slightly
more elaborate (fig. 99). The reverse displayed on the left a reproduction of
Kissling’s Tell and on the right a view of the Tell chapel and the Alps. Both
images were framed by 22 edelweiss, representing the 22 cantons, while edelweiss
also appeared as the central background decoration. Interestingly, a beehive in
front of a honeycomb pattern appeared in the lower middle. Considering the
economic circumstances, this image was likely to have been an allusion to hard
work rather than abundance. The reverse showed a view of the Jungfrau
mountains. While the notes of the Dahrlehnenskasse were entirely ornamental,
the obverse of the Staatskassen notes all showed on the left a female allegory of
Liberty. While Tell appeared on the right of the 10 fr. notes, the 5 and 20 fr. notes
showed Arnold Winkelried, mythical hero of the battle of Sempach (fig. 98).

The iconography displayed on the new banknotes thus mostly took up
themes displayed on bearers of value before the war including images already
reproduced on Swiss bearers of value, Landry’s Hasli woman and Kissling’s Tell.
While the recycling of Landry’s image, belonging to the Federal Mint, does not
seem to have posed any problems, Kissling engaged in a long dispute about an
appropriate compensation and the addition of his initials on the banknotes.39

The representation of Winkelried was the only new iconographic
theme on Swiss bearers of value and the only one particularly associated with
warfare. Winkelried was the mythical hero of the battle of Sempach (1386)
against Count Leopold III of Austria. The hero is supposed to have brought about
the Swiss victory by breaking up the enemy’s line of spears by uniting as many as
possible of them onto himself after exclaiming: “Sorget für Frau und Kind”.
Winkelried quickly developed into a symbol of military sacrifice for the nation
and especially in the 19th century became a major symbol for Swiss charities or

39 The dispute even continued after the death of the artist whose daughter finally received 500 fr. from the SNB,
see SNB to Stella Koller-Kissling, 29 Aug. 1919, SNB, 334.0-6
During the war, not only the battle of Sempach but also the battle of Morgarten where the first three Swiss cantons had beaten Duke Leopold I of Habsburg in 1315 was used for Swiss collective identification. In 1915 the head of the Swiss army, General Wille, decreed the commemoration of the 600th anniversary of the battle by all army units. The general compared the medieval to the contemporary military situation whereby the Swiss were faced with armies superior in numbers and used the Morgarten example to strengthen the troops' morale. A committee based in French-speaking Switzerland created Morgarten commemoration post-cards, the profits of which went to the poor Alpine canton of Uri. "[M]it Rücksicht auf den patriotischen und freundeidgenössischen Charakter dieses Unternehmens ..." the Post Office agreed to participate in the commemoration effort by selling these postcards via its post offices but did not issue special commemoration stamps.

Apart from Winkelried the First World War thus had very little iconographic influence on Swiss bearers of value. However, the war caused the creation of a whole new type of stamp, the so-called soldier stamps. These stamps were issued by army units, had no franking value and were added to military mail exempt from postal fares. The first series appeared in 1915 and it was intended to serve as a commemoration of the military service done by a fusilier battalion (fig. 93). In 1916 the first soldier stamps appeared which were sold in favour of a military charity prompting a number of army units to print and sell stamps in favour of their own charities which supported the units' needy soldiers and their families. The soldier stamps were designed by members of the issuing units and they had the official approval and encouragement of the Post

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40 See Suter, Beat, Arnold Winkelried, Der Heros von Sempach, Zürich 1977
42 Verfügung betr. ... Umertag ..., no date [1915], PTT Bib., PAA 02029
The soldier stamps were a financial success due to a combination of patriotism, philatelic interest and fact that fund-raising stamps had become a popular means of collective charity efforts due to the annual Pro Juventute series. The iconography of the soldier stamps is particularly interesting because they were created from within the individual army units, frequently by non-professionals, and thus show a broad range of male Swiss self-representation during the First World War.

The main theme of the soldier stamps was of course military. Soldiers appeared mostly displaying their weapons and often in front of an Alpine background, a city in which the unit was stationed or in combination with a Swiss flag (figs. 95, 96). Frequently also cantonal coats of arms appeared indicating the origin of the army unit (fig. 91). Historical themes included a representation by a Bernese unit of Adrian Bubenberg, hero of the battle of Murten (1476) (fig. 92), and the representation of an Appenzell soldier with a halberd. While Tell was absent, the Rütli oath appeared on one stamp and Helvetia appeared protecting her children while herself protected by a guarding soldier (fig. 97). Finally one unit reproduced the family coats of arms of its commander while a Ticinese unit represented a sentimental departure scene of a soldier leaving his family (fig. 94).

The soldier stamps thus combined existing iconographic means of Swiss self-representation such as the Alps or the Swiss cross with the celebration and commemoration of the Swiss soldier who by doing his military duty preserved the nation from military aggression. There was, however, no celebration of the Swiss national army as such. Similar to the representation of Switzerland by means of its cantons, the army was represented by means of its...
local units who proudly displayed symbols of their local identity. Some of the iconography and the way in which the money raised by the soldier stamps was spent referred to the difficult social conditions caused by war and the mobilisation of the army.

Commemorating Peace

While the war thus brought about the soldier stamps but had no effect on official war-time stamps, the Post Office issued a stamp series commemorating the end of the war in 1919. It organised a limited contest\textsuperscript{44} for these stamps early in 1917 in order to have peace stamps ready "... auf den Zeitpunkt des Friedensschlusses."\textsuperscript{45} The artists were expected to produce "... eine innerlich wahr empfundene Darstellung ..., die als Erinnerungszeichen auch später an den Ernst unserer Zeiten gemahnen soll."\textsuperscript{46} The three stamps showed: "Zwei feindliche Krieger reichen sich, über den Trümmern einer Kanone, kräftig die Friedenshand. Über den Beiden erstrahlt das "Friedensjahr" 1919." (fig. 88), "... ein Friedensengel, Oelzweig und Blumen in den Händen haltend." (fig. 89) and "Ein nackter Krieger mit verbundener Stirne liegt, ..., am Boden, das zerbrochene Schwert vor sich. Ueber der markigen Kriegergestalt erscheint im Lichte mächtiger Strahlen das Wort \textit{Pax}" (fig. 90).\textsuperscript{47} The emphasis of the iconography was thus on remembering the end of the war in terms of peace and a peace treaty. The Post Office commissioned these stamps early in 1917 and the stamps were issued on 1 August 1919, the Swiss national day.\textsuperscript{48}

The First World War was a disconcerting experience for Switzerland.

\textsuperscript{44} No documents about the contest survive in the archives. However, the art periodical \textit{Werk}, has a detailed description of the contest, see Röthlisberger, H., \textit{Die schweizerische Friedensmarke}, in \textit{Werk}, vol. 3, 1917, pp. 37-41
\textsuperscript{45} Verfügung betr. Wertzeichenwesen Nr. 91/1919, PTT Bib., BG 0134
\textsuperscript{46} Röthlisberger, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 40
\textsuperscript{47} Verfügung betr. Wertzeichenwesen Nr. 91/1919, PTT Bib., BG 0134
\textsuperscript{48} See \textit{ibid.}
Not only did it bring about profound international political changes such as the collapse of major European Empires and the rise of communism in Russia but it also deeply affected Switzerland internally. The war caused considerable tension not only between the major linguistic groups but also intensified social antagonism culminating in a general strike in November 1918. In contrast to Belgium therefore the Swiss experience of the First World War did not have the effect of uniting the country, on the contrary, the war highlighted the internal divisions and tensions of Switzerland. The display of traditional, pre-war iconographic themes on official war-time bearers of value can thus be interpreted as an attempt to suggest continuity with the pre-war era, and the commemoration of the end of the conflict by means of peace stamps can be seen to express the desire to return to the less conflict ridden pre-war situation.
5. Inter-War Decision-Making

5.1 Belgium

Reasons for the Creation of Bearers of Value

Stamps

In the course of the occupation of Belgium the German authorities had introduced both German overprinted stamps and postmarks mentioning place names in German. From September 1918 onwards the Belgian Post Office reestablished itself on the progressively liberated national territory and sought to remove all traces of the occupation by reintroducing Belgian stamps and postmarks. Initially, however, there was a scarcity of stamps so that letters were often sent with the remark "Port Payé" while due to the absence of new Belgian postmarks a number of improvised means of obliteration were used. Only with the appearance of the first post-war Belgian stamp series in July 1919 did the situation revert to normality.¹

The stamps issued in July 1919 commemorated the liberation of Belgium, showed a portrait of King Albert wearing a helmet and were thus called *Le Roi casqué* (fig. 107).² The idea of creating this series originated in the administration, the government and the general public. The Postal Ministry asked the postal administration to investigate the possibility of commemorating "... par le timbre-poste, le souvenir de la guerre."³ Within the postal administration the idea of creating a stamp showing King Albert in military dress had been proposed both by the director general and the stamp director and a newspaper article also

¹ See COB, p. 55
² See Arrêté Royal, 30 June 1919, *Recueil*
³ Ministère to directeur d'administration, 30 Nov. [1918], MP, 1919: timbre "Roi Casqué"
suggested postal stamps displaying Albert in military dress.4

In the first half of the inter-war period, several further series of purely commemorative stamps appeared in Belgium. In 1918 and 1919, Liège and Termode were included in the 1915 series commemorating martyr cities of the First World War. These commemorations were due to the initiatives of the Ligue Wallonne de Liège and the parliamentary deputy Vermeersch of Termode, initiatives which were motivated by strong local identities and intense city rivalries.5 The idea of creating the 1926 series commemorating the 75th anniversary of the first Belgian stamp of 1849 appears to have originated within the postal administration.6 The idea of issuing commemoration stamps celebrating Belgium’s 1930 centenary of national independence was discussed in 1929 by the Commission philatélique, founded in 1928 and composed of the director general of the Post Office and four philatelists chosen by the Postal Minister.7 However, commemoration stamps for the centenary were also expected by the general public. Already in 1927, De Nieuwe Gazet stated: “... wij naderen stillekens het jaar 1930. Het is the hopen dat de regeering van nu af voorzorgen zal nemen om die heuglijke gebeurtenis te vieren, ook door zegels, die buiten de banaliteit zullen zijn.”8 and the Post Office even received a private proposal for a commemoration series.9 At the initiative of the Fonds National de la Recherche Scientifique the Post Office agreed to issue a series commemorating the flights into the stratosphere of Professor Piccard, financed by the Fonds, in 1932.10 Finally there were mourning stamps for King Albert in 1934. The issue of

4 See directeur du timbre to directeur général, 13 Oct. 1918; directeur général to minister, 6 Dec. 1918, and La Cote Libre, 5 Dec. 1918, ibid.
5 See Ligue Wallonne de Liège to minister, 6 Dec. 1918, MP, 1919: timbre “Perron liégeois” and Vermeersch to minister, 26 July 1919, MP, 1919: timbre Termonde
6 No documents other than newspaper comments survive. MP, 1849-1924: timbres commémoratives
7 See Arrêté Royal, 1 Oct. 1928, Recueil
8 De Nieuwe Gazet, 23/24 April 1927, MP, 1930: timbres-poste et carte postale “Centenaire indépendance nationale”
9 Mr. G. Lallewaert from Boitsfort to minister, 28 Jan. 1929, ibid.
10 Fonds National de la Recherche Scientifique to minister, 6 Sept. 1932, MP, 1932: timbres-poste spéciaux dits F.N.R.S.
“timbres endeuillés” was an innovation proposed by the Postal Minister Van Cauwelaert and accepted by the council of ministers.¹¹ We can thus see that there was no institutionalised decision-making process leading to the creation of commemoration stamps. Rather ideas to create such stamps had a variety of origins, namely the postal administration, the government, parliamentary deputies, the press, private individuals and organisations.

Immediately after the end of the war Belgium for the first time produced stamps for political propaganda reasons: in 1919 for Belgian-occupied Germany and in 1920 for the annexed German territories of Eupen and Malmédy. Although the Postal Ministry had been informed by Maréchal Foch that issuing occupation stamps would be contrary to the principle of the maintenance of local legislation,¹² the War Ministry nevertheless agreed with the Postal Ministry on the need to print such stamps (fig. 108).³ The press both in Belgium and abroad saw this move positively, mainly because of the First World War precedent of German stamps in occupied Belgium. Het Vaderland wrote: “De geschiedenis wreekt zich zelfs bij middel van postzegels”, and L’Indépendance Belge told its readers of an article in the Daily Telegraph which called this “a mild retaliation!”¹⁴

The creation of stamps for Eupen and Malmédy was part of the official plan to integrate these annexed but in Belgian terminology reunited territories firmly into Belgium.¹⁵ In a detailed report the postal administration learned that the Belgian military commanders insisted on a rapid administrative take-over in order to: “... enlever toute illusion à ceux qui ne paraissent pas encore bien convaincus de la réalité de la situation et qui seraient tentés de faire usage de la

¹¹ Secrétair du Conseil to Ministre Van Cauwelaert, 1 March 1934, MP, 1932: Belgique Recollante et Mercure
¹² See Chef de section, Etat-Major to Ministre des Postes, 15 March 1919, MP, 1921 Timbre avec surcharge “Allemagne-Duisland”
¹³ See Ministère de la Guerre to Ministre des Postes, 21 June 1919, ibid.
¹⁵ On the annexation see Doepgen, Heinz, Die Abtretung des Gebietes von Eupen-Malmedy an Belgien im Jahre 1920, Bonn 1966
faculté que le traité de paix laisse aux habitants d’exprimer par écrit ... leur désir de voir tout ou partie des dits territoires maintenu sous la souveraineté allemande.” Based on this report the director general insisted on the “question très urgente” of stamps for the annexed territories. These stamps circulated from the beginning of the Belgian administration of Eupen and Malmédy in January 1920 (fig. 109).

Furthermore, in 1931 a stamp representing a view of Eupen was included into the 1929 series of express stamps thus inserting a representation of the principal city of the annexed German territories into a definitive Belgian stamp series displaying views of Brussels, Ghent, Liège and Antwerp (fig. 104). Therefore both the 1920 and 1931 Eupen-Malmédy stamps were more than a mild retaliation but one of the ways in which the Belgian government manifested its determination to make permanent its control of Eupen and Malmédy.

Belgian inter-war definitive stamps were introduced either for practical or aesthetic reasons. The first two inter-war definitive stamp series of 1921 and 1922 replaced the 1919 Roi casqué series which was only a temporary series. Thus it is likely that they were created for practical reasons in order to reestablish postal normality after the disturbances caused by the occupation. The 1929 series of express stamps also appears to have been created for practical reasons, while dynastic reasons led to the issue of definitive stamp series in 1934 and 1936 which showed portraits of King Leopold III who succeeded his father Albert in 1934.

All other definitive stamp series issued in the inter-war period were created because aesthetic criticisms of existing series led to the creation of new but

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16 Inspecteur de direction to directeur général, 3 July 1919, MP, 1921: timbre avec surcharge “Eupen-Malmédy”
17 Note directeur général to Directions P., E. et C., 7 July 1919, ibid.
18 See Décret, 29 Jan. 1920, Recueil
19 In 1940 similar stamps celebrated the reunification of the territories with Germany. See Krüger, Karl Heinz, Deutschlands Geschichte im Spiegelbild seiner Briefmarken, Marburg 1993, p. 167
20 Both series are badly documented since only the royal decree introducing them survives. See Arrêté Royal, 17 May 1921, Recueil
21 See Arrêté Royal, 15 Feb. 1929, ibid.
in turn not always successful stamps. This process was initiated by the 1922 stamps created by Léon Houyoux and displaying a portrait of King Albert which was widely criticised for its ugliness (fig. 102). A royal decree replaced all existing definitive series by three new series, two displaying new portraits of the King and one showing the Belgian heraldic lion. While the new portraits of King Albert issued in 1929 and 1931 did not lead to further complaints, the *lion héraldique* stamps issued in 1929 were again heavily criticised (fig. 103). Private individuals complained that their value was badly visible or that they seemed to display the Flemish (nationalist) lion instead of the Belgian heraldic beast, in the Senate these stamps received negative criticism from all parties and Senator Vinck personally complained: "Quelle vulgarité ...", and thought of the lion: "... à pleurer, n'est-il pas vrai." As a result, the Post Office proposed to replace the *lion héraldique* series and issued a new series in 1932. It displayed classical representations of Ceres and Mercury (figs. 105, 106) which were, however, criticised as even uglier than the *lion héraldique* series they replaced which prompted the *Revue Postale* to comment: "Je suis sûr que les Wallons eux-mêmes aimeront encore mieux le Lion de Flandre." The problem of an acceptable image for the lower values of Belgian definitive stamps was only solved in 1936 when another new series replaced the Ceres and Mercury stamps. This series displayed once more the Belgian heraldic lion. Probably in order to avoid any possible confusions with the Flemish lion, the series’ Belgian character was underlined both by its name and the iconographic elements employed: the

22 See newspaper complaints in MP, 1921: timbre type Houyoux
23 See Arrêté Royal, 7 Sept. 1928, Recueil
24 See for example letter of complaint from Liège, illegible signature, 4 Dec. 1931, MP, 1928: “Lion héraldique”
25 See Lecharlier to minister, 4 Oct. 1930, ibid.
26 Account of Senate session of 11 May 1932 in *Revue Postale*, June 1932, MP, Timbre Poste “Cardinal Mercier” Monument
27 Letter Vinck to Ministre des Postes, 29 Nov. 1931, MP, 1932: Belgique Recoltante et Mercure
28 Note, Direction Générale, 12 Jan. 1931, MP, 1928: “Lion héraldique”
29 *Revue Postale*, June 1932, MP, Timbre Poste “Cardinal Mercier” Monument
stamps were called “Petit sceau de l’Etat” while a crown appeared on top and the royal ermine fur in the background of the heraldic lion (fig. 180).30

The period immediately following the First World War witnessed a sharp increase in the number of fund-raising stamps.31 A detailed internal report explained the international post-war increase of fund-raising stamps: the warring countries were exhausted and a profound social upheaval had shaken the pre-war charitable institutions. In times of economic hardship: “... seul un effort financier minime, mais demandé à la généralité de la collectivité, pourrait produire des sommes en rapport avec l’énormité des besoins.” Thus issuing fund-raising stamps “… constituait un moyen extrêmement souple pour la perception de petites oboles individuelles, et ... proportionnait assez exactement l’invention à la vie active de chacun.” The report then compared various international cases trying to find the most apt solution for Belgium. Much of the interest was focussed on the annual Swiss Pro Juventute stamps which were frequently named as a successful model and the Belgian Post Office even received detailed information on the organisation of Pro Juventute from its Swiss counterpart.32

By 1926 the number of organisations33 or even individuals34 asking for the issuing of fund-raising stamps had increased considerably. In 1926 the Postal Minister had decided to issue a stamp in favour of the Oeuvre des Tuberculeux de guerre alone.35 For the following year, the director general of the Post Office argued against both too many stamp series, since this decreased their philatelic

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30 The dossier on these stamps only contains some preliminary stamp projects but no written information, see MP, 1935: petit sceau de l’Etat
31 1920, 22, 23: Pour les invalides, 1925, 26: Pro tuberculais belli, 1926: Inondations
32 See anon. report, Les timbres poste au service de la bienfaisance, no date [1926/27]; and (Swiss) Oberpostdirektion to Direction générale des postes de Belgique, 16 March 1927, MP, 1926/27: antituberculeux
33 Various charities such as the Association nationale belge contre la tuberculose, the Oeuvre nationale des Invalides de la guerre or the Ligue contre le cancer were competing for fund-raising stamps. See ibid.
34 Député suppléant Simon of Trazegnies demanded a fund-raising stamp for the reconstruction of Trazegnies castle, see Note, directeur général, 10 Feb. 1926, ibid.
35 Note, directeur général, 17 Aug. 1926, ibid.
value, and against the attribution of an unfair monopoly over fund-raising stamps to a single charity. He thus proposed to split the profit "... au prorata de l'importance des œuvres philanthropiques intéressées...". This proposal was implemented and the Comité National Belge de Défense contre la Tuberculose, an association of three anti-tuberculosis charities, acquired the sales monopoly of the "antituberculeux" series appearing annually from 1928 onwards and normally received 80% of the profit.

Apart from the annual anti-tuberculosis series the Post Office issued 26 fund-raising stamp series between 1928 and 1940. They appeared for a great variety of purposes ranging from erecting national monuments and child welfare to propagating the use and development of the aeroplane. Applications for these fund-raising stamps came from interested organisations and since at least 11 of the successful applying organisations enjoyed royal patronage, this seems to have been a good way of securing administrative approval for a fund-raising stamp.

Finally, in the inter-war period the Post Office also issued advertisement stamps, a Belgian invention interrupted in 1900 because the Universal Postal Union had forbidden the international use of special stamps. This was no longer the case in the inter-war period and thus advertisement stamps could again fulfil their purpose of announcing future events not only at home but also abroad. The stamps announced the 1935 Brussels world exhibition and the 1938 water exhibition in Liège and they were created at the initiative of the organisers of these exhibitions.

36 Note, directeur général to ministre, 28 Oct. 1926, *ibid*.
37 See minister to Comité National belge de Défense contre la Tuberculose, 16 May 1928, MP, 1928-29: timbres antituberculeux "Cathédrales"
38 Patronage of charities was of course a traditional activity of the Royal Family. The charities benefiting from fund-raising stamps and enjoying royal patronage included: Monumet National à la Gloire de l'Infanterie Belge (Albert), Orval (Albert and Elisabeth), Comité national de propagande aéronautique (Leopold III) and Appel de la Reine (Astrid)
39 See above, p. 39
40 See correspondence in MP, 1934: Exposition universelle de Bruxelles 1935 and 1938/4
The effects on the monetary system caused by the war and the occupation proved to be a more difficult problem for Belgium to solve than the disturbances in the postal system. By October 1918 an estimated 3 - 3.5 billion marks circulated in Belgium but they had lost about 50% of their market value. The government nevertheless decided to exchange all marks at the overvalued rate of 1.25 fr. per mark imposed by the German authorities in 1914. This decision helped to translate much of the war-time inflation directly into the post-1918 Belgian economy.

The annexation of the German cantons of Eupen and Malmédy also caused the same problem of the exchange of marks into francs, however, in this case the conditions were less favourable, the rate was 1 franc per mark. “Il importait aussi de leur [the inhabitants of Eupen-Malmédy] donner l’impression que nous les considérons comme des nationaux, ...” and “Le Gouvernement a estimé au surplus que ce geste généreux serait accueilli comme un témoinage de sincère sympathie à l’égard de la population libérée, auquel celle-ci ne manquerait pas de répondre par un regain d’attachement à la Patrie recouverée et de confiance envers elle.” Thus the inhabitants of Eupen and Malmédy got 20% less for their marks than their new compatriots and were furthermore expected to develop feelings of attachment and confidence towards their “patrie”. However, both exchange rates were well above the market value of the mark and the Eupen exchange rate was thus slightly closer to the economic reality but still mainly a psychological means of integrating the annexed territories firmly into

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41 See Van der Wee, H.; Tavernier, K., *La Banque Nationale de Belgique et l’histoire monétaire entre les deux guerres mondiales*, Bruxelles 1975, p. 26 and p. 35
42 See Ministère des Finances, *Retrait des monnaies allemandes*, 7 Dec. 1918 in BNB, SdC, u. a., Do: *Retrait des marks*
43 The Brussels price index (1914=100) rose to 639 in 1919. See Van der Wee; Tavernier, *op. cit.*, pp. 35-40
44 See Chambre des Représentants, *Projet de loi*, proposed by Prime Minister Theunis and Interior Minister Berryer, 21 March 1922, in BNB, SdC, u. a., Do: *illegible title*
Belgium.

Soon after the war therefore no German banknotes were circulating in Belgium. Since August 1914, however, coins had disappeared. Even by 1925 the circulation of gold coins was “nulle” and the circulation of their silver equivalents “pratiquement nulle”. Paper banknotes of 1, 2, 5 and 20 fr. circulated instead together with zinc centimes coins. The re-introduction of coins proved difficult due to a combination of economic and legal factors. Belgium was still bound by the Latin Monetary Union and was only allowed to mint its divisionary and legal tender coins in silver. However, the silver price had risen during the war so that the silver value of a 1 fr. coin rose to a maximum of 2.63 fr. in February 1920. Thus: “L’émission de ces billets [d’un franc] a dû être maintenue après l’armistice par suite de la hausse de l’argent qui aurait rendu illusoire la frappe de monnaies divisionnaires en ce métal.”

Due to the disappearance of coins, the banknotes of smaller denominations quickly deteriorated and were especially unpopular. “Les plaintes du public sont générales. ... Beaucoup de billets, spécialement en province, sont sales et détériorés.” In July 1921 the silver value of a 1 fr. coin was 0.99 fr. and the BNB thought that soon new silver coins could be minted. However, the Commissaire des Monnaies thought that the BNB’s plans were illusory and feared that new issues of silver coins would only lead to more hoarding. He argued that Belgium should follow the French example of issuing tokens made out of a cheaper metal than silver, for example nickel. In order to avoid legal problems with the Latin Monetary Union, these tokens were defined as having

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45 See report Système monétaire en Belgique, 12 March 1925, BNB, SdC, u. a., Do: Monnaies, monnayage et frappe
46 In June 1914 it was worth 0.40 fr.. See Report governor and secretary BNB to minister, 14 July 1921, MR, Administration des Monnaies, Supplément, 1913-1921, vol. I, p. 362
47 Report governor and secretary BNB to minister, 14 July 1921, ibid., p. 361
48 Commissaire des Monnaies to minister, 25 July 1921, ibid., p. 365
49 Report governor and secretary BNB to minister, 14 July 1921, ibid., p. 359-363
the character not of coins but of metallic bonds with a value of 1 fr.50 These nickel tokens, the so-called *jetons*, were issued in 1922.

Belgium witnessed a period of prolonged currency instability after the war. Along with most Western governments, the Belgian government initially thought that it would prove possible to go back to the *status quo ante* simply by going back to the gold standard and the convertibility of the franc, and they furthermore firmly counted on the German reparations which were expected to pay for the totality of war damages.51 The hopes pinned on the reparations remained illusory52 and only in 1925 were a series of measures undertaken for the stabilisation of the national currency. These measures included a stabilisation rate of 175 fr. per pound sterling, a reform of the BNB, the withdrawal from the Latin Monetary Union and the creation of a new currency unit for international transactions called the *Belga* (b.) which was worth 5 francs.53

This new currency unit, however, also had important psychological aspects. Firstly, the term “Belga” was understood to be a national term, not only because it was derived from the country’s name but also because the same word could be used in both Flemish and French.54 Secondly, the Belga was worth 5 fr. and therefore one Belga could buy about as much as one pre-war franc. This aspect became particularly important in connection with the 5 fr./1 b. coins minted in 1930. In the beginning, these coins were rare and one newspaper explained why: The pre-war silver 1 fr. coins were the symbol of fin-de-siècle prosperity, and

“... sans doute, nous savons tous qu’un belga ne sera jamais cinq francs; mais ... notre appauvrissement nous fait horreur au point que nous le

50 Commissaire des Monnaies to minister, 25 July 1921, *ibid.*, pp. 365-369
51 The view of a simple return to the *status quo ante* under the leitmotif of the return to the gold standard was widespread and propagated, for example, by the influential British Cunliffe Report of 1918. See Kindelberger, Charles P., *A Financial History of Western Europe*, London 1984, pp. 329-345
52 The Belgian claims on Germany mounted up to a total of 15 billion fr. of which it finally only received 3 billion gold marks (worth 2 billion by 1914 standards) in the period of 1921-31. See Van der Wee; Tavernier, *op. cit.*, pp. 31-146
53 See *ibid.*, pp. 193-208
54 See Baudhuin, Germain, *Histoire économique de la Belgique, 1914-1939*, vol. 1, Bruxelles 1946, p. 171

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nions contre tout évidence. C’est ce qui explique que le belga de nickel soit si recherché. On le confond, pour le plaisir, avec les cent sous d’avant-guerre. Et comme tout ici-bas n’est qu’illusions il se trouve que sept millions de Belges sesentent un peu plus riche et un peu plus heureux lorsqu’un belga de nickel s’arrête dans leur poche” (fig. 126).55

This quotation shows very clearly both the nostalgia for a lost pre-war golden age, the shock of inflation and the psychological aspects of the Belga. Although the stabilisation of 1926 was the final acknowledgement that a simple return to the *status quo ante* was impossible, the Belga symbolised for some Belgians exactly this illusory return to the pre-war years. Yet on the whole the Belga was a failure. Despite efforts of the BNB and encouraging newspaper articles, the Belga never replaced the franc in everyday life and it caused numerous problems due to confusions between francs and Belgas in international transactions. The government planned to abolish it just before the outbreak of the Second World War, an event which prolonged the Belga’s existence until 1946.56

No coins other than the 1922/23 jetons appeared before the stabilisation of the franc in 1926 and Belgium only introduced its first real post-war coin series replacing the jetons in the beginning of the 1930s. Although the sources reveal little about the exact reasons for the introduction of these coins the *Commission permanente pour l’étude des questions monétaires* seems to have been an important advisory body in coin matters. The commission was composed of parliamentary deputies and delegates of the Finance Ministry.57 Thus it is likely that most coins minted after 1930 were introduced after consultations of this commission. Since the reforms of 1926 not only stabilised the currency but also introduced the Belga endowed with considerable psychological meaning, the reason for the creation of the coins issued between 1930 and 1933 was a

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55 L’Echo du Soir, 19 Oct. 1930, MR, 604/7
56 See BNB, SdC, u. a., Do: Belga 1925
57 Only some protocols of and references to this commission survive, see for example, Commission ..., des questions monétaires, 12 June 1933, MR, 604/7
combination of practical necessity with the psychological intentions of the Belga.

The role of the Commission monétaire in the decision-making process is better documented for the 1930 10 fr./2 b. coins commemorating the centenary of Belgian independence. The idea for commemoration coins came from the Finance Ministry, the Commission monétaire, however, showed great interest in the production of the commemoration coins and was involved in the choice of the imagery.

After the accession to the throne of Leopold III new coins showing the new sovereign appeared: 20 fr. silver coins in 1934 and 5 fr. nickel coins in 1936. Both of these coins were identical to their predecessors of King Albert’s reign both in size and metal and thus they were clearly introduced in order to mark the new reign. The large 5 fr. nickel coins, however, seemed inappropriate especially in view of the 28% devaluation of the Belgian franc in March 1935. They were frequently mistaken for the similar 20 franc coins and: “Elles étaient au surplus trop lourdes et trop encombrantes pour une valeur devenue minime depuis la dévaluation de l’unité monétaire.” Already in 1934 the Commission monétaire had proposed a series of changes in the Belgian coinage system including the suppression of certain coins and the reduction of the size of others, and the Finance Ministry eventually decided to reform the coinage system completely in December 1936, consciously abandoning the previous strategy of large nickel coins trying to remind people of the pre-war silver coins. The new system of distinct and often smaller coins was legally implemented in 1938 leading to several new coin series issued at the end of the inter-war period.

58 See Commissaire des Monnaies to commissioned artists, 19 Jan. 1930, MR, 604/5
59 See Commission ... des questions monétaires, 21 Feb. 1930, MR, 604/5
60 The dossiers relating to these coins contain little detailed information. See MR, 601/16 and 604/6
61 This slightly exaggerated view came from the Finance Minister, see Finance Minister to Minister of Transport, 29 Dec. 1938, MR, 604/7
62 Commissaire des Monnaies to minister, 3 Dec. 1934, MR, 601/15
63 Commissaire des Monnaies to minister, 21 Dec. 1938, MR, 604/7 gives an account of the reform.
64 See Banque Nationale de Belgique (ed.), Le franc belge, Bruxelles 1989, p. 79
Two coins were, however, issued for reasons other than the new reign or the new coinage system. In 1935 the Monnaie Royale issued a coin advertising on the obverse the Brussels world exhibition and commemorating the centenary of the Belgian railways on the reverse. Victor Tourneur, president of both the Société royale Les Amis de la Médaille d'Art and the Société royale de numismatique de Belgique, and co-organiser of the 1935 universal exhibition successfully applied to the Finance Ministry for the minting of these coins. Finally, the 1939 50 fr. silver coins were minted because these coins were meant to replace 50 fr. banknotes issued by the BNB in order to settle the debt of the state towards the bank. The choice of silver rather than nickel was the result of the "... incertitude où l'on se trouve actuellement en ce qui concerne l'utilisation de ce metal [nickel] à des fins militaires." Thus new 50 fr. silver coins were issued for financial reasons and silver was employed because nickel might be used for military purposes in times of war, which of course seemed ever more imminent by October 1939.

Banknotes

As for the previous periods, there is very little written evidence relating to the decision-making process leading to the printing of new Belgian banknotes. The first post-war series appeared between 1920 and 1922 and was called Série Nationale. The BNB had begun with its creation during the war and these banknotes were used in order to replace the German marks and the war-time banknotes issued by the Société Générale. After the stabilisation of the currency in 1926, new banknotes appeared mentioning the new currency unit of the Belga, 50 fr./10 b. notes in 1927, 10.000 fr./2000 b. notes in 1929 and 100 fr./20 b. notes in 1928-1929.

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66 See Banque Nationale de Belgique (ed.), Le franc belge, Bruxelles 1989, p. 79
67 Directeur général to minister, 20 Oct. 1939, MR, 605/3
68 See Banque Nationale de Belgique (ed.), Le franc belge, Bruxelles 1989, p. 192
1933. At least the 1929 notes appear to have been issued due to inflation.69

No new banknotes appeared under the pre-war reign of Leopold III. However, the BNB prepared at least two new series of banknotes. In 1937 it commissioned new 500 fr./100 b. and 1000 fr./200 b. notes which received royal approval but were never produced.70 A further series was commissioned in 1939 but issued in a slightly altered form only after the end of the German occupation of Belgium in 1944.71 While the production of the second series was delayed by the war, the reasons why the 1937 series were never printed might be that they still mentioned their value in Belgas. Evidently failing even before the outbreak of the war, Belgas did not appear anymore on the 1939 banknote proposals.72

69 See *ibid.* p. 192-193
70 The sources fail to reveal why this series was never printed, see BNB ac. 3240, 11.04.01.00
72 An Arrêté Royal was ready to abolish the Belga in December 1939, see Directeur général to BNB, 7 Dec. 1939, BNB, SdC, u. a., Do.: *Belga 1925*
Commissioning and Choice of Imagery

Stamps

If a new stamp series needed to be created, the Post Office, rather than organising a contest among artists or the general public, usually directly commissioned an artist or an engraver for the creation of the imagery and at times directly commissioned the print firm Malvaux. The artists and engravers commissioned included Léon Houyoux, Jean de Bast, Gustave Montenez, Mauquoy, P. Goblet, A. Holler, Buisseret, Poortman and Pellens. While the collaboration with some artists proved to be rather problematic the Post Office began collaborating almost on a regular basis with others, notably Jean de Bast.

The choice of the imagery on definitive stamps is scarcely documented, usually only the royal decrees introducing them survives. However, the choice of the appropriate imagery did not seem to have posed great problems: as in previous periods, it seems to have been an unwritten rule that a portrait of the monarch should figure on higher values of definitive stamps and that definitive stamps of smaller denominations could also display Belgian heraldic symbols.

In 1932 the Post Office issued a definitive series displaying different imagery, Ceres and Mercury (figs. 105, 106). As we have seen above, this innovative but in the end unsuccessful choice was caused by a series of complaints about the 1929 Lion héraldique series. The director general stated: "En ce qui concerne le type 'Lion héraldique', spécialement visé dans les plaintes reçues ces derniers temps, ... il a été décidé de remplacer ce type de timbre par deux modèles nouveaux, conçus et gravés par deux artistes des plus qualifiés:

73 See COB, pp. 58-76

74 See for example the long correspondence between the Post Office and Montenez who was complaining about the distortion of his work by the engraver in MP, 1929: timbre-poste type "Montenez" grand format. The director general described Montenez as "un artiste-graveur de grand talent" with a "caractère difficile et chicanier".

75 See Recueil
We have seen that the post-war period witnessed a considerable rise in the number of fund-raising stamps. A report of the postal administration discussed at length the “difficulté toute particulière” of the choice of the theme of fund-raising stamps: “... il est essentiel que [les timbres de bienfaisance] aient un aspect qui sollicite en quelque sorte le public.” Discussing several ways of achieving this, the report concluded that it would be desirable to have a certain iconographic continuity within the fund-raising series. In practice, however, the postal administration usually left the choice of the imagery and the commissioning of the artist up to the charities issuing fund-raising stamps or the exhibition organisers issuing stamps advertising a particular fair. Yet the Postal Minister always had to give the final approval for all stamps and the administration at times induced the charities to change some of their proposals. The charities collaborated with artists and engravers who were often also working directly for the Post Office such as Jean de Bast. Well-known artists such as Anto Carte even at times volunteered to work benevolently for the charities for the creation of stamp designs.

From 1928 onwards, a so-called Commission philatélique, composed of the director general of the Post Office and four philatelists chosen by the Postal Minister, gave advice on all philatelic matters. Only very few documents of this commission survive - possibly most of its meetings did without a written protocol. The existing documents seem to indicate that the commission often

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Note, directeur général to minister, 7 Dec. 1931, MP, 1932: Belgique Recolante et Mercure
 anon., Les timbres poste au service de la bienfaisance, no date [1926/27], MP, 1926/27: antituberculeux
See for example minister to Comité National belge de Défense contre la Tuberculose, 16 May 1928, MP, 1928-29: timbres antituberculeux “Cathédrales” and Président du comité exécutif, Exposition ... de Bruxelles 1935 to minister, 29 July 1933, MP, 1934: Exposition universelle de Bruxelles 1935
See for example directeur général to Comité National belge de Défense contre la Tuberculose, 23 May 1929, MP, 1929-30: timbres antituberculeux “Sites”
See Comité Monument Cardinal Mercier to directeur général, 1 Aug. 1932, MP, Timbre-poste “Cardinal Mercier”, Monument
See Arrêté Royal, 1 Oct. 1928, Recueil
agreed with its president, the director general of the Post Office.82

Finally, royal approval was always needed for the representation of a member of the Royal Family. From 1936 onwards, however, the Post Office not only had to receive royal approval for stamps displaying a member of the Royal Family but it also had to inform the court in advance about any plans to issue stamps displaying a royal theme.83 In 1939 a member of the Royal Family even directly influenced the imagery displayed on stamps: Queen Elisabeth, the widow of King Albert, insisted on adding a portrait of the late Queen Astrid (1905-1935) to a series of Red Cross stamps which were originally intended to display the living members of the royal family alone.84 Both of these instances form part of the general increase in royal power in many aspects of Belgian public life in the 1930s, notably foreign policy.85

Coins

In most cases, the Monnaie Royale commissioned one or several artists with the creation of new coin designs, usually those whom they considered to be "[les] principaux artistes-médailleurs établis en Belgique."86 In the case of the 1935 commemoration coins, for example, the Monnaie Royale organised a limited contest among four artists who were commissioned with the creation of a coin design which was proposed by the numismatic expert Victor Tourneur who had asked for the commemoration coins to be created.87

Yet in the 1930s the Monnaie Royale also organised at least two formal

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82 See for example directeur général to minister, 13 Feb. 1929, MP, 1930; timbres-poste et carte postale "Centenaire indépendance nationale"
83 See note, directeur général to minister, 14 Oct. 1936, MP, 1938/3
84 See Cabinet du Roi to minister, 3 Feb. 1939, MP, 1938/5
86 See Ministre des Finances to de Bremaeker, 19 May 1933, MR, 604/5
87 See Tourneur to Minister Jaspar, 13 Feb. 1934 and Copie, Projet pour la frappe d'une pièce de quarante francs ... no date [1934], MR, 601/15
contests. Unfortunately, they are badly documented but it seems that none of them was an overwhelming success. For the creation of the 1930 centenary commemoration coins the mint organised a contest among 10 artists. While some artists were very eager indeed to participate, others declined to participate either because they did not have enough time or because they considered themselves too old for such contests, a procedure which "... est surtout intéressant pour l'émulation de la jeunesse, dont je ne suis plus, hélas!!".

In about 1937, the Monnaie Royale organised a further contest for the design of the coins to be introduced after the reform of the coinage system. Few written sources survive documenting this contest; however, the director of the Monnaie Royale subsequently summarised it: The contest was organised among 12 participants; excellent and internationally-renowned artists, however, failed to participate while others "de moindre valeur" only participated because of the prize money offered to each participant (3000 fr. per proposal). "Le concours ne fut pas un succès et il coûta très cher." Instead of this unsuccessful procedure, the director proposed to commission one or two artists "... dont la compétence dans l'art de la gravure des monnaies serait universellement reconnue ..." with the creation of a new model, the theme of which was to be decided beforehand.

In the case of direct commissions, the choice of the final proposals was made at an administrative level. In the case of contests, however, the Commission permanente pour l'étude des questions monétaires played an important part. On the occasion of the 1930 commemoration coins its members showed themselves "... vivement intéressés à l'aspect artistique que

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88 One letter refers to a general coin contest organised in 1936, but apart from this source no evidence for this contest survives. See Commissaire des Monnaies to minister, 15 Jan. 1937, MR, 604/6
89 See Commissaire des Monnaies to artists, 16 Jan. 1930, MR, 604/5
90 Godefroi Devreese was then 69 years old. Devreese to Commissaire des Monnaies, 7 Feb. 1930, MR, 604/5. De Bremaecker inquired about possible new coin designs before this was even envisaged by the Monnaie Royale. See Commissaire des Monnaies to minister, 29 April 1929, ibid., and see Le Roy to Commissaire des Monnaies, 20 Jan. 1930, ibid.
91 Directeur de la Monnaie to directeur général de la Trésorerie, 16 Aug. 1939, MR, 605/3
présenteraient les nouvelles pièces de 10 frs"92 and they subsequently chose the winning proposals of the contest.93 The commission also chose the winning proposals of the contests organised in 1935 and 1936.94 It is likely that it also selected the proposals resulting from the contest organised in about 1937 although in this case the sources fail to specify the choosing body.95 The final outlook of the proposals was at times influenced by the administration or by the Commission monétaire demanding the artists to modify their proposals96 or by the incompatibility of the artists’ proposals with the technical possibilities of engraving.97 All coins, finally, needed the approval of the Finance Minister and, in the case of a royal portrait, the approval of the King.98

Banknotes

Due to the scarcity of written sources we are badly informed about the commissioning and choice of the imagery on Belgian inter-war banknotes. The only exception is part of a correspondence of the BNB with Emile Vloors, the creator of the 1933 100 fr./20 b. notes (fig. 34).99 Initially, the BNB seems to have commissioned at least two artists with the creation of new 100 fr./20 b. notes in 1929 and the bank appears to have chosen Vloors’ project for the new

92 Illegible signature [member of the Commission monétaire], to Verhaeghe, secretary of Commission monétaire, 25 Feb. 1930, MR, 604/5
93 See Commission permanente pour l’étude des questions monétaires, 21 Feb. 1930, MR, 604/5
95 Directeur de la Monnaie to directeur général de la Trésorerie, 16 Aug. 1939, MR, 605/3, is the only reference to this contest and fails to specify who chose the winning proposals.
96 See for example Commissaire des Monnaies to minister, 21 March 1930, MR, 604/5
97 A coin proposal by Samuel for example “... se présente favorablement au format du médaillon, mais il perd ses qualités ... une fois réduit à celui d’une pièce de monnaie.” Thus a different artist, Bonnetain, was commissioned. Note, 21 Jan. 1922, MR, 604/2
98 See for example Cabinet du Roi to Commissaire des Monnaies, 27 Nov. 1934, MR, 601/16
99 This correspondence is incomplete and is mainly concerned with execution problems of the design, after the choice of the artist and after the creation of the original design. See BNB ac, 3240, 11.11.41
banknotes. The transformation of this project into an engraved model for new banknotes was, however, problematic and took much longer than the BNB anticipated.

In December 1930 Vloors was reminded by the bank to change the dimensions of his project and details of his proposals were criticised by the bank. The artist showed himself deeply disappointed and upset. Vloors' mood only changed after the bank told him of "... een schrijven van Gravin de Caraman Chimay, dat in zeer vleiende bewoordingen over Uw teekening spreekt. Ik ben ervan overtuigd dat de mij overgemaakte beoordeeling ook de gevoelens van de Koningin uitdrukt." After this royal encouragement Vloors started to rework the whole project, full of enthusiasm: "Hervatten we dan het geheel met moed." While Vloors changed his proposal again, the bank decided to change the Flemish spelling of Belga into Belgas. By February 1932, the bank could wait no longer and acquired the copy and reproduction rights of Vloors' designs for 25,000 fr. The banknotes finally appeared in December 1933.

In this period, the BNB issued three other banknote series, the Série Nationale (Minguet, Freund, 1919-1922), 50 fr./10 b. notes (Carte, 1927-28) and 10,000 fr./2000 b. notes (Montald, 1929). The Série Nationale series was apparently commissioned by the BNB during the First World War. The banknotes created by Carte were the first banknotes issued after the stabilisation of the franc in 1926. For these banknotes the BNB adapted proposals created by Carte in 1922 adding the new currency unit, the Belga, to the original proposal. The notes created by Montald were adaptations of the 1898 100 fr. notes created by the same artist and

100 A 1929 banknote proposal for the same value by a different artist, X. Mellery, survives. See I. 14.621, BNB SdC cat.
101 See BNB to Vloors, 24 Dec. 1930, BNB to Vloors, 14 Jan. 1931 and Vloors to BNB, 12 Feb. 1931, BNB ac. 32-40, 11.11.41
102 BNB to Vloors, 30 April 1931, ibid.
103 Vloors to BNB, 8 May 1931, ibid.
104 See Vloors to BNB, 28 Aug. 1931, BNB to Vloors, 1 Sept. 1931 and BNB to Vloors, 8 Feb. 1932, ibid.
105 See Banque Nationale de Belgique (ed.), Le franc belge, Bruxelles 1989, p. 192
106 Compare issued notes with Carte's proposal, 14 Aug. 1922, BNB SdC cat., I 14.592
were thus probably directly commissioned.

In general, the BNB thus seems to have directly commissioned several artists at the same time with the creation of new banknotes. The final imagery appears to have been chosen by the bank but, as the case of Vloors suggests, in collaboration with the artist. In some cases the BNB also adapted previously created banknotes designs for the creation of new notes required. In the case of a royal portrait, also the bank had to submit the proposal to the palace for approval.
5.2 Switzerland

Reasons for the Creation of Bearers of Value

Banknotes

After the end of the First World War the SNB, like its Belgian counterpart, expected to go back to the *status quo ante* and the gold standard of the pre-war years.¹⁰⁷ This led to attempts to reintroduce gold and silver coins as exclusive means of day-to-day payment instead of the banknotes of smaller denominations introduced during the war. In December 1921 the SNB encouraged its local branches, the Post Office and the customs offices not to hand out any 20 fr. notes but instead to issue gold coins and banknotes of larger denominations. This attempt at reducing the circulation of small denomination banknotes was rather unsuccessful because public demand for gold coins remained low and because small denomination banknotes were popular. In spite of this development the SNB was opposed to calls from industry for the introduction of a 10 fr. note due to its attachment to the Real Bills Doctrine which stipulated that banknotes should frequently circulate back to the central bank. In other words, in contrast to coins, banknotes were not intended to be means of everyday monetary activity but were rather perceived to be a form of bills of exchange.¹⁰⁸

In 1921 the SNB began to prepare a new series of 50 fr. notes to be issued as a pendant to the 100 fr. notes issued in 1918.¹⁰⁹ The sources fail to give the exact reasons for this plan but it is likely that as in the case of the 1918 100 fr. notes the SNB wanted to become less dependent on the London-based Waterlow and Sons printers who produced the existing 50 fr. notes. However, no new 50 fr. notes

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¹⁰⁸ See *ibid.*, pp. 20-24, 155-156 and 178
¹⁰⁹ See Schnyder, director SNB, to Durrer, 31 March 1931, SNB, 301.6
were finally produced. The SNB might have abandoned the project of printing a further banknote series in Switzerland both because the shipping of banknotes from Britain became less problematic after the war and because the Swiss-made 100 fr. notes of 1918 were counterfeited from 1923 onwards and were withdrawn from circulation in 1925. The SNB continued to use the 50, 100, 500 and 1000 fr. notes printed by Waterlow and Sons until 1957 when they were replaced with a new series printed in Switzerland.

In 1930 the SNB issued a new series of 20 fr. notes which replaced the 20 fr. notes circulating from 1914 onwards. The bank began working on these notes in 1924 and was already producing large quantities of them in 1926 when their printing was halted because technical experts of other European national banks considered the new notes to be inferior to the existing models in terms of their security. In 1930, these notes were nevertheless issued and no clear reasons for this decision are documented. While the SNB justified the introduction of the new notes with their smaller and thus more practical size compared to the previous series, the notes' security might have been improved after 1926, although this is not documented.

**Coins**

After the First World War the market value of the Swiss franc had risen considerably compared to the other currencies of the member states of the Latin Monetary Union, especially France and Belgium. As a result, Switzerland was flooded with foreign silver coins. In October 1920 the government banned the

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110 The sources fail to reveal the reasons for the abandonment of the plan for new 50 fr. notes, see SNB, 301.6
111 For an account of the counterfeited 100 fr. notes see Rechtsbureau, 13 March 1935, SNB, 330/339
113 See Ganz to Schnyder, SNB, 29 Nov. 1924 and SNB to Ganz, 23 June 1926, SNB, 330/339
114 Mitgeteilt, 12 July 1930, SNB, 330/339
115 The SNB's silver reserves doubled between 1919 and 1921. See Ruoss, op. cit., p. 132
import of foreign 5 fr. coins and declared them worthless in December of the same year.\textsuperscript{116} This move was contrary to the Latin Monetary Union treaty but was sanctioned by the Union in June 1921.\textsuperscript{117} In 1927 the Swiss government also banned all foreign gold coins leading for the first time since the foundation of the Confederation in 1848 to an exclusively Swiss coin circulation in Switzerland.\textsuperscript{118}

After banning all foreign 5 fr. coins in 1921, Switzerland had to mint considerable numbers of its own 5 fr. coins. Yet instead of minting more coins of the existing series, the Finance Ministry decided to change the design of the 5 fr. coins: “Das jetzige Münzbild stammt aus dem Jahre 1888. Seither hat sich die Geschmacksrichtung des Publikums geändert” (fig. 52).\textsuperscript{119} Thus a combination of practical reasons linked to the Latin Monetary Union and aesthetic considerations due to changing taste led to the creation of new 5 fr. coins issued in 1922.

In 1936 Switzerland issued its first ever commemoration coin commemorating the successful \textit{Wehranleihe}, the assignment of federal war bonds. The idea for these commemoration coins came from the medal company Huguenin Frères in Le Locle which together with the \textit{Schweizerische Numismatische Gesellschaft} (Swiss Numismatic Society) proposed to mint commemorative coins instead of the printing of official notes of thanks for the individuals who bought the federal war bonds. While this proposal was initially rejected by the government, after the unexpected success of the assignment, the government decided to mint special 5 fr. coins commemorating the \textit{Wehranleihe}.\textsuperscript{120}

In 1939 the Federal Mint issued 5 fr. coins commemorating the 600th

\textsuperscript{116} Ibid., p. 132. This ban also included all Belgian 1, 2 fr. and 50 ct. silver coins. See Schweizer, Arthur, \textit{Die neue Goldwährung}, Basel 1929, p. 83
\textsuperscript{117} See Van der Wee; Tavernier, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 48
\textsuperscript{118} See Schweizer, \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 83-84
\textsuperscript{119} Protokoll. 10 Jan. 1922, BA, 6100 (A) 1/1-15

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anniversary of the battle of Laupen (1339). The idea for these coins came from the committee organising the Laupen festivities and the committee also successfully applied for a federal contribution to the festivities from the profits of the minting of the commemoration coins. The issue of commemoration coins was profitable because although they were equal to ordinary coins in terms of their value, most of them were collected by the public and they were thus de facto taken out of the monetary system. All commemoration coins were therefore issued both for commemorative and fund-raising reasons.

Stamps

The first series of inter-war definitive stamps were introduced for practical reasons: the 1923 air mail series replaced overprinted definitive stamps used for air mail purposes after the introduction of air mail services in 1919, while in 1924 a definitive stamp series was introduced after changes in postal fares and a new series of tax stamps appeared modelled on these new definitive stamps.

The 1934 series, however, had its origin in press campaigns. Already in the late 1920s, newspaper articles argued that stamps could be an ideal means of advertising for the Swiss tourist industry, especially in times of economic crisis. In 1928 a Vevey newspaper wrote: “La Suisse néglige un excellent moyen de réclame: le timbre poste.” Newspapers as diverse as the major Zurich newspaper Tagesanzeiger and the Socialist Volksrecht and letters from as far away as Uruguay all raised the same idea: Swiss stamps should display Swiss

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121 The confederation supported the festivities with 75,000 fr., see Auszug aus dem Protokoll ... des schweizerischen Bundesrates, 4 Nov. 1938, BA, 6100 (A), 17
122 The sources fail to reveal what happened to the profits of the Wehranleihe coins.
123 See Zumstein (ed.), Katalog Schweiz/Liechtenstein, Bern 1985, p. 112
124 See Postamtsblatt, 1924, nos. 105 and 128
125 Feuilles d’Avis, Vevey, 10 Feb. 1928, PTT Bib., BG 0119
landscapes in order to stimulate tourism. Even the association of Swiss industrialists, the Vorort, wrote a letter to the Post Office requesting “Postwertzeichen die ... auf den Fremdenverkehr stimulierend wirken” and proposed landscapes as the appropriate imagery.

The director general of the Post Office, Furrer, summed up the problems connected with a possible creation of new definitive stamps called for by the public: the administration looked at stamps only in terms of their practical nature as bearers of value, philatelists however completely ignored this aspect, while advertising was at the forefront of the minds of the press and the tourist industry. He later reacted to the increasing press polemics culminating in an open letter published in the Luzerner Neuste Nachrichten on 10 April 1931. He replied to the letter’s author that the PTT was only responsible to parliament in certain matters and stated: “Je kitschiger das Bild, je grösser jedenfalls der Beifall der Menge. De gustibus non est disputandum.” Finally, an article of the Tagesanzeiger personally attacked Furrer prompting somebody in the Post Office, possibly Furrer, to write in the margin of the article “!!das genügt!” Earlier Furrer had suggested that in order to receive genuine new images for definitive stamps, a general contest might be the best solution. A contest was organised in 1932 and initiated the process leading to the new series issued in 1934.

In 1935 the Post Office acquired a new printing machine, a rotary press. “Die Anschaffung der neuen Druckanlage hat nun zur Folge, dass ungefähr im Zeitraum von drei Jahren alle unsere Marken ... neu ausgegeben werden müssen.” Due to the new technical possibilities of the rotary press the

127 Vorort to Post Office, 21 March 1930, ibid.
129 PTT to Mr. H. Meyer, 10 April 1931, ibid.
130 Tagesanzeiger, 23 Sept. 1931, ibid.
131 Juryprotokoll, 16 July 1931, ibid.
132 The acquisition is mentioned and dated in anon., Postverwaltung und Philatelie, no date [1936], ibid.
133 anon., Postverwaltung und Philatelie, no date [1936], ibid.
Post Office made a detailed report on the effects of the new machine on stamp production. It suggested reissuing the 1934 landscape series which had been widely criticised "... teilweise von der Presse und im Volk ...". Since the criticism had focused primarily on the style and the execution of the stamps rather than on the iconography chosen, the Post Office was convinced that the criticism of the series would diminish due to the new technique available. The series was reissued in 1936. The report also suggested replacing all other existing definitive stamp series and before the outbreak of the war, the Post Office issued two new series in 1938 replacing the tax stamps introduced in 1924 and the definitive stamp series introduced in 1914.

In the inter-war period the Post Office issued five series of commemoration stamps. Two series commemorated anniversaries of international organisations based in Switzerland, namely a 1924 series commemorating the 50th anniversary of the Universal Postal Union and a 1939 series commemorating the 75th anniversary of the Red Cross. The Post Office also commemorated the 50th anniversary of the Gotthard railway tunnel in 1932 and the introduction of the first mobile Post Office, the so-called Automobilpostbureau in 1937. The reasons leading to the creation of these commemoration stamps is badly documented, the only source available is the Postamtsblatt which often explains the importance of the commemoration but fails to reveal the origins of the idea of issuing commemoration stamps. The only exception is the series commemorating the 1932 disarmament conference in Geneva. These stamps were created because Geneva, the host town of the conference, applied to the Swiss government for stamps commemorating the event. The Post Office agreed to issue them in view of the "... ausserordentlichen

134 See Neue Markenausgaben infolge technischer Umstellung, 11 Jan. 1935, ibid.
135 See Postamtsblatt, 1938, nos. 20 and 167
136 The Postamtsblatt, for example, stated that the Automobilpostbureau series was introduced "Vielseitigem Wunsch gemäss ...", Postamtsblatt, 27 Aug. 1937
Wichtigkeit und Weltbedeutung dieser grossen internationalen Tagung ...".137

The annual Pro Juventute fund-raising series continued throughout the inter-war period. The Post Office, however, also received numerous demands for fund-raising stamps from other organisations or individuals,138 but usually rejected them arguing that such a move would set a precedent leading to innumerable further demands and that philatelists were opposed to an abundance of new stamps.139

In 1936, however, a series of fund-raising stamps appeared in favour of the federal war bonds, the Wehranleihe. The idea for stamps covering the expenses of the Wehranleihe came from the Finance and Defence Ministers, and the Post Office agreed to issue the stamps: “Da es sich bei der Wehranleihe um eine grossangelegte [,] von allen Bürgern Opfer heischende Veranstaltung im Interesse des Schutzes des Vaterlandes handelt, ...”140 Despite the fierce protests of the Pro Juventute charity, which feared financial losses due to the competition from other fund-raising stamps, the government decided to issue the series.141

In 1937 the Bundesfeierkomitee (Committee of the Federal Celebration), a charity which centred its fund-raising activities around the Swiss national day, applied for fund-raising stamps in order to expand its means of fund-raising.142 While the Post Office agreed to issue Bundesfeier stamps, the government refused to do so due to Pro Juventute’s complaints.143 In 1938, however, the Bundesfeierkomitee was able to break Pro Juventute’s monopoly over fund-raising stamps. This happened because the Bundesfeierkomitee was supported by

137 Postamtsblatt Nr. 12/1932, PTT Bib., BG 0134
138 For example, stamps were requested in favour of the unemployed (1931), intellectual refugees (1934), the emigration of Swiss families (1935) and the World Zionist Congress (1935). See PTT Bib., PAA 02029
139 See Generaldirektion to ministry, 29 July 1935, ibid.
140 Sektion Postwertzeichen to Sekretariat, 26 Aug. 1936, PTT Bib., BG 0134
141 See Sektion Postwertzeichen to Finanzverwaltung, 4 Sept. 1936, PTT Bib., BG 0134 and Loeliger to Wille, 16 Sept. 1936, Wille to Pilet-Golaz, 17 Sept. 1936, Pilet-Golaz to Wille, 21 Sept. 1936, PTT Bib., PAA 02084
142 On the charity see Don suisse de la Fête nationale (ed.), Don suisse de la Fête nationale, 1910-1985, Zurich 1985
143 See Notizen über eine event. Einführung einer Bundesfeiermarke, 21 Dec. 1937, PTT Bib., PAA 02084
the Foreign, Interior and Finance Ministries and because the press had criticised
the government's 1937 refusal of Bundesfeier stamps: "Es sei hier noch besonders
darauf hingewiesen, dass die ablehnende Haltung des Bundesrates in der
Ausgabe einer Bundesfeiermarke in der Tagespresse und zwar mehrheitlich in
den bürgerlichen Presseorganen lebhaft kritisiert wurde und Befremden
hervorrief." 144 Annual series of Bundesfeier stamps thus began to appear from
1938 onwards.

Finally, at the end of the inter-war period, the Post Office issued
advertising stamps for the first time on the occasion of the 1939
Landesausstellung (National Exhibition) in Zurich. 145 The organising committee
of the exhibition asked the Post Office to issue special exhibition stamps. The Post
Office agreed to issue stamps advertising the exhibition in advance and to
produce stamps sold exclusively at the fair. 146

144 Ibid., see also note, Sektion Postwertzeichen, 3 Feb. 1938, PTT Bib., BG 0111
145 On this very important exhibition see Meier, Irene, Die Landi, Zurich 1986
146 See Generaldirektion to minister, 7 July 1937, PTT Bib., PAA 02084
Commissioning and Choice of Imagery

In order to analyse the choice and commissioning of Swiss inter-war bearers of value some background information about the development of federal cultural politics is necessary. We have already noted that the numerous scandals which had accompanied the EKK ever since its foundation in 1887 led to a reorganisation of the commission in 1915. In 1916 the EKK received a new president, the Genevan art historian Daniel Baud-Bovy (1870-1958). The Eidgenössische Kommission für angewandte Kunst (Federal Commission for Applied Arts, EKfaK) was founded in 1917 and was also headed by Baud-Bovy who was president of both commissions until 1939. Baud-Bovy’s dream was “... de susciter un nouvel art suisse, plus typiquement national, moins dépendant de l’héritage des grandes nations qui nous entourent.” 147 Together with the Zurich painter Sigismund Righini, the EKK’s long-term vice-president (1922-1937), Baud-Bovy successfully worked for one of the main aims of the EKK and EKfaK, the economic support of Swiss artists.

Righini initiated the 1921 import limitations on art set up to prevent foreign art of “low” quality from flooding the Swiss market which reduced the value of imported art by over 70% from 1920 to 1921. These import restrictions remained in force between 1921 and 1924 and again between 1935 and 1954. For the benefit of Swiss artists Righini also suggested expelling foreign artists from city-owned studios in Zurich. 148 Apart from these import restrictions, a federal fund for the support of artists by state commissions was introduced in 1932. This led to the creation of over 150 state-commissioned mural paintings until 1945

147 Monnier, Philippe M., Les archives Baud-Bovy à la bibliothèque publique et universitaire, Genève 1970, p. 165
and the creation of the Schweizerisches Schulwandbildwerk, a collection of pictures showing aspects of Swiss life, culture and history to the country’s children, for which five competitions were organised between 1936 to 1940.\textsuperscript{149}

The EKK’s job-creation measures, however, were not limited to the mural paintings and the Schulwandbildwerk. As the analysis of the commissioning of new bearers of value will show, limited and general contests for the creation of new stamps were increasingly organised in order to create jobs for Swiss artists, especially after the establishment of the 1932 federal fund for the support of Swiss artists. The driving force behind this development appears to have been the Interior Ministry. Already in 1916, the Interior Ministry encouraged the other ministries to consult the EKK in all artistic matters explicitly including bearers of value.\textsuperscript{150} The Secretary of the Interior Ministry, Fritz Vital, was in charge of administering both federal art commissions from 1910-1940 and, as we shall see, Vital acted as the delegate of the Interior Ministry at numerous jury sessions often defending the (economic) interests of Swiss artists.

\textbf{Stamps}

The imagery of the annual Pro Juventute fund-raising stamps continued to be commissioned and paid for by the charity. After the end of the series of cantonal coats of arms in 1926, the charity issued its first commemoration stamps dedicating the entire 1927 series to the memory of the educationalist Heinrich Pestalozzi (1746-1827) on the occasion of the 100th anniversary of his death.\textsuperscript{151} In the following years, one of the four values of Pro Juventute stamps always commemorated a famous Swiss person. Although initially there seems to have been no plan for a long-term series of commemoration stamps, in 1932 the Post

\textsuperscript{149} See Poiatti, Myriam, \textit{L’esprit des années trente}; Vogel, Matthias, \textit{Staatskunst oder staatlich geförderte Kunst?}, in Bundesamt fur Kulturpflege (ed.) \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 71-80, pp. 81-94
\textsuperscript{150} Interior Minister to Post and Railway Minister, 20 Dec. 1916, BA, 8 (E)/37
\textsuperscript{151} No documents were located relating to this series.
Office suggested continuing the annual commemorations. It noted that these stamps were very popular and stated "[S]ie erfüllen die verdienstliche und dankbare Aufgabe, der heutigen Generation die Namen grosser Männer unseres Landes in sinniger[,] anspruchsloser Art in Erinnerung zu rufen." Thus the Pestalozzi series set a precedent for annual commemorations of famous Swiss people on Pro Juventute stamps which only ended in 1961. The charity usually proposed the person to be commemorated; however, the Postal Ministry had to approve of the charity's choice and the Postal Minister or the entire government often imposed changes. In 1939, for example, the Postal Minister noted: "Le conseil fédéral est d'avis qu'il serait préférable que Pro Juventute envisage une autre personnalité que Jürg Jenatsch ... ." Jenatsch was replaced by a portrait of general Hans Herzog.

The commissioning and choice of the imagery on inter-war stamps is unevenly documented and the sources are especially scarce on the early part of the inter-war years. The only source for this period is an internal postal document which gives a brief overview of five limited contests among artists which were organised by the Post Office between 1923 and 1931. The Post Office seems to have chosen the artists for all of these contests apart from a 1929 contest for which the EKK proposed the artists. There was a relatively even distribution of commissions to artists from all parts of Switzerland, always including French and German speakers, at times even Italian speakers, and there also was a notable balance among the cities in which the artists lived.

The composition of the juries judging the results of these contests varied,

152 Generaldirektion to Pro Juventute, 29 Jan. 1932, PTT Bib., BG 0113
153 Generaldirektion to Postdepartement, 1 Feb. 1932, Ibid.
154 The only exception is a 1952 series displaying a portrait of an anonymous boy. The Pro Patria stamps continued the commemoration series from 1962-1967.
155 Note on margin by Minister Pilet-Golaz on Generaldirektor to minister, 28 Jan. 1939, PTT Bib., PAA 02084. The source fails to reveal the reason for the government's dislike of Jenatsch (1596-1639), a Grisons general of the Thirty Years' War who became a literary figure especially through the writing of C. F. Meyer (1825-1898). Herzog (1819-1894) was the leader of the Swiss army during the Franco-German war of 1870-71 and supervised the internment of the French Boubaki army in Switzerland in 1871.
156 See Zusammenstellung der Ideen-Konkurrenzen ..., 11 Sept. 1930, updated 1931, PTT Bib., BG 0119
but always included members of the EKK or the EKfaK. The EKK formed the jury of two contests in 1923 while the 1929 jury was composed of members of the Post Office, the Pro Juventute charity and a member of the EKK and the juries of two contests organised in 1931 were composed of members of the EKK and the EKfaK and an engraver. Delegates of the Postal and at times the Interior Ministry’s secretary Vital participated in the discussions of the proposals but the choice of the winning proposal usually lay with the artistic jury.157

Due to the widespread calls for new definitive stamps promoting tourism the Post Office decided to organise a general stamp contest open to all Swiss citizens in 1932, the first in 32 years. The jury judging these proposals was composed of four members of the EKK and the EKfaK, two print experts and the director general of the Post Office. Furthermore, delegates of the Postal and Interior Ministries and of philatelist associations held advisory positions.158 As an alternative to using a jury the organisation of a national referendum had been proposed to the Post Office which, however, refused to do so because the idea was "... zweifellos originell, praktisch aber un durchführbar."159

The participating artists had full artistic freedom and the creation of proposals promoting tourism was not a condition of the contest. Thus the Post Office received 999 rather diverse proposals which were exhibited in the main hall of the federal parliament in Berne.160 The jury’s decision in favour of a numeral stamp instead of a landscape stamp, expected to promote tourism, provoked widespread protest. The Luzerner Neueste Nachrichten organised a ballot among its readers, the Swiss philatelist association began to collect signatures for a petition and many letters of complaint were received, such as the one from a Swiss living in Milan who thought that: "... es muss [der Jury] an

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159 Post Office to Grisch, 7 June 1932, PTT Bib., BG 0119. See also Grisch to PTT, 4 June 1932, ibid.
160 See Juryprotokoll, 24 Sept. 1932, ibid.
gesundem Menschenverstand fehlen."\textsuperscript{161} In the face of the increasing criticism the Postal Minister Pilet-Golaz made it clear, that the final decision would be taken by him. He told the Post Office: "J’ai déclaré expressément ... que je me bornais à laisser s’effectuer le concours en réservant mon entière liberté de détermination sur la suite à lui donner jusqu’à ce que ses résultats soient connus."\textsuperscript{162} And indeed when in 1933 the advertising theme was even taken up in an intervention in parliament demanding to make 1934 "l’année de la Suisse" in order to promote tourism,\textsuperscript{163} Pilet-Golaz asked the Post Office "... si nous pourrions envisager pour l’étranger des timbres à valeur touristique."\textsuperscript{164} Thus the competition of 1932 was organised in vain because a new series of definitive stamps displaying Swiss landscapes was directly commissioned and issued in 1934.\textsuperscript{165}

In 1935 the Interior Ministry asked the head of the stamp division of the Post Office, Gaudard, to explain the technical innovations related to the newly-acquired rotary press and their implications for stamp creation to the EKfaK. Gaudard reported back to the Post Office that the commission showed great interest in stamps and that the commission wished to be involved not only in the choice of the imagery but also in the execution and production of stamps. Gaudard feared that too much influence from the EKfaK would complicate matters since artistic ideas were likely to clash with the Post Office’s exigencies and he proposed to limit the commission’s influence to the choice of the imagery.\textsuperscript{166}

Despite its reservations towards the EKfaK the Post Office organised a limited contest for the creation of four new stamp series in 1935 together with the

\textsuperscript{161} Mr. Schibler to Post Office, 10 Sept. 1932, \textit{ibid.}
\textsuperscript{162} Pilet-Golaz to Post Office, 15 Sept. 1932, \textit{ibid.}
\textsuperscript{163} Interpellation Vallotton, 26 Sept. 1933, \textit{ibid.}
\textsuperscript{164} Pilet-Golaz to Post Office, 11 Nov. 1933, \textit{ibid.}
\textsuperscript{165} See Generaldirektion to minister, 26 April 1934, \textit{ibid.}
\textsuperscript{166} Gaudard, Wertzeichensektion to Generaldirektion, 9 Feb. 1935, \textit{ibid.}
EKfaK and the Interior Ministry. The Post Office's reason for this decision was probably the fact that the Interior Ministry provided the entire funding for the contest, drawing on the 1932 federal fund for the support of Swiss artists. The secretary of the Interior Ministry, Vital, explained that the aim of the contest was "... Künstlern, die sich mit angewandter Kunst befassen, Arbeit zu verschaffen" and to enable the artists to improve their experience in stamp creation. These aims alone justified the contest in the eyes of the Interior Ministry and Vital stated: "Wenn dabei dann noch Resultate herausschauen, die der Postverwaltung gediegene Briefmarken vermitteln, so ist dies umso erfreulicher." This contest indeed mostly created jobs for artists since only one proposal proved to be suitable for a stamp design and was issued in 1938.

The limited contest for the creation of advertisement stamps for the 1939 Landesausstellung was financed both by the Interior and Postal Ministries. Although the organisation of the contest was the responsibility of the Post Office, the Interior Ministry wanted to increase the number of invited and thus supported artists and to change the composition of the jury by enhancing the importance of the artists. The Post Office, however, was opposed to a predominance of artists in the jury: "An einem solchen Übergewicht der Künstlerschaft hat die PTT-Verwaltung kein Interesse, sondern muss dieser offensichtlichen Tendenz vielmehr entgegentreten" and refused one jury member proposed by the Interior Ministry because he figured on a black list of cooperators who had proved to be unreliable in the past. Ultimately a

167 See Einladung zur Erlangung von Entwürfen für neue schweizerische Briefmarken, no date [1935], and Juryprotokoll, 29 May 1935, ibid.
168 See Generaldirektion to ministry, 20 March 1935, ibid.
169 Juryprotokoll, 29 May 1935, ibid.
170 The series Symbolische Bilder by Karl Bickel.
171 See Einladung zum engeren Briefmarken-Wettbewerb 1938, 7 March 1938, PTT Bib., BG 0119
172 Interior Ministry to director general, 4 Nov. 1937, PTT Bib., PAA 02084
173 Generaldirektion to minister, 16 Nov. 1937, ibid.
174 See Sektion Postwertzeichen, Schwarze Liste, 9 Aug. 1933, PTT Bib., BG 0119 and Notizen fur Herrn Generaldirektor, no date [1938], PTT Bib., BG 0134
compromise between the two ministries was found, the jury being composed of two members of the EKfaK, the secretary of the Interior Ministry, Vital, three delegates of the Post Office and the director of the Landesausstellung, Meili.\textsuperscript{175} Despite long jury sessions lasting up to seven hours and despite discussions with the artists to improve their projects, none of the results of this contest satisfied the Post Office and it had to organise a further limited contest among new artists in order to get acceptable proposals.\textsuperscript{176}

Both contests which the Post Office organised together with the Interior Ministry were thus relative failures and although, unlike in the case of the 1932 general stamp contest, press polemics were consciously avoided by keeping the juries' decisions secret,\textsuperscript{177} the difficult cooperation with the Interior Ministry and its two art commissions obviously did not suit the Post Office. This could explain why the commissioning and the choice of the imagery for the Bundesfeier stamps issued from 1938 onwards excluded the Interior Ministry and only involved members of the postal administration and the stamp-issuing charity.\textsuperscript{178}

The final choice of the imagery on Swiss stamps continued to lie with the Post Office throughout this period. In 1937 the director general of the Post Office even stressed that a 1930 regulation confirmed the Post Office's exclusive right to choose the imagery displayed on stamps and he stated that only in some exceptional cases, for example the 1934 landscape series, the Post Office had voluntarily informed the entire government about new stamp designs.\textsuperscript{179} This affirmation of the Post Office's prerogatives might well have been a reaction against the Interior Ministry's attempts to influence stamp creation by means of its art commissions and the funds it offered to the Post Office for the organisation of the contests.

\textsuperscript{175} See Juryprotokoll, 1 Feb. 1938, PTT Bib., BG 0134
\textsuperscript{176} See Juryprotokoll, 1 Feb. 1938; Protokoll, 15 Feb. 1938; Generaldirektion to minister, 16 March 1939, PTT Bib., BG 0134 and Juryprotokoll, 29 June 1938, PTT Bib., BG 0119
\textsuperscript{177} See Juryprotokoll, 29 May 1935, PTT Bib., BG 0119
\textsuperscript{178} See for instance, Juryprotokoll, 13 Feb. 1939, PTT Bib., BG 0111
\textsuperscript{179} Generaldirektor to minister, 15 March 1937, PTT Bib., PAA 02084
In order to create the new 5 fr. coins the Finance Ministry organised a general coin contest open to all Swiss artists in 1921.\textsuperscript{180} About 200 artists participated producing a total of 542 proposals. The Finance Ministry designated a jury headed by the director of the Eidgenössische Münzstätte, Adrian, which included four artists and three academics, three of whom were members or former members of the EKK.\textsuperscript{181} None of the proposals, however, entirely satisfied the jury and it only awarded second prizes while a special federal fund for the support of unemployed artists was used to pay lump sums to further artists who were not awarded a prize.\textsuperscript{182} The jury decided to organise a further, limited contest among the six participants who had received second prizes. The government, however, decided to invite two more artists into this second round which provoked vociferous protests from one jury member who insisted on the jury’s right to choose the winning artists.\textsuperscript{183} At the end of the second round the jury decided to let the government choose between the proposals by the artists Maurice Sarkissoff and Paul Burkhard and the government finally chose Burkhard’s modified proposal in June 1922.\textsuperscript{184}

Two particular aspects of this procedure are noteworthy. Firstly, the citizenship criteria for the artists participating in the general contest was taken very seriously. Richard Petraschpe was one of the artists who received a lump sum for his proposal. Since the artist lived in Germany the Finance Ministry asked the Interior Ministry to find out whether he was Swiss.\textsuperscript{185} Only after

\textsuperscript{180} See Vorschriften betreffend den Wettbewerb ..., 30 Aug. 1921, BA, 8 (E)/37
\textsuperscript{181} See Protokoll, 10 Jan. 1920, BA, 6100 (A) 1/1-15. The EKK members were Prof. Paul Ganz (EKK 1912-1919), Raphael Lugeon, sculptor (EKK 1910-1914, 1919-1923) and Eduard Zimmermann, sculptor (EKK 1912-1916), see Staub, \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 178-212
\textsuperscript{182} See Mitgeteilt, 30 Jan. 1922, BA, 6100 (A) 1/1-15
\textsuperscript{183} See Burckhardt to Minister Chuard, 4 Feb. 1922, BA, 8 (E)/37
\textsuperscript{184} See Protokoll, 21 April 1922, BA, 6100 (A) 1/1-15. On this coin see also Puntener, August, \textit{Der Fünfliiber und sein Münzbild}, Altdorf 1987
\textsuperscript{185} Finance Ministry to Interior Ministry, 17 Jan. 1922, BA, 8 (E)/37
Petraschpe had proved his Swiss nationality did he receive the money.\textsuperscript{186}

Secondly, the use of a jury did not prevent the Adrian from trying to influence the commissioning of his favourite artist, Burkhard. Already in 1920 Adrian had tried to convince the Finance Minister to approve of Burkhard’s proposals for divisionary coins.\textsuperscript{187} While these coins were never minted, the commission for the 5 fr. coins went to Burkhard whom Adrian told: “Ich habe das Gefühl, dass Sie unter den wettbewerbenden Künstlern eigentlich der einzige waren, der ein richtiges Verständnis für ein Münzbild hat.”\textsuperscript{188} Although there is no evidence suggesting that Adrian manipulated the decisions of the jury of which he was president or the government’s final choice of Burkhard, Adrian nevertheless kept Burkhard informed about the jury’s attitudes towards the artist’s proposals in the second round of the contest and made a series of suggestions aimed at improving the proposal in order to please the jury.\textsuperscript{189} Adrian thus clearly helped Burkhard to obtain the commission.

For the creation of the commemoration coins the Finance Ministry also organised contests: a general contest in 1936 and a limited contest in 1939. 119 artists participated in the 1936 contest but the jury, composed of members the two federal art commissions, the EKK and the EKfaK, a delegate of the \textit{Schweizerische Numismatische Gesellschaft}, an artist, a delegate of the Finance Ministry, and Fritz Vital, the Secretary of the Interior Ministry, failed to award a first prize and had to organise a limited contest among five of the participants. In this second round the jury decided in favour of a proposal by the artist Max Weber.\textsuperscript{190} Due to the unsatisfactory results of the 1936 general coin contest the Finance Ministry decided to organise a limited contest in 1939.\textsuperscript{191} The contest was organised among

\textsuperscript{186} Finance Ministry to Interior Ministry, 28 Jan. 1922, \textit{ibid.}
\textsuperscript{187} See Adrian to Vibert, 8 Nov. 1920, BA, 6200 (A) I/42
\textsuperscript{188} Adrian to Burkhard, 21 March 1922, BA, 6200 (A) I/44
\textsuperscript{189} See Adrian to Burkhard, 20 March 1922, \textit{ibid.}
\textsuperscript{190} See Vorschriften betreffend den Wettbewerb ..., 20 Nov. 1936 and Auszug aus dem Protokoll ... des schweizerischen Bundesrates, 12 Feb. 1937, BA, 6100 (A), 15
\textsuperscript{191} See Auszug aus dem Protokoll ... des schweizerischen Bundesrates, 4 Nov. 1938, BA, 6100 (A), 17

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15 artists and the jury was composed in the same manner as in 1936 including again members of the federal art commissions and Fritz Vital.\textsuperscript{192}

**Banknotes**

In 1921 the SNB planned to issue new 50 fr. banknotes. Initially, one of its directors, Schnyder, was charged with the task of making a proposal for the new notes' design.\textsuperscript{193} Schnyder had a rather clear idea as to what the new banknotes should look like and commissioned several artists with the creation of proposals displaying a view of the Matterhorn and a portrait of Winkelried.\textsuperscript{194} Yet the head of the Lucerne *Bürgerbibliothek*, Hilber, whom Schnyder had contacted in search for Winkelried images, suggested organising a general banknote contest among Swiss artists for the design of the new notes.\textsuperscript{195} And the SNB did indeed organise a general banknote contest in December 1921 and appointed a jury to judge the proposals. The jury was composed of two artists, one of whom was a member of the EKK, two engravers, a print expert, the head of the Bernese *Kunstmuseum* and the secretary of the *Gottfried Keller-Stiftung*, a privately donated federal foundation with the aim of acquiring works of art for the Swiss Confederation. The SNB was represented by two advisory delegates including Schnyder.\textsuperscript{196} 59 artists participated in the contest but the jury decided not to award a first prize since none of the proposals were entirely satisfactory and finally no new 50 fr. notes were produced.\textsuperscript{197}

\textsuperscript{192} See Protokoll, 19 Dec. 1938, *ibid.*
\textsuperscript{193} See Chef des II. Departementes [Schnyder] to Balmer, 16 April 1921, SNB, 301.6
\textsuperscript{194} See Schnyder to Chiesa, 3 June 1921, Schnyder to Meyer, 4 July 1921, Gos to Schnyder, 18 July 1921, *ibid.*
\textsuperscript{195} See Hilber to Schnyder, 6 April 1921, *ibid.*
\textsuperscript{196} See Vorschriften fur einen Wettbewerb ..., 16 Dec. 1921, SNB, 340/344. Edoardo Berta was a member of the EKK three times including the period 1920-1924, see Staub, *op. cit.* On the *Gottfried Keller-Stiftung* see Landolt, Hanspeter (ed.), *Gottfried Keller-Stiftung*, Bern 1990
\textsuperscript{197} See Wettbewerb fur die 50 Fr. Banknote ..., no date [1922] and Rapport du Jury, 21 April 1922, SNB, 301.6
For the creation of the 20 fr. notes issued in 1930 the SNB directly commissioned the engraver Karl Bickel with the creation of the new notes and chose Prof. Paul Ganz, director of the Basel public art collection and former member of the EKK, as an artistic expert in 1924. Ganz had considerable influence on the choice of the imagery since his suggestions for changes were approved of by the bank. Ganz also successfully opposed the bank’s plan to submit the proposals to the entire EKK, arguing that he had been chosen as the only expert in order to avoid pointless disputes about artistic taste. Because the collaboration with the engraver Bickel turned out to be complicated and expensive, the bank charged the Zurich-based Orell Füssli printers with the final production of the new banknotes.198

198 See Ganz to SNB, 29 Nov. 1924, Ganz to SNB, 21 Feb. 1925, SNB to Ganz, 16 July 1925, SNB, 330/339 and Ganz to SNB, 21 July 1925, SNB, 301.6. Ganz was member of the EKK from 1912-1919, see Staub, op. cit., pp. 187-189
5.3 Conclusion

The First World War had a direct effect on the circulation of Swiss coins and banknotes while in Belgium the war and especially the occupation affected all bearers of value. After the war, the issuing bodies in both Belgium and Switzerland aimed at reestablishing the pre-war status quo but while this was relatively easy in the case of stamps, the economic changes caused by the war, most importantly the collapse of the classical gold standard and the de facto existence of freely-floating exchange rates, turned out to be only partially reversible. This was most conspicuous in the case of the coins. The Latin Monetary Union regulating the coin issues of both countries continued to exist after the war. The devaluation of the Belgian franc and the revaluation of the Swiss currency, however, induced both the Swiss and the Belgian government to circumvent or, in the Swiss case, to break the treaty in the years before they formally left the collapsing union at the end of 1926. Thereafter, both countries had exclusively national coin circulations for the first time.

Thus most bearers of value issued immediately after the war were issued for practical reasons aimed at reestablishing monetary and, in Belgium, postal normality. In both countries, new postal services, changing postal fares and fund-raising objectives led to the creation of further inter-war stamp series while security, in the face of technological progress, remained a significant reason for new bearers of value to be issued, most notably the acquisition of a new printing press by the Swiss Post Office, leading to three new issues of stamps between 1936 and 1938.

In some cases, the imagery displayed on bearers of value entirely or partly induced their creation. The Swiss Federal Mint issued its first commemoration coins, both Post Offices continued to issue commemoration stamps and both issued advertisement stamps announcing national exhibitions. While changing
artistic taste contributed to the decision to issue new Swiss 5 fr. coins in 1922, in both countries definitive stamp series were replaced due to widespread public criticism. Dynastic reasons were of course again an exclusively Belgian phenomenon leading to the creation of new coins and stamps showing King Leopold III, while in his father's memory the first ever Belgian mourning stamps appeared.

The decisions to create new bearers of value continued to lie with the issuing bodies. Both national banks appear to have been able to decide on new banknote issues on their own, but the decisions to issue new stamps and coins was susceptible to influences from outside the issuing bodies and their relevant ministries. In both countries this outside influence could come from other ministries or at times the entire government, or from parliamentary deputies, private organisations, the press or even private individuals.

Two new developments took place in this period. Firstly, fund-raising stamps became increasingly popular and both Post Offices received numerous demands for their issue. However, while the Belgian Post Office decided to split the profit of the annual anti-tuberculosis series among several charities and issued numerous fund-raising stamps in addition to the annual anti-tuberculosis series, in Switzerland the Pro Juventute charity was the only beneficiary of fund-raising stamps until 1936, when fund-raising stamps appeared in favour of the Wehranleihe. Pro Juventute lost its monopoly over fund-raising stamps in 1938 by the introduction of the annual Bundesfeier stamps. Secondly, while the press in both countries had already criticised and at times influenced the issuing of stamps in the pre-war period, the inter-war period witnessed larger and more influential press campaigns contributing to a considerable extent to the decision to replace unattractive existing stamp series.

As in the pre-war period, Belgian issuing bodies tended to commission one or several artists directly with the creation of the imagery on bearers of
value, while in Switzerland limited or indeed general contests among artists were almost the norm. In both countries there were of course exceptions, the Monnaie Royale, for instance, organised several contests among them a general contest in 1936 while the SNB directly commissioned the banknotes issued in 1930. However, the organisation of successful contests proved to be difficult in both countries. Belgian and Swiss administrations noted that contests were not only more expensive than direct commissions but also relatively inefficient since large numbers of competitors and proposals did not necessarily lead to aesthetically acceptable and technically sound designs.

The choice of the imagery usually lay with the issuing bodies, but if contests were organised, the issuing bodies often charged special juries to choose the winning proposals. Although we are less well informed about the Belgian case there appears to be one notable development in the composition of the juries. While they continued to include representatives of the issuing bodies, and, at least in Switzerland, artistic and print experts, specialised commissions were increasingly involved in judging the proposals. In Belgium, these were the Commission philatélique specially set up as a consultant body for philatelist questions and the Commission monétaire primarily concerned with monetary policy but subsequently also interested in coin design. In Switzerland, on the other hand, the two federal art commissions, the EKK and the EKfaK, were frequently involved in the decision-making juries. The Belgian commissions thus had a direct link to the bearers of value of which they helped to choose the imagery; the Swiss commissions, however, were federal institutions to be used for a variety of state commissions and support for artists.

In Switzerland the frequency of contests for the creation of bearers of value and the prominent involvement of the two federal art commissions in the juries judging the proposals was clearly linked to Swiss inter-war cultural policy. The aim of this policy was the financial support of Swiss artists and this chapter has
shown that the organisation of contests among artists for the creation of new bearers of value was increasingly and consciously used for this purpose. This was done by means of the EKK and the EKfaK headed by Daniel Baud-Bovy and under the guidance of the Interior ministry, the secretary of which, Fritz Vital, was frequently involved in the decision-making process of bearers of value.

In both countries the imagery on bearers of value needed the approval of the issuing bodies and, in the case of coins and stamps, their relevant ministers. While towards the end of the inter-war years, the Swiss Post Office reacted against the increasing influence of the Interior Ministry and its art commissions by insisting on its exclusive right to chose the final imagery on stamps, in Belgium any bearer of value displaying a member of the Royal Family needed the approval of the King.

Finally there are two general points to note. Firstly, in both countries fund-raising stamps were increasingly issued with a commemorative purpose. From 1927 onwards at least one of the annual Swiss *Pro Juventute* stamps was a commemoration stamp, while many of the Belgian fund-raising stamps even had a double commemorative function since both the imagery displayed and the money raised were used for commemorative purposes: A 1932 series, for example, displayed the portrait of the primate of Belgium during the First World War, Cardinal Mercier, while the money raised was used to erect a monument commemorating this patriotic hero.199 Probably because fund-raising stamps could include this double commemorative aspect, purely commemorative stamps became very rare in the second half of the inter-war period.

Secondly, in the inter-war period bearers of value were increasingly used as a means of propaganda. Although there had been an awareness of the propaganda possibilities of bearers of value before the war, the First World War, at least in Belgium, set important precedents. The stamps issued by the German

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199 See MP, Timbre-poste “Cardinal Mercier” Monument
occupying authorities prompted the issue of stamps marking the Belgian occupation of Germany in 1919, while the series issued in 1920 seconded the Belgian annexation of Eupen and Malmedy, while in Switzerland the 1934 landscape series was aimed at promoting the Swiss tourist industry. The intensified press polemics against disliked stamps, in both countries, the interest of the Swiss government in commemoration stamps and the increasing influence of the Belgian Royal Family on stamp creation and design are further indications for the general discovery of bearers of value as an ideal means of propaganda in the inter-war period.

The history of the production of inter-war bearers of value of course also relates to broader themes of the history of the era. The post-war banknote and coin policy was part of the widespread desire for a return to the (perceived) stability of the pre-war period which proved largely illusory. This policy also shows the continuing effects of economic upheavals and sheds light on the limited resources at the disposal of the governments to cope with those difficulties, for example the failure of the Belga in Belgium or the futile attempts in Switzerland to prevent the use of banknotes for every-day monetary activity. The new recognition of the importance of propaganda was also not an exclusively Belgian or Swiss phenomenon and echoed, however distantly, practices in other countries, notably the USSR, Germany and Italy. Finally and most importantly this chapter sheds light on the increasing difficulty experienced by democratic (or at least non-authoritarian) structures of government and administration in devising and implementing a coherent policy in a world which had become more uncertain but also in which increasing numbers of institutions and people (ministers, parliamentary deputies and commissions, newspapers, lobby groups such as philatelists and charities, as well as that amorphous phenomenon misleadingly called public opinion) all sought to exercise some influence. While the decision-making process of bearers of value
was clearly a relatively small part of these larger developments, this chapter offers an insight into this interesting microcosm which has so far been largely neglected.
6. Portraits 1919-1933/34

6.1 Belgium

Memories of the Great War

Belgium was probably the country in Western Europe which was most completely and directly affected by the First World War. Unlike France, Germany or indeed Britain, fighting took place in the whole of the country and almost the entire population lived under enemy occupation for more than four years. Thus almost all Belgians experienced what their neighbours only experienced in the course of the Second World War: direct involvement in dramatic historical events leading to a variety of personal and collective memories.¹ It is therefore no surprise that the memory of the war became an important new means of Belgian collective identification in the post-war period, especially because there had been few such means of collective identification prior to 1914.

Belgium’s war-time heroism was frequently commemorated on Belgian post-war bearers of value. The first bearers of value to appear after the war were the *Roi casqué* stamps displaying a portrait of King Albert with helmet, coat and uniform and the dates 1914 and 1918 in the background (fig. 107). The Postal Minister explained its meaning to the King: “Afin de commémorer les événements glorieux qui ont amené la libération de la Belgique et d’en perpétuer le souvenir, il m’a paru que le timbre-poste, la vignette populaire par excellence, était tout indiquée et que l’effigie du chef suprême de l’armée symboliserait aux yeux de la nation reconnaissante le courage de ses soldats.”² The stamp director wanted for Belgium: “... la satisfaction de glorifier devant le monde entier son

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¹ For a good comparison with the French experience during the Second World War see Burrin, Philippe, *La France à l’heure allemande, 1940-1944*, Paris 1995

² Rapport au Roi, 16 May 1919, MP, 1919: timbre “Roi Casqué”
héroique Roi-soldat et sa vaillante armée,"³ and the director general wanted to
popularise this image of the King: "... qui s'adapte si bien à notre situation
actuelle, correspond au sentiment général et rapelle, dans la personne du Roi, les
circonstances glorieuses qui ont valu à notre pays sa libération."⁴

The representation of King Albert chosen for this commemoration series
thus implied the King's position as head of the army but it stressed the image of
the Roi-soldat, representing and glorifying all Belgian soldiers and their heroic
contribution to the liberation.⁵ This positive image of Albert had been part of the
Belgian and Allied war-time propaganda and the stamp director noted that the
production of these stamps ensured not only the domestic but also the world-
wide dissemination of this image.⁶ The national importance attached to these
stamps was enhanced by issuing them "... à partir du 19 juillet ... à l'occasion des
fêtes nationales" of 21 July.⁷

Heroism was also the most prominent theme appearing on proposals for
new silver coins in 1919, which were, however, never minted due to the rise in
silver price. While the images themselves are lost, detailed descriptions of four
proposals survive. The first proposal by Paul Dubois showed: "... le Roi portant le
casque. Au revers, ... une Victoire conduisant un char tiré par trois chevaux." The
second artist, Josué Dupon, showed Albert in profile and proposed for the
reverse "... une Victoire à cheval, ..." or "... un lion assis sur un socle, tenant
l'écu belge." The third artist, J. Lagae "... a fait un bon travail. L'effigie du Roi a du
caractère. Le revers représente deux femmes tenant l'écu belge. Elles symbolisent
l'union de la Flandre et de la Wallonie." Finally, also the projects of M. Samuel
"... ont du mérite. Ils représentent à l'avvers le profil du Roi lauré et au revers,

³ Directeur du timbre to directeur général, 13 Oct. 1918, ibid.
⁴ Directeur général to minister, 6 Dec. 1918, ibid.
⁵ The glorification of the Belgian soldiers was part of a myth exaggerating the importance of the relatively few
Belgian troops which contributed little to the liberation of Belgium.
⁶ On the development of the theme of the Roi-soldat see Van Yperseele, Laurence, Le Roi Albert, Histoire d'un
mythe, Ottignies 1995, pp. 92-102, 312-318
⁷ Notice, 14 July 1919, MP, 1919: timbre "Roi Casqué"
une figure symbolisant la Victoire." The interesting representation of Flanders and Wallonia did not get the approval of the director of the Monnaie Royale: "... j’estime que c’est à tort qu’il [l’artiste] a rappelé l’apaisement de la querelle flamande-wallonne; il eût beaucoup mieux fait célébrer, comme Mr Samuel, la gloire immortelle de notre pays; c’est une erreur d’associer le Roi lauré à la lutte flamingante. Il faut, au contraire, l’unir au triomphe de nos armées." Thus, in 1919 the heroic military victory achieved under the leadership of King Albert was the preferred theme for new Belgian coins rather than a representation of the King as the head of united Flanders and Wallonia.

While a 1929 stamp displayed the British war memorial of Ypres, thus commemorating the heroism of a foreign but allied nation, the commemoration of Belgium’s military heroism reached its climax in a 1932 series of fund-raising stamps issued to raise money for the erection of the "Monument National à la Gloire de l’Infanterie Belge" (fig. 123). All of these stamps produced for this purpose were sold and raised a total of 300,000 francs. The stamps showed a Belgian soldier in full battlefield uniform walking in front of a background of ruins serving as a reminder of the destructions caused by the war. This series for the first time directly glorified the anonymous citizen-soldier fighting for the nation in contrast to his indirect commemoration via the mythical image of the Roi-soldat.

Belgium’s civic heroism during the occupation was commemorated by a further series of fund-raising stamps also issued in order to fund a lieu de mémoire in stone. A 1932 series raised money for a monument commemorating Cardinal Mercier (1851-1926). He was archbishop of Malines and thus primate of the Belgian Church from 1906 onwards and had remained in Belgium during the
German occupation in many ways replacing the King who headed the army in West Flanders. A strong Belgian patriot who considered an interest in “les choses patriotiques” as a duty and a virtue, Mercier became the symbol of civic moral and resistance in occupied Belgium not least by publishing the famous pastoral letter *Patriotisme et endurance*.

The Mercier series contained four different stamps. While the lower values showed a simple portrait of the cardinal, two of the three higher values emphasised his role during the occupation. On the 1.75 fr. stamps (fig. 121) the archbishop appeared as the “infranchissable barrière du droit” protecting against the invader “... une mère éplorée avec ses enfants, trois hommes qui s’étreignent comme pour échapper aux déportations ... . La silhouette en noir de la cathédrale de Malines, ruinée par les bombardements, est le fond sur lequel s’enlèvent la tête et le corps de son archevêque.” The 10 fr. stamps (fig. 122) served as reminders of Mercier’s patriotic benedictions in St. Gudule cathedral in Brussels and the old title *Civitatis Defensor* was meant to associate Mercier with medieval bishops defending their cities against barbarian invaders and thus recalled Mercier’s “... rôle surhumain, ... pour la protection de la vie et de l’âme de la Belgique.”

These stamps were heavily criticised, but the criticism focussed on the extremely high additional tax rather than on the commemoration of Mercier which seems to have been widely accepted. The weekly newspaper *Pourquoi Pas?* for example wrote: “Un monument au Cardinal Mercier devrait être un hommage de toute la nation et non pas le résultat de l’exploitation d’une passion couteuse, mais anodine.” The sale of the stamps nevertheless raised over two

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11 On Mercier see Hendricks, Jean-Pierre; Priotte, Jean; Courtois, Luc (eds.); *Le cardinal Mercier (1851-1926), Un prélat d’avant-garde*, Louvain-la-Neuve 1994 and Simon, A., *Le cardinal Mercier*, Bruxelles 1960
12 The 5 fr. stamp showed Mercier as philosophy professor at Louvain.
13 *Revue de la Poste*, June 1932, MP, Timbres-poste “Cardinal Mercier” Monument
14 *Pourquoi Pas?*, 1 July 1932, ibid.
Hand in hand with the commemoration of Belgium’s heroism went the commemoration of the country’s martyrdom. This theme already prominently appeared on the 1915 stamp series displaying monuments destroyed by the German invader. After the war, two further cities were included in this category of martyr cities, namely Liège (1919) and Termonde (1920). The reverse of the 1000 fr. banknote issued in 1922 displayed a view of the Halles d’Ypres, which were completely destroyed during the war. These banknotes combined the themes of martyrdom with heroism by representing a map of the Yser plain, where the Belgian Army fought during the war, in the lower right corner (fig. 132).

The continuation of the theme of martyrdom on Belgian post-war bearers of value to an extent had the same aim of denouncing German atrocities for which it was used by Allied propaganda during the war. In the post-war period, however, it was increasingly linked to the theme of restoring the country’s physical and spiritual wholeness damaged by the war and the occupation. The major example for this development are the 1922 nickel jetons (fig. 125). The Commissaire des Monnaies explained their meaning in an interview: “... une figure allégorique représentant la Belgique victorieuse, couronnée de lauriers, un genou à terre et bandant une blessure qu’elle porte au mollet de l’autre jambe symbolisant ainsi le Pays pansant sa plaie vive.”16 Thus the iconography emphasised not only Belgium’s heroism and martyrdom but also the open wounds still affecting the country, a theme absent from the 1919 coin proposals discussed above. Instead of a triumphant allegory of victory the jetons displayed a victorious allegory curing her wounds. This change of emphasis can be seen as an indicator of Belgium’s rather painful post-war experience when, after the

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15 2,089,067.75 fr., see Relevé des émissions spéciales de timbres-poste avec surtaxe parues depuis 1932, MP, 1938/3
16 L’Etoile belge, 7 April 1922. Several other newspapers published interpretations based on this interview, see for example La Gazette, 10 April 1922 or Journal de Liège, 9 April 1922, MR, 603/2
initial euphoria of liberation, Belgians had to face the physical and economic realities of a country damaged by four years of occupation and warfare.

The theme of restoration and more specifically of healing the wounded nation also influenced a series of fund-raising stamps issued after the war: stamps appeared in favour of war invalids (1920, 1922, 1923, 1931) and “pro tuberculatis belli” (1925, 1926). While most of these fund-raising stamps primarily referred to their purpose by means of a specific inscription, the 1922 stamps by Anto Carte showed a wounded naked man supporting a portrait of King Albert (fig. 110) and the 1923 stamps by Ramaeckers showed a one-legged war invalid with crutches (fig. 111). The appearance of the healing theme also extended to the destroyed monuments. While the 1920 Termonde stamps showed the town’s destroyed city hall (fig. 101), the reverse of the 1922 1000 fr. banknotes (fig. 132) displayed the intact Halles d’Ypres which were indeed rebuilt after the war and completed in 1934.

The healing theme to a large extent also motivated the widespread attention given to tuberculosis in the post-war period and partly explains the Post Office’s decision to issue annual anti-tuberculosis fund-raising series from 1928 onwards. The Post Office singled out fund-raising stamps as an important means of conserving for the country “... son capital le plus précieux, la santé des jeunes générations, profondément débilité par les privations des années de guerre.” Thus, the profits should preferably go to charities fighting “... contre les grandes maladies, que l’on a appelées sociales parce que, dans la statistique de la mortalité d’un peuple, elles viennent en première ligne et détruisent, ..., le plus grand nombre d’existences humaines.” The main diseases mentioned were tuberculosis and cancer.17

In the 19th century a variety of medical, social and political discourses developed around the phenomenon of tuberculosis effectively constructing the

illness as a social disease. In post-war Belgium the idea was widespread that the war, mainly the gases dispersed, and the hardship caused by four years of occupation were the main reasons for the increase in tuberculosis cases. Thus the problem was linked to the nation's recent dramatic history and the fight against tuberculosis was interpreted as a national duty, especially by members of the upper classes. The Royal Palace, for example, told the Postal Minister: "... la Reine porte grand intérêt au développement de la lutte contre la tuberculose qui semble trouver de nouvelles armes dans la constitution récente du 'Comité National Belge de Défense contre la Tuberculose'."

The war also affected the Belgian perception of citizenship. Before the war there had been no real wish or need to define what it was to be a Belgian citizen and the 1909 naturalisation laws were relatively generous to applicants for Belgian nationality. Immediately after the war, however, the German community of Belgium, including naturalised Germans and second generation immigrants previously eligible for naturalisation, were collectively punished for collaboration. Most of them lost their civic rights and were expelled from Belgium. In 1922 citizenship legislation profoundly changed to the disadvantage of the applicants, including the abolition of dual nationality and the stipulation that the candidates had to prove their personal attachment to the Belgian nation.

In the year of the tightening of the naturalisation laws, citizenship affected...
the reception of one set of bearers of value, the 1922 jetons. Their creator, Armand Bonnetain, was not a Belgian but a French citizen which led to a question in the Chambre des Représentants which asked the Finance Minister why no Belgian artists had been chosen. The reply was that the artist was born and had always lived in Brussels, he had studied at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts of the capital and “Il a combattu pendant les quatre années de guerre dans les rangs de l’armée d’une nation alliée.” The choice of a non-Belgian for the creation of Belgian coins was thus justified both by the citizenship criteria of jus solis abolished by the new naturalisation laws and by the fact that the artist fulfilled his civic duties by fighting during the First World War against the common German enemy.

Royal Portraits

In the course of the preparations for new silver coins in 1919 the director of the Monnaie Royale, Josse Allard, made an important statement about portraits on coins:

"... une monnaie n’est pas un portrait; il faut naturellement s’attacher le plus possible à donner la physionomie exacte du personnage qu’on veut représenter, mais il ne faut pas mettre en évidence des caractéristiques spéciales ou des exagérations de développement de certaines parties, que le public ne remarque pas en général, et dont ils critiquerait l’exagération. Il faut hiératiser le profil d’un Souverain; petit à petit, son profil devient un type consacré (sic!), il peut même à certains moments s’écarter sensiblement de la nature, c’est sans inconvénient, car il ne doit représenter que ce que, conventionnellement, le public admet comme devant être son portrait."
Allard’s statement is highly relevant for the understanding of both human portraits on bearers of value in general and for Belgian royal portraits on post-war bearers of value in particular. Portraits displayed on bearers of value are not meant to be the exact reproduction of an individual’s face, rather they are images carrying a variety of messages, they become icons symbolising concepts and meanings which go well beyond the simple representation of the individual. The additional meaning associated with the portrayed individual, however, cannot arbitrarily be imposed by the creators of the image. Rather, associations and allusions to symbolic meanings of the individual have to correspond to a considerable extent to the expectations of the public.

In the more specific context of royal portraits on Belgian bearers of value, Allard’s remarks are highly illuminating in order to understand the noticeable difference between images created before and after the First World War. We have seen earlier that royal portraits were already one of the most important iconographic elements on pre-war bearers of value. They showed an aging and increasingly unpopular King, Leopold II, and subsequently his nephew, Albert I, who despite being young appeared to lack character and remained rather inconspicuous before 1914. The war, however, dramatically changed the perception and representation of the new King. Albert became a mythical war hero and almost all of his post-war portraits on bearers of value make reference to the events of 1914-1918.26

The Roi Casqué stamp series was the most important example of a royal icon representing the King in line with public expectation. In 1918, for example, Le National expressed the desire that: "... Albert ler, casqué de fer, casqué de tranchée, casqué du petit soldat de l’Yser... entre dans l’Histoire...".27 The stamps issued in 1919 portrayed Albert in exactly this manner as Roi-soldat and the

26 On King Albert see Van Yperseele, op. cit., and Thielmans, Marie-Rose, Albert ler et sa légende, in Morelli, op. cit., pp. 175-188
27 Le National, 24 Nov. 1918, MP, 1919: timbre "Roi Casqué"
stamps became very popular (fig. 107). The new series of 1921 and 1922 which replaced the Roi Casqué stamps, however, were not in line with public expectation (figs. 102). The Antwerp newspaper De Schelde thought that the replacement stamps were: "... erbarmelijk leelijk en slecht uitgevoerd"; the Gazette de Liège wrote: "Il est réellement impardonnable de propager un portrait du Roi qui le ridiculise à ce point!"; and L'Echo d'Ostende asked: "... pour quel motif on n'a pas maintenu l'effigie 'Roi casqué?'". Le Rappel of Charleroi even claimed mischievously to be able to see everybody, including Tarzan, on the new stamps, but could not find the King.

Subsequent representations of King Albert often referred to the war. While Albert had appeared in parade uniform on definitive stamps before the war, the post-war definitive stamps showed him in khaki field uniform. On commemoration stamps of 1925 and 1930, Albert again appeared wearing a coat, thus more explicitly referring to his active military role during the First World War (figs. 115). Albert was the first living monarch to be represented on banknotes, he appeared in parade uniform on the Série nationale banknotes issued between 1920 and 1922 (figs. 128-132).

Crown Prince Leopold first appeared on a fund-raising stamp in favour of an exhibition of the Club Royal Philatélique des Invalides in 1931 (fig. 119). Leopold was a patron of this exhibition which had an obvious link to the memory of the First World War via the invalids. Leopold appeared wearing the uniform of a corporal of the 12th Régiment de Ligne, the military unit he served in during the First World War. The Revue Postale endowed Leopold with the same qualities of a military hero previously accorded to his father: "Frêle adolescent, mais grandi de tout l'héroïsme de sa race, ne vivant déjà que pour la

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28 De Schelde, 1 Aug. 1922, MP. 1921: timbre type Houyoux
29 Gazette de Liège, 28 July 1922, L'Echo d'Ostende, 30 July 1922, Le Rappel, 3 June 1922, ibid.
30 See, Van Yperseele, op. cit., p. 172
Not only male members of the Royal Family but also Queen Elisabeth, the wife of Albert, appeared on post-war bearers of value. After the First World War precedent of banknotes issued by the Société Générale displaying the first Belgian Queen Louise-Marie, Elisabeth was the second female personality and the first living Queen to appear on Belgian bearers of value. Initially, Elisabeth appeared together with her husband, on the Série nationale banknotes of 1920/22 and on 1926 fund-raising stamps. These representations of the Queen were conventional, Elisabeth wearing a crown and a fashionable gala dress (figs 112, 128-132).

In 1931 Elisabeth appeared for the first time alone on an anti-tuberculosis stamp series (fig. 120). An article in the Revue Postale provides a detailed analysis and interpretation of the imagery. The article first praised her patriotic actions during the war. “Aux côtés du Roi, elle demeure, belle comme la douleur, douce comme la patience, tranquille comme la confiance, rayonnante comme la victoire. Il est le chef, mais elle est l’âme.” Elisabeth was: “En bref, la Reine de l’Yser.” The interpretation of the Queen’s head-dress is very revealing: “Sur les cheveux, cette coiffure que l’image a popularisé et dont on ne sait si c’est le bandeau de l’infirmière de la Croix-Rouge ou le bandeau royal ou probablement les deux ensemble.” Intentionally ambiguous, Elisabeth was at the same time a Red Cross nurse and the Queen of the Belgians. The article ends with: “C’est le portrait de Celle qui incarna, aux heures suprêmes, l’âme de l’immortelle Belgique.” Thus here the memory of the First World War combined with the cult of a member of the dynasty resulted in the soul, or in other words the national identity, of eternal Belgium.

Some important points have to be noted in relation to these royal

portraits. Queen Elisabeth who became the incarnation of the Belgian soul was originally from Germany. However, at the outbreak of the war in 1914 the Queen, born a princess of Bavaria, publicly cut her emotional ties with Germany and declared that an iron curtain descended between her and the Germans.33 During the war Elisabeth was engaged in a variety of humanitarian activities in favour of the Belgian population and the army such as the transformation of the royal palace in Brussels into a hospital, the distribution of cigarettes to exhausted soldiers and occasional active engagements as a nurse. Most of her activities were symbolic and led to the development of the myth of the Reine-infirmière.34 Visually, this myth was alluded to by the ambiguous headdress which replaced the crown on representations of Elisabeth not only on the 1931 stamps but also on the 1933 100 fr./20 b. banknotes (fig. 134) where the Queen again appeared together with her husband. Elisabeth personally encouraged and appreciated this form of representation. "... [La Reine] S’est montrée extrêmement satisfaite...", the Post Office told the artist who created the 1931 stamps.35

In general, the post-war representations of the Belgian Royal Family included the major new means of Belgian collective identification based on the memory of the First World War. Albert and his son served as human lieux de mémoire for Belgium’s military heroism, while the post-war use of the myth of the Reine-infirmière not only commemorated Elisabeth’s war-time deeds as a heroine of charity but also inserted itself into the theme of healing the wounded Belgian nation after the war. Furthermore the cult of the dynasty was extended to other members of the Royal Family apart from the King and special emphasis

33 See Dayez-Burgeon, Pascal, La reine Astrid, Histoire d’un mythe, Paris 1995, p. 65
35 Directeur général to Jean de Bast, 24 Nov. 1931, MP, 1931/32: timbres anti-tuberculeux “Reine Elisabeth”. During the First World War Elisabeth was not the only female member of a Royal Family surrounded by the myth of a Red Cross nurse. See the photo of Queen Marie of Romania in her “famous” Red Cross Uniform in Arson, Theo, Crowns in Conflict, London 1986, p. 162 and the photos of all female members of the Russian Imperial Family in the same dress in Bokhanov; Knodt; Onstmenko et al (eds.), The Romanows, Love, Power and Tragedy, London 1993, pp. 272-274
was put on the representation of the royal couple. The myth of the *Roi-soldat* was closely linked to the myth of the *Reine-infirmière* a phenomenon which is frequently overlooked by concentrating exclusively on one member of the Royal Family, usually the King.\textsuperscript{36} Indeed it can be argued that after the First World War, the symbolic meaning of the Belgian King was always complemented by a significant if not equally important meaning attached to his Queen.

**Progress and Prosperity**

We have seen how the widespread belief in both economic and cultural progress was a dominant theme on Belgian pre-war bearers of value. The First World War not only profoundly changed the world economy, but the war was also widely interpreted as a cultural tragedy seriously challenging the almost ubiquitous 19th century belief in progress. Yet this did not lead to a complete disappearance of the progress theme on Belgian bearers of value in the post-war period. The *Série nationale* banknotes issued between 1920 and 1922 represented the Belgian mining industry on the 5 fr. note (fig. 131), the 1000 fr. note showed “[Une] figure féminine [qui] symbolise l’abondance et la prospérité produite par le travail dans la paix” (fig. 132) and on the 100 fr. note appeared “... un lion figurant la Belgique entouré des emblèmes du travail industriel, des arts, de l’agriculture produisant abondance et prospérité” (fig. 129).\textsuperscript{37} Anto Carte’s 1927 50 fr./10 b. notes (fig. 133) showed on the obverse “... une femme, sur un cheval de trait, portant une gerbe de blé - symbole simplifié de la richesse par le travail ...”\textsuperscript{38} and Emile Vloors included on both sides of his 1933 100 fr./20 b. notes (fig. 134) “... une guirlande de fruits - symbole de richesse et de prospérité ...”.\textsuperscript{39} The reverse of

\textsuperscript{36} Van Yperseele, for example, seems to me to underestimate the importance of Elisabeth for the development of the myths around her husband. See Van Yperseele, *op. cit.*

\textsuperscript{37} Note relative à une demande d’information de l’Internationale d’Impression et d’Edition, 23 May 1936, BNB ac, 3240 11.04.01.00

\textsuperscript{38} Carte to Aussems, 30 April 1936, *ibid.*

\textsuperscript{39} Vloors to Aussems, no date [1936], *ibid.*
the 1922 *jetons* (fig. 125) was the rod of Mercury, the God of trade, who also appeared on stamps in 1932 (fig. 106).

In 1932 stamps commemorated the support by the *Fonds National de la Recherche Scientifique* for the stratospheric flights of Professor Piccard and showed the stratospheric balloon of the Swiss scientist and two dates "... auxquelles la Belgique entière, risquant le torticolis, a regardé le ciel - ce qui n’est pas dans ses habitudes." These stamps thus inserted themselves into the continual identification with progress. Interestingly, the event and the association it commemorated had a rather direct link to King Albert whose mythical significance included economic prosperity and technological progress. The *Fonds National de la Recherche Scientifique* was founded by Albert and the King and his wife took an active interest in Piccard’s research: "Während seines Schweizer Aufenthalts stattete das Herrschepaar dem Gelehrten einen Besuch ab und kletterte auch in die neue Kugelgondel, die für den Aufstieg in fast 20 km Höhe bestimmt ist." Thus in this case the identification with scientific progress was expressed by representing the spectacular scientific research of a Swiss scientist supported by a Belgian fund, founded by King Albert, himself a symbol of progress and prosperity.

The continual identification with progress, usually perceived to create economic wealth in the long run, stands in contrast to the economic reality of post-war Belgium which was marked by currency instability and economic crisis. In contrast to the pre-war period, the identification with progress thus does not appear to express an uncontested or naive belief but rather the hope of returning to the certainties of the pre-war world. This view can be supported by a comparison with the Belgian government’s financial policy after the war. We have seen that the Belgian government initially wanted to return to the classical

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40 *Le Soir*, no date [1932], MP, 1932: timbres-poste spéciaux dits F.N.R.S.
41 See Van Yperseele, *op. cit.*, pp. 102-120
pre-war gold standard which was perceived to be the guarantor for a reestablishment of the stable economic situation prior to 1914, and how, after the failure of these plans, the franc was stabilised in 1926. This stabilisation included the creation of the Belga which was also introduced as a psychological means in order to feign a return to an idealised pre-war status quo of the gold standard which was very much perceived to be a lost golden age.

In addition to the continual but somewhat illusory theme of progress leading to economic prosperity, a new apparent source of prosperity increasingly appeared on Belgian bearers of value, namely the Congo. Anto Carte's 50 fr./10 b. notes issued in 1927 (fig. 133) showed on the reverse "... [une] figure de femme symbolisant 'l'abondance' par l'effort d'outre-mer - en l'occurrence le Congo - (expansion: figurée par le bateau) ...". In 1934 the Commissaire des Monnaies proposed to mint a series of coins commemorating the 50th anniversary of the creation of the Congo Free State; the Palais du Congo belge figured on the first stamp of an advertisement series for the 1935 Brussels world exhibition (fig. 181), and a private coin proposal even envisaged the display of the Congo star on 5 fr. coins. Furthermore, whenever possible the major export product of the colony, copper, was used for the creation of Belgian coins, La Libre Belgique noting with pride that the Belgian coins were minted from: "... cuivre rouge, produit de nos mines du Katanga." Jean Stengers has singled out three main colonial policy objectives of the Belgian government between 1908 and 1958: "... il fallait y réaliser une œuvre nationale, de civilisation et de mise en valeur." The first Belgian bearers of value referring to the Congo, the stamps issued in 1915, had concentrated on Belgium's civilisation efforts, a theme which continued after the war and which

43 Carte to Aussems, 30 April 1936, BNB ac, 3240 11.04.01.00
45 La Libre Belgique, 7 Jan. 1930, MR, 604/5
46 Original italics. See Stengers, Jean, Congo, Mythes et réalités, Paris and Louvain-la-Neuve 1989, p. 183
culminated in an important series of Belgian images, namely Hergé’s *Tintin au Congo*, first published between 1930 and 1931. Yet the inter-war bearers of value referring to the Congo mainly concentrated on the *mise en valeur* of the colony for the economic benefit of the motherland. Simultaneously, in the eyes of some Belgians the Congo had also begun to be perceived as an integral part of the Belgian nation thus echoing the third colonial objective, the *œuvre nationale*. When in 1919 Germany adopted the same heraldic colours as Belgium *Le Soir* wrote: “Donc les Boches ont adopté nos couleurs, ...” and in order to distinguish Belgium from Germany it argued for combining the Belgian and the Congolese flags creating thus “... une expression vraiment belge, que ne pourrait plus imiter la République allemande.” Yet calls for such complete identification with the Congo were still relatively rare in this period and the idea of a single Eurafriean Belgian nation only developed on a larger scale after the Second World War. Therefore although Belgian enthusiasm for its colony remained relatively modest compared to other colonial countries, the post-war period clearly witnessed the highpoint of popularity of the Congo in Belgium. The colony began to be seen as a worthwhile and prestigious project and a modern image of the Congo in terms of its development and economic potential was successfully integrated into Belgian national identity.

**Local Identity and Linguistic Diversity**

While both the memory of the war and the cult of the Royal Family were identifications situated predominantly at a national level, symbols of local identity already present in the pre-war period continued to appear on post-war...
Belgian bearers of value. An interesting case are two stamps which were included in the 1915 series commemorating martyr cities of the First World War. In December 1918 the *Ligue Wallonne de Liège*, a tiny organisation, praised the idea of the series but complained to the Postal Minister that “... si Anvers est représenté ... Liège, elle qui subit le premier choc, elle qui se défendit si glorieusement que la France lui décerna la Croix de la Légion d’Honneur, que ne reçut aucune autre ville belge, Liège wallonne et loyale est exclue de la répartition.”\(^{50}\) Thus, instead of defending the interests of the whole of Wallonia, the *Ligue* defended local Liège interests. Local identity in Liège was constructed around the history of the episcopal principality the history of which was politically disconnected from the other Walloon principalities from 843-1793. The dominance of the relatively strong and distinct Liège local identity over the other parts of French-speaking Belgium was one of the reasons for the slow development of a unified Walloon movement and of a common Walloon identity.\(^{51}\)

After the issue of the Liège stamps, city rivalry and competition motivated the member of the *Chambre des Représentants* Vermeersch to complain that Termonde, a small and rather insignificant provincial town, “... qui a le plus souffert de l’invasion Allemande n’a jamais eu le mérite d’être reconnue comme l’une des villes martyres ...”. He therefore demanded a stamp for his city, especially after the precedent of Liège “... qui n’a guère souffert.”\(^{52}\)

Both complaints were successful, though the choice of the appropriate image proved difficult in the case of Liège. While the destroyed city hall of Termonde was an ideal theme (fig. 101), the director general told the Postal Minister that, after having consulted a series of post-cards of Liège, “... je n’ai rien trouvé qui vaille vraiment la peine de retenir l’attention.” The only possible

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\(^{50}\) *Ligue Wallonne de Liège* to *Ministre des Postes*, 6 Dec. 1918, MP, 1919: timbre “Perron liégeois”

\(^{51}\) See Kesteloot, Chantal, *Mouvement wallon et identité nationale*, in *Courrier hebdomadaire du CRISP*, no. 1392, 1993

\(^{52}\) *Vermeersch* to *Ministre des Postes*, 26 July 1919, MP, 1919: timbre Termonde
exception was the *Perron liégeois*, a marble column marking the place where justice was administered in medieval times. The original column was destroyed by a storm in 1693 and a modern replica is integrated into a fountain of the *Place du Marché* in Liège. Yet the director general was not convinced that the Perron was an appropriate choice: “Il ferait, je pense, assez pâtre figure, à côté des superbes monuments qui ont été choisis pour la partie flamande du Pays...” In his embarrassment the director even proposed to ask the *Ligue Wallonne* for a characteristic view of the town.53 The minister, however, decided in favour of the *Perron* (fig. 100).54

Symbols of local identity also appeared on other post-war stamps, including views of cathedrals (1928), cities (1929), tourist sites (1929) and castles (1930). The most interesting case were, however, the images displayed on the reverse of the *Série nationale* banknotes (1920-22) (figs. 128-132). On the 1 fr. notes appeared all provincial coats of arms, bilingual Brabant placed in the middle analogous to the pre-war arrangement of the coats of arms on banknotes. The 5 fr. notes showed a seated coal miner, posing his hands on the coat of arms of Hainaut, in front of an impressive *Pays Noir* industrial background. The 20 fr. notes were dedicated to the capital Brussels and showed its famous *Grand Place* while the coats of arms of the city and its province appeared in the lower corners of the banknote. The 100 fr. notes were dedicated to Liège and showed an armourer at work, views of Liège, the *Perron* and the cloisters of the episcopal palace, appeared in the lower corners and the coat of arms of the province was placed in the lower middle. This note also included the first, albeit small, representation of one of the famous *hiercheuses* in a medallion in the centre left. The 1000 fr. notes, finally, were dedicated to the two provinces of East and West Flanders, displayed the provinces' coats of arms in the upper corners and a lace

53 Directeur général to minister, 7 Jan. 1919, MP, 1919: timbre “Perron liégeois” On the *Perron* see Piret, op. cit., p. 76
54 See Chef du Cabinet to Administration des Postes, 16 Jan. 1919, MP, 1919: timbre “Perron liégeois”
maker in traditional dress alluded to the Flemish textile tradition. She stood in relation to the Halles d'Ypres in the lower middle which originally hosted the cloth market but which, as we have noted above, became a major symbol of the war because of its destruction.

The important point about the display of these local symbols of identity is the fact that they were firmly grouped into a Belgian national context. The sights displayed on stamps were chosen from around the country, displayed the name of the country together with the name of the sight and because they were always grouped together in series they represented the nation by means of its constituent parts. This effective combination of local and national means of identification was most striking in the case of the Série nationale banknotes. The local symbols appeared on the reverse, yet the obverse displayed exclusively national symbols or allegories of which the dominant element was the double portrait of the sovereigns Albert and Elisabeth.

There is one prominent absence of this kind of identification: While the bilingual inscriptions on stamps and banknotes and the coexistence of coins inscribed in both languages continued after the war, Belgium was not, in this period, visually represented by means of its constituent linguistic parts. While there were proposals for representing Flanders and Wallonia, such projects were never executed (fig. 135). The reasons for this absence do not emerge clearly from the sources. However, we have seen above that the director of the Monnaie Royale was opposed to the representation of allegories of Flanders and Wallonia on coins in 1919 and that the Belgian lion displayed on the 1929 definitive stamps was interpreted by some to be a Flemish nationalist symbol prompting the Post Office to replace these ambiguous stamps. These two instances show that visual representations of Flanders and Wallonia did not meet with enthusiasm at an

55 For example one of the 1919 silver coin proposals, see Commissaire des Monnaies to minister, 4 July 1919, MR, Administration des Monnaies, Documents 1915-1921, Supplement, or a project for the 1933 banknotes showing a Flemish lion and a Walloon cock subsequently replaced by the initials of the Banque Nationale, see BNB, SdC, cat., no date [1930-33], I. 14.608
administrative level and it can be argued that such representations were indeed consciously avoided.

Nevertheless, the postal administration was keen to keep a certain linguistic balance of stamp themes. In 1929 the director general compiled a list of all of the cities represented on stamps. He found that there had been 7 Walloon, 9 Flemish and 3 bilingual (Brussels) themes and, because of this disproportion, he proposed to choose "... une vue wallonne, p. ex. l’église (caractéristique, me dis- on) de St. Hubert ..." instead of Antwerp for the new series of air mail stamps.56 In 1931 the Post Office added a view of Eupen (one of the towns annexed from Germany in 1920) to an express stamp series displaying views of major Belgian cities (fig. 104). Although there is no written evidence relating to this decision it is likely that this decision was not only motivated by the desire to integrate the newly-acquired territories symbolically into the “family” of Belgian territories. The decision may well have been influenced too by the desire for linguistic balance, in other words, even the German-speaking parts of Belgium were taken into consideration.

The 1930 Centenary

In 1930, Belgium celebrated 100 years of national independence. Three Belgian cities competed for the organisation of the centenary exhibition which led to a typically Belgian compromise: the centenary exhibition was split between Antwerp and Liège, while Brussels received the right to organise a world exhibition in 1935 celebrating the 100th anniversary of the Belgian railways and the centenary of the foundation of the Congo Free State.57 In order to mark the 1930 centenary both commemoration stamps and coins were issued. The Finance

56 After this series the proportions were: Wallonia: 9, Flanders: 10, Brussels 4. See directeur général to minister, 15 Oct. 1929, MP, 1935: timbres "Avion"
Ministry organised a limited contest among ten artists for the creation of a commemoration coin. The artists had to represent on the obverse the three Belgian Kings and on the reverse the inscription "... 1830-1930, dans une guirlande surmontée d'une couronne royale." Despite these rather detailed instructions, the artists nevertheless managed to add additional meaning to their proposals. Alphonse Marquoy included a symbol of abundance, P. Dubois showed "... [une] guirlande de lauriers partant de la couronne royale, symbolisant la source de prospérité dont nous sommes redevables à nos souverains." and de Bremaecker underlined that he represented "... la tête de Léopold 1er surtout en silhouette, les détails étant très peu indiqués; le profil de Léopold II serait plus détaillé, et le profil du Roi Albert serait très incisé." thus visualising the maturing of the Belgian state by means of its sovereigns. The winning artist finally combined three existing coin profiles of the Kings and two two vertical laurel branches (fig. 127).

The Commission philatélique began with the preparation of a centenary commemoration series in 1929. Initially, there had been a plan to create a series of "... hommes illustres (artistes, savants etc. de la Belgique)" which was, however, dropped in favour of a series showing the members of the provisional government of 1830, the double portraits of all Belgian royal couples and of Crown Prince Leopold and Crown Princess Astrid. Later, the commission changed its mind, dropped the representation of the 1830 politicians and proposed to reproduce the first two sovereigns alone and only Albert together

58 Commissaire des Monnaies to artists, 19 Jan. 1930, MR, 604/5
59 "Au revers la couronne Royale entourée d’épis décoratives symbolisant l’abondance ...", Marquoy to Commissaire des Monnaies, 4 Feb. 1930, MR, 604/5
60 Dubois to Commissaire des Monnaies, no date [1930], MR, 604/5
61 de Bremaecker to Commissaire des Monnaies, 4 Feb. 1930, MR, 604/5
62 Commissaire des Monnaies to Allard, 25 Feb. 1930, MR, 604/5
63 Such a series had been proposed by De Nieuwe Gazet, 23/24 April 1927, MP, 1930: timbres-poste et carte postale "Centenaire indépendance nationale"
64 Directeur général to minister, 13 Feb. 1929, ibid.
with his wife Elisabeth. In the final series, however, all three sovereigns appeared alone (figs. 113-115).

As complementary stamps to this series the Commission philatélique proposed to issue two advertisement stamps for the international exhibitions in Antwerp and Liège. As regards the themes, it thought: “... le mieux serait de rappeler, pour Anvers, l’art flamand, en reproduisant le portrait du peintre célèbre Rubens et, pour Liège, l’art industriel en faisant choix de l’effigie du grand inventeur Zénobe Gramme” (figs. 116, 117). Together with the portraits of the first three Belgian monarchs, they constituted the official stamp series celebrating 100 years of national independence.

The imagery of the centenary bearers of value thus combined major identification themes discussed in this chapter. Albert in field uniform recalled Belgium’s heroism during the war, some proposals for the commemoration coins included symbols of abundance thus referring to the hopes for continual prosperity while Rubens and Gramme were symbols of the local identities of Antwerp and Liège rather than symbols of Flanders and Wallonia. While Gramme symbolised technological progress, Rubens was the symbol of a cultural tradition linking Belgium to its pre-1830 past and alluding to the existence of the Belgian nation even before the establishment of political independence. This meaning was also attached to the 1930 series of anti-tuberculosis stamps displaying Belgian castles on which the Revue Postale commented: “Après les sites et les cathédrales, on a choisi des sujets dont toute la Belgique put s’enorgueillir et qui montrent bien que notre nation remonte beaucoup plus haut que 1830, nos châteaux historiques” (fig. 118).

65 There are no indications about the reasons for this change of mind. See directeur général to minister, 6 April 1929, ibid.
66 The sources tell nothing about the reason why Elisabeth was finally not represented. Possibly, however, this happened because the Cabinet du Roi had by November 1929 still not provided the Post Office with photographs of the royal couple, see directeur général to minister, 18 Nov. 1929, ibid.
67 See directeur général to minister, 9 Dec. 1929, MP, 1930: Exposition Anvers-Liège
The insistence on the existence of Belgium before 1830 was also one of the main arguments of the important Belgian historian Henri Pirenne whose monumental study *Histoire de la Belgique* had enormous influence in the 1920s. Pirenne presented a strongly patriotic and self-congratulatory image of the development of the Belgian nation from the time of Julius Caesar to its final apotheosis in the 1830s state. Pirenne’s popularity was enhanced by the fact that he had been deported to Germany during the First World War and thus became to be something of a patriotic hero. His status as a very francophone professor at Gent University also emphasised his very Belgianness.69

The most important element of the centenary, however, was the identification with the dynasty. On the coins and stamps the three Belgian Kings symbolised the first century of national independence. This concentration on the Belgian dynasty and the exclusion of other important personalities contributing to Belgium’s independence, notably the members of the 1830 provisional government, demonstrates the firm and uncontroversial position which the dynasty had acquired as a central means of Belgian national identification. While in the final version of the centenary stamps the Belgian Queens and the heirs to the throne failed to appear, their representation, especially that of Queen Elisabeth, was seriously considered. This is in line with our observation of the extension of the cult of the dynasty beyond the King frequently including the Queen. While the post-war popularity of the dynasty was to a large extent due to the heroic actions of the royal couple during the war, the marriage of Crown Prince Leopold with Princess Astrid of Sweden in 1926 clearly added to the dynasty’s appeal. While this new couple did not appear on the centenary bearers of value, it nevertheless contributed to the celebrations. In the year of the centenary, Astrid gave birth to a son, Baudouin, thus securing the male succession to the throne. Princess Astrid allegedly commented “Maintenant je

me sens vraiment belge."™ And indeed, Astrid did not only become Belgian but also a major symbol of Belgian national identity, as we shall see in the following chapter.

70 Quoted in Dayez-Burgeon, op. cit., p. 107
6.2 Switzerland

Differentiated Neutrality

Switzerland escaped direct military involvement in the First World War and it was widely held that its neutrality had considerably contributed to this positive outcome. In order to join the League of Nations the legal definition of Swiss neutrality was amended in the London declaration of 1920. While the treaty of Versailles confirmed Switzerland’s permanent neutrality established at the Congress of Vienna in 1815, the London declaration established the so-called differentiated neutrality. Confirming Switzerland’s special neutral status and privileges of 1815 and arguing that this neutrality had become an integral part of international law and a positive international peace-keeping factor, the London declaration was a compromise which enabled Switzerland to join the League of Nations and to participate in possible common actions against treaty-breaking members.71

Joining the League of Nations by referendum in 1920 and hosting the newly-founded organisation in one of its major cities, Geneva, were clear signs of the identification with this new form of neutrality which explicitly included international cooperation for positive, humanitarian goals predominantly peace-keeping. It inserted itself into the so-called policy of good services already practised before the war and increasingly manifested itself on bearers of value. We have seen how already the 1919 series of peace stamps had commemorated the end of the war by means of an international peace treaty. In 1925 the Post Office issued the second stamp series commemorating the foundation of the Universal Postal Union situated in Berne, while in 1928 stamps commemorated the 100th birthday of the founder of the Red Cross, Henri Dunant, the

71 See Jaeger, René, Über die Rolle der Neutralität im Völkerbund und die Gestaltung der dauernden Neutralität der Schweiz, Bern 1942, pp. 67-74
significance of whom we will discuss below. Yet the most important and striking manifestations of the identification with the differentiated neutrality enabling Switzerland to participate actively in international peace-keeping efforts were the stamps commemorating the League of Nations’ disarmament conference held in Geneva in 1932.

The Post Office organised a contest among selected artists for the creation of the commemoration series in 1931. The jury judging the proposals unanimously approved of three proposals but the protocol tells us little about the jury’s motives for this choice. Fortunately, however, the Post Office seems to have asked the artists to explain the meaning of the stamps they created a couple of weeks before their issue. Maurice Barraud thought that a stamp had to be simple and easily intelligible and had thus originally planned to show a hand holding a broken sword. “Mais ce motif me semblait encore brutal et quelque peu menaçant; alors l’idée de la paix lui était subséquemment liée: la colombe est venue tout naturellement se poser sur le glaire brisé.” His final version (fig. 151) thus showed: “Une main tenant un glaire brisé, sur le fragment duquel vient se poser une colombe tenant en son bec un petit rameau d’olivier, …”.73

Otto Baumberger created the air mail stamps and explained that he chose to portray a civil as opposed to a military aeroplane because the former was: “... zugleich Symbol der Flugpost und Symbol des Friedens (Abrüstungskonferenz!)”.74 Baumberger’s design also included the representation of the Genevan coat of arms in the upper left corner (fig. 153). Finally, the 1 fr. stamps by Géo Fustier showed: “... einen geflügelten Genius ..., in der Rechten den Oelzweig und in der Linken eine Fackel haltend” while the Genevan slogan Post Tenebras Lux was inscribed on the symbolic sun appearing on the left (fig. 152).75

72 Juryprotokoll, 16 July 1931. PTT Bib., PAA 02071
73 Barraud to Schweger, 13 Jan. 1932, PTT Bib., BG 0119
74 Baumberger to Schweger, 11 Jan. 1932, ibid.
75 Postamtsblatt Nr. 12/1932, PTT Bib., BG 0134. No interpretation by the artist of this stamp survives.

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The disarmament series thus clearly used Switzerland's differentiated neutrality, expressed by its active involvement in international peace-keeping efforts, as a means of identification. The decision to issue not only ordinary postal values but also an air mail series ensured the world-wide dissemination of these stamps and the Post Office, indeed, explicitly stated its aim of propagating the conference and its idea throughout the world by means of these stamps: "Es werden Marken gewünscht, die in alle Welt kommen und die Idee der Abrüstung propagieren." The importance attached to this new identification with Switzerland's internationally active neutrality was further underlined by the fact that these stamps were not, like other special stamps, valid for half a year only. On the contrary, they were valid for ten years until 1942, ironically the year when the Second World War was at its peak.

This stamp series received mixed comments. The Swiss applied arts journal Werk praised Barraud for having created a universally intelligible symbol of disarmament (fig. 151) but thought that the air mail series by Baumberger (fig. 153) lacked symbolism and that the 1 fr. stamp by Fustier was tasteful but was "... fast zu blutleer, ..."(fig. 152). On the other hand, among the members of the international delegations participating in the conference who all received a special edition of the series from the Swiss Post Office, the stamps were very popular indeed. The Post Office received numerous demands for further copies from delegation members claiming not to have received a copy or wanting additional ones. The League of Nations office of the Italian Foreign Ministry in Rome even wanted copies because: "... nous aussi nous participons en quelque manière aux travaux de la Conférence du Désarmement, ..." and the Swiss ambassador in Washington wanted to offer the stamps to President Roosevelt.

76 Sektionschef Oberpostdirektion, in Juryprotokoll, 9 June 1931, PTT Bib. PAA 02084
77 Kienzle, H., Neue Briefmarken, in Werk, vol. 3, 1932, pp. 95-96
78 The Post Office received requests from the American, British, Danish, Hungarian, Portuguese, South African and Turkish delegations and from the Cuban consul and from a Canadian senator. PTT Bib., PAA 02071
79 Ministero degli Affari Esteri to Directeur général des Postes Suisses, 24 March 1932, PTT Bib. PAA 02071
known as a "grand collectionneur de timbres-postes".80

The Japanese invasion of Manchuria which took place when the conference was held provoked considerable criticism of the Swiss stamp series. An anonymous letter asked the Post Office: "Wie stellen Sie sich zur Herausgabe als Pendent zu den Abrüstungsmarken, von Erinnerungsmarken des 'friedlichen Wettkampfes in der Mandschurei'?"81 and the French extreme-right journal Je suis partout even published a cartoon based on 1 fr. stamps turning the original peace allegory into a Japanese bomber (fig. 177).82 The Post Office thus clearly achieved its aim of a world-wide propagation of Switzerland's identification with the ideals of the disarmament conference but the stamps could, of course, not prevent the failure of the conference and the subsequent mocking of the stamps by cynical critics.

Commemoratio Helvetiorum

While the persons displayed on Swiss bearers of value until the First World War were all either anonymous allegories or mythical heroes, in the post-war period bearers of value for the first time displayed famous Swiss personalities. The annual Pro Juventute stamp series included a commemoration stamp dedicated to a famous Swiss person from 1927 onwards while the 20 fr. banknotes issued in 1930 were the first notes to display a portrait of a Swiss personality. The idea of portraits on bearers of value was widespread and even existed before the First World War. In 1905 in the course of the creation of new images to be displayed on definitive stamps the Postal Ministry noted that the idea of displaying deceased government members and generals had been

80 Légation de Suisse, Washington to direction générale, 30 March 1933, PTT Bib. PAA 02071
81 "Drei Gwundrige!" to Oberpostdirektion, 8 Feb., 1932, PTT Bib., BG 0119
82 Je suis partout, 2 April 1932, PTT Bib. PAA 02071. No mention of this cartoon was found in Dioudonnat, Pierre-Marie, Je suis partout, Paris 1973
suggested by the press. The sources fail to document why this idea was not realised but it is likely that in view of the advanced state of the production of the new series in 1905, the government rejected the idea of changing the proposals completely.

We have seen that the annual *Pro Juventute* commemoration stamps began with the commemoration of the 100th anniversary of Heinrich Pestalozzi (1746-1827) and that the Postal Ministry and the government subsequently encouraged the continuation of the annual commemoration stamps and at times influenced the choice of the person to be commemorated. The first banknotes commemorating a Swiss personality appeared in 1930 and were also dedicated to Pestalozzi. In the course of the creation of the new banknotes, the art historian Paul Ganz, the artistic expert chosen by the SNB, proposed: "... an Stelle des wenig interessanten Mädchenkopfes einen schweizerischen Charakterkopf hinzusetzen, einen Schweizer, der es verdient, im besten Sinne des Wortes populär zu werden." Ganz proposed the representation of Pestalozzi explicitly referring to the educationalist's centenary and proposed as an alternative a portrait of Jean-Jacques Rousseau. The bank decided to represent Pestalozzi. Ganz welcomed the bank's decision "... die Köpfe von kostümierten Schweizerinnen oder Idealgestalten durch authentische Bildnisse berühmter Schweizer zu ersetzen ..." and proposed a list of personalities to be displayed on subsequent notes. However, until 1956 the SNB did not issue any new banknotes and thus the Pestalozzi notes issued in 1930 remained the only Swiss banknotes displaying a personality in the period covered by this thesis.

The introduction of commemorations of famous Swiss people on bearers of value had two main motivations. Firstly, the centenary of Pestalozzi and its

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83 See Postal Ministry to government, 20 Dec. 1905, BA, E 51/577-587
84 See Ganz to SNB, 29 Nov. 1924, SNB, 330/339
85 The sources fail to explain this choice of the bank. See SNB to Ganz, 16 July 1925, SNB, 330/339
celebrations prompted the idea of commemorating the educationalist on bearers of value. Secondly, the ministerial and governmental interest attached to the commemoration stamps, and more explicitly the comments by Ganz on the SNB’s decision to represent Pestalozzi, suggest that there was an increasing desire to move away from the display on bearers of value of allegories and mythical heroes towards the representation of authentic personalities.

Since Pestalozzi was the first Swiss personality to be commemorated on bearers of value it is worth investigating the meanings attached to him in the context of Swiss national identity. Pestalozzi was an educationalist who founded several primary schools where he aimed at educating children by means of his so-called method and despite the ultimate failure of all of his projects he was usually remembered as the founder of the modern primary school accessible to everyone. After his death, overlapping and to some extent competing myths began to develop around Pestalozzi, both in Switzerland and abroad. In Switzerland Pestalozzi’s memory was contested between some Liberals who discovered him as a spiritual symbol of their beliefs and some Catholic-Conservatives who opposed this cult by portraying Pestalozzi as a masonic rationalist. Yet despite his contested memory, Pestalozzi undoubtedly developed into a Swiss national icon by the beginning of the 20th century.87

The banknotes dedicated to Pestalozzi only reproduced a famous portrait of the educationalist and the notes did not contain any other iconographic elements alluding to Pestalozzi (fig. 176). The iconography on the Pestalozzi stamp series, however, was much richer. Two of them showed the positive effects of the educationalist’s “method” on an orphan. The Postamtsblatt explained that Pestalozzi’s care and education transformed an orphan sitting abandoned on the grave of his parents on the 5 ct. stamps into a well-behaved

and pious boy on the 10 ct. stamps (figs. 144, 145). Pestalozzi's portrait on the 30 ct. stamps (fig. 146) showed him "... in der Glorie des Abends, der sich auf die heimatliche Scholle senkt." The sown acre and the ripe wheat field stood for the beginning and the climax of his work and "Die untergehende Sonne und davor die Festbänder sollen zeigen, dass das Wirken Pestalozzis für die Menschheit einem gesegneten Sommertage vergleichbar ist." Thus the stamp iconography suggested the saintly qualities of Pestalozzi and his work, not only for Switzerland but for humanity in general.

While the Post Office explained the meaning of the Pestalozzi stamps, the SNB made enquiries among all its local branches about the reception of the new banknotes which provides us with very interesting information. The choice of the educationalist as a means for Swiss collective identification was not criticised, but almost all local branches and many newspapers complained that the representation of Pestalozzi, who was known to have been particularly untalented in financial matters and whose ruinous financial generosity became proverbial, was completely inappropriate on banknotes. The Lausanne branch, for example, wrote: "Une chose a surpris tout le monde, c'est que Ton y ait mis l'effigie de Pestalozzi, qui, comme on le sait, fut un piètre financier." The 1928 Pro Juventute stamps commemorated Henri Dunant (1828-1910). Dunant was a Genevan banker who, after witnessing the battle of Solferino in 1859, developed the idea of a humanitarian organisation in favour of war victims. Dunant’s zeal led to the 1864 convention of Geneva which founded the Red Cross. Financially and socially ruined in 1868, Dunant disappeared from Geneva drifting around the world and finally installed himself in Heiden in the canton of Appenzell. Rediscovered by a journalist in 1895, Dunant became a living legend and received federal and international recognition for his works at

88 Postamtsblatt Nr. 128/1927, PTT Bib., BG 0113
89 SNB Lausanne to SNB Bern, 1 May 1931 and compare Neue Zürcher Zeitung, 15 July 1930, Volksrecht, 18 July 1930, SNB 330/339
the end of his life, including the Nobel Prize for peace in 1901.90 The Pro Juventute stamps (fig. 147) commemorated the 100th anniversary of Dunant’s birth and showed Dunant’s portrait in the foreground, while the background alluded to his works. On the right appeared an olive branch, symbol of peace, while on the left a wounded and bandaged soldier rested under the shining red cross appearing in the sky above.91

The 1929 Pro Juventute commemoration stamps were dedicated to Niklaus von Flüe (1417-1487). Born in Obwalden in central Switzerland Flüe was strongly driven by mysticism and, after the foundation of a numerous family and a career in cantonal politics, he became a hermit in his native Obwalden. He acquired prestige by means of his permanent fasting and became a very popular source of advice sought from all over the confederation. In a political context, Flüe was best remembered for his 1481 mediation between the conflicting Swiss cantons, known as the Stanser Verkommnis, which avoided a serious rupture between the confederate cantons. After his death, Flüe became a symbol of solidarity, compromise and tolerance practised in favour of the common federal good. While Flüe’s memory was cultivated throughout the Old Confederation, in the first decades of the modern confederation he became an important symbol of the Swiss Catholics. This changed in 1887 when the commemoration of the 400th anniversary of the hermit’s death was used to turn Flüe into a symbol of national reconciliation between the Liberals and their Catholic-Conservative opponents. Flüe thus became a major symbol of national integration which manifested itself, for example, in the prominent presence of his statue in the federal parliament built between 1894 and 1902 and which culminated in the large-scale celebrations of Flüe’s 500th birthday in 1917 where Flüe was successfully portrayed as the symbol of national reconciliation between

91 See Postamtsblatt, no. 19/1928, PTT Bib., BG 0113
Switzerland's major linguistic and social groups. The stamps dedicated to his memory showed the hermit in front of a rainbow symbolising reconciliation together with a peace dove. The stamps were created by Anton Stockmann (1868-1940) the most important and influential producer of modern Flüe iconography (fig. 148).

Pestalozzi, Dunant and Flüe were not only the first three persons commemorated on Swiss bearers of value but they were also the only ones who received more than one commemorative bearer of value in the period covered by this thesis. Pestalozzi appeared on the first Swiss commemorative stamps and banknotes and his 200th anniversary was commemorated on stamps in 1946, Dunant appeared again on a definitive series of tax stamps in 1935 and Flüe's portrait appeared for the second time on Pro Juventute stamps in 1937 while a representation of the Stanser Verkommnis including Flüe appeared on definitive stamps in 1938. Interestingly, Paul Ganz who proposed the idea of a Pestalozzi commemoration to the SNB suggested for subsequent banknotes the display of both Dunant and Flüe who, like Pestalozzi, due to their fame would not require an indication of their names. This evidence suggests that the three were prime Swiss icons. Pestalozzi's educational works were perceived to have brought humanitarian progress not only to Switzerland but to the whole world, while the cult of Dunant formed part of Switzerland's identification with its active neutrality. The Red Cross he founded was even described by Friedrich Wahlen, minister from 1959 to 1965, as Switzerland's greatest gift to the world. Flüe finally incarnated Swiss political wisdom by keeping the diverse

94 See Ganz to SNB, 21 Sept. 1925, SNB, 330/339
95 See Thüret, op. cit., p. 392

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confederation united and his status resembled that of a patron saint of Switzerland. Since he lived before the Reformation, Flüe had the advantage of being acceptable to both denominational groups, a position which was arguably weakened by his canonisation in 1947.96

While these appeared to have been prime icons suitable for display on bearers of value, the commemoration of Swiss personalities was not limited to them. On the contrary, the annual Pro Juventute series commemorated an increasing number of writers, politicians, educationalists, philosophers and academics who often had a predominantly local identity function. Yet all were perceived to have contributed in a positive way to the development of Switzerland and often also to the development of mankind in general. Thus Switzerland was represented as a nation contributing to its own and the world’s civilisation. The Pro Juventute commemorations have thus aptly been described as a Swiss pantheon.97

This system of creating a national pantheon also allowed for a representation of Swiss diversity. While the symbolic meaning of most of the commemorated individuals included cantonal, linguistic and denominational aspects, the pantheon allowed for the consideration of the exigencies of all groups. This can be seen in the case of the slightly complicated inclusion of the Italian-speaking Swiss into the Pro Juventute pantheon. In 1933 the Post Office suggested commemorating a famous Ticinese and proposed the artist Vincenzo Vela (1820-1891).98 However, the Postal Minister was opposed to this choice arguing that Vela had more relation with Italian than with Swiss art, that he had recently been commemorated in the course of the 50th anniversary of the

97 See Tavel, op. cit., p. 184
98 Wertzzeichensektion to Generaldirektion, 10 Jan. 1933, PIT Bib., BG 0113. On Vela and his most important Swiss national work, the Tell statue in Lugano, see Vismara-Bemasconi, Floriana, Il monumento a Guglielmo Tell di Vincenzo Vela, in Unsere Kunstdenkmäler, vol. 1, 1984, pp. 74-78

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Gotthard railway in 1932 and that his representation might lead to polemics. Two years later, the Post Office listed all personalities commemorated so far concluding: “Auf das Sprachgebiet verteilt erhalten wir 5 Männer aus der deutschsprachigen Schweiz und 3 Männer aus der welschen Schweiz.” The Post Office thus proposed to commemorate Stefano Franscini (1796-1857), the first Ticinese member of the federal government. This proposal received ministerial approval and Franscini thus became the first Italian-speaker to be commemorated on Swiss bearers of value in 1935 (fig. 150).

Local and Linguistic Identity

While the representation of individuals often implicitly included references to Switzerland’s cantonal diversity, more explicitly cantonal symbols, the cantons’ coats of arms, appeared on Pro Juventute stamps issued between 1918 and 1926, accompanied by a Swiss coat of arms from 1921 onwards. While the cantonal coats of arms alone are arguably the most important visual expression of each canton’s identity, the background pattern of each stamp furthermore consisted of one or several visual means of cantonal identification. A rosary and the episcopal hat, for example, referred to Fribourg as a catholic Canton and a bishop’s see, Neuchâtel’s coat of arms was surrounded by the watches produced in this canton while carrots alluded to Aargau’s nickname of the carrot canton (figs. 140-142).

Thus individually, each of these stamps were strong expressions of cantonal identities rather than Swiss identities. Grouped together, however, these stamps formed the oldest visual representation of Swiss national identity.

99 See hand-written note by Minister Pilet-Golaz on Wertzeichenkto to Generaldirektion, 10 Jan. 1933, PTT Bib., BG 0113. Instead of Vela, Grégoire Girard appeared on the 1933 stamps.
100 Wertzeichenkto to Generaldirektion, 14 Jan. 1935, PTT Bib., BG 0113
101 This rather complicated iconography is explained in Bosshard, J. A., Die Wohltätigkeitsmarken der Schweiz, Leipzig, 1927, pp. 20-35
the frieze of cantonal coats of arms. The confederate cantons began to exchange their coats of arms, mainly in the form of stained glass windows, in the second half of the 15th century. A frieze of coats of arms of the confederate cantons appeared from the beginning of the 16th century onwards. The cantons were arranged in the chronological order of entry into the confederation except for the three important city states of Zurich, Berne and Lucerne situated at the beginning.102

The traditional sequence of cantons was not applied to this stamp series, rather the chronological sequence seems to have been consciously broken up. The first two stamps were dedicated to Uri and Geneva, the first and the last cantons to join the confederation. Most yearly series consisted of both cantons from the Old Confederation and from those which joined in the 19th century. Since the traditional order to an extent always attached more prestige to the older cantons it can be speculated that Pro Juventute’s choice of mixing old and new cantons was aimed at putting all cantons on an equal level.103

The style of the coats of arms strongly resembled Swiss medieval and early modern stained-glass windows. Swiss stained-glass windows became the object of considerable collectors’ interest from the late 19th century onwards. The Swiss National Museum built up one of the most important collections of such windows which were considered to be among the finest art objects produced in the Old Confederation.104 Furthermore, the persons or symbols surrounding the Swiss coats of arms referred to important historical events of the Old Confederation ranging from the 1292 foundation of the confederation through the early modern Burgundian and Milanese wars to the 1792 massacre of the

102 See Tavel, op. cit., p. 15-20. On bearers of value the frieze appeared as a very small detail for the first time on the belt of Helvetia displayed on the 1883 banknotes.
103 No documents were located explaining the choice of the cantonal order.
104 See Durrer, Robert; Lichtlen, Fanny, Heinrich Angst, Erster Direktor des schweizerischen Landesmuseums; Britischer Generalkonsul, Glarus 1948, pp. 165-178 and Schweizerisches Landesmuseum (ed.), Das Schweizerische Landesmuseum, Hauptstücke aus seinen Sammlungen, Zürich 1969
Swiss guards in the Tuileries (fig. 143). Taking up the oldest visual means of Swiss self-representation, the frieze of cantonal coats of arms, and combining it with allusions to historical landmarks of the Old Confederation, this Pro Juventute series thus clearly linked the modern confederation of 22 cantons to its predecessor, the Old Confederation.

While the Pro Juventute series represented every canton, Genevan cantonal identity manifested itself on the 1932 disarmament series. For the 5 ct. stamp, Geneva proposed to reproduce its first stamp issued in 1845 which featured its coats of arms and the cantonal slogan Post Tenebras Lux. While the 19th century Genevan stamp, a strong symbol of Genevan identity, was not chosen for the series because the jury wanted to have a single image for all values from 5-60 ct., the cantonal slogan appeared on the 1 fr. stamp and the Genevan coat of arms on the air mail series (figs. 152, 153). Thus in this case, the stamp iconography combined traditional Genevan means of identification with the new identification theme of Switzerland’s differentiated neutrality.

As in the pre-war period the inscriptions on Swiss bearers of value either appeared in all three languages or in Latin. Only one complaint about this arrangement is documented. In 1930 the Vorort, the association of Swiss industrialists, proposed to replace the Latin word Helvetia with the German term Schweiz on stamps in order to create less confusion abroad and thereby enhancing the stamp’s advertisement potential in favour of the tourist industry. The Post Office, however, replied: “Die Schweiz ist bekanntlich ein dreisprachiges Land (3 verfassungsmässige Nationalsprachen) und wir können uns nicht vorstellen, dass unsere welschen und tessinischen Miteidgenossen davon befriedigt wären, wenn die schweizerischen Postmarken nur die deutsche

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105 See Schlunegger, Ernst, Motivhandbuch Schweiz, Basel 1990, pp. 306-315
106 Juryprotokoll, 9 June 1931, PTT Bib., PAA 02084
107 For Genevan, Basle and Zurich local identities see, Bouvier, Nicolas; Craig, Gordon A.; Gossmann, Lionel, Geneva, Zurich, Basel, History, Culture and National Identity, Princeton 1994
108 Vorort to Oberpostdirektion, 21 March 1930, PTT Bib., BG 0119
Aufschrift “Schweiz” trügen, ...”. It further stated that a trilingual inscription would take up too much space justifying therefore the display of the Latin term *Helvetia* used since 1862.109

The only bearers of value to provoke complaints on behalf of a linguistic group were the 1930 Pestalozzi banknotes (fig. 176). The note’s style and colour were frequently criticised as resembling German and Austrian banknotes. The SNB noted that these comments came from specific regions, namely from the very east of Switzerland, close to the Austrian border where the notes were confused with the currency of the neighbouring country, and from French-speaking Switzerland in the west.110 No such criticism apparently came from the rest of German-speaking Switzerland. This striking dislike of the banknotes “... d’allure autrichienne ou germanique assez prononcée.”111 in the French-speaking part of Switzerland might be explained by an interesting article published the *Tribune de Lausanne*. It attributed the unpleasing outlook of the banknotes to mother Helvetia’s bad taste about which it stated: “En tout cas, il n’est pas romand.” The author went on to imagine future banknotes displaying a portrait of Charles Ferdinand Ramuz (1878-1948), an important Vaudois writer, or banknotes using the colours of Lake Geneva and displaying the portrait of a beautiful girl. But of course such ideas were illusory, “.... sorti d’un cerveau de ces Welsches, qui ne sont pas toujours contents de ce que tu [Maman Helvétia] fais.” The article ended with the laconic observation: “Ça vaut toujours vingt francs.”112

The Romand criticism thus did not focus on the fact that a German-speaking Swiss was commemorated on the notes although Pestalozzi appears to have been less well known in the French-speaking part of Switzerland than in the German-speaking part. The SNB noted that sources stemming from French-

109 Oberpostdirektion to Vorort, 2 April 1930, PTT Bib., BG 0119
110 See III Departement SNB, Bericht, 6 May 1931, SNB, 330/339
111 SNB Neuchâtel to SNB Berne, 29 April 1931, *ibid.*
speaking Switzerland criticised the absence of Pestalozzi's name on the notes "... weil der Kopf nicht allgemein bekannt sei." Interestingly, the criticism focussed on the "Germanic" style of the Pestalozzi notes which led to calls for more "Romand" notes both in terms of style and in terms of the personality commemorated. We have seen above that the Romands did not remain unrepresented on bearers of value. While no new banknotes were issued until after the Second World War, one of the prime Swiss icons was Henri Dunant, a French-speaking Swiss who was commemorated several times on stamps, while many other French-speakers were included in the Pro Juventute pantheon.

Alpine Dwellers. Alpine Landscape

We have seen that, due to the collapse of the Latin Monetary Union, Switzerland banned all foreign 5 fr. coins after the war and decided to create new 5 fr. coins by means of a general coin contest in 1921 followed by a limited contest in 1922. The winning artist was Paul Burkhard (1888-1964). His proposal issued in 1922 showed on the obverse the portrait of an Alpine mountain shepherd wearing a traditional shirt, while the reverse displayed the Swiss coat of arms flanked by edelweiss and Alpine roses (fig. 175). Burkhard developed this image out of proposals he submitted in earlier coin contests. For a 1918 limited contest for divisionary coins, he had proposed a standing shepherd carrying a Swiss flag an image which he proposed in a slightly modified version in the course of the 1921 general coin contest (fig. 174). For the final version of the shepherd, Burkhard displayed the portrait of his original shepherd in an enlarged form. The rules of the 1918 contest left full artistic freedom to the participants but stipulated that the coin imagery "... ausdrücklich schweizerischen Charakter haben muss" a claim which was repeated in the course of the 1921 general

114 See Püntener, August, Der Fünfliiber und sein Münzbild, Altdorf 1987, pp. 11-15
Burkhard complied with these exigencies by displaying an idealised Alpine shepherd who was, however, not intended to represent Tell. Neither the preliminary proposals nor the final coin imagery included Tell’s major attribute, the cross bow, and the Federal Mint usually referred to Burkhard’s image using the terms Älpler, or Hirte.\(^{116}\)

The interesting study by August Püntener, however, shows that Burkhard’s shepherd was considerably influenced both by representations of Tell and by the canton of origin of the hero, Uri. The director of the Federal Mint Adrian encouraged Burkhard to find inspiration for his portrait by visiting the famous Tell monument by Kissling in Altdorf, the capital of Uri, and by exploring Bürglen in the remote Uri Schächental where Tell is meant to have come from. Burkhard indeed went to Uri, and Püntener shows that via an artist friend, Eduard Gubler, Burkhard was able to acquire photographs of two Bürglen Alpine farmers on the basis of which Burkhard is likely to have developed the shepherd’s portrait.\(^{117}\)

Burkhard’s proposals provoked mixed reactions. Although the jury had approved of Burkhard’s 1918 proposals showing a standing shepherd without a flag for new divisionary coins, the Interior Minister Chuard refused to mint them because one jury member, the painter Ernst Stückelberg, convinced the minister that the shepherd resembled a striking proletarian.\(^{118}\) Burkhard did, however, have a strong ally, the director of the Federal Mint Adrian, who was convinced of the superiority of Burkhard’s work in comparison to other proposals, as we have noted before. While no new divisionary coins were finally minted, thus eliminating the possibility of a display of Burkhard’s perceived proletarian, the coins issued in 1922 were created by Adrian’s preferred artist...

\(^{115}\) See Wettbewerb ..., April 1918, and Vorschriften ..., 30 Aug. 1921, BA 8 (E)/37

\(^{116}\) See Adrian to Burkhard, 20 March 1922, BA 6200 (A) 1/44 and Adrian to Eidgenössische Staatskasse, 7 Oct. 1929, BA 6200 (A) 1/3

\(^{117}\) See Püntener, op. cit., pp. 21-31

\(^{118}\) See Adrian to Vibert, 8 Nov. 1920, BA, 6200 (A) 1/42 and Püntener, op. cit., pp. 25-26
After their issue Burkhard’s coins provoked widespread criticism but it did not focus on the choice of the theme of an Alpine shepherd. Rather they centred around the coins’ low relief leading to a blurred appearance of the portrait, and around the dimensions of the Swiss cross which were heraldically incorrect. Burkhard had to rework both the relief and the proportions of the cross and slightly altered versions of the coins appeared in 1923 and 1924. Despite subsequent changes in diameter and the metal employed, Burkhard’s shepherd still appears on Swiss 5 fr. coins today. Although we have seen that the image was not intended to represent Tell, today there is a widespread belief that the coins do, in fact, show Tell.

Already in the pre-war period, the Alps were one of the most important means of Swiss collective identification especially because of their function as a major tourist attraction. The theme of the Alps as a tourist attraction gained increasing influence on the design of post-war bearers of value. The Pro Juventute series issued in 1929 and 1931 displayed Alpine views clearly aimed at promoting tourism. The Postamtsblatt even explained that one stamp was meant to express “… die Eindrücke einer Wanderung von Grindelwald nach der Grossen Scheidegg, …” (fig. 149). More importantly, we have seen above that the 1934 definitive stamps were deliberately introduced in order to stimulate tourism. This series showed a variety of Swiss landscape views all but one of which were taken from the Alps (figs. 136-139). Despite the small size of the stamps they were understood as advertisements for Switzerland’s natural beauty abroad, as a positive comment in a Berlin newspaper emphasising the series’ advertising character shows.

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119 Pintener, op. cit., p. 17
120 The writer Hermann Burger, for instance, saw Tell on the 5 fr. coins. See Burger, Hermann, Die Künstliche Mutter, Frankfurt am Main 1986, p.126. Full quotation above, p. 6
121 Postamtsblatt Nr. 293/1931, PTT Bib., BG 0113
122 See Berliner Zeitung am Mittag, 11 July 1934, PTT Bib., BG 0119
Before the First World War, the Swiss tourist industry had been growing rapidly: the nights spent in Swiss hotels rose from 3 million in 1871 to 22 million in 1913. This development was caused by a variety of factors including the invention of winter sports providing Switzerland with a second touristic season apart from the traditional summer holiday period, the constant growth of Alpinism and the improvements of Alpine infrastructure including exclusively touristic railways such as the Jungfraubahn built between 1898 and 1912. The First World War was an economic disaster for the Swiss tourist industry and despite counter measures such as a hotel construction ban (1915), hotel price regulations (1919), or the promotion of tourism for the Swiss rather than for foreigners, the numbers of nights spent at Swiss hotels never reached their pre-war levels and were subject to considerable fluctuations (1921: 13 million, 1930: 19 million, 1932: 13 million, 1941: 11 million). The increasing emphasis on the touristic aspect of the Alps displayed on Swiss post-war bearers of value thus has to be seen as one of the attempts to support the tourist industry negatively affected by the economic problems of the period.

The 1934 landscape series, however, not only aimed at promoting tourism. Post Office stressed that their aim was: "... das typische der schönen Schweiz und der schweizerischen Verkehrswege darzustellen: Von Bergen eingerahmte Täler und Seen, Gletscher, Schluchten, Wasserfälle, Bergstrassen und Alpenbahnen." In contrast to previous Alpine views represented on Swiss bearers of value which showed the Swiss mountains unaffected by modernity in their perceived natural state, the 1934 series showed the Alps made accessible by modern means of technology and engineering (figs. 136-139). Two years earlier, another stamp series had commemorated the 50th anniversary of one of the most important Alpine engineering projects, the Gotthard railway. The series

124 Mitteilung an die Presse, 11 May 1934, PTT Bib., BG 0119
represented the portraits of three main exponents of the Gotthard railway project, namely the architect Louis Favre (1826-1879), the entrepreneur Alfred Escher (1819-1882) and the minister Emil Welti (1825-1899). Both the 1934 landscape series and the 1932 Gotthard series represented Switzerland as a modern nation capable of achieving technological and engineering works which from the late 19th century onwards were widely admired and on occasions even compared to the architectural wonders of Antiquity.

An interesting shift in emphasis within the continuous identification with the Alps becomes apparent by comparing the pre- and post-war Alpine representations on Swiss bearers of value. In the pre-war period, the Alps often had an allegorical function symbolising freedom and liberty and were frequently linked to the Swiss foundation myths set in the three primordial cantons. After the war, however, there was less emphasis on the mythical-allegorical aspects of the Alps and instead there was increasing emphasis on the mountains' function as tourist attractions, and they were for the first time used to distinguish Switzerland as a modern, technology-oriented nation. This move away from mythical-allegorical representations also occurred with respect to the representation of people. While pre-war bearers of value displayed Tell and Helvetia, the post-war coins displayed an Uri mountain shepherd not intended to represent Tell, while stamps and banknotes began to commemorate Swiss personalities.

The 1932 General Stamp Contest

The 1932 general stamp contest allows for an interesting comparison with its 1900 precedent and for an evaluation of the themes discussed in this chapter.

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125 On the Gotthard project and the frequent disputes involving Favre, Escher and Welti see Hasler, Alfred, *Gotthard. Als die Technik Weltgeschichte schrieb*, Frauenfeld 1982

The 1932 contest produced 999 proposals by 414 participants, a 23% rise in participants and an 85% rise in the number of proposals compared to the 1900 contest (336 participants, 541 proposals). In contrast to the 1900 contest, almost all of the proposals survive, namely 996, but most of them lack an indication of the artist's name which excludes an analysis along gender lines. However, the Post Office noted that the regulations of the contest were sent out a total of 539 interested persons, 375 times in German, 152 times in French and 12 times in Italian. Compared to Switzerland's linguistic composition (1930: 71.9% German, 20.4% French, 6.0% Italian, 1.1% Romansh) the linguistic proportions of the ordered regulations (69.6 % German, 28.2 % French, 2.2 % Italian) show a disproportionately high level of interest in French-speaking Switzerland, while Italian-speakers appear to have been disproportionately uninterested in creating new Swiss stamps.

As in the case of the 1900 general stamp contest, I have attempted an approximate classification and quantitative analysis of the iconographic elements displayed on the proposals. The single most important symbol continued to be the Swiss cross which appeared on 407 proposals. As in the previous contest, many participants endowed the cross with additional meaning mainly by adding rays to it thus suggesting almost holy aspects of the national heraldic symbol. The federal nature of the Swiss state was again alluded to by means of displaying 22 symbols representing the 22 cantons, although this way of representing Switzerland was used less frequently in 1932 than it had been in 1900. The second most popular form of imagery continued to be the Alps. 374 proposals showed Alpine views or representations of mountains in general, many others alluded to the Alps by employing Alpine plants such as edelweiss, gentians, and...
Alpine roses or firtrees.\textsuperscript{132} 30 stamps referred to the Alps by representing Alpine animals of which the chamois was by far the most popular with 16 proposals (fig. 163).\textsuperscript{133} The reason for this seems to be that other animals such as a stag or deer were either not associated sufficiently closely with the Alps since they also live in the lowlands or because two important Alpine animals already had other associations than the Swiss national identity. The ibex is the heraldic beast of the Grisons while the eagle is the old German imperial symbol. The jury of a subsequent stamp contest, for example, rejected a proposal arguing "... ein Reichsadler als schweizerisches Wertzeichen eignet sich aber nicht."\textsuperscript{134}

The shift in emphasis already noted with respect to Alpine representations on bearers of value also appears in the proposals of the contest. There were still a number of proposals using the Alps in an mythical-allegorical way - for example by showing areas of central Switzerland where the Rütli Oath and the Tell myth are situated. 37 proposals directly drew on the Tell myth while 36 proposals referred to the Rütli Oath, mostly by showing an oath scene or three swearing hands. Compared to the 1900 contest there were, however, considerably fewer representations of Tell and the Rütli oath in 1932.\textsuperscript{135} On the other hand, the touristic aspect of the Alps was very prominent. Many proposals showed famous views of the Alps, sometimes explicitly referring to tourism. The Post Office also noted that the Matterhorn, the key Swiss tourist icon, was particularly popular and it indeed appeared on 52 proposals (fig. 165).\textsuperscript{136} Many proposals used Alpine themes to mark Switzerland as a modern, progressive country by showing how the Alps had been made accessible by modern means of transport such as railways and roads suitable for cars (fig. 160). Some of the proposals developed this new means of identification even further by showing the Alps not only as

\textsuperscript{132} I counted 89 stamps using Alpine plants, however, firs were only counted when they were used in a symbolic manner since Alpine landscape proposals usually included these trees.

\textsuperscript{133} Other animals included eagles, ibex, deers, stags, marmots and even an Alpine goat.

\textsuperscript{134} Juryprotokoll, 29 May 1935, PTT Bib., BG 0119

\textsuperscript{135} 1900 Tell: 7.4%, Rütli: 9.1%, see above, p. 98, note 134; 1932: Tell and Rütli both 3.7%

\textsuperscript{136} Wertzeichenabteilung to Generaldirektion, 19 Aug. 1932, PTT Bib., BG 0119
the scenery for the display of modern engineering and technical achievements but also as a source of economic potential in the form of hydroelectric dams (fig. 171).

At least 34 proposals used symbols of peace such as olive branches, peace doves or the Latin word pax thus alluding to Switzerland’s differentiated neutrality and its active role in peace-keeping (figs. 164, 166). Eight proposals were dedicated to famous Swiss personalities, namely Pestalozzi, Dunant and Flüe as well as the scientist Auguste Piccard, the writer Gottfried Keller and the politician Jonas Furrer. Dunant and Flüe appeared on two proposals each, which confirms their definition as prime Swiss icons.\textsuperscript{137} While allegories, especially various forms of Helvetia, were very prominent in 1900, I found only 28 classical Helvetias among the results of the 1932 contest. However, there were several anonymous female figures usually with a strong rural and agricultural emphasis (fig. 173). Among the anonymous male representations there were several Tell-like mountain dwellers but this group also included the representation of an old man ploughing an acre and what I consider a novelty, the Helveticus, a male allegory with an edelweiss in his hair (fig. 167), while some proposals clearly had a satirical notion such as the proposals mocking Switzerland as a country of cows and railways (figs. 169, 170).

While many of the proposals thus confirm the key themes discussed in this chapter, the participants also proposed ways of portraying Switzerland which did not appear on Swiss bearers of value in this period. Twelve proposals, for example, displayed a map of Switzerland, a very effective portrait of the nation which did not appear on bearers of value in this period (fig. 168), while several other proposals referred to Swiss medieval history either by showing medieval arms or soldiers or by commemorating medieval battles such as the battle of Morgarten (1315). Furthermore, many proposals made reference to agriculture by

\textsuperscript{137}Proposals: 269, 827: Dunant; 90, 384: Flüe; 204: Auguste Piccard; 268: Pestalozzi; 361: Jonas Furrer, 961: Gottfried Keller, PTT Wertz., Proposals 1932
showing agricultural scenes or symbols such as wheat ears or ploughs (fig. 172), while only relatively few proposals alluded to industry.\textsuperscript{138}

Yet the prominence of decidedly modernist proposals is clearly one of the most striking aspects of the 1932 general stamp contest. The modernity of the proposals manifested itself not only in terms of the themes displayed, for example the hydroelectric projects, but also in terms of their radical, modern style. Many proposals employed a very simple, sober style and I counted 124 proposals which only displayed the country's name and a numeral indicating the value of the stamp and which completely avoided iconographic elements referring to Switzerland, even the Swiss cross. (figs. 157, 161, 162). This clearly demonstrates the influence of new, modern forms of high artistic production which were abstract, geometric and non-representational and which developed during and after the First World War. Zurich is widely known as the place of origin of Dadaism during the First World War and although Switzerland failed to become a centre of modern artistic movements after the war, the results of the 1932 contest demonstrate that modernist notions of art began to make themselves felt quite prominently in the production of bearers of value.

Unfortunately, the jury protocol for the 1932 contest is not very explicit. A great majority of proposals was rejected without comment in the first rounds and the jury only commented briefly on proposals rejected in later rounds. However, there was a general tendency to reject old-fashioned (altersümelnd, zu wenig zeitgemäss) or badly designed (klobig, starr, manieriert) proposals and it tended to approve of clear and simple proposals, mainly numeral stamps (klar, einfach, gut durchgearbeitet). Eventually, the jury gave prizes to 8 simple, modern numeral stamps, 6 landscape stamps, 2 symbolic oath stamps, 2 architectural views, one female allegory and one heraldic proposal. It awarded two first prizes, one for a very simple numeral stamp including a postal horn (fig. 154) and a stamp

\textsuperscript{138} I counted 48 proposals using agricultural themes and only 12 employing industrial themes.\textsuperscript{217}
alluding to the Rütli oath by means of a swearing hand (fig. 155). The jury thus clearly appreciated stylistically modern proposals and it even commented on one of the prized proposals: "Geistreiche, vielleicht zu modernistische Komposition" (fig. 158). Furthermore, the winning artists included Max Bill who was to become a major exponent of the radically abstract and sober art movement Konkrete Kunst (fig. 159).

The fact that the jury rewarded modernist proposals is of course not an exclusively Swiss phenomenon. Early Soviet Russia deliberately used abstract art especially for poster design and the Dutch Post Office allowed avant-garde artists to create almost all of its inter-war stamps. However, appreciation of inter-war modernist art was usually limited to intellectuals and met with popular incomprehension for which the reactions of the Swiss public to the jury’s decision are a prime example: the major applied arts journal Werk approved of the jury’s choice in favour of modern design but the decision provoked widespread criticism outside the artistic world. The public criticism of the images chosen was very diverse, one letter complained that the hands swearing an oath on one proposal were left hands (fig. 159); another criticised the choice of of cows on a meadow a “Unverfrorenheit” which could only possibly be used for a chocolate advertisement and criticised the female allegory: “Zum guten Glück sind unsere Schweizermädchen in der grossen Mehrzahl doch erheblich schöner, sonst müsste man sich vor ihnen fürchten” (fig. 156).

139 See Bericht der Jury, 24 Sept. 1932, PTT Bib., BG 0119
140 See ibid.; on Bill see Hütlinger, Eduard, Max Bill, Zürich 1987
143 Stucker to Oberpostdirektion, 19 Sept., 1932, PTT Bib., BG 0119
144 Sigg to Generaldirektor Furrer, 11 Sept. 1932, ibid.
145 See for instance the very rude letter of Kreis to Oberpostdirektion, 27 Aug. 1932, ibid.
industry finally led to the issue the 1934 landscape series instead of a modernist series, an approach which clearly proved to be too divisive and incomprehensible for the general public.

This 1934 landscape series replaced the earlier series displaying Tell and Tell’s son. However, despite the tendency apparent in the post-war period to move away from representations of the Tell myth leading to the disappearance of the hero from definitive stamps, Tell remained an important Swiss icon. In the course of the polemics surrounding the 1932 general stamp contest there were calls to keep the Tell stamps\textsuperscript{146} and two days after the issuing of the new series an anonymous Vaudois sent a post-card of the Tell monument in Altdorf to the Post Office attributing to Tell the words: “Viens mon fils! On ne veut plus de nous en Helvétie. La liberté et l’indépendance ne sont plus permises.”\textsuperscript{147} Yet, Tell did not remain unrepresented on Swiss stamps for a long time. References to the Tell myth reappeared on stamps issued in the late 1930s and Tell himself returned in a powerful pose on definitive stamps issued in 1941 as the following chapters will show.

\begin{footnotesize}
\textsuperscript{146} Bauer to Oberpostdirektion, 5 Oct. 1932, \textit{ibid.}
\textsuperscript{147} anon. post-card sent from Lausanne to Direction Fédérale des Postes, 5 July 1934, \textit{ibid.}
\end{footnotesize}
6.3 Conclusion

The First World War not only profoundly altered the political landscape of Europe but the violent self-destruction of the old continent was also widely interpreted as a catastrophic cultural experience profoundly affecting the identity of the Western World in general.\(^\text{148}\) In the post-war period all European states had to adapt to the new economic and political circumstances and their inhabitants had to find a way of integrating the memories of the war into their collective identities. Belgium and Switzerland are two very interesting cases for the process of post-war adaptation of national identities not least because the Swiss and the Belgians experienced the war in such different ways.

While the war was a catalyst for the development of a fully-fledged Belgian nationalism in the face of the German invader, the memory of the war became one of the most important and effective means of national identification in the post-war period. The memory of the war took three principal forms: the commemoration of Belgium's military heroism, its martyrdom brought about by the German invasion and occupation, and the post-war restoration of the nation's wholeness by means of the healing of the wounds inflicted by war and occupation. On bearers of value, the memory of the war appeared in a great variety of forms: they included the commemoration of war heroes such as the anonymous Belgian soldier, Cardinal Mercier or members of the Royal Family endowed with a heroic myth; the commemoration of destroyed buildings; or the issue of fund-raising stamps in favour of war victims, mainly mutilated soldiers and tuberculosis patients.

The Swiss did not experience the war in the same direct way as the Belgians. Despite the mobilisation of the militia army and the direct effects of the war on the Swiss economy, unlike the Belgians the Swiss escaped the mass

\(^{148}\) See, for example, Spengler, Oswald, *Der Untergang des Abendlandes: Umrisse einer Morphologie der Weltgeschichte*, 2 vols., München 1918.
destruction of lives and property characteristic of the war. Compared to the Belgians the Swiss thus experienced the war indirectly, they were observers rather than active participants. The war was thus more prominently perceived as a tragedy of humanity and civilisation brought about by destructive nationalism which was to be avoided in the future. The post-war period witnessed the development of an internationalist concept of Switzerland based on humanitarian principles above and beyond nationalism. This was reflected in the claim that Switzerland, because it was neutral, was somehow innocent during the First World War, its identification with the Red Cross and the pride in its active membership and hosting of the League of Nations. This almost anti-national Swiss collective identity implied the celebration of Swiss moral superiority and the international role of its amended, differentiated neutrality and was most clearly manifested on bearers of value by means of the 1932 disarmament stamps.

In the post-war period an interesting phenomenon occurred in both Belgium and Switzerland, namely the increasing commemoration of personalities on bearers of value. While Belgium had always represented its King on coins and stamps, during and especially after the war, these royal representations also appeared on banknotes and the cult of the monarchy was extended to other members of the Royal Family, while Belgian stamps began to commemorate non-royal Belgian personalities for the first time. On the other hand, Swiss bearers of value for the first time commemorated personalities and beginning with Pestalozzi the annual Pro Juventute commemoration stamp series gradually built up a national pantheon. This phenomenon is difficult to explain but it seems that the reason might lie in the history of taste. At least in the Swiss case some of the sources consulted clearly expressed the desire to replace the seemingly outdated allegories by representations of personalities and indeed the increase in the representation of personalities went hand in hand
with a noticeable decrease of allegorical figures in both cases. Allegories which had been so prominent in the pre-war period throughout Europe, not only on bearers of value, appear to have become unfashionable after the war. Their replacement by portraits of individuals did not mean, however, that personalised imagery was less able to carry symbolic meaning than their anonymous predecessors. The important comments on the subject of portraits on bearers of value by the head of the Monnaie Royale clearly showed that such portraits were icons which remained capable of symbolising a variety of meaning and concepts going well beyond the portrayed individual. Considering the increasing emphasis placed on the definition of national citizenship throughout Europe after the war it could be argued that these representations also represented the nation by means of some of its model citizens.149

The First World War negatively affected the relationship between the major linguistic groups in both countries. The German Flamenpolitik aimed at dividing Belgium along linguistic lines, while the diverging sympathies of German- and French-speaking Swiss with regard to the warring countries led to discord in Switzerland. Yet this did not lead to changes in the design of post-war bearers of value. The Swiss issuing bodies continued their policy of displaying either all three national languages or Latin on bearers of value, while their Belgian counterparts continued to apply the bilingualism established in the pre-war period. Complaints on behalf of linguistic groups did occasionally occur but did not focus on the language policy pursued by the issuing bodies but rather focussed on artistic taste in Switzerland or the perceived display of Flemish nationalist symbols in Belgium. While both Post Offices aimed at an equal representation of themes along linguistic lines, neither country symbolically represented their linguistic communities and in Belgium the symbolic representation of Flanders and Wallonia appears to have been consciously

149 On the relevance of citizenship and national identity see Brubacker, Rogers, Citizenship and Nationhood in France and Germany, Cambridge (Mass.) and London 1992 222
avoided on both coins and banknotes.

Other sub-national identities, however, prominently appeared on both countries' bearers of value, namely provincial, cantonal and city identities. Already displayed on pre-war bearers of value the representation of the two countries by means of their component local parts continued to be an effective way of portraying the nation. For example, while Swiss stamps displayed all cantonal coats of arms thus taking up the oldest form of Swiss self-representation, the frieze of confederate coats of arms, the Belgian series of martyr cities, especially the cases of Liège and Termonde, demonstrated the vigour of Belgian communal identities which through their martyrdom in the First World War had become firmly integrated into the Belgian nation.

The post-war period up until about 1933 is a generally neglected period, usually overshadowed by the subsequent period which witnessed a new wave of nationalism and the rise of Nazism which easily leads to an underestimation of the post-war period also in terms of the construction of national identities. Yet the analysis of the post-war development of Belgian and Swiss national identity during the 1920s shows that this was an important and highly fascinating period of adaptation and assertion of national identity in both countries. The post-war period witnessed the remarkably successful (re)construction of the Belgian nation and its identity which effectively combined the memories of the First World War with an increasing cult of the Belgian monarchy and the integration of strong local identities. Furthermore territorial expansion at the expense of the former German enemy both at home and in Africa marked the Belgian nation internationally while events such as international exhibitions or the organisation of the first post-war Olympics in Antwerp in 1920 were important occasions for Belgium to represent itself to the world.150 Swiss national identity adapted in a more gradual but equally efficient way in the post-war period. Apart

from integrating the new identification with Switzerland's differentiated neutrality, the identification with the Alps underwent a considerable shift in emphasis away from mythical-allegorical towards tourism-oriented representations. Furthermore, Switzerland increasingly portrayed itself as a modern country both by displaying achievements of modern technology and by supporting modern artistic styles. While in both cases there clearly were tensions or even contradictions within the construction of the nation, such tensions are inherent to collective identities and they did not prevent both countries from representing themselves as successful nations on their post-war bearers of value.
7. Portraits 1933/34-1939/40

7.1 Belgium

New Reign, New Portrait of the Monarch

On 17 February 1934 King Albert accidentally died mountain climbing at Marche-les-Dames in Southern Belgium. In commemoration of the King the Postal Minister Van Cauwelaert invented mourning stamps issued in March 1934 showing a portrait of the King surrounded by a black frame. Albert’s son Leopold became Belgium’s fourth King on 23 February 1934 and the portrait of the new King appeared in due course on Belgian stamps and coins. The first stamps showing Leopold III were fund-raising stamps issued in favour of war invalids in September 1934. Leopold was honorary president of the Club Royal Philatélique des Invalides and had allowed the reproduction of his portrait for this series. The stamps received positive responses, among them “l’appréciation fort élogieuse” of the director of the Swiss Post Office who was regarded as particularly competent in matters of stamp aesthetics due to Switzerland’s “art parfait” in matters of stamps. This encouragement may well have led to the decision to display this image also on the first series of definitive stamps featuring Leopold III issued in December 1934.

In an ornamental frame the stamps showed a photographic portrait of the young monarch in profile to the left. Leopold wore the same parade uniform as his father on the last series but unlike his predecessor the new King was

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1 Albert was an experienced Alpinist which was the main theme of Swiss obituaries for Albert, see for example Der Bund, 22 Feb. 1934, BA, 2200 Brussel, 3/4
2 See Secrétaire du Conseil to Ministre Van Cauwelaert, 1 March 1934, MP, 1932: Belgique Recoltante et Mercure
3 See Le Soir, 2 June 1934, MP, Timbres-poste spéciaux à l’effigie de S. M. Léopold III
4 Senator Delvaux de Fenffe to minister, 4 Oct. 1934, ibid.
bareheaded (fig. 178). This stamp was generally considered to be very successful, the society magazine *L’Eventail* declared it to be: “Le beau timbre”.\(^5\) Two further definitive stamp series appeared in 1936 and they also showed Leopold in profile and in uniform but in more sober frames and again without a hat. The series by Poortman was derived from an official photograph by the court photographer Marchand working in Brussels and was highly esteemed for its aesthetic beauty especially among philatelists (fig. 179).\(^6\)

The author of all of Leopold’s portraits on coins was the sculptor Marcel Rau (1886-1966) an active creator of Belgian national iconography. Rau’s works include the monumental statue of King Albert at the entry of the *Canal Albert* in Liège (1939), the decorations of the buildings of the *Banque Nationale* in Brussels (c. 1950) and medals commemorating the eminent Belgian historian Henri Pirenne and various members of the Royal Family.\(^7\) Rau created classical, sober profile portraits of Leopold displayed on the 5, 20 and 50 fr. coins (1936/34/39). The coins were only inscribed with the King’s name and thus for the first time Belgian coins did without the inscription *Roi des Belges, Koning der Belgen* (figs. 202, 204, 211).

The public seemed to have liked the images of the young King; even a cynical article in *Pourquoi Pas?* commented on Rau’s portraits on the first two coins (figs. 202, 204): “... la tête du souverain est bien venue, ...” and only criticised their reverse. The reverse of both coins figured a crown and plant symbols, the 20 fr. coin an ear of wheat, a laurel and an oak leaf and the 5 fr. coin a laurel and an oak branch. The size of the crown and its combination with the plant symbols was not easily understood and *Pourquoi Pas?* exclaimed about the 20 fr. coin: “Le revers, lui, est à hurler! ... une couronne énorme écrasant une espèce de

\(^5\) *L’Eventail*, 10 March 1935, MP, 1934: Léopold III (petit format et format moyen)

\(^6\) See undated photograph of Leopold III with indication R. Marchand, Portraits, Bruxelles, used for the series Poortman, 1936, MP, 1936/1 and Joncker, Charles, *Les timbres à effigie de Léopold III gravés par Maurice Poortman*, Bruxelles 1947

\(^7\) On Rau see Banque Nationale de Belgique (ed.), *La monnaie et le portrait royal*, Bruxelles 1991, pp. 152-167
"... ce qui est plus regrettable est l'aspect antiesthétique des pièces nouvelles. La pièce de monnaie est un des symboles d'un pays. Or, le lion que représentent certaines pièces n'est pas le lion belge.
M. Fischer.- Il est bien 'crollé'. (Rires).
M. Van Glabbeke.- C'est un caniche!
M. Carton de Wiart.- ... Je viens d'avoir une pièce d'un franc dans les mains. Cela m'arrive parfois. (Rires.) J'ai constaté que ces pièces ne portent que trois écussons provinciaux. Pourquoi trois, et choisis au

8 Pourquoi Pas?, 8 Jan. 1937, MR, 604/6
hasard? C'est invraisemblable! ... je regrette qu'un pays qui a, comme le nôtre, de si grandes traditions d'art ait fait frapper des monnaies si pitoyables. (Très bien! très bien! sur la plupart des bancs.)"

The Finance Minister Gutt agreed with the criticisms of the coin, created under his predecessor, stating that he had protested against the "caniche héraldique" but that the production of the new coins had already been too far advanced when he came into office so that a new minting would have cost too much.9

The 1935 Brussels world exhibition and the 1939 Liège water exhibition were announced by means of advertisement stamps, the iconography of which included strong symbols of the cities' identities. The Brussels series displayed two Belgian national images, namely the Belgian and the Congolese sections of the exhibition (figs. 181, 182), while two further stamps showed the exhibition hall of the city of Brussels and a view of "Vieux Bruxelles", a reconstruction of 17th century Brussels which was one of the main attractions of the fair.10 The Liège series only showed the exhibition palace on one stamp while the other three stamps showed a view of the Meuse, the Albert Canal and the allied war memorial in Liège (figs. 190, 191). While in 1936 the town halls of both Borgerhout and Charleroi were commemorated on stamps, one of the most interesting manifestations of local identity was displayed on the 1939 anti-tuberculosis stamp series. The stamps showed eight bell-towers chosen alternately from Flanders and Wallonia. Most of these bell towers were medieval and were thus symbols of the urban and mercantile heritage of the Belgian communes which were glorified as the nuclei of the Belgian nation most prominently by Henri Pirenne.11 Belgian radio still plays bells from different areas of Belgium as a symbol of the nation12, yet it has to be noted that

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9 Chambre des Représentants, 6 June 1939, MR, 604/7
10 On 1935 Brussels exhibition see Cockx, Lemmens, op. cit., pp. 115-132
11 See Pirenne, op. cit.
12 Martin Conway provided me with this very interesting information.
campanology is a widespread phenomenon in countries with strong local identities. It is no coincidence that in Italian the term *campanilismo* is frequently used to describe the strong and remarkably resilient local identities of Italy which indeed often fail to go beyond the area one can see from one's own *campanile*.

This frequent display of local symbols of identity, however, also provoked some criticisms. The Antwerp newspaper *La Métropole* warned of an excessive use of local symbols such as town halls: "... qui pourraient se répéter à l'infini si chaque commune belge s'avisait à réclamer ainsi un timbre pour une commémoration quelconque." While this comment somehow implied that only important cities such as Antwerp were worth displaying on national bearers of value, a Flemish newspaper commented on the 1935 coins commemorating the Brussels world exhibition which showed the statue of St. Michael of Brussels town hall on the obverse and the palace built for the commemoration of the 100th anniversary of the Belgian railways on the reverse: "Wat de uitbeelding betreft is het hoofdzakelijk een Brusselse munt" and complained about the dominant display of local symbols on the coins. "Het zal zich trouwens ook zelden hebben voorgedaan dat de uitbeelding voor een muntstuk zich beperkte tot zulke lokale gebeurtenis. Maar ... men staat hier voor Brussel, en dan schijnt alles mogelijk" (fig. 203).

14 The newspaper cutting is unfortunately without either date nor indication of the name of the paper, see anon. Flemish newspaper, no date (1935), MR, 601/15

La Belgique, la patrie des arts

Important artists worked in the geographical area of modern Belgium long before the creation of the Belgian state, most prominently the Flemish masters ranging from late-medieval artists such as the Van Eyck brothers or Memling to early modern masters like Rubens or Van Dijck. Since Old Masters are usually
associated with one or several cities in which they had worked rather than with their original place of birth they were an ideal means for local identification purposes.\textsuperscript{15} Antwerp's identification with Rubens shall serve as an example. An inter-war tourist guide stated that while, like other cities, Antwerp had heroic legends, a glorious past and splendid architectural monuments, the distinguishing element of the city was its most famous artist: "Anvers, seul au monde, est le royaume de Rubens! Elle s'identifie avec son demi-dieu."\textsuperscript{16}

For the construction of a collective Belgian identity, the identification with important artists was used from an early date onwards. Already during the French annexation of the Southern Netherlands, Guillaume-Jacques-Joseph Bosschaert (1737-1815), director of the \textit{Académie de peinture} and curator of the Brussels collections stated: "Les Belges sont peintres; leur école est nécessaire à l'équilibre de la production artistique; l'art français et italien déclinera si nôtre ne reste pas florissant."\textsuperscript{17} After the foundation of Belgium, the members of its Royal Academy rediscovered the country's artistic heritage and Rubens in particular.\textsuperscript{18} For the rest of the century the identification of the Belgian bourgeoisie with Rubens remained dominant and retained much of its attraction in subsequent periods.\textsuperscript{19}

At the turn of the century, however, the so-called Flemish Primitives, late-medieval Flemish painters such as the Van Eyck brothers, Memling, Rogier van der Weyden or Pieter Bruegel the Elder, received increasing attention.\textsuperscript{20} Neglected by art history for centuries they were rediscovered in the famous

\textsuperscript{15} Many of these important "Belgian" artists were born in other parts of Europe, notably Germany in the case of Rubens and Memling.
\textsuperscript{16} Ligue Patriotique du Tourisme et Touring-Club de Belgique (eds.), \textit{Anvers. Lierre. La campine anversoise}, Bruxelles no date [inter-war], p. 8
\textsuperscript{17} Roberts-Jones-Popelier, Françoise, \textit{Chronique d'un Musée}, Bruxelles 1987, pp. 11-12
\textsuperscript{19} See Archieven en museum van het Vlaamse culturele leven (ed.), \textit{De Roem van Rubens}, Antwerpen 1977
\textsuperscript{20} On the Primitives see Patoue, Brigitte de; Van Schoute, Roger (eds.), \textit{Les Primitifs flamands et leur temps}, Louvain-la-Neuve 1994
exhibition called “Exposition des Primitifs flamands et d’Art ancien” in Bruges. In only three and a half months more than 35,000 people visited this exhibition and thereafter the Primitives never went out of fashion.21 The Primitives were shown in important exhibitions both in Belgium and abroad, often neatly tied into a Belgian national context. In 1927 the London Exhibition of Flemish and Belgian art, 1300-1900 directly linked old Flemish to modern Belgian art while one of the most successful sections of the 1935 world exhibition in Brussels was the Section d’Art ancien. “Visité par des foules innombrables”, parts of this exhibition were subsequently shown in Paris in an exhibition called L’Art Flamand the cover of the catalogue of which showed a ribbon in Belgium’s national colours and a lion, the heraldic symbol of both Belgium and Flanders.22

The most striking manifestation of Belgium’s identification with its artistic heritage, however, was part of the peace negotiations following the First World War: Belgium wanted both Germany and Austria to surrender works of art claiming that they were Belgian.23 While article 247 of the treaty of Versailles forced Germany to hand over masterpieces including the portraits of the donors of the Ghent altar piece,24 the Viennese Kunsthistorisches Museum proved able to avert Belgium’s claim for Rubens’ Ildefonso altar and the treasure of the Order of the Golden Fleece.25 The Monnaie Royale too attempted to recuperate the coins created by Th. Van Berkel, head of the Brussels mint from 1772 to 1794, from Vienna where the Habsburgs had moved them in 1794. While attempts to

21 On the exhibition see Haskell, Francis, History and its Images, New Haven and London 1993, pp. 433-495 and the official catalogue, anon. [Weale, W. H. James], Expositions des Primitifs flamands et d’art ancien, Bruges 1902
22 See catalogue by Anglo-Belgian Union (ed.), Exhibition of Flemish and Belgian Art, 1300-1900, London 1927; Colin, Paul; Lambotte, Paul (eds.), L’art flamand, Paris 1935. The 1935 Sèction d’Art ancien attracted 324,572 visitors, see Cockx; Lemmens, op. cit., p. 127
23 Unfortunately, no study seems to exist on this highly interesting aspect of Belgian cultural policy. On the precedent of German museum and cultural policy during the First World War see, Kott, Christina, Kunstwerke als Faustpfänder im Ersten Weltkrieg, in Neue Zürcher Zeitung, 25 March 1997
25 It had to surrender over 60 paintings to Italy, see Seipel, Wilfried, Zur Geschichte des Kunsthistorischen Museums Wiens, in Plessen, Marie-Louise von (ed.), Die Nation und ihre Museen, Frankfurt a. M., 1992, pp. 55-68
recover the coins had failed in the 19th century, by 1918 “... la situation a changé. Nous pouvons poursuivre la restitution ... Nous devons obtenir la reconnaissance de notre droit de les rechercher dans le Musée de Vienne. Ces œuvres font partie de notre patrimoine artistique.”

This collective identification with Belgium’s artistic heritage also influenced the creation of bearers of value. Frequently, new bearers of value were criticised because they did not seem to be in line with Belgium’s artistic traditions. In 1920, for example, one paper criticised stamps stating: “La Belgique tient à se dire la patrie des arts, mais ne tient pas du tout à le prouver ...” and the Touring Club de Belgique insisted on an appropriate artistic execution of stamps “... qui ne soient pas un défi aux traditions d’art qui sont celles de notre peuple ...” in order to receive results “... réellement digne du pays.”

In 1910, the reproduction of Van Dijck’s St. Martin was the first Old Master painting represented on Belgian stamps (fig. 8) while the 20 and 1000 fr. banknotes issued by the Société Générale in 1915 showed a self-portrait by Rubens which also appeared on advertisement stamps for the international exhibition of Antwerp in 1930 (fig. 116). In 1939 the Post Office issued two series of stamps dedicated exclusively to artists. Both were fund-raising series, the first in favour of the renovation of Rubens’ house in Antwerp for the forthcoming Rubens jubilee in 1940 (the 300th anniversary of Rubens’ death) and the second in favour of the Memling exhibition in Bruges organised in commemoration of the artist’s 500th birthday. The Rubens series contained eight values representing masterpieces by the artist including a self-portrait and La Descente de Croix while the Memling stamp showed the right panel of the dyptich of Martin van Nieuwenhove, the portrait of the donor (figs. 192-194). For the Memling

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27 Le Carillon, 7 Jan. 1920, MP, 1919: timbre “Roi Casqué”
28 La Métropole, 30 Aug. 1922, MP, 1921: timbre type Houyoux.
29 See MP, 1939/3 and MP, 1939/4

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exhibition, the Post Office also issued special post-cards showing the other half of the dyptich reproduced on the stamps, *La vierge de Martin van Nieuwenhove*.

This identification with Belgium's artistic patrimony is highly revealing for the construction of Belgian national identity. Belgium, like other "small nations", such as the Czechs or the Norwegians, had a political history of unquestionably foreign rule in the centuries before the achievement of political independence and could thus not draw on this aspect of the past for the construction of a national identity. Instead of focussing on the writing of national history, the construction of national cultural, mainly linguistic traditions was a key element for the nation-building process in such nations. However, in linguistically diverse countries such as Belgium this kind of cultural nation-building had to be based on non-linguistic aspects of culture, for example the visual arts. The identification with Belgium's non-linguistic cultural heritage not only applied to the visual arts but also included architectural monuments which, as we have seen above, were frequently displayed on Belgian bearers of value especially after their destruction during the First World War.

**Orval and Koekelberg. National Religious Sites**

In the inter-war period the support of the (re)construction of two religious sites began by means of fund-raising stamps. Between 1928 and 1943, a total of six series were dedicated to the Cistercian abbey of Orval while the basilica of Koekelberg in Brussels received three series in 1938. In both cases organisations aimed at funding these architectural projects successfully convinced the Post

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30 See MP, 23/6 Propagandapostkaarten Tentoonstelling Memling 1939
31 In the definition of small and big nations I follow Hroch, Miroslav, *Social Preconditions of National Revival in Europe*, Cambridge 1985
Office of the national importance of the sights and argued that the stamp profits would also help to diminish unemployment because of the jobs created by the projects. The Comité pour la restauration d’Orval was especially keen on emphasising its role in fighting unemployment claiming that: “... grâce à ces travaux [on] a pu éviter le chômage dans la région.”

The Cistercian abbey of Orval (fig. 195) in the extreme south of Belgium was founded by St. Bernard in 1131 and destroyed by the French in 1793. In 1926 the owners of the ruins offered Orval to the Cistercians for the foundation of a new monastery. Step by step Orval was rebuilt under the guidance of the Cistercian father Albert van der Cruyssen who in 1936 was elected Orval’s first abbot after the monastère’s dissolution in 1793. The reconstruction of Orval was “... depuis le premier jour, considéré comme une œuvre nationale” and won the support of both the Belgian church hierarchy and the Royal Family for whom a royal chapel was built dedicated to the memory of King Albert. This widespread support manifested itself on the Orval stamps: a 1933 stamp, for example, showed Crown Prince Leopold laying the foundation-stone of the future église abbatiale surrounded by cardinal Van Rœy, archbishop of Malines and Monseigneur Heylen, bishop of Namur (fig. 124).

The symbolic importance of Orval had three main aspects. Orval was the first Cistercian abbey “créée en Belgique” contributing to the development of agriculture, craftsmanship and art schools “... qui font la gloire du Pays.” Orval was therefore firstly considered to be an important element of “notre Patrimoine artistique National” worthy of preservation and reconstruction. Secondly, emphasis was placed on the continuing princely protection of Orval. The 1933 series figured the Count of Chiny, Princess Mathilde, Emperor Charles V, the

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33 See Comité pour la restauration d’Orval to minister, 7 Feb. 1939, MP, 1939/2 and compare note, 14 Oct. 1936, MP, 1938/3
34 Comité pour la restauration d’Orval to minister, 7 Feb. 1939, MP, 1939/2
35 On Orval see Tillière, Nicolas, Histoire de l’abbaye d’Orval, Orval 1967
36 Comité exécutif ... to ministers, April 1927, MP, 1929: timbres “Orval” avec surcharges
Archdukes Albert and Isabella, Empress Maria-Theresa, Charles of Lorraine and Crown Prince Leopold while a 1939 stamp showed King Albert and King Leopold III centred around a representation of the royal chapel of Orval (fig. 197). Thirdly, parallel to the sequence of princely protectors of Orval, representations of important ecclesiastics ranging from St. Bernard to Cardinal Van Rœy and the reproduction of the Virgin of Orval emphasised the ecclesiastical and religious importance of Orval (fig. 196).

The Orval series thus combined important Belgian identification themes. Belgium was linked to its pre-1830 past both by the identification with the cultural patrimony created by Orval’s Cistercians and by the identification with the Royal Family who were placed in a direct historical line with previous sovereigns of the lands which later formed Belgium. Finally for the first time, Catholic religious symbols were prominently used for Belgian self-representation, however, without their potential supranational character. No papal symbols were used and apart from St. Bernard all religious symbols had clear ties to the Orval region or Belgium, most notably Cardinal Van Rœy, the (Flemish) successor of Mercier as archbishop of Malines and head of the Belgian church.

The basilica of Koekelberg on the outskirts of Brussels was first planned under Leopold II who wanted to erect a massive neo-gothic church as a pendant to his equally huge Palais de Justice: “Temple de Justice d’un côté, Temple de Miséricorde de l’autre, disait Léopold II ...”37 The construction began in 1905, but the original project had to be abandoned due to its high costs. A new start was made after the First World War by commissioning the architect Albert Van huffel. While Leopold II’s project had mainly aimed at size and at competing with Paris, the new project “... sera dédiée au Sacré-Cœur en reconnaissance de la libération de la Belgique et en mémoire des Belges tombés pour la défense de la

37 Speech by Paul Rome, 28 Dec. 1936, MP, 1938/3

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Patrie.” The association *Les Amis de la Basilique nationale du Sacré-Coeur à Koekelberg* was founded in 1923 and was composed of bourgeois notables including a number of senators, industrialists, lawyers, and clerics among them the Cardinal Mercier, the main initiator of the second Koekelberg project.\(^{38}\) Partly inaugurated in 1935 but still unfinished, Koekelberg was described by Paul Rome, the architect succeeding Van Huffel, in a speech which in many ways is reminiscent of Procopius' description of Hagia Sophia in Constantinople. The size of the church was one of its main characteristics, Rome noted that all of the steel wires included in the building put together reached as far as Lourdes. Koekelberg was meant to become “l'église de tous”: each province and the Congo were supposed to receive an individual chapel, allowing for smaller religious gatherings, while the nave “contiendra des milliers de fidèles” who could all easily reach Koekelberg where underground bicycle and car parks were planned. The church even received important relics, the remains of St. Albert of Louvain (+1192) were buried under the choir cupola.\(^{39}\)

Thus the Koekelberg project developed from a manifestation of Belgian grandeur under Leopold II to a multifold national church after the First World War. After a triumphal ceremony organised by Cardinal Van Rœy in 1936 “... Koekelberg était devenu le vrai sanctuaire National.”\(^{40}\) The church represented the country by means of its provincial and colonial entities, it served as a major *lieu de mémoire* for the commemoration of Belgium’s First World War heroism and was meant to become a gathering place for national mass manifestations combining religious and national sentiments. On the Koekelberg stamps exterior views of the completed building and an interior view of the central cupola appeared, thus showing an ideal projection of the finished monument which was, however, only completed in 1970 (fig. 189).

\(^{38}\) See statutes *Les Amis de la Basilique nationale du Sacré-Coeur à Koekelberg*, 13 Dec. 1922, MP, 1938/3


\(^{40}\) Speech by Paul Rome, 28 Dec. 1936, MP, 1938/3

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Although Belgium was an almost entirely Catholic country the clerical-anticlerical division had long been one of the most powerful political factors dividing Belgium and this continued to be the case in the inter-war years. Thus the explicit display of Catholic symbols on bearers of value would have immediately created great protests but the cases of Orval and Koekelberg show that it also proved possible tentatively to insert into Belgian self-representation an image of the Church which was national and ceremonial. In other words, Catholic sites became symbols of Belgian national identity and means whereby national events and dramas could be marked. The patriotic and thus less divisive role of the Belgian Church in the inter-war years was to a large extent due to Cardinal Mercier and his prestige gained during the First World War.41

Astrid and the Royal Family

On the morning of 29 August 1935 a Packard with Belgian number plates was driving into Küsnacht, a holiday resort in central Switzerland. On the straight road leading into town the car first drove for about 30 meters on the road side, then hit a pear tree, descended down a meadow and finally came to a standstill in the lake of Lucerne. When the police and the district officials arrived, a dead woman lay on the meadow while two slightly injured men, one of them in a driver’s uniform, refused to identify themselves. The chauffeur eventually handed over his passport to the police and said: “Ich bin nicht selbst gefahren, sondern mein Herr.”42 In the car the police found two Belgian diplomatic passports of Monsieur and Madame Louis Lambert, Industriel, Bruxelles and a Touring Club membership card issued for the Comte de Réthy. Only after inquires with the Touring Club did it emerge that the the Comte de

42 Rapport über den Verkehrsunfall, 30 Aug. 1935, BA, 2200 Brussel, 3/4
Réthy was in fact King Leopold III and that “... die verunfallte und getötete Dame
die Königin von Belgien sei.”

Queen Astrid was born in 1905, daughter of Charles, Prince of Sweden and
Ingeborg, Princess of Denmark. King Albert and Queen Elisabeth announced her
engagement to Prince Leopold in 1926 whereby the Queen emphasised: “Et dites
bien que c’est un mariage d’amour!” Their civil marriage took place in
Stockholm and Astrid arrived by boat in Antwerp on 8 November 1926. Her
spontaneous embrace of Leopold upon disembarkation lay the foundation of her
increasing popularity in Belgium despite her limited public appearances and
frequent overseas travels with her husband including a visit to the Congo in
1933. She gave birth to three children, Joséphine-Charlotte (*1927), Baudouin
(1930-1993) and Albert (*1934) and became Queen of Belgium after King Albert’s
death in February 1934.

Apart from ceremonial duties, Astrid’s only large-scale public initiative
was a 1935 fund-raising campaign in favour of the Comité National de Secours,
supported with 500,000 fr. of her private money. In a letter published in the press,
the Queen urged: “Ce n’est pas en vain, j’en suis persuadée, qu’on fera appel à
l’esprit de solidarité toujours si vivant dans notre pays” for the benefit of
children, adults and old people “... qui souffrent le plus cruellement de la crise et
de la misère.” The so-called Appel de la Reine was a success and the Post Office
issued a fund-raising series in favour of the project displaying Astrid’s three
children who were a key element of her popularity (fig. 183).

The news of Astrid’s death came as a shock to Belgium, deeply moving
almost everybody. Prime Minister Van Zeeland gave an emotional radio speech
in which he asked: “Est-il une maison de Belgique où des larmes, des vraies

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43 Bezirksamt Küsnacht to Polizeidepartement, 30 Aug. 1935, ibid.
44 Quotation in Dayez-Burgeon, Pascal, La Reine Astrid, Histoire d’un mythe, Paris 1995, p. 57
45 On Astrid and the diverse myths surrounding her see Dayez-Burgeon, op. cit., which lacks, however, a
detailed analysis of bearers of value.
46 Astrid to Henri Jaspar, president of the Comité national de secours, quotation in Dayez-Burgeon, op. cit., p. 116
larmes qui brûlent les yeux, n’ait été versées sur Elle?” Van Zeeland’s reference to tears was genuine, he went to Switzerland immediately after the accident and a Swiss source stated: “... Herr Van Zeeland, der Tränen in den Augen hatte, ...”. The country was in official mourning for a week, innumerable people paid homage to the dead Queen’s body and the streets were lined with school children when Astrid’s body was brought to the medieval Cathedral of St. Gudule for the official funeral, transmitted nationwide by radio and attended by over one and a half million people in and around the cathedral in Brussels.

While the myth of Astrid began before the accident in Küsnacht, her untimely death intensified the development of a variety of collective Belgian memories and myths which also influenced the creation of bearers of value. An undated typescript Une Série Reine Astrid, very probably for an issue of the Revue Postale, argued in emotional language for a stamp series for the dead Queen. “La grâce, la beauté, la bonté, la charité, l’amour familial, la tendresse maternelle...” were all aspects of Astrid’s personality and the author stressed the importance of commemorating her. “Dans son char rapide, le Temps, puisqu’il faut le nommer, emporte les meilleures choses dans le domaine de l’Oubli. A la faux de Saturne, opposons notre arme mieux fourbie: le culte du souvenir.” The text ends with: “Le ‘Roi Casqué’ occupe la première page de nos albums. Il réclame à ses côtés Celle qu’il affectionnait tout particulièrement. Sa prière sera exaucée.”

And indeed, the culte du souvenir of Astrid manifested itself in three stamp issues which compare favourably with the success of the “Roi Casqué”.

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47 Text of Van Zeeland’s speech of 30 Aug. 1935 in Le Soir, 1 Sept. 1935
48 See anon. report to Bundesrat Motta, 31 Aug. 1935, BA, 2200 Brüssel, 3/4. According to Martin Conway this was the only time Van Zeeland ever cried.
49 Dayez-Burgeon, op. cit., pp. 16-21. There are no indications for the reasons why the funeral was held at St. Gudule and not at Koekelberg.
50 My italics, see Byl, Richard, Une Série “REINE ASTRID”, MP, 1935: timbres antituberculeux, émission 1935-36
The 1935 anti-tuberculosis stamp was dedicated entirely to the memory of Astrid (fig. 184). 21.9 million stamps were printed,\footnote{See report of Oeuvre Nationale Belge de Défense contre la Tuberculose, 5 Jan. 1937, MP, 1936/2} the total profit of this stamp series was 2,124,850 fr., compared to only 493,765 fr. the year before.\footnote{See Relevé des émissions spéciales ..., MP, 1938/3; partly the success of this series was due to smaller extra-charges levied on the anti-tuberculosis stamps, as stated in the report of the Oeuvre Nationale Belge de Défense contre la Tuberculose, 2 June 1936, MP, 1936/2} The photograph used for this stamp was by the court photographer Marchand whose portrait of Leopold was used for the stamps issued in 1934. It was this image which clearly became the main Astrid icon, reproduced countless times, for example on the front page of Belgian newspapers on 30 August 1935, on books or on post-cards.\footnote{See Le Soir, 30 Aug. 1935; Dayez-Burgeon, op. cit., cover. A post-card machine in Küssnacht still today sells cards reproducing this photograph.} Young and beautiful, her eyes turned away past and beyond the beholder, Astrid wore a feathered white dress and beautiful jewellry, most importantly a crown. Like her predecessor Elisabeth, Astrid rather than her husband could use the important symbol of the crown. As opposed to Elisabeth's headband, Astrid's was a more classical crown, a diamond diadem called "le diadème des Neuf Provinces" which she received in 1926.\footnote{See Dayez-Burgeon, op. cit., p. 341} This image thus ideally combined both national and royal with local and provincial iconography very much in the same way as Leopold III's coins with the provincial coats of arms.

Yet this photograph of Astrid was also strongly reminiscent of contemporary photographs of popular actresses. Indeed Astrid's representations and popularity in many ways reflect the widespread new obsession with iconographic young actresses which developed in the inter-war years. Due to the absence of a Belgian film industry it is arguable that Astrid also fulfilled the role of a Belgian film star. For example, Astrid's impulsive embrace of Leopold upon her arrival in Antwerp in 1926 was so very effective because it was anti-ceremonial and emotional and largely corresponded to the ideal of romantic love cultivated not only in Belgium but in the whole of Europe especially by means of
films. Thus the outpouring of grief at Astrid’s death was not only the expression of a national emotion but also included the mourning of a popular heroine whose fame spread well beyond Belgium.

The second Astrid stamp appeared in 1937 at the initiative of the Société Belgo-Suédoise. While the profits of the first series went to various charities, the profits of the second one were used for the culte du souvenir. In order to “... perpétuer le souvenir, si cher au peuple belge, de Sa Majesté Astrid, Reine des Belges, et, comme manifestation de son activité sociale...” the funds were to be used to erect a monument in Brussels, to fund children’s parks in provincial capitals and to establish a sanatorium for small children. On the stamp, Astrid appeared holding Crown Prince Baudouin (fig. 187). Therefore, her (lost) role as mother of her own and the country’s children was stressed by this stamp series, both by means of the imagery and by the way in which the money raised was spent. The final stamp showing Astrid appeared in a fund-raising series in favour of the Red Cross in 1939 (fig. 200). While the original plan was to represent only living members of the Royal Family, Queen Elisabeth let the Post Office know that she would like an image of Astrid to appear on one stamp of the series. Both stamps were very popular: Le Soir showed philatelists queuing at seven in the morning for the new stamps of Astrid and Baudouin and the paper announced the Red Cross series by reproducing the Astrid stamp on its front page.

There were even plans to display Astrid’s portrait on coins. However,
this project was abandoned because "... on peut se demander ... si ... il s'indique de représenter les traits d'une souveraine défunte, quelle que puisse être la puissance de son souvenir."\(^{61}\) and, possibly more importantly, because: "Le choix d'une figure allégorique coûte moins cher que celui d'une effigie royale."\(^{62}\) While Astrid thus failed to appear on Belgian coins she did appear on stamps outside Belgium, in the Congo. In 1936 a fund-raising stamp appeared in favour of the charity *L'œuvre de l'enfance noire* showing Astrid behind a group of five Congolese children, again suggesting Astrid's mother role, this time for the children of the colony (fig. 186). The stamp was based on a photograph of her visit to Africa, however, on the original, both Astrid and Leopold had posed for the camera.\(^{63}\)

Astrid was not the only member of the Belgian Royal Family who was increasingly used for Belgian identification purposes. In order to ensure continued success for the anti-tuberculosis stamps, the *Oeuvre Nationale Belge de Défense contre la Tuberculose* chose to represent all of Astrid's children instead of an already prepared series of bell-towers; Baudouin in 1936 (fig. 185), Joséphine-Charlotte in 1937 and Albert in 1939. The charity believed that: "Cette continuité dans les sujets ne manquerait pas de plaire beaucoup au public."\(^{64}\) And indeed, the Baudouin series raised even more money than the first Astrid stamp.\(^{65}\) Astrid's children clearly evoked sympathy because they were orphans but they also symbolised the fragile future of Belgium, especially that of Baudouin, the Crown Prince.

After 1935 there was a noticeable change in emphasis of the portraits of Leopold III compared to previous portraits of the King. While the first stamps and coins showed a young and rather innocent Leopold, the ten results of a

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\(^{61}\) Directeur de la dette publique to minister, 22 Aug. 1939, MR, 605/3  
\(^{62}\) Directeur de la Monnaie to directeur général, 9 Aug. 1939, MR, 605/3  
\(^{63}\) The photograph is part of the Salle Astrid of the Musée de la Dynastie in Brussels.  
\(^{64}\) Protocol, *Oeuvre Nationale Belge de Défense contre la Tuberculose*, 2 June 1936, MP, 1936/2  
\(^{65}\) 2,487,173.65 fr., of which 828,750 fr. were raised at a special philatelic event. See directeur général to Briant, 21 Feb. 1938, MP, 1937/3
limited coin contest organised in 1937 survive and provide us with a variety of alternative portraits of the King. Compared to the previous coin portraits by Rau, on most of these proposals the King, now a widower, looks older, more mature and at times even concerned or severe (figs. 205, 206). Many proposals appear heavy and the portraits by Samuel and Jespers even use a monumental, authoritarian style in vogue also elsewhere in Europe in this period (figs. 207, 208). Eight proposals did without the name of the sovereign only representing the King's portrait. Thus the image of Leopold alone seemed to include his function as King of the Belgians. Therefore, there seems to have been a tendency towards endowing Leopold's portraits with more authority. This is also reflected in a positive comment about changes to Rau's fourth portrait of the King in 1939: "... les traits de S.M. LEOPOLD III sont devenus plus virils et notamment l'expression de la bouche et du menton."67 (fig. 211)

An increasing emphasis on Leopold's authority is also one of the conclusions drawn in an interesting study by Hellemans on the representation of the King in the illustrated press between 1936 and 1939. Hellemans found that Leopold increasingly wore military uniform but also increasingly appeared together with civilians participating in non-ceremonial activities thus emphasising not only his role as head of the army in case of war but also his role as the prime leader of all Belgians.68 Both the imagery on bearers of value and the press photographs of Leopold III are in line with widespread authoritarian projects for constitutional reform many of which put great emphasis on an enhanced position for the monarch. Leopold III did not explicitly provoke such ideas but he certainly encouraged them and his representations fit in with this concerted effort to make the King the much more central expression of the

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66 MR, 604/7
67 Directeur de la Monnaie to directeur général, 23 Sept. 1939, MR, 605/3
Belgian nation.69

But Leopold was not only associated with authority. He was the patron of the Comité National de Propagande Aéronautique and appeared as Roi aviateur on stamps propagating "l'idée aérienne."70 Unpublished banknote proposals associated Leopold with agriculture, industry and abundance, for example the note proposed by Emile Vloors which was a pendant to Vloor's 1933 banknotes of Albert and Elisabeth (fig. 212).71 Thus Leopold also symbolised progress and prosperity, two long-established means of Belgian collective identification, and he was linked stylistically to his popular parents.

After the death of Queen Astrid, Queen Elisabeth, for whom the role of sovereign had ceased after the death of her husband, again took up public duties and in many ways filled the gap left by Astrid. Her main interest was artistic: she was an active sculptor and she founded both the musical Concours International Ysaye (1937) and the Chapelle Musicale Reine Elisabeth at Argenteuil (1939).72 For both of her foundations Elisabeth secured the creation of a fund-raising series.73 The series in favour of the Concours International Ysaye showed Elisabeth next to a violin, an instrument which she learned under Professor Ysaye, while the series for the Chapelle Musicale Reine Elisabeth showed the site of the foundation in Argenteuil and a portrait sculpture by Elisabeth of her grandchild Albert (fig. 247). Elisabeth was thus associated with music and sculpture, both of which are comprehensible independently of language. This new role of Elisabeth as a patron of the arts therefore fitted into the larger theme of Belgian cultural nation-building by means of non-linguistic aspects of culture.

Finally, the memory of King Albert remained very powerful. He appeared as the Roi Casqué on two fund-raising stamps in 1938, one representing the

69 On the projects of constitutional reform see Witte; Craeybeckx, op. cit., pp. 236-238
70 Comité National de Propagande Aéronautique to King Leopold, 23 Feb. 1937, MP, 1938/2
72 See Dumont, op. cit., pp. 78-89
73 See minister to Palais du Roi, 14 June 1937, MR, 1937/3 and Cabinet du Roi to minister, 21 Nov. 1939, MP, 1940/1

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Albert Canal on an advertisement stamp for the 1939 water exhibition in Liège (fig. 191), and one in favour of the Yser memorial erected in his memory (fig. 188). This latter stamp was an extraordinary financial success. While the charity had expected to raise 700,000 fr., it raised more than twice as much.74 The organisation Monument au Roi Albert à l'Yser stated that this was mainly due to veterans, both organised and private. The Front Unique of St. Josse, for instance, bought stamps for 9,000 fr.75

Therefore we can see that, while the memories of Astrid became an important new means of Belgian collective identification after Küssnacht, this was only the most striking element of a larger development: the increasing cult of the entire Belgian Royal Family as the central means of Belgian national identification in the years before the Second World War. In many ways the Red Cross stamp series of 1939 summed up this development. Two stamps were dedicated to non-Belgian icons of the Red Cross, Henri Dunant and Florence Nightingale. Elisabeth who on the day of the release of the series received the Florence Nightingale medal, “la plus haute distinction pour infirmières” from the International Red Cross76 appeared visiting a hospital on one stamp thus continuing her First World War myth of the Reine Infirmière (fig. 201) The remaining stamps showed all living members of the Royal Family and, due to Elisabeth’s initiative, Astrid (figs. 198-200). While Astrid’s image stood for the various meanings represented by the dead Queen, Astrid’s children surrounded both Leopold and Elisabeth very much like on ordinary family photographs. Thus it can be argued the Belgian Royal Family was represented as an idealised Belgian family, its members being Belgian citizens.77 Thus the Royal Family was both endowed with a variety of meanings leading to a cult of the dynasty but at

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74 See Directeur général des Postes to Secrétaire du cabinet, 21 Feb. 1938, MP. 1937/3
75 See Comité du monument au Roi Albert à l'Yser to minister, 14 March 1938, MP. 1938/1
76 La Libre Belgique, 1 April 1939
77 This interpretation emerged during the discussion of my paper Portraits of the Nation, Imagery on Belgian Postage Stamps, 1914-1945 at the conference Société, culture et mentalités. L'impact de la Seconde Guerre mondiale en Belgique, 23-27 Oct. 1995 in Brussels

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the same time they were represented in a manner sufficiently similar to the ordinary citizen to become the main means of Belgian national identification in this period.
7.2 Switzerland

Geistige Landesverteidigung

In the 1930s fascist regimes installed in neighbouring Italy and more importantly in Germany increasingly threatened Switzerland's national integrity by means of their nationalist propaganda. In particular the foundation in 1933 of the Nazi Propaganda Ministry which issued various threatening declarations against Switzerland led to a wide range of defensive responses in Switzerland which was commonly referred to as Geistige Landesverteidigung (intellectual defence). Far from being a unified doctrine this term is today used to describe the great variety of intellectual responses of all Swiss political and social groups to the fascist propaganda from abroad. The term coined in the 1920s was increasingly used in the early 1930s, discussed in parliament in 1935 and in 1938 the Interior Minister Philipp Etter formulated the principles of the Geistige Landesverteidigung in a cultural manifesto which was able to create an almost universal political consensus.

The Geistige Landesverteidigung was constructed on the basis of two main concepts. Firstly, in opposition to the ethnocentric ideologies of neighbouring fascism, Switzerland was presented as a multilingual country the three main linguistic regions of which, while belonging to three principal European civilisations, nevertheless formed a specific, namely Swiss, cultural unit. Secondly, the Swiss political system leading to a specifically Swiss form of democracy and allowing for cultural diversity within a single political unit by means of federalism was placed in contrast to the antidemocratic, state-oriented and totalitarian ideologies of fascism. In other words, Switzerland was presented as a multiethnic and democratic state in antagonism to the ethnocentric and antidemocratic fascist dictatorships south and above all north of its borders. The
The final aim of the *Geistige Landesverteidigung* was to strengthen Switzerland internally by means of preserving and fostering typically Swiss thought, ideas and values (*Gedankengut*) thus leading to an immunisation of the population against the foreign fascist propaganda.\(^7^8\)

Despite the frequent use of the term *Geistige Landesverteidigung* it remained a rather loosely defined term, especially about its objective to foster specifically Swiss culture.\(^7^9\) Furthermore, it is important to note that the *Geistige Landesverteidigung* was not exclusively a governmental objective. On the contrary, most of the intellectual defence was done on a non-federal level, and included cantonal governments and private associations. For example, the canton of Schwyz built the *Bundesbriefarchiv* in Schwyz containing medieval constitutional documents including the 1291 treaty as a national shrine (*Ehrenhalle der Eidgenossenschaft*) between 1934 and 1936 "... im Zeichen der geistigen Landesverteidigung"\(^8^0\), while the *Neue Helvetische Gesellschaft*, founded in 1912 with the aim of fostering good relations between the French- and German-speaking parts of Switzerland, was particularly influential in the shaping of the *Geistige Landesverteidigung*.\(^8^1\) Nevertheless, the federal government also participated in the intellectual defence of Switzerland. It contributed to the *Geistige Landesverteidigung* not only by founding cultural institutions such as the federal film commission (1937) or *Pro Helvetia*, the first Swiss cultural foundation (1939)\(^8^2\), but also, as we shall see, increasingly by means of the design of bearers of value.

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\(^7^8\) For a good overview of the history of the *Geistige Landesverteidigung* see Kessler, Franz, *Die Schweizerische Kulturstiftung "Pro Helvetia"*, Zurich 1993, pp. 7-14

\(^7^9\) See for example the interesting recent study concentrating on music by Mäusli, Theo, *Jazz und die Geistige Landesverteidigung*, Zurich 1995


\(^8^2\) On *Pro Helvetia* see Kessler, op. cit.
Trachtenmädchen

Between 1933 and 1942 Pro Juventute issued a stamp series showing portraits of women in traditional costume (Tracht) from every canton. In the course of the creation of this series, the Post Office often consulted the Schweizerische Trachtenvereinigung, founded in 1926, for advice. In 1936 the association complained about the proposal chosen for Zurich (fig. 218): “Die sog. Zürcher Stadttracht ist eine Schöpfung der letzten Jahre. Sie soll sich zwar an alte Vorbilder anlehnen, hat jedoch praktisch wenig Bedeutung.” The association further argued that this form of dress was only worn by a few women and that the leading Trachten researcher, Julie Heierli, did not recognise this form of dress. Instead the association proposed “... die Wehntaler Tracht, die sich im Kanton durch Jahrhunderte und ununterbrochen bis auf den heutigen Tag erhalten hat ... .”83 Similarly, the Bündnerische Vereinigung für Heimatschutz complained about the Grisons proposal (fig. 217) which it called: “... entweder eine reine Phantasiegestaltung ... oder dann irgend eine ‘moderne Tracht’... .”84 The Post Office replied that the artist had consulted the Grisons branch of the Schweizerische Trachtenvereinigung and “... ist dann extra nach St. Moritz gereist, wo ihm Frl. Branger in ihrem Kostüm zur Anfertigung der Zeichnung Modell stand.”85

Yet the imagery on this series not only consisted of costumes. The Trachtenmädchen were always set in front of a typical scenery of their canton, such as city views or mountains. Furthermore, the Post Office also sought typically cantonal portraits of the women appearing in traditional costume, particularly in the case of the stamp dedicated to Appenzell Innerrhoden (fig. 216). The Post Office wrote to the artist: “Der Appenzellertypus ist im Ausdruck glutvoll und geprägt.”86

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83 Schweizerische Trachtenvereinigung to Generaldirektion, 9 Jan. 1936, PTT Bib., PAA 02084. There is no evidence for an adaptation of the project in the sources.
84 Bündnerische Vereinigung für Heimatschutz to Generaldirektion, 11 Oct. 1934, PTT Bib., BG 0113
85 Generaldirektion to Bündnerische Vereinigung für Heimatschutz, 15 Oct. 1934, ibid.
eher noch etwas spitziger und weist meist dunkelbraunes Haar auf."  

In principle the *Trachtenmädchen* series took up the same idea as the previous *Pro Juventute* series displaying the frieze of cantonal coats of arms. It represented Switzerland by means of its constituent local parts, as a confederation of 22 equal cantons and the equality of old and new cantons was again underlined by consciously breaking up the traditional chronological order of cantons. The series began with a combination of one old and two new cantons, namely Berne, Vaud and Ticino, which also represented the three official Swiss languages. Yet unlike the cantonal coats of arms which in a number of cases remained unchanged from medieval times, our sources clearly show that the *Trachten* belong in the field of invented traditions. The inspiration for these images was found in publications on costumes and from field trips by the artist to the cantons. However, despite efforts of associations and publications trying to preserve the *Trachten* tradition, authenticity disputes clearly show that this construction was contested.  

The *Trachtenmädchen* series also had an important gender connotation. In this period, *Pro Juventute* continued to commemorate famous Swiss men on each of its annual series so that in each series a famous man was surrounded by anonymous Swiss women in traditional costumes. The gender roles were thus very clearly distributed, Swiss men were represented by exceptionally successful or important individuals while women were confined to wearing traditional costumes and to remaining anonymous. Furthermore, women represented an exclusively traditional, pre-industrial Switzerland while men such as Niklaus Riggenbach (1817-1899), the inventor of the rack-railway commemorated in 1942, could also represent modern Switzerland.  

It would be easy to label the *Trachtenmädchen* series as part of the *Geistige

86 Generaldirektion to Courvoisier, 7 Feb. 1934, *ibid.*  
87 The main reference book was Heierli, Julie (ed.), *Die Schweizer Trachten vom XVII-XIX Jahrhundert nach Originalien*, Zürich 1897
Landesverteidigung which put considerable emphasis on the preservation of Swiss traditions of which the Trachten movement is clearly an important expression. However, all too often almost any cultural product of this period is attributed to the phenomenon of intellectual defence and this seems not to be necessary in this case. This series essentially combined iconographic themes which had already previously been used for the creation of Swiss bearers of value, namely cantonal representations, while Pro Juventute had already issued three series of Trachtenbilder between 1915 and 1917. Not even the curious insistence on the correctness of the Appenzell physiognomy is a new phenomenon: we have seen how portraits of Appenzell women had already provoked very similar discussions in 1910 in the course of the creation of the 500 fr. banknotes.88 This series thus fits into the general framework of the Geistige Landesverteidigung but it represented Switzerland by means of iconographic elements used well before the beginning of this phenomenon.89

New Symbols for Switzerland

In the course of the reissue of all definitive stamp series prompted by the acquisition of a new printing press, the Post Office wanted a single symbolic image to be displayed on the stamps of 35 ct. to 1 fr. in order to differentiate these stamps from the lower landscape series. For this purpose the Post Office organised a limited stamp contest in 1935 and informed the artists that it wanted a symbolic stamp. The Post Office listed all of the national symbols previously used on stamps, explicitly expressed the desire not to repeat any of them and urged the artists to create a new but nevertheless typically Swiss symbol.90

88 See above, p. 87
89 The Trachtenmädchen are still today used to represent Switzerland: for Cono Maltese’s Swiss voyage the comics artists Hugo Pratt drew a Trachtenmädchen of each canton. See Pratt, Hugo, Elvetiche. Rosa alchemia, Milano 1989
90 Einladung zur Erlangung von Entwürfen für neue schweizerische Briefmarken, no date [1935], PTT Bib., BG 0119
The jury awarded prizes to three proposals. *Apfelschuss-Tell* (fig. 230) showed an apple with an arrow and the jury commented: “Dieser Entwurf ist klar und gut im Aufbau.” The two further prizes went to two female portraits, *Dixi* “Künstlerisch ... sehr gut gelungen. Der Kopf dieser idealistischen Helvetia ist natürlich, kraftvoll und doch anmutig. Er findet allgemein Anklang.” (fig. 231) and *Mélèze* “Typisch schweizerisch ist dieses Mädchengesicht. Ernst, frisch, um das Kinn ein kräftiger Zug.” (fig. 232). Other proposals displayed arrows, halberds, and cross-bows. 

Yet none of these proposals fully satisfied the Post Office. “Es stellte sich heraus, dass es äusserst schwierig ist, ein modernes Symbol zu finden, das sich als Markenbild für eine längere Zeitspanne eignet” wrote a leading postal civil servant. Why was there the desire for a modern symbol and why was it so difficult to find one? The first question is clearly one of the history of taste. Some of the symbols previously used on Swiss stamps were subject to changing taste, especially allegoric female figures and national myths both of which reached a peak of popularity at the turn of the century but somehow went out of fashion afterwards. The new taste was influenced by (abstract) modernism and the Post Office clearly aimed at displaying a contemporary symbol of Switzerland, almost a commercial logo, in line with modern taste. While the same desire had already become apparent during the 1932 general stamp contest, in 1935 it was again too difficult to integrate modernist concepts of symbolic representation into the rather conservative world of bearers of value. This difficulty of finding a contemporary single symbol can be explained by the limitations of possible themes. A more or less uncontested image always had to be acceptable to all of

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91 Juryprotokoll, 29 May 1935, PTT Bib., BG 0119
93 ibid.
94 On the history of taste see Haskell, Francis; Penny, Nicholas, _Taste and the Antique_, New Haven and London 1982
95 See above, pp. 221-222
96 See above pp. 217-218

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the diverse parts of Switzerland. Previously, this had been fulfilled either by a female allegory, national heraldic symbols, representations of the national myth or an Alpine symbol incarnating and representing the state. All of the successful proposals in the 1935 contest in fact continued to use old themes, the apple with the arrow alluded to the Tell myth, while the two female heads were contemporary variations of the old Helvetia theme. Confined on the one hand by the desire to find new symbols due to changing taste and on the other hand by the absence of obvious further symbols likely to be widely accepted, the Post Office had to abandon this project for the time being.97

In the course of the introduction of the new printing press the Post Office also planned to reissue the series of 3 to 10 fr. stamps. The series was meant to display historical themes because after the replacement of the Tell stamps by the landscape series, there had been public criticisms that "... es hätten auf unseren Marken nicht einmal mehr heraldische oder vaterländische Symbole Platz."98 Initially, the postal administration suggested several different ways of fulfilling the objective of a historical series. The proposals included the representation of the three most important federal buildings (the Federal Parliament in Berne, the Federal Court in Lausanne and the Federal Polytechnic in Zürich); a series called "Freiheitskämpfe" commemorating the battles of Morgarten (1315), Sempach (1386) and the Swabian war (1499); or a series dedicated to the development of the Swiss constitution by means of representing the 1291 Bundesbrief, the 1481 federal diet in Stans and the development of the modern confederation of 1848.99 The Post Office subsequently organised a limited contest but only suggested the subject of the representation of the development of the Swiss constitution to the artists.100 In this case, the results were much more satisfactory and the stamps

97 See Gaudard, op. cit., p. 7
98 Neue Markenausgaben infolge technischer Umstellung, 11 Jan. 1935, PTT Bib., BG 0119
99 ibid.
100 Einladung zur Erlangung von Entwürfen für neue schweizerische Briefmarken, no date [1935], PTT Bib., BG 0119

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were issued in 1938.

The first stamp (fig. 213) showed a group of 14 men swearing an oath standing around a table and framing the central iconographic element, the 1291 Bundesbrief, while the coats of arms of the three primordial cantons appeared on the table cloth. The next stamp (fig. 214) showed a representation of the 1481 federal diet of Stans remembered for the reconciliatory mediation of Niklaus von Flüe. "Da es sich um eine ... symbolische Darstellung handelt, durfte er [the artist] es wagen, ohne Rücksicht auf die historischen Tatsachen als Mahner eine Figur auf die Marke zu setzen, die äusserlich Niklaus von der Flüe nahekommt."101 The final stamp (fig. 215) showed a modern voting scene in which the Post Office insisted that, by combining different age groups, professions and classes (but not genders), the image represented "... die Zusammensetzung unseres Volkes."102 Swiss women, whom the constitution excluded from political rights until 1971, were completely excluded from the iconography.103 This series thus symbolised Swiss constitutional history beginning with the 1291 Bundesbrief and culminating in universal male suffrage of 1848.

In contrast to the Trachtenmädchen series, these stamps clearly represent one of the key elements of the Geistige Landesverteidigung, namely the emphasis on the Swiss constitution and democracy in opposition to the threatening fascist dictatorships. The Post Office also stated this emphasis explaining that the aim of the series was "... unsere demokratische Staatsform [zu] symbolisieren."104 But the series was not only the expression of the mental defence of Switzerland. On the last stamp of the series a Swiss soldier in full uniform occupied a central space of the image which clearly alluded to the

101 Flüe did not personally intervene at the diet and his exact influence on the diet's outcome is unknown, see Comité pour une Nouvelle Histoire de la Suisse (eds.), op. cit., p. 315
102 Gaudard, op. cit., p. 15
104 Postamtsblatt, No. 38, 1938
increasing importance attached to Switzerland’s military defence in the critical years before the outbreak of the Second World War.

**Wehranleihe. Bundesfeier**

Due to the widespread opposition to the army especially by the Social Democrats committed to pacifism and the general economic crisis, Swiss defence expenditure was kept at a relatively low level in the 1920s. This changed in the 1930s under the new Defence Minister Rudolf Minger who held office between 1930 and 1940. In the face of the increasing possibility of a new armed conflict in Europe, Minger was able to steadily increase both the money spent on defence (1930: 85 m. fr., 1939: 351 m. fr.) and the popularity of the army, which he successfully portrayed as a central means to secure peace.\(^{105}\) The growing consensus that Switzerland needed a well-equipped and efficient army manifested itself in the fact that the Social Democrats removed their absolute opposition to the army from their manifesto in 1935 and, more importantly for this thesis, to the 1936 subscription of federal war bonds, the so-called *Wehranleihe*, organised by the Defence Ministry. Despite the low levels of interest provided by the bonds they were widely oversubscribed, raised 332 m. fr. and thus the *Wehranleihe* was referred to as a "Plebiszit des Portemonnaies".\(^{106}\)

In order to cover the expenses of the national defence bonds, the Post Office issued a series of fund-raising stamps in 1936. It stated that unlike previous fund-raising stamps, the aim of this series was not to support charities or commemoration; rather it wanted a series "... mit dem ausgesprochenen Charakter eines Opfers für das Wehrwesen ...".\(^{107}\) The emphasis therefore was on the sacrifice of the whole population for the support of national defence. The

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\(^{106}\) ibid., p. 374

\(^{107}\) Generaldirektion to minister, 31 Aug. 1936, PTT Bib., BG 0134
Wehranleihe stamps were a public success, over 3.3 million stamps were sold raising a total of almost half a million francs.\textsuperscript{108} The Swiss Union of Philatelists' Associations noted that this success was not only due to eager philatelists "... ein weiteres Publikum hatte hier mitgeholfen, ...").\textsuperscript{109}

The issue and the public success of the Wehranleihe stamps thus clearly showed the increasing importance attached to military defence. These stamps, however, stand in conspicuous contrast to the stamps issued four years earlier commemorating and propagating the ideas of the Genevan disarmament conference. Thus the increasing importance attached to the army and its armament occurred in contradiction and arguably at the expense of the commitment to world peace by means of disarmament.

The image chosen for this series was a stamp proposal by Ferdinand Hodler (1853-1918). It showed the portrait of a Fribourgeois peasant standing on a meadow with 22 flowers symbolising the cantons and in front of a view of central Switzerland, the bay of Lucerne and the Rigi and Pilatus mountains. The Latin Pro Patria indicated the purpose of the stamp while avoiding preferential treatment of any national language (fig. 222).\textsuperscript{110} This image is one of Hodler's symbolist works, combining many core elements of Swiss self-representation such as the identification with the sum of all of the cantons, the mythological landscape of central Switzerland and the identification with rural Alpine dwellers. Interestingly, Hodler did not choose an Alpine dweller of German-speaking central Switzerland, rather he represented an Armailli of bilingual Fribourg, thereby linking the two major linguistic groups in one single image. This complicated iconography was explained in the Postamtsblatt and in the press.\textsuperscript{111}

\textsuperscript{108} 469,223.95 Fr., see Mitteilung an die Presse, 8 Jan. 1937, \textit{ibid}.
\textsuperscript{109} \textit{Bericht, Zentralkomitee des Verbandes schweizerischer Philatelisten Vereine}, 26 Dec. 1936, \textit{ibid}.
\textsuperscript{110} The Post Office preferred this solution to issuing the stamps in all three languages, see Generaldirektion to minister, 31 Aug. 1936, \textit{ibid}.
\textsuperscript{111} See Postamtsblatt no. 172/1936, PTT Bib., BG 0134 and \textit{Neue Zürcher Zeitung}, 21 Sept. 1936, PTT Bib., BG 0119
Hodler had presented this stamp in the course the 1900 general stamp contest but on that occasion the jury had rejected this proposal in the first round. Yet in 1936 the Post Office argued that "... das Hodlersche Bild mit der Sennengestalt sich für den Sinn und Zweck des Wehropfergedankens gut eignet." This interesting change in the perception of Holder's work can only be explained by the development of the artist's career after 1900. Until the outbreak of the First World War, Hodler was, on the one hand, still a controversial figure in the Swiss art scene, as we have seen above in the case of the creation of the first Swiss banknotes; but, on the other hand, he was internationally successful, especially in Germany where he received two important commissions. In the University of Jena (1907) and the City Hall in Hanover (1911), he created major wall paintings depicting important historical events of the cities.

However, when German artillery shelled the cathedral of Rheims in 1914, two hundred Genevan intellectuals and artists, among them Hodler, issued a statement of protest. The reaction in Germany against Hodler was extraordinarily virulent and long-lasting. He lost almost all of his German friends, collectors and clients, he was expelled from artists' associations, museums removed his pictures and the University of Jena even boarded over his mural painting. Hodler was perceived as a traitor in Germany because, via his famous mural paintings in Jena and Hanover, he had effectively become a German national painter. Hodler's reaction in turn was to characterise his œuvre as a Swiss national one in his 1917 retrospective in Zurich where he assumed the rank of a painter who had newly defined Swiss national iconography and created a "Swiss national style".

The reactions to the choice of Hodler confirm his increasing prestige as a national artist. The Post Office called Hodler "... unseren grossen Maler ...", the
possessive pronoun clearly referred to the Swiss nation and the important Liberal Neue Zürcher Zeitung praised the decision of the Post Office, since Hodler’s work “... in ihrer grosszügigen, kraftvollen künstlerischen Formulierung das Wesen einer schweiz[erischen] Briefmarke überaus glücklich treffe und als Originalbriefmarke Hodlers zudem für Volk und Land von hohem Propagandawert sei.”

The Schweizerischer Beobachter approved of the choice of Holder but not of the image which it considered inadequate for the war bond stamps: “Wären Hodlers bekannte Kriegergestalten hier nicht sinnvoller gewesen, oder solche von Urs Graf, Niklaus Manuel, um nur wenige von tausend Möglichkeiten zu nennen?” while the Basler Nachrichten complained that the Post Office had used a proposal by a dead artist instead of organising a contest among Swiss artists in need of work.

Apart from demonstrating that Hodler posthumously came to be perceived as the main Swiss national artist, the complaints of the Schweizerischer Beobachter also show the limitations of re-interpretations of national iconography. Hodler’s image had originally been intended for a definitive series in 1900 and although the Post Office thought that this image was suitable for the Wehranleihe stamps, it was nevertheless somehow too generally Swiss to be widely acceptable for war bond stamps. The call for the reproduction of historical rather than symbolic paintings by important Swiss artists, however, did not remain without effect: in 1941 such a series was issued, as we shall see in the following chapter.

In order to commemorate the extraordinary success of the Wehranleihe, the Federal Mint issued its first ever commemoration coins in 1937. The coins were created by Max Weber who was proud “... endlich etwas tun zu können für unser liebes Vaterland.” He showed on the obverse a kneeling female allegory.

115 Neue Zürcher Zeitung, 21 Sept. 1936, PTT Bib., BG 0119
116 See Schweizerischer Beobachter, 15 Oct. 1936 and Basler Nachrichten, 24 Nov. 1936, PTT Bib., BG 0119
117 Weber to jury, 16 Feb. 1937, BA, 6100 (A), 15
holding a sword in her right hand, while the left hand supported a peace dove. The reverse combined the Swiss cross with the Latin slogan “Pro patria armis tuenda” in a rectangle which was topped by a Swiss helmet and flanked by oak leaves (fig. 244). A curator of the Swiss National Museum criticised the shape of the sword and the helmet which did not correspond to Swiss originals\textsuperscript{118}, while a heraldic expert criticised the shape of the Swiss cross.\textsuperscript{119} The mint decided to improve both the cross and the helmet but, due to artistic freedom, left the sword unchanged.\textsuperscript{120} The iconography of the Wehranleihe coins thus emphasised the idea that peace for Switzerland was to be kept by having a mighty army ready to defend the fatherland.

From 1938 onwards the Bundesfeierkomitee, founded in 1909, was allowed to issue annual fund-raising stamps. By selling post-cards and, from 1923 onwards, badges for the support of social and charitable works on 1 August, the Swiss national day, the charity aimed at enhancing the importance of the national day by means of emphasising Swiss solidarity. The important difference between the Bundesfeierkomitee and Pro Juventute was that the Bundesfeierkomitee chose to support different charitable organisations each year, while the Pro Juventute charity raised money for its own activities. This made the Bundesfeier charity more flexible and adaptable to changing circumstances and via its link to the national day, somewhat even more patriotic than its counterpart.\textsuperscript{121}

Due to their annual production of patriotic post-cards and badges the Bundesfeierkomitee had a tradition of creating national iconography. The themes it employed were largely overlapping with the themes displayed on Swiss bearers of value, including, for example, post-cards displaying allegorical

\textsuperscript{118} See Gessler to Kellenberger, 25 Feb. 1937, \textit{ibid.}

\textsuperscript{119} See Ganz to Eidgenössische Finanzverwaltung, 8 March 1937, \textit{ibid.}

\textsuperscript{120} See Eidgenössische Finanzverwaltung to Gessler, 17 March 1937 and Eidgenössische Finanzverwaltung to Ganz, 9 June 1937, \textit{ibid.}

\textsuperscript{121} On the Bundesfeierkomitee see Don suisse de la Fête nationale (ed.), \textit{Don suisse de la Fête nationale, 1910-1985}, Zurich 1985

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Helvetias (1915, 1917), commemorating Pestalozzi (1914) or the 1291 oath (1932). The Post Office wanted the charity’s stamps to represent historical landscapes or places. The first Bundesfeier stamps showed a photographic view of the Tell chapel on the Lake of Lucerne and the Urirotstock mountains in the background strongly reminiscent of a tourist postcard. Instead of the simple Latin name Helvetia, the country of origin was indicated by Confoederatio Helvetica and the charity’s name appeared in all three national languages on top of the stamp. The iconography thus again combined several core themes of Swiss national identification: reference to the Tell myth by means of the 19th century lieu de mémoire, the identification with the prominently displayed Alps as a major tourist attraction and the identification with Switzerland’s linguistic diversity by means of the trilingual inscription of the charity’s name. The Bundesfeier’s link to the national day and inscription Confoederatio Helvetica referred to the origins of Switzerland as a confederation of cantons based on the federal treaty of 1291. The Post Office stated that the imagery displayed on the stamps was particularly appropriate in view of the fact that the 1938 Bundesfeier profits were intended for the Swiss living abroad: "... so dürfte dieses Bild, aus dem Herzen unserer Heimat, jene Landsleute über den Landesgrenzen ganz besonders erfreuen." These stamps were the first to be designed on the basis of photography and the Post Office justified the use of this technique because photography was widely used in the graphic arts, because it seemed particularly apt for the reproduction of landscapes and because there had been several suggestions from the public to make use of photography for stamp design. However, most members of the government "... n'ont pas paru goûter beaucoup le projet de timbre envisagé, à

122 For reproductions of all Bundesfeier post-cards and badges see Müller, Johannes. Pro Patria, Katalog zum Thema Bundesfeier, Bern 1991
123 Generaldirektion to minister, 4 April 1938, PTT Bib., PAA 02084
124 ibid.
125 Generaldirektion to minister, 15 March 1937, PTT Bib., PAA 02084
leur sens trop photographique" and suggested instead supporting Swiss artists by commissioning them to design stamps. The stamps were nevertheless printed but subsequent Bundesfeier stamps again relied on the organisation of limited contests among artists.

In 1939 both the Bundesfeierkomitee and the Federal Mint decided to commemorate the 1339 battle of Laupen won by Berne and its allies from central Switzerland against a coalition of local lords supported by the Emperor Ludwig of Bavaria. The Post Office organised a limited contest among artists but the jury found it rather difficult to decide on an acceptable way of commemorating the event. It refused proposals emphasising the military aspect of the battle arguing: "... da an der Laupener-Schlacht auch Gegner aus Orten teilnahmen, die heute zu schweizerischen Kantonen gehören" and also rejected proposals overemphasising the role of Berne or its leading knight von Erlach by means of the display of their coats of arms. It finally decided on a representation of the castle of Laupen but made the artist add the Swiss coat of arms to the proposal arguing that the absence of the Swiss cross on the 1938 stamps had been criticised (fig. 224). The Finance Ministry also wondered whether "... die Schlacht von Laupen nicht eine bloss bernische Angelegenheit war ..." and left the decision to the government which decided in favour of commemoration coins. The limited contest organised by the Finance Ministry was won by Remo Rossi who showed a shepherd with a sling, a decisive weapon during the battle (fig. 245). Thus the stamps and coins commemorating the battle of Laupen visually transformed an originally Bernese victory into a Swiss victory firstly by means of the fact that the battle was commemorated on Swiss bearers of value and secondly by means of the prominent display of the Swiss coat of arms.

126 Minister to Generaldirektion, 19 March 1937, ibid.
127 See Protokoll, 13 Feb. 1939, PTT Bib., BG 0111
128 See Auszug aus dem Protokoll ... des schweizerischen Bundesrates, 4 Nov. 1938, BA, 6100 (A), 17
129 See Auszug aus dem Protokoll ... des schweizerischen Bundesrates, 23 Dec. 1938, BA, 6100 (A), 17
Although the 1920 London declaration had allowed Switzerland to participate in common actions against treaty-breaking members of the League of Nations, in 1935 Switzerland only partly participated in the sanctions imposed against Italy because of its invasion of Abyssinia. After the failure of the sanctions, the departure from the League by Italy, and the German annexation of Austria, Switzerland obtained from the League of Nations in May 1938 the recognition of its return to the unqualified perpetual neutrality of 1815.130

Rather ironically, the Swiss Post Office issued a series of stamps showing the buildings of the League of Nations and the International Labour Office in the same month as Switzerland returned to its unqualified neutrality. Such propaganda stamps had repeatedly been asked for by the League of Nations and the Post Office wrote: "Die PTT-Verwaltung unterzog sich damit der Einsicht höherer Politik, die eine vermehrte Popularisierung des Völkerbundsgedanken erstrebte."131 Therefore Switzerland on the one hand greatly limited its activity in the League of Nations while on the other hand its Post Office issued stamps to propagate the ideas of the same organisation.

Although the Swiss government in many ways considered the League a failure, it nevertheless remained loyal to the ideals of peace and the commitment to international cooperation.132 Increasingly, however, Switzerland did so outside the framework of the failing League of Nations, concentrating its international humanitarian efforts on its patronage of the Red Cross. In 1939 the Post Office issued a series commemorating the 75th anniversary of the Geneva convention, the document which led to the foundation of the Red Cross. The stamps showed a view of Geneva and the symbol of the Red Cross derived from

130 See Jaeger, op. cit., pp. 74-84
131 Generaldirektion to Verband Schweiz. Philatelistenvereine, 22 Nov. 1938, PTT Bib., PAA 02084
132 See Swiss memorandum to the League of Nations, 29 April 1938, in Jaeger, op. cit., pp. 81-82
the chromatically-inverted Swiss cross, thus both an international and a national Swiss symbol (fig. 229).

The Post Office also emphasised Switzerland's identification with the Red Cross by commemorating its founder Henri Dunant on the highest value of a 1935 stamp series issued for the use by charitable organisations exempt from postal tariffs (fig. 221). The two lower values of the series showed a Protestant deaconess and a Catholic nurse (figs. 219, 220). Thus Protestant and Catholic charity efforts combined with the international humanitarian activity of Switzerland via the Red Cross were meant to symbolise the ideals of charity. This series for the first time used Switzerland's main denominational groups as a means of self-representation. It is significant to note that this aspect of Swiss diversity had never been displayed on bearers of value before, most probably because Switzerland's religious divide continued to be a very important factor in Swiss domestic politics. This can be seen by one of the reactions following the publication of the stamps. A Zurich newspaper complained about the display of the Catholic nurse. It claimed that mother Helvetia had been transformed into a nun and referring to the presence of Catholic politicians in the government it exclaimed: "... es ... regieren eben die Schwarzröcke in der Schweiz." While this article can be seen as typical anti-clerical exaggeration, it also shows that despite efforts to satisfy most of the public by issuing a balanced series of stamps, the iconography of individual stamps could be interpreted separately leading to completely different results than when seen in a series.

Landi 39

From May until October 1939 the Swiss national exhibition, 133 See Postamtsblatt, no. 251, 1934 134 On Swiss Catholics see above, p. 94, note 116 135 Scheinwerfer, 6 July 1936, PTT Bib., BG 0119
(Landesausstellung or Landi) took place in Zurich attracting a total of 10.5 m visitors. Initially planned as a mere industrial fair in 1935, the exhibition gradually developed into an elaborate but also contradictory manifestation of Swiss national identity. The exhibition consisted of two parts located on either side of the lake of Zurich, an amusement fair in the form of a traditional village (Dörflis) on the right, and an industrial and national propaganda fair on the left bank. The latter's section "Heimat und Volk", the so-called Höhenstrasse, was the core of the exhibition: "Sie lieferte die wichtigste Symbolprodukte für das schweizerische Nationalbewusstsein, definierte schweizerische Werte und Vorstellungen, indem sie die Themen Vaterlandsliebe und Wehrbereitschaft in unendlichen Varianten wiederholte, verdichtete und bis zu rituellen Höhepunkten steigerte." While it is clear that there was no such thing as a single Landi concept of Swiss national identity, the contradictory image presented was the outcome of a tension between a view of modernising, industrial Switzerland eager to adapt to changing economic circumstances mainly in favour of its export industries and a view of Switzerland shaped by the Geistige Landesverteidigung which presented the country mainly by means of emphasising traditional cultural values.

In 1937, at the request of the exhibition’s organising committee, the Post Office agreed to produce two series of stamps, an advertisement stamp to be sold before and an exhibition stamp to be sold during the exhibition. Several contests were organised and a number of jury protocols and unpublished proposals survive shedding light on the difficulty of creating stamps representing the contradictory messages of the Landis.

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136 Switzerland had 4.26 m inhabitants in 1941, see Eidgenössisches Statistisches Amt (ed.), Eidgenössische Volkszählung 1. Dezember 1941, Berne 1948, p. 3
137 Meier, Isabelle, Die "Landi", Zürich 1986, p. 133
138 A number of authors have dealt with the Landi, most importantly Meier, Isabelle, Die "Landi", Zürich 1986 and Angst, Kenneth; Cattani, Alfred (eds.), Die Landi, Vor 50 Jahren in Zürich, Erinnerungen-Dokumente-Betrachtungen, Stäfa 1989. See also the official catalogue by Meili, Armin, Schweizerische Landesausstellung 1939, Zürich, Zürich 1939 and Wagner, Julius (ed.), Das goldene Buch der LA 1939, Zürich 1939
During the first contest, the artists received only vague guidelines for the creation of the stamps. An apt ("passend") reference to the event was expected and although the participants explicitly had complete artistic freedom, it was noted that the press had suggested "... dass diese Markenbilder in den Dienst der schweizerischen Wirtschaftswerbung gestellt werden sollten."\(^{39}\) The jury, including the director of the Landi, the architect Armin Meili, had to judge a rather diverse range of proposals. Some projects focussed on the industrial fair aspect of the exhibition others combined representations of industry with agriculture, trade or the arts. While some proposals had no iconographic element referring to Switzerland, mountains, Alpine flowers, women in traditional costume and the Swiss cross appeared on others (figs. 233-236). Probably due to the absence of clear guidelines for the artists and because the concept of the exhibition itself was not yet clearly defined, none of the proposals really satisfied the jury. Director Meili even stated: "Die Landesausstellung als solche lasse sich auf einer Marke überhaupt nicht darstellen."\(^{140}\) The only thing which seemed to have been clear was that the exhibition was meant to have a strong Swiss rather than a Zurich character. One proposal showing a view of Zurich was rejected by director Meili: "Die Landesausstellung ist schweizerisch, nicht zürcherisch."\(^{141}\)

In a further session the jury discussed the proposals together with the artists. The secretary of the Interior Ministry, Fritz Vital, was particularly interested in Swiss physiognomy. He criticised one proposal "... der Kopf erinnere aber an Bilder auf römischen und griechischen Münzen und lasse das typisch Schweizerische vermissen." Thus the tiny Swiss cross included in the laurel wreath was not sufficient to render the image Swiss (fig. 234) and Vital proposed "... die 4 Volkstypen unseres Landes darzustellen." However, the artist Gauchat was sceptical about Vital's four types proposal "... da typische
For the next round of the competition the jury agreed to commission the artists with the creation of a single advertisement stamp and, based on an idea of director Meili, a series of exhibition stamps, referring to the individual sections of the fair and advertising Swiss industry. The exhibition stamps proposed in this round attempted to represent the various sections of the exhibition employing different styles ranging from the daring attempt by Birkhäuser to represent the sections by means of sample products in a sober, pictogram like style (fig. 237) to the naive proposals by Reber (fig. 238). But by far the most interesting proposal was an additional project by director Meili himself (fig. 239). He suggested a series of 22 stamps, the individual images of which included views of the exhibition, symbols of industrial progress (turbines, dams, modern means of transport), rural scenes (cows, women in traditional costume, an Alphorn bugler), symbols of Swiss democracy (Landsgemeinde), and the army (medieval, 19th century and 20th century combined). Thus Meili's stamps showed exactly the multifold and diverse aspects of the Landi, combining them in a skillful way into a larger image of Switzerland: all of the stamps combined showed, like a puzzle, the shape of the Swiss borders. Thus clearly the 22 stamps symbolised the 22 cantons which together formed the Swiss nation.

Despite the variety of proposals the jury again failed to decide on an acceptable series of exhibition stamps, criticising some individual stamps of the series as completely unacceptable and ignoring Meili's proposal because the Post Office refused to issue series containing more than 7 stamps. Neither did the proposals for the advertisement stamp manage to convince the jury, although the head of the propaganda section of the exhibition, Wieland, commented about the project Gauchat already proposed in 1937 (fig. 233): "Die geistige Tendenz der
Landesausstellung werde in einer sehr schönen Form zum Ausdruck gebracht."

Wieland’s suggestion, however, to use the Swiss cross for the advertisement stamps was approved of by the jury. The main idea behind this use of the national symbol was “... der Welt durch das Schweizerwappen die friedliche Mission der Schweiz in Erinnerung zu bringen, ...” and the director general of the Post Office stated that: “... in der heutigen Zeit, wo die Schweiz eine Mission in Europa zu erfüllen habe, [wäre] es von Nutzen ..., wenn die Schweiz ihr überall bekanntes Landeswappen in die Welt hinausschicken würde.”

The “peaceful mission” the Swiss coat of arms was meant to allude to was not explained by the jury. Yet it is clear that the intention was to represent Switzerland, returned to unqualified neutrality, as the patron of the International Red Cross.

Several further artists were commissioned with the creation of stamps displaying the Swiss cross, leading finally to the issue of stamps by the experienced stamp designers Karl Bickel and Victor Surbek. Bickel created two stamps in a rather heavy, classicising style. The first showed a group of people of various professions symbolically carrying their products to the exhibition (fig. 225) while the second stamp displayed a group of tourists and a mountain shepherd listening to a poet, an image which “... will mehr das Geistige unserer Heimat und unseres Volkes zum Ausdruck bringen ...” (figs. 226). Surbek who had been asked to produce a typically Swiss landscape showed a view of Piz Rosegg and the Tschierva glacier “... und bringt die Schweiz als Berg- und Reiseland zur Geltung” (fig. 227). All stamps existed in three linguistic versions and were distributed according to regional language.

For the exhibition stamps another contest was organised among artists

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144 Juryprotokoll, 29 June 1938, PTT Bib., BG 0119
145 No more jury protocols survive for the issued stamps.
146 Postamtsblatt, 5 Jan. 1939, PTT Bib., BG 0134
147 Postamtsblatt, 5 Jan. 1939, PTT Bib., BG 0134 and Bestimmungen für einen Entwurf ..., 19 July 1938, PTT Bib., PAA 02084

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experienced in the field of stamp design. Wieland and Liner both proposed allegorical, conspicuously mother-like Helvetias. Surbek proposed an interesting series consisting of two male and two female portraits (figs. 240-243). Since no documents survive we can only speculate whether this series was an attempt to realise Vital’s idea of representing the four racial types of Switzerland. The iconography, however, clearly indicated their rural origin through the clothes worn and the tools included in some portraits. The chosen stamp was Surbek’s proposal figuring a cross bow, also used to identify Swiss quality products, and a blossoming apple branch (fig. 228). It represented the theme of the exhibition “... die eine Blüte schweizerischer Arbeit und Gewerbefleisses sein will.”

The imagery on the final Landi stamps thus largely focussed on traditional themes of Swiss self-representation including the identification with the Alps and its inhabitants, the Tell myth, tourism and the Swiss humanitarian tradition focussed on the Red Cross. The only exception was the 20 ct. stamp which clearly aimed at representing an image of Swiss culture as defined by the Geistige Landesverteidigung. Considering the great efforts and large numbers of stamp proposals produced in the course of the creation of the Landi stamps, the final results are rather disappointing. While this was largely due to a divided jury, a conservative postal administration and the unclear and still evolving concept of the Landi at the time of the creation of the stamps, the disappointing final results also seem to show how difficult it proved to produce images carrying the complex and contradictory vision of the Swiss nation which existed in the years immediately before the outbreak of the Second World War. This vision of Switzerland simultaneously emphasised modernity and tradition which led to considerable tensions. The unpublished stamp proposals show these tensions very clearly, not only by means of the themes displayed - ranging from cow bells to chemical formulae - but also in the styles employed which ranged from naive.

148 Postamtsblatt, 14 April 1939
to uncompromisingly modernist. The greatest problem, however, did not concern the inclusion of modernity into Swiss national identity but rather the Geistige Landesverteidigung concept of Switzerland forming a cultural unit despite its linguistic diversity. In the face of the ethnocentric ideologies of fascism Swiss multiethnicity received increasing attention in the construction of a collective Swiss identity and thus has to be looked at more closely.

Only German, French and Italian were official Swiss languages until 1938 when also Romansh was made a Swiss national language. Romansh dialects are spoken in some valleys of the Grisons and the decision to make Romansh a Swiss national language was partly caused by the desire to support this language against the increasing influence of German spoken by the majority of the canton’s inhabitants and tourists visiting this famous Alpine region. However, the decision was also a reaction against increasing nationalist propaganda issued by some Italian linguists and journalists claiming that Romansh was merely a Lombard dialect and that the Grisons were thus a natural part of Italy.

It is thus no coincidence that the later 1930s witnessed increasing attempts to use Romansh as an active element of Swiss national identity. One artist (Gauchat) and more interestingly even a private proposal used Romansh inscriptions on proposals for Landi stamps, the Postal Ministry had to reply to letters of complaint asking why the Landi stamps which were finally issued did not appear in Romansh versions too. While the iconographic representation of the four Swiss linguistic groups was not realised, the 30 ct. Landi advertisement stamp can be interpreted as a reference to Romansh since the Piz

149 Due to the absence of a unified literary Romansh the language was not made an administrative language on a federal level although since 1794 the dialects are administrative languages of the Grisons, a canton which also includes German and Italian parts, see Decurtins, Alexi, 40 Jahre Rätoromanisch als vierte Landessprache, in Ladina, vol. 12, 1978, p. 143
150 For a good overview of the debates see Pult, Caspar, Rätoromanisch, unsere vierte Landessprache, in Veröffentlichungen der Handelshochschule St. Gallen, vol. 2, 1938, pp. 3-27
151 Beeli-Trueb to Generaldirektion, 17 Nov. 1937, PTT Bib., PAA 02084
152 Ministry to Weider, 16 Jan. 1939, PTT Bib., PAA 02084. Romansh was excluded because it was no administrative language. Nevertheless, during the exhibition, major inscriptions appeared in all four languages, see Duttweiler, Gottfried (ed.), Eines Volkes Sein und Schaffen, Zurch 1940, passim.

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(Romansh for peak) Rosegg is in the Romansh-speaking Engadin valley.

The use of Romansh for the construction of Swiss national identity thus appears to have been relatively easy and uncontested. There seem to be two main reasons for this development. Firstly Romansh is spoken in parts of the mountainous Grisons and thus the language was easily integrable into the established identification with the Alps. Secondly, the inclusion of Romansh into the group of national languages was not only a clear statement against Italian nationalist propaganda but it also gave Switzerland a further element of distinction with regards to its neighbours with whom it shared its other languages. It could even be argued that Romansh was the only exclusively and thus most national Swiss language and indeed one of the most illustrious constructors of Switzerland, Gonzague de Reynold, called the poem \textit{Il pur suveran} by the Romansh poet Gion Antoni Huonder “les vers les plus suisses que nous connaissons.”\footnote{Quotation in Pull, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 21. On de Reynold see Jost, Hans Ulrich, \textit{Les avant-gardes réactionnaires}, Lausanne 1992}

This accentuated interest in language was closely linked to concepts of race. The \textit{Landi} stamp discussions show that at least secretary Vital thought that the four linguistic groups had distinct physiognomic features and in 1936 director Meili suggested including a treatment of the theme of “Rassenhygiene” in the exhibition.\footnote{See Meier, Isabelle, \textit{Die “Landi”}, Zürich 1986, p. 134} The most significant manifestation of this preoccupation with race, language and the nation was, however, a collection of 84 anonymous Swiss portrait photographs including portraits of all members of the government which formed part of the exhibition’s \textit{Höhenstrasse}. By means of the portraits of the government ministers dispersed among symbolic Swiss citizens, the photographs alluded to the first major element of the \textit{Geistige Landesverteidigung}, the identification with Switzerland’s democracy while its title referred to the second aspect of the intellectual defence, the cultural unit of
diverse Switzerland: "Origines, langues et confessions diverses et pourtant une nation." This shows that despite the preoccupation with race the concept of the Swiss nation shaped by the *Geistige Landesverteidigung* was not based on a singular race such as the *homo alpinus helveticus*, desperately looked for by some Swiss scientists in the 1930s. On the contrary, the Swiss nation was presented as a combination of four races, both genders, diverse classes and denominations, thus a nation of settled Catholics and Protestants speaking either German, French, Italian or Romansh. While this concept of the nation was clearly more tolerant than that of any of Switzerland’s neighbours in the 1930s, it still excluded the linguistically diverse and nomadic Gypsies and to an extent the Jews, since references to Swiss religious diversity only referred to Catholicism and Protestantism.

155 The term *nation* translated into *Volk, nazione* and *põvel* in the other languages, see Duttweiler, Gottfried (ed.), *Eines Volkes Sein und Schaffen*, Zürich 1940, p. 11
157 From 1926 until 1973 a large-scale project organised by *Pro Juventute* and supported by the Swiss government even aimed at making all the Gypsies settled by dividing families and raising Gypsy children in foster families or orphanages. See Mehr, Mirella, *Kinder der Landstrasse*, Bern 1987
7.3 Conclusion

The rise of fascism and the growing possibility of a new armed conflict in Europe put both Belgium and Switzerland under increasing pressure in the 1930s. This pressure came both from within and from outside. Both countries witnessed the growth of fascist movements which won considerable electoral victories in the early and mid-1930s, in Switzerland the fascist Fronten and in Belgium the Flemish Vlaams Nationale Verbond and the francophone movement Rex. Nazi Germany, on the other hand, increasingly threatened the sovereignty of both countries from the outside, directly in the case of Switzerland and indirectly in the case of Belgium which was mutually linked to France in a defensive alliance since 1920.

The danger of an imminent war led to an increasing emphasis on national identity and the desire to adapt it to the changing circumstances in both countries. While this certainly happened in order to strengthen the nation’s and especially the conscript army’s morale in the case of war, this did not occur by means of orchestrated state propaganda as in Nazi Germany. The Geistige Landesverteidigung in Switzerland was far from being a unified doctrine and was only partly constructed by the government. The increasing cult of the Belgian Royal Family incarnating a great variety of Belgian collective identification themes was to a large extent the outcome of projections and interpretations originating with the press, private organisations and the general public rather than the outcome of a grand plan on the part of the Royal Family let alone the government.

The visualisation of these adapted forms of national identity on bearers of value proved to be much easier in Belgium than in Switzerland. The portraits of the members of the Belgian Royal Family had two main advantages. Firstly, a royal portrait can become an icon capable of carrying a great variety of meanings.
ranging, for example, in the case of Queen Elisabeth from the myth of the *Reine Infirmière* to the representation of the Queen as the patroness of the arts. Secondly, royal portraits have the advantage that they naturally adapt over time. After the death of Albert, for example, his son provided the country not only with a new symbol of the nation but also with a representation of a new generation. Thus portraits of living members of the Royal Family were always easily put in line with contemporary taste and could serve as ideal representations of the nation in the eyes of contemporaries. In other words, the Royal Family, despite the foreign origins of Elisabeth and Astrid, had the advantage of literally incarnating the Belgian nation.

In Switzerland the desire to create modern portraits of the nation which went beyond the traditional and somewhat outdated repertoire of Swiss self-representation proved to be much more difficult, as shown by the futile attempts to create a typically Swiss and yet new image for new definitive stamps in 1935, and in the difficulties emerging from the desire to combine the exigencies of the *Geistige Landesverteidigung* with representations of modern Switzerland for the *Landi* stamps. Daring proposals to achieve a sense of modernity by means of applying radical modern style or attempts to link languages, races and the nation were disputed and not realised, an indication that they were not perceived to be widely acceptable. In view of the absence of widely acceptable and naturally renewing national symbols such as royal portraits, Switzerland had to limit itself either to adaptations of existing themes of identification such as the Alps or the country's cantonal diversity.

In terms of foreign policy, both countries tried to avert the possibility of being dragged into a European armed conflict by implementing a foreign policy of rigid neutrality. Belgium's return to neutrality was marked by King Leopold's speech of 14 October 1936. The King's speech in front of the cabinet had been approved by Prime Minister Van Zeeland and was aimed at uniting the divided
ministers in order to ensure the passing of a military defence bill. Although the idea of Belgium's return to neutrality was not exclusively the idea of Leopold, whose influence on this policy has been largely exaggerated, the subsequent publication of the rather blunt text arguing for a Belgian policy of non-alliance led to considerable diplomatic repercussions infuriating the French and delighting the Germans.\textsuperscript{158} The Swiss return to unqualified neutrality in 1938, on the other hand, was less dramatic in so far as Switzerland had no alliances to dissolve and only renounced participating in common actions against treaty-breaking members of the League of Nations.\textsuperscript{159}

The policies of neutrality manifested themselves in rather different ways in Belgium and Switzerland. Due to the publication of his speech King Leopold became the major symbol of Belgium's so-called policy of independence. This policy mainly aimed at keeping war away from Belgian territory "maintained by a reasonable military and financial effort" which Leopold expected to "gain the support of the Belgians, all animated by an intense and basic desire for peace."\textsuperscript{160} The Belgian pre-war spirit seems to be captured in one of the 1939 Red Cross stamps (fig. 199). Leopold appeared in uniform surrounded by his children who were ideal symbols for small and weak Belgium desiring peace and in need of protection by the nation's father, Leopold. The Swiss pre-war policy of neutrality, while also aiming at keeping Switzerland out of military conflict, put much greater emphasis on quite costly military dissuasion as the 1936 fund-raising stamps contributing to the issue of the \textit{Wehranleihe} show. While Switzerland presented itself as the neutral patron of the Red Cross it also emphasised its military traditions, for example by commemorating important 19th century Swiss generals, Dufour and Herzog, on \textit{Pro Juventute} stamps in 1937 and 1939.

\textsuperscript{158} See Kieft, David Owen, \textit{Belgium's Return to Neutrality}, Oxford 1972 and compare with the rather speculative article by Binion linking Leopold's memory of the Kussnacht accident to his subsequent foreign policy, see Binion, Rudolph, \textit{Repeat Performance: A Psychohistorical Study of Leopold III and Belgian Neutrality}, in \textit{History and Theory}, vol. 8, no. 2, 1969, pp. 213-259

\textsuperscript{159} See Jaeger, \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 74-84

\textsuperscript{160} Speech by Leopold, 14 Oct. 1936, quoted and translated in Kieft, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 138

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and represented itself prepared for national defence most strikingly by means of Hans Brandenberger’s statue *Wehrbereitschaft* exhibited at the *Landi* which celebrated Swiss military strength by means of a monumental soldier getting ready to defend the nation in battle (fig. 246) Therefore, before the outbreak of the war, Belgium appeared as a small, peace-loving and rather vulnerable nation sheltering behind a policy of independence associated with its King, while Switzerland represented itself as a small but proud and mighty country ready to defend its independence in battle.
8. The Second World War

8.1 Belgium

At the outbreak of the Second World War in September 1939 Belgium mobilised its army and emphasised its neutrality guaranteed by Britain and France. King Leopold III, like his father, took up personal command of the Belgian army and the three major political parties, Catholics, Socialists and Liberals, formed a national government under Prime Minister Pierlot. On 10 May 1940, Hitler attacked Belgium. While the Belgian government and parliament retreated to France, King Leopold III, against the advice of the government and in contrast to the Dutch Queen Wilhelmina, refused to leave the country. The Belgian army capitulated on 28 May and the King received German permission to reside in the chateau of Laeken. The King was officially a prisoner of war and remained in Belgium until June 1944 when he and his family were deported to the Reich.¹

Bearers of Value during the Occupation

In view of the German attack, the BNB evacuated its most important assets and an operational service followed the government into exile in France. As during the First World War, the occupation authorities devalued the Belgian franc by imposing a favourable exchange rate with the Mark and froze prices and salaries for the whole period. While introducing the use of German Pfennig coins and of Reichskreditkassenscheine, German banknotes were only imposed

¹ On the government and the King see Stengers, Jean, Léopold III et le gouvernement: les deux politiques belges de 1940, Paris-Gembloux 1980, Gérard-Libois, Jules; Gotovitch, José, Léopold III, De l’an 40 à l’effacement, Bruxelles 1991 and Velaers, Jan; Van Goethem, Herman, Leopold III, De kooning, het land, de oorlog, Tielt 1994
during the first weeks of the Occupation. In order to prevent a contraction of the monetary circulation, the occupying authorities created the Banque d’Emission as a central bank. The BNB, however, succeeded in preventing the issue of banknotes already printed by the Banque d’Emission so that only the existing banknotes continued to circulate in occupied Belgium.2

In 1941 the German authorities decided to collect all metal available in Belgium for the war industry. While the use of coin metal, especially nickel, for the Belgian industry in war times had been planned by the Monnaie Royale before the war, it was reluctant to cooperate with the German authorities.3 Eventually only 16% of the 5 fr. nickel coins were withdrawn and the metal never reached the German authorities.4 In order to compensate for the withdrawal of nickel coins and to respond to the increasing coin demand, the Monnaie Royale minted new 5, 10 and 25 ct. and 1 and 5 fr. coins in zinc, “... seul métal disponible dans les circonstances actuelles.”5

The Postal administration remained in operation during the whole occupation period, the secretary general of the Postal Ministry acting with ministerial powers delegated to the administration at the outbreak of the war.6 Decisions taken by the administration were, however, subject to German approval, which was not without effect for the creation of stamps in occupied Belgium. While the German authorities allowed the sale of the stamp series in favour of the Chapelle Musicale de la Reine Elisabeth, created before the invasion, these stamps were not allowed to be used for franking purposes.7 Thus,

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2 See Banque Nationale de Belgique (ed.), Le franc belge, Bruxelles 1989, pp. 79-80 and 245-246
3 See Directeur de la Monnaie to Directeur Général de la Trésorerie ..., 3 Jan. 1941, MR, 605/3
4 See Banque Nationale de Belgique (ed.), Le franc belge, Bruxelles 1989, p. 80
5 Directeur de la Monnaie to Directeur Général de la Trésorerie ..., 29 Jan. 1941, MR, 605/3. The coin circulation rose from 1,607 to 5,468 m fr. between May 1940 and Oct. 1944. See Banque Nationale de Belgique (ed.), Le franc belge, Bruxelles 1989, pp. 79-80
7 See Militärbefehlshaber in Belgien ... to Generaldirektion, 7 Oct. 1940, MP, 1940/1
immediately after the invasion the circulation of new stamps with strong royal significance was not allowed by the German authorities (fig. 247).

In the autumn of 1940 the Secours d‘Hiver charity was set up on the model of the Nazi Winterhilfswerk. The German authorities declared the issue of the 1940 anti-tuberculosis stamps to be “unerwünscht” and instead proposed to issue stamps in favour of the new charity. The stamp series prepared by the Oeuvre nationale belge de défense contre la tuberculose (ONBDT) was transformed by adding the new charity’s name but without removing the Cross of Lorraine, symbol of the ONBDT, into the first Secours d‘Hiver series appearing in December 1940. The series showed the coats of arms of all of the provincial capitals and “... des attributs évoquant l‘industrie ou les productions du sol, propres à chaque région” (figs. 248-250). The ONBDT had explicitly taken the Swiss Pro Juventute series of cantonal coats of arms as the model for this series.

The German authorities, however, altered the linguistic composition of the series by placing the Flemish Brugge above the French Bruges and by placing the German Arel above the French Arlon and removing the town’s Flemish name. This action illustrates two aspects of German occupation policy. On the one hand, as during the First World War, the Germans engaged in an active Flamenpolitik while on the other hand, the Nazi’s racial concept led them to emphasise the German linguistic element in the Belgian province of Luxembourg.

Under German tutelage, the Secours d‘Hiver achieved a privileged
position in the field of fund-raising stamps issuing eight different stamp series between December 1940 and February 1944. However, other organisations, among them the ONBDT, succeeded in being allowed to issue fund-raising stamps. Yet, when anti-tuberculosis stamps were permitted again in 1942 the Secours d’Hiver claimed half of its profits.\(^{14}\) Throughout the Occupation the Secours d’Hiver had to be consulted for any proposal for fund-raising stamps while its exaggerated demands concerning its own stamps met with a rather reluctant postal administration.\(^{15}\)

Royal Continuity

Throughout the Occupation, royal iconography remained a prominent feature on Belgian bearers of value. The 1 and 5 fr. zinc coins minted in 1941 were created by Marcel Rau before the invasion.\(^{16}\) The 5 fr. coin showed on the obverse a profile of Leopold III to the right and for the first time displayed not only his name but also his title as King of the Belgians (fig. 276). The reverse showed the value topped by a crown and flanked by the double initial of the King. The 1 fr. coin showed a Belgian lion flanked by the country’s name on the obverse and on the reverse the value and the double royal initial topped again by a crown. The 5, 10 and 25 ct. zinc coins showed the same design as their copper-zinc-nickel predecessors.

The definitive Belgian stamp series showing Leopold’s portrait or the Belgian heraldic lion continued to be used and the Post Office even issued

\(^{14}\) See report by ONBDT, no date [1942], MP, 1943-2. Secours d’Hiver also got parts of the profit of at least one issue of stamps in favour of prisoners of war, see Generaldirektor to Armeefeldpostmeister, 10 March 1942, MP, 1942/2

\(^{15}\) See Generaldirektor to Armeefeldpostmeister requiring permission for a series of Red Cross stamps “Nachdem das Winterhilfswerk diese Ausgabe im Prinzip genehmigt hat...”, 10 Jan.1944, MP, 1944/2 and Directeur général to Secours d’Hiver complaining about the impossibility of the charity’s demands, Aug. 1942, MP, 1942/4

\(^{16}\) See correspondence Monnaie Royale with Rau 1939/40 in MR, 605/3
complementary values of these series in 1941 and 1943. While at the beginning of the Occupation the stamps in favour of the musical foundation of Queen Elisabeth could not be used for franking purposes, in 1941 a new series in favour of the Queen's foundation appeared with postal value and furthermore, a new issue of the 1939 Red Cross stamp showing the Queen visiting a hospital appeared in the same year.

War-Related Charities

The Post Office issued five stamp series in favour of Belgian prisoners of war and their families. The secretary general of the Ministry of Communication stated that public aid to prisoners of war was necessary because of "... le caractère sacré de la dette contractée vis à vis des prisonniers, dette qui intéresse toute la population, ...". While the imagery of some of these series did not allude to their fund-raising purpose, the 1942 series was a double stamp: "Le volet de droite représentera un soldat belge écrivant à sa famille, figurée par deux têtes, de femme et d'enfant; celui de gauche reproduira un sujet allégorique et un texte approprié de l'émission." This text was "Pour nos prisonniers, Voor onze gevangenen" while the allegory was the sun shining from behind a small cloud and the royal emblem of Leopold III (fig. 253). In the following year the prisoner stamps showed "deux scènes différentes de la vie de camp" including a mother holding a small child (fig. 254). The Commission philatélique decided that these stamps should appear in two textual versions, one giving preference to French and one giving preference to Flemish. Both stamps had the same value

17 See Arrêté du Secrétaire Général, 4 July 1941, Recueil and COB, p. 93
18 See Arrêté du Secrétaire Général, 25 Sept. 1941, Recueil and COB, p. 88
19 Report Emission d'un timbre-poste ... au profit des prisonniers de guerre, 4 March 1942, MP, 1942/3
20 Arrêté du Secrétaire Général, 21 July 1942, Recueil
21 Arrêté du Secrétaire Général, 31 March 1943, ibid.
"... afin d’assurer une égalité absolue aux deux langues nationales."²²

Thus Belgian prisoners of war were represented as young fathers divided from their family and their support was perceived to be a national duty of a sacred character. What is particularly interesting about the 1942 stamp is the appearance of the King’s symbol. After the capitulation of the Belgian army, Leopold III was in fact the country’s most famous prisoner of war and this image was used for collective identification purposes. The Comité de Secours social aux Prisonniers, Invalides et Blessés de guerre, for example, distributed “10,000 magnifiques pull-overs ornés du monogramme royal” among prisoners of war, thus symbolically linking ordinary prisoners with their King and perceived fellow-sufferer.²³ This myth of the Auguste prisonnier, however, had collapsed in December 1941 when Cardinal Van Roey announced the King’s marriage with Liliane Baels. Unlike the soldiers represented on the stamps, Leopold was not only not divided from his children but he also got married for the second time and became a father again in 1942.²⁴

The stamps of the second war-related charity, the Secours d’Hiver, after 1940 always showed images of St. Martin of Tours, symbol of charity because, according to legend, this Roman soldier gave half his coat away to a freezing beggar. But unlike the adaptation of Van Dijck’s famous St. Martin painting for fund-raising stamps in 1910, the Secours d’Hiver stamps reproduced mostly anonymous representations of the Saint. In most cases they reproduced statues or other representations of the Saint from churches and museums from all over Belgium, in one series in combination with the churches to which the statues belonged. As in some pre-war stamp series, Belgium was thus again represented by means of its component local parts together forming the Belgian nation

²² Commission philatélique, 9 March 1943, MP, 1943/1
²³ Nouveau Journal, 9 June [1942], MP, 1942/3
²⁴ Prince Alexander was born on 20 July in 1942, less than 9 months after the announcement of the marriage, but more than 9 months after the spurious official date of the wedding. On the collapse of the Leopold’s prisoner myth already during the Occupation see Gotovitch, José, L’opinion et le Roi, 1940-1944, in Res Publica, vol. 20, 1978, pp. 55-98
united in this case by the cult of a popular Catholic Saint. Furthermore, the series also used the identification with the pre-1830 artistic patrimony of Belgium to represent the nation. The German-censored newspaper *Le Soir*, for example, commented that the 1941 series was inspired “... de nos meilleurs sculpteurs flamands et wallons.”\(^\text{25}\) Finally, the two 1944 *Secours d'Hiver* stamps showed the first intentional visual representation of Flanders and Wallonia representing St. Martin “... dans des paysages typiques de nos contrées, symbolisant l'action du Secours d'Hiver dans le pays tout entier” (figs. 255, 256).\(^\text{26}\) The two linguistic parts of the country were thus linked by the same representation of the Saint.

St. Martin's day is 11 November, a date usually well known in Catholic countries. Both in Italy and Belgium, for example, there is the concept of the “Summer of St. Martin”, a period of warm weather around 11 November, a sign of God protecting the Saint from cold since he was only wearing half a coat. 11 November, however, was also the armistice day in 1918, a date intensely celebrated in Belgium in the inter-war years and even during the German occupation used as a day of open patriotism.\(^\text{27}\) Thus although the *Secours d'Hiver* and especially the German authorities seem not to have been aware of the double significance of the Saint, the St. Martin stamps were not only symbols of charity but were also likely to remind many people of the armistice in 1918 and could thus have been interpreted as a sign of hope and subtle resistance.

During the Occupation bearers of value were also issued in favour of Belgian volunteers fighting together with the Germans against the Soviet Union. Both the Flemish *Vlaams Nationaal Verbond* (*VNV*) and the francophone extreme-right movement *Rex* recruited forces in order to join the *Wehrmacht* on the eastern front. While from the beginning of the Occupation the German authorities were willing to exploit the collaboration of the Flemish nationalist

\(^{25}\) *Le Soir*, no date (1941), MP, 1942/4  
\(^{26}\) Advertisement leaflet, 1943, MP, 1943/4  
\(^{27}\) See Gérard-Libois; Gotovitch, *op. cit.*, p. 158
VNV for their own ends, in the course of the Occupation the leader of Rex, Léon Degrelle, managed to transform his movement, largely marginalised before the outbreak of the war, into the major collaborationist organisation in francophone Belgium enjoying the Nazi's favour. A key element of Degrelle's success in winning German favour was the creation and performance of the Légion Wallonie which was headed by Degrelle himself and increasingly became the centre of Rexist propaganda efforts at home.28

Both stamp series represented a possibility to support the volunteers for Belgian civilians, mainly relatives, but were clearly also aimed at propagating the efforts of the collaborationist movements joining the crusade against Bolshevism at home. The series issued for the Legioen Vlaanderen comprised four values and displayed medieval themes namely a soldier, an archer, two halberd bearers and a mounted knight, thus alluding to the crusade by means of their medieval imagery. The inscriptions, only in Flemish, read: “Voor onze Jongens aan het oost front” while the Flemish lion prominently appeared in the lower part of the stamps (figs. 268-271). The series of the Légion Wallonie series also comprised four values displaying two coats of arms, the crosses of Livonia and the cross of Burgundy. Because the Légion was exclusively francophone, Degrelle was unable to use the Belgian flag but instead of taking the explicitly regionalist Coq Wallon he convinced the German authorities that the cross of the old Burgundian Empire should be the flag of the Légion.29 The stamps showed a flag bearer, an assembly of the legion, the portrait of a légionnaire in front of an agricultural and an industrial background and a king on horseback in front of a row of soldiers (figs. 272-275). The image of the king on horseback is a reproduction of the statue of Godefroid de Bouillon, crusading hero and first King of Jerusalem (1099), erected as an important lieu de mémoire in the Place

29 See ibid., p. 97
Royale in Brussels in 1848 from where the Légion departed on 8 August 1941.\textsuperscript{30} The myth of Bouillon was an important element of the construction of Belgian national identity in the 19th century,\textsuperscript{31} and his display on the stamps of the Légion Wallonie thus emphasised the crusading aspect of the war against the Bolsheviks, alluded to the Belgian character which the mission was meant to have in the eyes of Degrelle and linked the leader of the medieval crusade to the leader of the modern crusade, since Degrelle was a native of Bouillon.

\textbf{Wartime Iconography: New and Old Ways}

During the Occupation, the identification with Belgium’s cultural patrimony linking the nation to its pre-1830 past continued and found new ways of expressing itself. Three more stamp series appeared in favour of the Abbey of Orval and in 1944 a series of fund-raising stamps in favour of the Red Cross reproduced six masterpieces by Van Dijck, continuing the theme of Belgian identification with its Old Masters. In 1941, the \textit{Oeuvre Nationale de Service Social aux Familles de Militaires} successfully proposed creating a series called “Portraits Historiques de l’Ecole Flamande”.\textsuperscript{32} The series reproduced the portraits of important Burgundian and Habsburg rulers of the (Southern) Netherlands from Philip III (1396-1467) to Maria Theresa (1717-1780) based on works of artists including Roger van der Weyden, Barend van Orley and Rubens (fig. 251, 252). In an interesting speech to an Antwerp philatelic society, the “Historische Personagien ... uit de geschiedenis van ons land ...” were put into a specific Belgian context emphasising the role of some of them as patrons of the arts and sciences - for example the archdukes Albert and Isabella, great patrons of

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{30}See \textit{ibid.}, p. 99
\item \textsuperscript{31}On Godefroid de Bouillon see Wanson, Isabelle, \textit{Godefroid de Bouillon}, in Morelli, Anne (ed.) \textit{Les Grandes mythes de l'histoire de Belgique, de Flandre et de Wallonie}, Bruxelles 1995, pp. 47-54
\item \textsuperscript{32}See \textit{Oeuvre Nationale de Service Social aux Familles de Militaires} to \textit{Directeur Général}, 20 June 1941, MP, 1941/2
\end{itemize}

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Rubens. This stamp series thus combined the identification with the works of
the Old Masters with an identification with the late medieval and early modern
history of the lands which later became Belgium.

The theme of the 1942 anti-tuberculosis series was that of important 16th
and 17th century scholars initially including Erasmus of Rotterdam. However,
"Un échange de vues s’establit immédiatement au sujet d’Erasme. Malgré que la
majeure partie de sa vie se soit écoulée sur notre sol, Erasme était de nationalité
(sic!) hollandaise. L’idée de patrie doit-elle rigoureusement dominer le choix du
Comité?" The answer was positive: "... une reproduction des traits d’Erasme dans
une série de timbres consacrés aux savants ayant honoré la Belgique, ne peut être
retenue. Au surplus, la Hollande a elle-même déjà glorifié Erasme sur un
timbre-poste." Thus the committee applied the modem concepts of Belgian and
Dutch nationality to a period when neither of these states had existed.
Interestingly, similar arguments about the appropriateness of commemorating
the German-born Rubens and Memling were never raised.

The 1944 series in favour of prisoners of war represented hommes célèbres
of each province including Jan Van Eyck (Limbourg), Godefroid de Bouillon
(Luxembourg) and Jacob Van Artevelde (East Flanders). The problem was a
suitable representative for bilingual Brabant. The solution was found in
Ruusbroeck (1294-1381) (fig. 258): "... personnage vraiment Européen ... ce n’est
pas une personnalité flamande, non encore n’a aucune attache nationaliste, c’est
un extatique des altitudes de la pensée, et personne n’y pourra voir autre
chose."

The 1943 anti-tuberculosis series reproduced eight of the 48 statues

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33 Speech Jordens, Julien P., Postzegelreeks "Historische Portretten", 28 July 1941, MP, 1941/2
34 See protocol ONBDT, 17 Sept. 1941, MP, 1942/4
35 See protocol ONBDT, 22 Sept. 1941, MP, 1943/2
36 A 1901 dictionary attributed non-Belgian nationality to two further scholars of the series: "Juste Lipse ...
Savant philologue hollandais ... Plantin ... Imprimeur français ..." See Notices historiques extraités du
dictionnaire M.N. Bouillet 1901, MP, 1943/2
37 Letter Tierlink, member of Comité de Coordination de l’aide aux prisonniers de guerre belges et à leurs
familles, to Directeur général, 25 March 1944, MP, 1944/3

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surrounding the Petit Sablon in Brussels. The square was inaugurated in 1890 in its present form and represented on the outside the 16th century corporations of the capital by means of the 48 statues while on the inside it displayed 11 statues of 16th century martyrs of the liberty of conscience including Barend Van Orley, Gérard Mercator and Guillaume le Taciturne. They symbolised "... le martyre de la nation écrasée sous la sanglante répression de Philippe II."  

The 1943 anti-tuberculosis stamps only reproduced statues representing the 16th century corporations by means of a variety of artisans and traders including a fishmonger, a goldsmith and a roofer. Against this the German authorities did not protest although the Petit Sablon as a whole was clearly a Belgian patriotic lieu de mémoire serving as a reminder of a previous occupation.

Legends from each province were represented on the 1944 anti-tuberculosis series (fig. 257). The author of an anonymous typescript, possibly intended for the Revue Postale, explained the appropriateness, especially in a time "... où chaque peuple met l’accent sur ses originalités, sur les valeurs spirituelles qui lui sont propres, ..." of the representation of legends transmitted over centuries from distant ancestors: "Àvant l’aube de toute littérature, ces légendes ont été la source même de la poésie. Elles sont la traduction des premières émotions de notre peuple, jaillies de son âme et de son imagination, ... , n’est-ce pas une affirmation éclatante de l’originalité de notre terroir, et de la pérennité de notre race?"  

Thus, during the German occupation, contemporary 'Blut und Boden' theories were curiously mixed together with the structural framework of the Belgian provinces to demonstrate the existence of the eternal and singular Belgian race.

Two different ways of linking Belgium to its pre-1830 past were thus newly explored. Firstly, Belgium was represented as a cultural nation by means of

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39 anon. typescript, 6 July 1944, MP.1944/4
outstanding individuals not only of the world of the arts and science but also of politics by commemorating former rulers of the territories which later formed Belgium. Around many of them Belgian national myths existed, for example around the archdukes Albert and Isabella, frequently compared to Albert and Elisabeth in the inter-war period.\textsuperscript{40}

Secondly, unlike the commemoration of the princes, artists and scientists, all exponents of high culture, the métiers anciens and the legend series linked Belgium to its pre-1830 past by means of symbols and references to the culture of the middle and lower classes. This means of representing Belgium aimed at demonstrating the existence of the Belgian nation as a totality even before 1830 and is in some respects reminiscent of the contemporary German concept of Volk. This shows that the concept of a national community was not limited to the Nazi ideology, on the contrary, it appears to have been rather pervasive in Europe in the 1930s and 1940s also extending to clearly multiethnic Belgium.

**Liberation Iconography: New Belgium, New Images?**

A small number of Belgian ministers among them Hubert Pierlot reached London in the winter of 1940 where they were recognised as the legitimate Belgian government in exile. This government returned to Belgium in the course of the Liberation in September 1944. Due to the absence of the King, deported to an unknown location in Germany, his brother Charles was made Regent of Belgium.\textsuperscript{41}

During its London exile the BNB had commissioned 5 and 10 fr. notes in


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London and 2 fr. zinc coated carbon steel coins in Philadelphia to be used by Allied troops during the Liberation. One of the first actions taken by the returned government was the so-called opération Gutt of September 1944, an economic programme aimed at reducing the monetary circulation and thus preventing post-war inflation. All pre-war banknotes of a value of 100 fr. and above lost their monetary value and only 2000 fr. per household could be exchanged into new emergency banknotes which the bank had also commissioned during the war in London. From November 1944 onwards, a new definitive series, printed in Brussels, began to replace the emergency series.

Where is the King?

The Second World War provided Belgium with a new theme of self-representation and the Post Office issued commemoration stamps for the Liberation. The director general in Brussels realised that the stamps commissioned by the Belgian government in exile and created in London were supposed to show "...le lion héraldique encadré d'un V..." (fig. 259). But he also pointed out that Luxembourg and The Netherlands would certainly show their sovereigns on the Liberation stamps. He then argued: "Des trois pays du bloc économique décidé par les gouvernements intéressés [i.e. the Benelux pact signed in London on 5 Sept. 1944], la Belgique serait donc le seul qui émetterait un timbre de la libération sans l'effigie Royale. Il me paraît indispensable de corriger cette omission afin d'éviter dans le pays et même à l'étranger des commentaires regrettables sinon des critiques véhémentes." He proposed to add a 'V' to the existing stamps showing the King and to issue them as Liberation stamps.

42 On the coins see BNB to Vanderlinden, Hôtel des Monnaies, 27 Nov. 1944, MR, 607/1. On the banknotes see Banque Nationale de Belgique (ed.), Le franc belge, Bruxelles 1989, pp. 246-247
43 See Banque Nationale de Belgique (ed.), Le franc belge, Bruxelles 1989, pp. 246-247
44 See directeur général to Foreign Minister, 7 Nov. 1944, MP, 19/2, 1944
45 Directeur général to Postal Minister, 7 Nov. 1944, MP, 19/2, 1944
These stamps were issued early in 1945 (fig. 260).

The coins and banknotes introduced during and after the Liberation, however, did not show any representation of King Leopold. The 2 fr. coins showed on the obverse the name of the country in both national languages and on the reverse the value, while olive branches, symbols of peace, appeared on both sides. The 5 and 10 fr. banknotes were exclusively decorated with ornamental symbols and the emergency banknotes reproduced variations of pre-war banknotes showing King Albert and Queen Elisabeth. The only novelty of this series appeared on the 100 fr./20 b. notes which for the first time displayed the Flemish text on the obverse.

The subsequent series appearing from November 1944 onwards was called Type dynastie. It showed on the 1000 fr. notes (fig. 277) the familiar First World War representation of King Albert with helmet and coat and the Colonne du congrès, site of the tomb of the unknown soldier in Brussels. On the reverse appeared a view of the Flemish coastal town of Furnes. The 500 fr. notes (fig. 278) showed King Leopold II and a view of Antwerp on the obverse, while on the reverse africanising decorative elements framed a view of the Congo river including several Congolese in traditional dress. The 100 fr. notes (fig. 279) finally showed King Leopold I and an 1830 view of the Place Royale in Brussels on the obverse and a representation of King Leopold I's joyeuse entrée in Brussels in 1831 on the reverse. The watermark of all of the notes of the series was a profile of King Leopold I. This series was created by Jules Vanpaemel and was begun before the war. Surviving proposals show that it initially included a banknote dedicated to King Leopold III. These notes showed on the obverse a portrait of Leopold III and a view of the Palais de Justice in Brussels. The reverse showed a view of a port, possibly Antwerp (fig. 280).46

The conscious decision not to represent Leopold III on banknotes stands in

46 The Service des collections of the BNB was unable to identify the imagery on the reverse with certainty.
contrast to his appearance on the Liberation stamps. It has to be noted that the
proposal to represent Leopold on the Liberation stamps came from the director
general of the Post Office, Houtman, while the Liberation stamps without
Leopold were commissioned by the Belgian government in exile in London who
also commissioned and controlled the issue of all post-war Belgian banknotes.47
Houtman remained in his post during the Occupation and like other senior
Belgian administrators appears to have followed a pragmatic policy of the lesser
evil throughout the Occupation.48 Thus his insistence on the representation of
the King reflects a widespread wish among the Belgian administration to come
through the war with minimal changes to the pre-war situation. The Belgian
government in exile, however, had fallen out with Leopold at the beginning of
the war and despite subsequent efforts at reconciliation was never able to
reestablish good or indeed any relations with the monarch.49 The government’s
decision not to represent Leopold on post-war bearers of value thus symbolically
questioned Leopold’s position within post-war Belgium and is an indication that
the government was not prepared to go back to the status quo ante without some
form of compromise with Leopold.

As an alternative to the display of Leopold there were plans to display his
brother Charles, Regent of Belgium between 1944 and 1950, on Belgian stamps. In
1945 a series of fund-raising stamps was planned in favour of Belgian prisoners
of war and these stamps were meant to display all Belgian Kings including
Leopold. However, the stamp director suggested representing also all Belgian
Queens and the Regent in this series. "Nous saisirions ainsi, la seule occasion qui
se présentera peut-être, de rendre, comme le voeu en a déjà été exprimé,
hommage au Prince Régent, sans risquer de provoquer des commentaires

47 See directeur général, Houtman, to Postal Minister, 7 Nov. 1944 and directeur général to Foreign Minister, 7
Nov. 1944, MP, 19/2, 1944
48 See Van den Wijngaert, op. cit.
49 See Stengers, Jean, Léopold III et le gouvernement, Paris-Gembloux 1980

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fâcheux touchant la situation du Souverain.” These stamps were never issued probably because of the issue of a series in favour of a wide combination of war victims. A further attempt to represent Charles, this time on definitive stamps, also failed in about 1948. Both the statement of the stamp director and the decision not to issue definitive stamps displaying the Regent show that the representation of Charles instead of Leopold on stamps would have been perceived as a clear statement against the King symbolising his deposition. Thus the Post Office remained committed to the King despite his disputed constitutional position. Leopold eventually returned to Belgium in July 1950 after narrowly winning a referendum about his return. However, the so-called Question royale had divided the country, Flanders largely supporting Leopold and Wallonia largely rejecting him. In view of increasing domestic tensions Leopold had to abdicate in favour of his son Baudouin in August of the same year.

Les Sinistrés and La Résistance

The memory of the war was used for the creation of two further stamp series in 1945. Fund-raising stamps were issued in favour of bombed-out Belgians, the so-called sinistrés, and in favour of prisoners of war, deported or executed Belgians, members of the resistance and their families. While the issue of the sinistrés stamps did not seem to have caused significant problems probably because it was not difficult to single out the people in need of help, the

50 Directeur technique to directeur général, 15 Jan. 1945, MP, 1945/3
51 Examples of the unpublished stamps of the Regent are exposed in the Musée de la Dynastie, Brussels, Salle Léopold III, panneau J, 4, Vers 1948. Projet de timbre à l’effigie du prince Régent. No documents could be located relating to these stamps in the Musée Postal.
52 On the Question Royale see above, p. 277, note 1
53 Arrêté Royal, 10 April 1945, Recueil
54 Arrêté Royal, 21 Aug. 1945, ibid.
55 See directeur général to minister, 16 Feb. 1945, MP, 1945/3, insisting on the importance of help for the sinistrés.
issue of the second series, called Les Résistants, caused considerable polemics and difficulties.

In October 1944 the Comité d'initiative et d'organisation du timbre belge de la libération led by Princesse de Mérode proposed to issue stamps in favour of families of resistance members shot or imprisoned during the Occupation. While Prime Minister Pierlot thought this was a very good idea, Demany, ministre de la Résistance from 26 September until his resignation on 16 November 1944, warned against issuing such stamps because: "... cette émission aurait lieu avec la collaboration d'une série d'organismes n'ayant absolument rien de commun avec les organisations de la résistance proprement dites." Demany also believed that the princess was "... assez peu qualifiée pour parler au nom de la Résistance." Demany was one of the founders of the clandestine left-wing resistance organisation Front de l'Indépendance on which the charitable organisation Solidarité depended and it is thus not surprising that he insisted that Solidarité should have been consulted. The Postal Minister replied to his colleague that nothing had been decided on the subject of resistance stamps and that if such stamps were to be issued the charities depending on resistance movements would certainly receive part of the money raised. The problem of the distribution of the funds raised by the resistance stamps was solved by distributing them on the one hand to war-related charities directly dependent on the government, thus excluding most of the charities proposed by Princesse de Mérode, and on the other hand to resistance charities integrated into the Conseil

56 See COB, p. 97
57 Princesse de Mérode to Premier Ministre, 11 Oct. 1944, MP, 1945/3
59 Among them the Foyers Léopold III, the Oeuvre National Belge de Défense contre la Tuberculose and the Red Cross.
61 Postal Minister to Demany, 30 Oct. 1944, MP, 1945/3
62 Oeuvre nationale des invalides de la guerre, Oeuvre nationale des anciens combattants, déportés et prisonniers politiques, Office de renseignements et d'aide aux familles des militaires.
The iconography of the two stamp series is very interesting. The *sinistrés*
stamps issued in May 1945 comprised two values and showed for the first time
anonymous representations of Flemish and Walloons (figs. 261, 262). The
director general wrote: “L'un de ces dessins symbolise l'union des wallons et des
flamands dans la douleur, et l'autre concrétise cette même union dans le travail
de reconstruction.”*  64  65  The resistance series issued in October 1945 was composed
of nine stamps displaying five different images. The first four images (figs. 263-
266) glorified “les prisonniers de guerre ... , les déportés ... , les fusillés ... et les
membres de la Résistance ... .” while the highest value (fig. 267) symbolised “... la
Belgique ayant retrouvé sa liberté, grâce à l'abnégation et à l'esprit de sacrifice de
des fils valeureux.”*  66  It is important to note that this series was not called
*Résistance* but *Les Résistants*, thus allowing for the combination of all sorts of
victims of the war and the Occupation with the internal resistance, which was, of
course, in itself very diverse. After the confrontation between the resistance and
the Pierlot government in November 1944 the nature of the resistance had
become very controversial, especially due to the antagonism between between
left and right-wing resistance, a development which is likely to have induced the
production of this pluralist and all-embracing representation of the resistance
published in October 1945.*  66

The *Sinistrés* series repeated the First World War theme of physically
martyred Belgium but with a considerable difference in emphasis. Unlike in the
First World War, the stamps did not focus on the destruction of culturally
valuable architectural monuments but rather displayed destroyed housing of
ordinary people, both Flemish and Walloon, who also appeared together with

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63 See directeur général to minister, 22 Nov. 1944, Postal Ministry to Mérode, 31 Jan. 1945, Postal Minister
to Prime Minister, 9 Jan. 1945 and Cabinet du Premier Ministre to Postal Minister, 15 Feb. 1945, MP, 1945/3
64 Note directeur général to ministre, 9 April 1945, MP, 1945-1
65 Arrêté Ministériel, 21 Aug. 1945, Recueil

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the destroyed buildings and united in their reconstruction. Similarly, *Les Résistants* celebrated Belgium’s heroism but not as in 1919 by means of a glorious King and his army. Rather, the series glorified the victims of the war and the Occupation and placed special emphasis on the role of the internal resistance which was portrayed as one of the first and most important factors leading to the Liberation of Belgium. The *Comité d’initiative et d’organisation du timbre belge de la libération*, for example, defined the members of the internal resistance: “... qui, au prix de leur vie, de leurs souffrances et de leur liberté, ont les premiers contribué à la libération du Pays.”67 *Les Résistants* thus represented Belgium having liberated itself due to its “fils valeureux”, without royal guidance and neglecting the considerable if not overwhelming contribution of the Allies.

These two stamp series are thus one of the rare examples of attempts to represent liberated Belgium independent of historical themes or a cult of the Royal Family. While the *Sinistrés* series positively used Belgium’s linguistic diversity, both series lay considerable emphasis on the ordinary and obviously non-bourgeois but rather working-class people prominently displayed on the stamps. The prominence of working-class iconography is in line with much of the welfare state legislation passed by the Van Acker governments of 1945 and 1946 which, after the resignation of the Catholics from the government in August 1945, had a rather progressive, “Labour government” character.68 Thus it can be argued that the stamps dedicated to *Les Sinistrés* and *Les Résistants* show a view of post-war Belgium to be reconstructed in the spirit of the resistance by and in favour of the working classes.

67 Princesse de Mérode to Prime Minister, 11 Oct. 1944, MP, 1945/3
68 See Witte; Craeybeckx, *op. cit.*, pp. 337-340
During the Second World War Switzerland escaped an invasion due to a combination of reasons. The militia army mobilised in the first days of September 1939 and was headed by the Vaudois Henri Guisan. While the army was propagated as the central instrument safeguarding Swiss independence, strategic and economic aspects contributed to Switzerland’s fate during the war. Once surrounded by the Axis powers after the fall of France in June 1940, Switzerland posed no strategic danger as a possible Allied invasion route to the Axis powers and more importantly, Switzerland was an important if not a vital source of finance, industrial goods and information for Hitler and to lesser extent the Allies.

Unlike during the First World War, the war caused no domestic friction along linguistic lines. On the contrary, the Geistige Landesverteidigung had united the country internally and the four years of complete encirclement of Switzerland by Hitler and his allies from June 1940 until August 1944 further contributed to holding the Swiss together. Social and economic conditions were also less affected than during the First World War due to large-scale government intervention including social legislation, rationing and rent freezes and because the Swiss export industry was able to trade with both Allied and Axis countries throughout the war. While after Hitler’s victory over France some right-wing groups called for a Swiss compromise with the New Order, the majority of the population remained anti-fascist and the general sense of national consensus was illustrated by the inclusion of the first Socialist in the federal government in 1943.69

69 Despite the large-scale efforts to rewrite the history of Switzerland and the Second World War, also by means of the government-sponsored Commission Bergier, most facts about the war are well known. See Comité pour une Nouvelle Histoire de la Suisse (ed.), op. cit., pp. 788-814.
Bearers of Value during the War

Since the Second World War did not cause the same financial crisis as its 1914 precedent, it had little effect on the circulation of money. Coins were not hoarded, no new coins were minted and the SNB never had to issue the 1 and 2 fr. notes printed preventatively in 1938. Already in March 1939 the SNB planned to produce a new series of banknotes printed in Switzerland because of increasing fraud of the existing series, because the notes printed in London were relatively expensive and because their supply was unreliable even before the outbreak of the war.70 While the 100 fr. note seems to have been directly commissioned by the SNB, for the 50 fr. note it organised a limited contest in 1941 among selected artists in collaboration with the two federal art commissions.71 Because the supply of notes printed in London was never totally interrupted, none of these notes were issued and they were kept as a reserve series.72

The annual Pro Juventute and Bundesfeier fund-raising stamps continued throughout the war, whereby the Bundesfeier was able to increase the number of stamps from originally one to four per year. The Post Office completed the replacement of the definitive stamp series initiated in 1936 by issuing a new series comprising the values from 50 ct. to 2 fr. in 1941.73 "Da der Postmarke weitgehende kulturelle und propagandistische Bedeutung zukommt, ..." the Post Office organised a general stamp contest in 1942 in order to give the public the opportunity "... an der Gestaltung künftiger solcher nationaler Sendboten mitzuwirken." Although the Post Office received a total of 1,650 proposals, none of them entirely satisfied the jury. Eventually, no new stamps were issued, possibly in part because the composition of the jury comprising members of the postal administration, the two federal art commissions, the vice-director of the postal administration, the two federal art commissions, the vice-director of the

70 See Bericht ..., 3 March 1939, SNB, 340/344
71 See Konferenz ... für eine neue 50 Fr.- Note, 20 Oct. 1941, SNB, 340/344
72 See Bankrat, 12 Dec. 1952, SNB, 340/344
73 See Gaudard, op. cit., pp. 7-13
Federal Library in Berne and a leading journalist, led to complaints and a subsequent boycott by the Verband Schweizer Graphiker, excluded from the jury.\textsuperscript{74}

**Continuity, Adaptation and Innovation of Themes**

Many iconographic themes used before the war continued to appear on Swiss bearers of value during the Second World War. Switzerland’s linguistic diversity and local identities remained prominent means of Swiss self-representation. The foundation anniversaries of both Berne (1941, 750 years) and Geneva (1942, 2000 years) were commemorated on stamps, the Bundesfeier charity began a series of typical cantonal farm houses in 1945 and an air mail series of 1941 showed landscape views from all linguistic parts of Switzerland and for the first time included an inscription in Switzerland’s fourth national language: the stamp showing the Inn valley was entitled Engiadina (fig. 296). In the course of the creation of the new, but never issued banknotes the SNB also expressed the desire to include Romansh inscriptions.\textsuperscript{75} Switzerland’s denominational diversity, however, continued to be a delicate theme to be displayed on Swiss bearers of value. In 1942 a stamp jury wondered: “... ob drei Kirchen auf einem Markenbild nicht zu viel wären und ob das Volk darüber nicht Verbindungen mit der Religionszugehörigkeit des Präsidenten und des Vizepräsidenten des Bundesrates anstellen würden. Nr. 45 wird ausgeschieden.”\textsuperscript{76}

The Alps continued to be a main theme of Swiss self-representation. All but one of the 1941 air mail stamps showed Alpine views, a series of Alpine

\textsuperscript{74} No documents survive apart from the announcement of the contest, Mitteilung an Presse und Rundspruch, 14 July 1942, PTT Bib., BG 0119 and the jury protocol, Protokoll, 1/2 Dec. 1942, PTT Wertz.

\textsuperscript{75} See Wegleitung für einen Wettbewerb ..., 11 Nov. 1941, SNB, 340/344. The first Swiss banknotes including Romansh inscriptions only appeared in 1977.

\textsuperscript{76} Juryprotokoll, 22 Jan. 1942, PTT Wertz.
flowers followed after the conclusion of the cantonal Trachtenmädchen on Pro Juventute stamps from 1943 until 1949 while the unpublished 100 fr. banknote showed the portrait of a woman of Oberhasli in the Bernese Alps.77 During the war and especially after the fall of France in 1940 the Alps also became the centre of the Swiss military strategy. In case of attack the army would have abandoned the lowlands with their urban and industrial centres and would have retreated into the so-called Réduit national located in the Alps and centred around the Gotthard massif thus combining military strategy with the strong symbolism of the Alps.78

Switzerland’s identification with its international neutrality was much less conspicuous during the war and was even in part removed from bearers of value. In 1940 the Post Office noted that complaints from the public had defined the stamps representing the League of Nations and the International Office of Labour as “unzeitgemäss” and thus decided to withdraw them as quickly as possible.79 While the Post Office had issued stamps commemorating the 75th anniversary of the Red Cross just before the outbreak of the war in August 1939, during the war it only alluded in a very indirect way to the organisation. The profits of the Bundesfeier stamps issued in 1944 went to the Swiss Red Cross but only one of the four stamps alluded to it. The 5 ct. stamp showed “... ein Bild von Heiden ..., des letzten Aufenthalts- und Sterbeorts des Gründers des Roten Kreuzes, Henri Dunant.”80

The Pro Juventute charity continued with its annual commemoration of famous Swiss men including politicians, engineers, educationalists and the legendary founder of the Swiss watch industry, Daniel Jeanrichard (around 1670-

77 The SNB ensured a correct representation of the traditional costume by collaborating with the Schweizerische Trachtenvereinigung, see Schweizerische Trachtenvereinigung to SNB, 31 Jan 1941, SNB, 340/344
78 On the Réduit see Schaufelberger, Walter, Das Réduit national, ein militärhistorischer Sonderfall, in Marchal; Mattioli, op. cit., pp. 207-216. On the symbolic use of the Alps in this period see Lasserre, André, Le peuple des bergers dans son ‘Réduit national’, ibid., pp. 191-205
79 Dienstliche Mitteilungen Nr. 172/1940, PTT Bib., BG 0134
80 See Protokoll, 25 Jan. 1944, PTT Wertz.
In 1944 the suffragette organisation *Schweizerischer Verband für das Frauenstimmrecht* protested against the absence of famous women on Swiss commemoration stamps, however, the Post Office replied: “Mit Helvetia und den Trachtenmädchen ist das weibliche Element schon reichlich vertreten.”

The following year nevertheless saw the first commemoration of a woman on Swiss bearers of value: Susanna Orelli (1845-1939), an important member of the temperance movement and founder of various alcohol-free restaurants in Zurich, was commemorated on the 1945 *Pro Juventute* series (fig. 300).

No documents shed light on the reasons for the Post Office’s decision. However, Orelli’s portrait appeared in a series including a portrait of the politician Ludwig Forrer and two Alpine flowers. Since the *Pro Juventute* series usually comprised one commemoration stamp and three theme stamps it is likely that Orelli’s portrait was subsequently added to the series because of suggestions such as the one from the *Schweizerischer Verband für das Frauenstimmrecht*. Also during the war the first Swiss bearer of value appeared created by a woman. While in the course of the 1941 general stamp contest the Post Office had already acquired the proposals by Faustina Iselin depicting the monument of the battle of Sempach and Karin Lieven’s projects representing city views, Iselin designed one of the *Bundesfeier* stamps issued in 1945 and showing a Jura farm house (fig. 299).

The commemoration of important Swiss women on bearers of value and their creation by female artists stand in contrast to a comment by an all male jury judging banknote proposals in 1942. The jury chose a proposal by Hans Erni representing on the reverse a hydroelectric plant including a turbine (fig. 319). The jury liked this project because: “... ein grosser Teil des Volkes technisch eingestellt ist” but also remarked: “Dem weiblichen Teil der Bevölkerung zum

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81 Quotation in Köchli, Yvonne D., *Eine Frau kommt zu früh; Das Leben der Iris von Roten*, München 1992, p. 34
82 On Orelli see Müller, Verena E., *Susanna Orelli* in Jaeckle; Stäuble, *op. cit.*, pp. 419-423
83 See *Grosser öffentlicher Wettbewerb 1942, Prämiierte und angekaufte Entwürfe*, PTT Wertz.
84 Iselin was the only woman invited to participate in the limited contest for this series and like the other participants she submitted her proposal anonymously, see Protokoll, 4 Jan. 1945, PTT Wertz.
Beispiel dürfte das Motiv nicht ohne weiteres verständlich sein."85 Thus during the war women for the first time created bearers of value and appeared as exemplary individuals on them but gender roles still associated men with technology and progress, concepts which women were only expected to understand with difficulty. This phenomenon corresponds with the general paradox of the development of women’s rights during the Second World War: while women were increasingly able to participate in domains previously reserved to men, most notably military service, conservative and traditionalist attitudes towards women also gained momentum and contributed to preventing women from acquiring the right to vote until 1971.86

1941: Celebration of 650 Years of Switzerland

In 1941 Switzerland celebrated its 650th anniversary with open-air festivities in Schwyz which were financially supported by the government by means of the issue of commemoration coins.87 The canton of Schwyz, the organiser of the 1941 festivities, applied for the issue of these coins and the government agreed to issue them arguing that the commemoration was apt "... den patriotischen Geist hochzuhalten und im Zeitalter umwälzender Ereignisse die Jahrhunderte lange Tradition unserer Eigenstaatlichkeit in Erinnerung zu rufen."88 The Finance Ministry organised a limited contest among artists89 and finally issued a coin created by the artists E. Suter and L. Jaggi. It showed on the obverse three swearing men while the reverse showed an extract of the 1291 Bundesbrief, Promiserunt invicem sibi assistere auxilio (fig. 318). The obverse

85 Konferenz, 17 April 1942, SNB, 340/344
86 On Swiss women and the war see Comité pour une Nouvelle Histoire de la Suisse (ed.), op. cit., pp. 806-807
87 On the festivities see Malfroy, Sylvain, Le paysage de la Suisse comme valeur et comme problème, in Unsere Kunstdenkmäler, vol. 1, 1984, pp. 23-31
88 Auszug aus dem Protokoll ... des schweizerischen Bundesrates, 25 Feb. 1941, BA 6100 (A), 20
89 See Summarische Protokolle der Jurysitzungen, 18 April 1941, BA 6100 (A), 20
alluded to the Rütli oath but showed Swiss men of different ages: on the right a medieval soldier with a cross bow alluding to Tell, in the centre a figure resembling Niklaus von Flüe and on the left a contemporary soldier with a rifle "... die gemeinsam dem Vaterlande Treue schwören." The coin imagery thus linked medieval to contemporary Swiss history emphasising Switzerland’s political independence and its determination to defend it by means of armed resistance.

On stamps, the anniversary was commemorated on the 1941 Bundesfeier series. The Post Office organised a limited contest among artists of which only the proposals but not the documents survive. The artists chose themes from all Swiss foundation myths. Three swearing men or a hand swearing an oath alluded to the myth of the Rütli oath of 1307, one proposal commemorated the battle of Morgarten in 1315 while the 1291 Bundesbrief appeared on other proposals. Thus while Switzerland chose to opt for the foundation date of 1291 based on the earliest surviving document testifying to an alliance between the three primordial cantons, symbols of foundation myths originally associated with different dates (1306 Rütli oath, 1315 battle of Morgarten) were not excluded from Swiss self-representation. Instead of exclusively focusing on the 1291 document, Switzerland’s medieval foundation was represented by means of combining elements referring to all foundation myths. The best example of this method is the Bundesbriefarchiv inaugurated in Schwyz in 1937 which also appeared on one of the anniversary stamp proposals. The museum contains not only the 1291 Bundesbrief but also 13 other medieval and early modern Swiss constitutional documents including the 1315 Morgartenbrief, while the legendary Rütli oath prominently appears on a large mural painting by Heinrich Danioth above the entrance.

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90 Mitgeteilt, no date [1941], BA 6100 (A), 20. The source fails to identify the three men “aus verschiedenen Jahrhunderten” and their identification is based on my own iconographic judgment.

91 See Pro Patra 1941, Wettbewerb, PTT Wertz.

92 See Wiget, Josef, Das Bundesbriefarchiv in Schwyz, Bern 1986
Two stamps were finally issued by the Post Office commemorating the anniversary. The first showed a map of the lake of Lucerne together with the coats of arms of the first three cantons Uri, Schwyz and Unterwalden situated around the lake (fig. 294). The image did not include any visual reference to a particular foundation myth and thus allowed the viewer to associate the area of central Switzerland with one or several of the Swiss foundation myths. The second anniversary stamp alluded to the Tell myth (fig. 295). However, unlike on previous representations of the Tell myth on bearers of value, which referred to the idealist and freedom-loving apple shot scene or Tell’s escape from unjust imprisonment, this stamp showed a view of the Hohle Gasse where Tell is supposed to have shot the tyrant Gessler thus emphasising the rebellious and murderous element of the myth.

Martial Imagery

During the Second World War Switzerland issued a number of stamps celebrating Swiss military efforts, both past and present. In 1941 the Post Office issued a new series of definitive stamps called Historische Bilder which almost exclusively celebrated past military glory. The higher values of the series were dedicated to the memory of important Swiss generals namely Ludwig Pfyffer (1524-1594), Jürg Jenatsch (1596-1639), François de Reynold (1642-1722) and Joachim Forrer (1782-1833) (figs. 286-289). The lower values (figs. 281-285) showed the monumental Rütli oath statue (1914) by James Vibert, the central work of art in the parliament in Berne,\(^\text{93}\) and reproductions of paintings by two important Swiss artists, Hodler and Niklaus Manuel (1484-1530). Manuel was himself a mercenary and politician and became one of the major artists immortalising Switzerland’s 16th century military glory. The 90 ct. stamps reproduced one of his

famous drawings displaying a 16th century standard bearer. The series reproduced three paintings by Hodler. The first showed Hodler’s imposing self-portrait as Tell (1897) while two remaining stamps showed parts of Hodler’s Landesmuseum fresco Rückzug aus Marignano (1897-1900). The reproduction of the Landesmuseum frescoes, which at the time of their creation had caused such a long-lasting controversy, indicates that this work by Hodler had ceased to be divisive and the representation of Hodler-Tell is a clear sign that the Swiss identification with this artist reached a climax during the Second World War.

A leading postal civil servant interpreted the series: The Vibert statue referred to the foundation of Switzerland but the Hodler and Manuel images showed: “... [den] Kampf um die Unabhängigkeit mit der Waffe ...” while the generals represented: “... die geistige Grösse des schweizerischen Soldatentums ...” This new way of representing Switzerland “... wurde dadurch erleichtert, dass der Zeitpunkt für die Ausgabe einer solchen Serie mit Rücksicht auf die Grenzbesetzung durch die schweizerische Armee besonders geeignet war.”

Martial themes were also very prominent on the war-time Bundesfeier stamps which reproduced two monuments dedicated to the commemoration of the mobilisation of the Swiss army during the First World War, the statue by Charles L’Éplattenier in Les Rangiers in 1940 (fig. 293) and the soldier monument in Forch in 1942. Furthermore the Bundesfeier stamps commemorated the battles of Sempach (1386), Giornico (1478) and Calven (1499) in 1940 (figs. 290-292) and of St. Jakob an der Birs (1444) in 1944, while the Federal Mint also minted coins commemorating the battle of St. Jakob in 1944. The extent to which the military past was used for collective identification purposes can be illustrated by a comment by the jury on the St. Jakob stamps:

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94 On Hodler’s Tell see Hirsh, op. cit., p. 49 and on the Landesmuseum frescoes see above, p. 95
95 Gaudard, op. cit., pp. 7, 10 and 12
96 On the St. Jakob coins see BA. 6100 (A), 22
"Der Urheber will nicht die Gebäulichkeiten darstellen, sondern den Begriff St. Jakob, so wie er in unserem Unterbewusstsein (sic) lebt. Aus dem Dunkel und der Mystik der Jahrhunderte erhebt das Bild, im Licht der 500jähren Gedenkfeier. Blutrote Beschriftung und Waffenverzierungen erhöhen die Wirkung" (fig. 298).97

However, the Post Office did not exclusively display Swiss military glory of the past. In 1941 it issued a stamp displaying a ploughing farmer in order to remind the population of the Nationales Anbauwerk, a programme aiming at the autarky of Switzerland by extending the area of cultivated land (fig. 297).98 Initiated by the agronomist Friedrich Wahlen this plan received widespread official and private support from 1940 onwards. The so-called Plan Wahlen successfully propagated the participation in the extension of the arable land as a national duty parallel to the military service done by peasants and volunteers. Wahlen's plan was often called Anbauschlacht and also aimed at uniting the country internally by means of an ersatz war fought against the danger of famine.99 In 1942 the Post Office issued a stamp series calling upon the population to collect second-hand goods. It explained that the Federal Office of War Economy attached great importance to this activity for the support of Swiss industry and it was thus the Post Office's duty to issue these stamps which appeared carrying appropriate slogans in the three official languages.100

The most impressive representation of Switzerland's Second World War efforts were, however, the soldier stamps. During the First World War only some army units had issued them but within the first months of the mobilisation in 1939 almost all army units began to issue fund-raising stamps in favour of charities supporting the units' needy soldiers and their families. These stamps were enthusiastically collected by the public and raised almost 2 million

98 See Postamtsblatt, 17 March 1941
100 Postamtsblatt, Nr.11/ 1942, PTT Bib., BG 0134
francs. The overproduction of soldier stamps by some units led the army to restrict the units to one stamp issue per year in December 1939. For reasons of neutrality, the creators of the soldier stamps had to avoid displaying symbols such as the British lion, the German eagle or the Italian fasces which could recall foreign countries and the design of all soldier stamps had to be approved by the army and the Post Office.101

The soldier stamps were of a much greater number and thus iconographic variety than their First World War predecessors but like them combined existing iconographic means of Swiss self-representation with the celebration of the Swiss soldier who by doing his military duty sheltered the nation from military aggression (fig. 308). Most soldier stamps included the Swiss cross and a major part of the soldier stamps displayed symbols of local, mainly cantonal identity such as cantonal coats of arms or city views (figs. 305, 316). As on the Post Office stamps of the period, many soldier stamps linked Switzerland’s military past to the mobilisation of 1939-45 commemorating battles or displaying old and contemporary Swiss soldiers (fig. 307, 312) and many stamps of medical orderly troops made reference to Switzerland’s connection to the Red Cross, either by displaying both flags or by representing Henri Dunant (fig. 313). There were two important novelties among the soldier stamps. Firstly, the newly created women’s unit also issued a stamp displaying a woman soldier with short hair and a Swiss cross around her arm in front of a Swiss flag (fig. 306). Secondly, while the First World War soldier stamps did not represent the leader of the army, General Wille, his Second World War equivalent, General Guisan, appeared on some soldier stamps (fig. 311) while the army leadership created stamps for all members of the army commemorating the 70th birthday of General Guisan in October 1944 (fig. 317) and for the celebration of Christmas in the same year displaying portraits of the general. Thus Second World War

101 On the Second World War soldier stamps see Frutiger, Hans, *Die Soldatenmarken der schweizerischen Armee 1939-1945*, Bern 1969; see also Sulser, op. cit. and Kurz; Massarotti; Sulser, op. cit.
soldier stamps represented the army not only by means of its constituent parts but also by means of the portrait of the general who in the course of the war increasingly incarnated not only the army but the whole country.102

The iconographic representation of Switzerland as a particularly able military nation had a long tradition dating back to the middle ages but had been especially emphasised during the Geistige Landesverteidigung. In 1938 Bundesrat Etter, for example, stated in the preface to a highly patriotic book dedicated to art reflecting Swiss martial spirit (Schweizer Wehrgeist in der Kunst): “Wir Schweizer sind ein kriegerisches Volk. In der Kunst enthüllt sich das Geheimnis jener Kräfte, die ein Volk in der Tiefe seiner Seele bewegen. So wurde die Kunst, Tochter eines wehrhaften Volkes, zugleich die Mutter eines wehrhaften Geistes.”103 During the war, martial imagery even extended to the popular children’s comic-strip hero Globi whose life as a soldier appeared for the first time in 1940, had the support of General Guisan and quickly became a best-seller.104

The impressive display of martial imagery on stamps commemorating past Swiss military glory and emphasising Switzerland’s military and spiritual preparedness in case of attack clearly aimed at keeping up the morale of the population in general and of the army in particular. Yet it is also arguable that Switzerland, excluded from direct military involvement in the war, fought the Second World War symbolically by means of the imagery displayed on these stamps. Instead of being able to celebrate 20th century military victories Switzerland intensely commemorated and identified with battles and successful generals of earlier periods, and while the Anbauschlacht clearly represented an ersatz agricultural war, the soldier stamps emphatically showed Switzerland

103 Kommiitte Schweizer Wehrgeist in der Kunst (ed.), Schweizer Wehrgeist in der Kunst, Basel 1938, p. 11
ready if not eager to go into battles which never took place (figs. 304, 305, 307, 309, 310, 313-316).

Towards Peace

Due to the decreasing possibility of a Nazi invasion and the ever more foreseeable end of war in Europe, martial themes became less popular for the creation of imagery on bearers of value and were replaced with more peaceful imagery. In January 1945, for example, the jury of the 1945 Bundesfeier stamps stated: “Das kriegerische und historische aber muss nun etwas zurücktreten; das Volk hat schon genug davon gesehen” and decided to initiate “... eine Serie friedlicher Bauernhäuser ... ” (fig. 299). The imminent end of the war also prompted the creation of two stamp series, a fund-raising series in favour of the Schweizer Spende an die Kriegsgeschädigten (Swiss Donation for War Victims) and a special series commemorating the end of the war.

The charity Schweizer Spende an die Kriegsgeschädigten was created by parliamentary decision and endowed with an initial capital of 100 m. fr. in December 1944. Active until 1948 the charity spent a total of 205.95 m fr. on the support of war victims, mainly children and the sick, throughout Europe, including Germany. It was financed by federal and private contributions and the latter amounted to a total of 53.1 m fr. raised by means of a variety of fund-raising activities including the sale of a special stamp series which raised 1.3 m fr.. While the aim of the charity was clearly humanitarian, its organisation and financing by Switzerland also had an important symbolic meaning. Each donor received a certificate indicating the contributor's name and the amount donated “... als Zeichen des Dankes für das gütige Schicksal, vom Kriege verschont geblieben zu sein, und als Ausdruck des Willens, das notwendige und selbsverständliche

105 Juryprotokoll, 4 Jan. 1945, PTT Wertz.
Werk für die Leidenden Brüder zu unterstützen." Thus the Schweizer Spende certificates represented Switzerland as a country which had escaped war due to favourable fate rather than a formidable army and its main emphasis was on how gratitude had prompted the desire to help those who had suffered from the war.

The lower values of the stamps issued for the Schweizers Spende alluded to its humanitarian aim by means of symbols of charity, namely a combination of a Christian cross, a heart and an anchor (fig. 302). The 3 fr. stamps (fig. 303) showed a lifeboat carrying the Swiss flag and rowed by four men wearing hats resembling Swiss helmets. The other passengers appear to have been saved from shipwreck while one person is about to be rescued from the stormy waters. Interestingly, this image did not directly represent Switzerland's post-war activity in favour of war victims but instead alluded to a war-time image of Switzerland, namely that of a safe but fragile haven for refugees in war-torn Europe. In parallel with the very successful film by Leopold Lindtberg, *Die letzte Chance* (1945), these stamps promoted the myth of Switzerland as an ideal asylum country.

The history of Swiss asylum policy during the Second World War is, however, one of the darkest chapters of Swiss contemporary history. Already in the pre-war years Switzerland tightened asylum laws especially to the disadvantage of Jews culminating in the addition of the infamous "J" stamp in passports of German Jews, introduced due to Swiss fears of Jewish immigration in 1938. During the war Switzerland further tightened its asylum policy, refusing asylum on the grounds of racial discrimination until 1944, which in many cases meant that Jewish refugees were sent back to the German authorities, and thus to


the concentration camps. This harsh asylum policy provoked criticisms accusing
the government of breaking with Switzerland’s tradition of asylum but the
Minister of Justice Eduard von Steiger justified his policy and in 1942 he even
coined the expression of Switzerland as a “stark besetztes Rettungsboot” which of
course renders the image displayed on the 3 fr. Schweizer Spende stamp even
more cynical.108 A first wave of a large-scale public debate about Swiss Second
World War asylum policy only started in 1957 with the publication of the
government-commissioned Report Ludwig109, while in the cinemas an
alternative to the idealised film Die letzte Chance only appeared in the form of
Markus Imhoffs Das Boot ist voll in 1980.110

On 9 May 1945 the Post Office issued a series commemorating the armistice
and stated: “Die PTT-Verwaltung erachtet es als ihre Pflicht, ein Ereignis von
solch weltgeschichtlicher Bedeutung mit der Ausgabe von Sonderpostmarken
würdig zu begehen.” The series combined the biblical slogan *Pax hominibus
bonae voluntatis* with various symbols of peace and was meant to express “... den
Wunsch des Schweizervolkes nach einem dauernden Frieden ...” and to call
upon the rapid conclusion of a peace treaty (fig. 301).111 The Schweizer Spende
and the peace stamps concluded the Second World War on Swiss bearers of
value. Based on the pre-war Geistige Landesverteidigung the multifold
experience of the war had united Switzerland internally emphasising traditional
and often isolationist means of Swiss collective identification in times of military
danger and taking up Switzerland’s humanitarian and internationalist tradition
when the war was coming to an end.

417
109 See Imboden, Monika; Lustenberger Brigitte, *Die Flüchtlingspolitik der Schweiz in den Jahren 1933 bis
1945*, in Goehrke, Carsten, Zimmermann, Werner G. (eds.), *Zuflucht Schweiz. Der Umgang mit Asylproblemen
110 See Schlappner, Martin, *Bilder der Schweiz im Schweizer Film*, in *Unsere Kunstdenkmäler*, vol. 1, 1984,
pp. 96-106
111 Postamtsblatt, 7 May 1945

310
The polyvalent but overwhelmingly positive image drawn of Switzerland during the war proved to be remarkably resilient to change in the post-war period. Despite the successful Allied accusations levelled against Switzerland for its gold trade with Nazi Germany which led to the 1946 Treaty of Washington and Swiss compensation payments of 250 m. fr., and despite the challenges by revisionist intellectuals and historians, the myth that Switzerland escaped the Second World War mainly because it was neutral and had a mighty army has only collapsed in the course of the last couple of years. While there were clearly a number of reasons for the resilience of this myth, notably the transference of the Second World War spirit into the Cold War era, an important factor appears to have been the fact that aspects of the war which could be seen as morally wrong, such as the asylum policy or the gold trade with Germany, were either ignored or interpreted in a positive way by emphasising Switzerland's humanitarian tradition. While we have seen how the imagery of the 3 fr. Schweizer Spende stamps transformed the image of the full lifeboat unable to take further refugees into a symbolic Swiss lifeboat of generous charity the 1946 compensation payments were officially interpreted as Switzerland's contribution to the reconstruction of Europe rather than a compensation for Switzerland's dubious economic relationship with Nazi Germany. Only the recent and yet unfinished polemics around a variety of different aspects of Switzerland's Second World War history and the resulting debate about Swiss moral guilt have brought a wide public awareness of the significance of economic relationships with Nazi Germany helping Switzerland to escape from the horrors of the Second World War.

113 For an overview of this debate see Neue Zürcher Zeitung (ed.), NZZ-Fokus, Schatten des Zweiten Weltkrieges. Zurich 1997
9. General Conclusion

It would be easy to invest bearers of value with too great an importance. In many respects, they are merely part of the ephemera which surround modern life. Just as popular magazines, advertising and sport can be said to shed light on diverse aspects of popular mentalities without really having any explanatory power, so stamps, coins and banknotes illustrate the process of national identification without explaining it. Nevertheless, this thesis has sought to demonstrate that bearers of value can be used to analyse not merely the processes whereby these "portraits of the nation" were produced but also the factors which determined the symbolic content of these images. Indeed, it is the very unreflective way in which these images were produced which in many respects constitutes their historical importance. Major national monuments - buildings, exhibitions, ceremonials - were necessarily the product of much debate and consultation. As such, they often possessed a heavy and all-too-predictable form. Bearers of value in contrast were produced in a much more informal, even "amateurish" manner.

In both Belgium and Switzerland bearers of value were produced by three issuing bodies, the national banks, the national mints and the national Post Offices. In the wide range of activities of these institutions, however, the design of new types of bearers of value was only one among a great number of tasks which they had to fulfil and the creation of new designs for bearers of value was clearly not the most important let alone the most frequent one. The analysis of the production of bearers of value showed that in most cases decisions were taken on an ad hoc basis and that none of the issuing bodies had a standardised procedure of decision-making for the creation of new bearers of value. The employees of the issuing bodies were thus not professional nation-builders who could sometimes be found in cultural or educational ministries; on the contrary,
with respect to the construction of national identity and memory they were amateurs who among other responsibilities also had to create stamps, coins and banknotes. This coincides with a further important conclusion of this study, namely the fact that the great majority of bearers of value were issued for practical rather than aesthetic reasons. In other words, most stamps, coins and banknotes were not issued because of the image they displayed but because they were needed for postal and financial reasons such as the prevention of counterfeiting, the ensuring of monetary circulation, changes in postal fares or fund-raising objectives.

There were two ways in which the imagery on bearers of value was commissioned. Either the issuing bodies directly commissioned one or several artists with the creation of new designs or they organised a contest among artists. Both the Belgian and the Swiss issuing bodies noted that contests were more expensive and less efficient than direct commissions. Despite this knowledge, the Swiss issuing bodies, notably the Post Office, frequently organised contests while in Belgium this was a rather rare phenomenon. This difference between the two cases was caused by the fact that the commissioning of new designs for bearers of value was one of the few means at the disposal of the federal government to support Swiss artists. This mechanism of active cultural policy was strongly and successfully advocated by the federal art commissions, the EKK and the EKfaK, and the Interior Ministry, especially in the inter-war years.

Although the decision-making process always involved the issuing bodies, we have seen that this process was also susceptible to influences from above (ministers, the government, and, in Belgium, the Royal Family) and from the outside (other ministries, parliamentary deputies, the press, charitable, artistic or philatelist associations and public opinion voiced, for example, in letters of complaint or approval). These external influences made themselves increasingly felt in the inter-war years. Thus it can be seen that at least in so far as stamps,
coins and banknotes were concerned, national identity and memory was not the fabrication of a single class or group; rather, they were subject to influences from a growing number of actors who though they failed to represent all of the diverse groups and interests in either Belgian or Swiss society, nevertheless ensured a considerable degree of dialogue and the presence of a variety of opinions about the way in which the nation should be represented.

Bearers of value were thus by-products of the establishment of modern postal and financial systems and were not primarily created in order to construct national identity or memory. Although stamps, coins and banknotes were thus not professional memory sites such as national monuments, the imagery they displayed was nevertheless considered to be of national significance. Bearers of value therefore offered a relatively open space for the display of national symbols and access to this space was possible for persons or organisations located outside the issuing bodies, allowed for adaptations of national identity and memory to changing historical circumstances and furthermore allowed for the representation of several at times conflicting or even contradictory perceptions of national identity and memory in the same period. Stamps, coins and banknotes are thus comparable to film stills taken from a variety of movies about the nation and therefore they offer very interesting insights into the ever evolving national identities and memories of the Belgians and the Swiss.

The representation of Belgium and Switzerland on stamps, coins and banknotes was not static. On the contrary, the imagery was continually adapting. Nevertheless in both countries key iconographic themes existed which were used throughout the period covered by this study. The most important Belgian symbol was the representation of the monarchy. It proved to be particularly well suited for the representation of the Belgian nation mainly because it adapted over time; with every succession a new generation largely in line with contemporary taste could serve as a portrait of the nation. While Leopold II was certainly not a very
popular monarch, he nevertheless incarnated the Belgian nation and under the reign of his nephew Albert, the Belgian monarchy acquired deeply patriotic significance due to the First World War myths surrounding the King and his wife Elisabeth. Finally, under King Leopold III, especially after the death of Queen Astrid in 1935, the Royal Family became the central means of representing the Belgian nation.

Switzerland, on the other hand, lacked naturally renewing symbols comparable to the Belgian Royal Family, and the search for new images of Switzerland in line with contemporary taste often proved to be very difficult. Apart from the Swiss cross, the most successful symbol of Switzerland was the Alps. Inhabited by all of the country's linguistic groups the Alps proved to be very adaptable to change. The Alps could be seen as the source of freedom especially in combination with the Swiss foundation myths located in Alpine central Switzerland, they could transform themselves into symbols of the Swiss tourist industry or the scene of the successful display of modern engineering. During the Second World War, they could even acquire an important strategic significance through the army's retreat into its Alpine réduit.

The representation of local symbols of identity in a national context proved to be a further highly important and successful way of representing both Belgium and Switzerland. Local identities were very powerful in both countries and the representation of symbols of these cantonal, provincial or city identities on bearers of value integrated them firmly into a national context. For example, Belgian stamps displayed historic castles, bell towers or legends from all parts of the country, while Swiss stamps displayed landscapes, women in traditional costumes or farm houses from each canton of the confederation. Furthermore, both countries displayed their cantonal or provincial coats of arms, arguably the most powerful symbols of local identity, on their bearers of value. Grouped together, these symbols of local identity represented the nation by means of its
constituent parts and, to borrow the terminology of Applegate, it is indeed arguable that both Belgium and Switzerland were thus successful above all as nations of provincials.¹

Belgium and Switzerland are both multilingual countries and this study has revealed that this phenomenon was not a paramount obstacle for the successful construction of national identity. For self-representation on bearers of value, Swiss multilingualism was never a serious problem, inscriptions were either in neutral Latin or in all three official languages. The linguistic problem was solved on Belgian bearers of value in the 1880s when inscriptions changed from unilingual French inscriptions to bilingual French and Flemish inscriptions. While linguistic disputes continued in Belgium, they mainly focussed on perceived spelling mistakes in Flemish or the perceived display of the Flemish (nationalist) instead of the Belgian heraldic lion. The most important symbols displayed on Belgian and Swiss bearers of value had the advantage that they were either located on a supra-linguistic level, the Belgian Royal Family and the Alps, or on a sub-linguistic level, the symbols of local identity. Nevertheless the issuing bodies of both countries, especially the Post Offices, were eager to ensure an equal representation of iconographic themes or commemorated individuals from each of the linguistic groups. Both Post Offices, for example, integrated the countries' minority languages into the set of national symbols during the inter-war years, Belgium by issuing stamps representing a view of German-speaking Eupen and Switzerland by issuing stamps displaying mountain views from the Romansh-speaking areas of the Grisons. Thus instead of being an obstacle for the construction of national identity, both Belgium and Switzerland used their linguistic diversity as a positive means of identification; in other words, they identified with their linguistic diversity.

Self-representation was, of course, not limited to the Belgian Royal Family,

¹ See Applegate, *op. cit.*
the Alps and the symbols of local identity but also included a great variety of other themes. Both countries commemorated national exhibitions, displayed national allegories and identified with their cultural patrimony. Belgium most strikingly with its artistic traditions, notably Rubens, Van Dijck and the Flemish Primitives, while Switzerland did the same by commemorating internationally renowned Swiss citizens such as Pestalozzi or Dunant. Swiss bearers of value furthermore frequently displayed iconography alluding to the Tell myth, Switzerland’s neutrality or the country’s tourist industry, while Belgium identified with progress, its constitution and at times with its martyred cities destroyed during the First World War or its colony the Congo. The great variety of themes, their appearance and disappearance as means of national identification was caused by the adaptability of national identity to changing circumstances and illustrates the ever evolving nature of national identity in both countries.

This study ends with a discussion of the Second World War which was a highly important event for the development of national identity in both Belgium and Switzerland. In the case of Belgian national identity and self-representation, the Second World War and especially its aftermath is the history of a failure. One of the main reasons for the crisis of Belgian self-representation during but more especially after the Second World War was that, because of the disputed constitutional position of Leopold III, Belgium’s most potent national symbol was deprived of much of its power. In striking contrast to the prominent role of King Albert after the First World War, Belgium’s main means of identification, Leopold III, was absent in Germany during the Liberation in 1944 and because of his controversial wartime actions could not be efficiently used as a symbol of post-war glory and unification of the nation. The attempts to create an alternative image of Belgium based on the Resistance and the sinistrés did not prove to be very effective; the myth of the Resistance was disputed and
furthermore, instead of a climate of national reconciliation, Belgian society was filled with an enormous desire for revenge to be taken on collaborators.²

In Switzerland, on the other hand, the experience of the Second World War served to consolidate national identity. Not only were the Alps never seriously questioned as national symbols, but Switzerland also successfully adapted its self-representation in the course of the war. Building on the pre-war development of the Geistige Landesverteidigung, it initially emphasised its martial tradition and subsequently replaced it by taking up the country’s international humanitarian tradition, which had been sadly neglected during much of the war. This tactic enabled Switzerland to come through the delicate years immediately following the war and lay the foundation for Switzerland’s post-war foreign policy under the slogans of neutrality and solidarity.³

Switzerland and Belgium seem in retrospect to be contrasting tales of success and failure. Today Belgium is frequently viewed as a “failed” nation-state dissolving into the regional entities of Flanders, Wallonia and Brussels, while Switzerland is often seen as one of the most durable political communities of Europe displaying an almost tedious stability and showing no signs of serious fragmentation. Bearers of value shed some light on this process namely the real problem encountered by creators of bearers of value in Belgium once the monarchy had ceased to be an uncontested focus of national identification and the unifying effect of the Second World War on Swiss society. But in many respects this thesis has pointed in the opposite direction. For most of the period covered by this thesis Belgium was more successful than Switzerland in moulding its diverse forms of identification into a coherent, effective and above all contemporary portrait of the nation. In this way the thesis helps to serve as a warning against an overly determinist account of the demise of the Belgian

³ See Comité pour une nouvelle Histoire de la Suisse (ed.), op. cit., pp. 944-946
nation-state since there is very little in the account provided here which would enable one to predict the subsequent crises of the Belgian political community. One of the merits of comparative history is perhaps that it helps to relativize concepts of success and failure since contrary to what might be expected in view of the present day situation of Switzerland and Belgium, for much of the first half of the twentieth century Belgium was one of the most successful examples of nation-building in Europe, while Switzerland encountered considerable problems when searching for widely acceptable national images in line with contemporary taste, especially in the inter-war period.

Bearers of value are of course only one of a variety of possible visual sources which can be used for the study of national identity and memory. The nation was also visualised by means of museums and their collections such as the Musées royaux des Beaux-Arts in Brussels of the Schweizerisches Landesmuseum in Zurich, public statues such as the statue of Tell in Altdorf or the statues of King Albert and Queen Elisabeth on the Place de l’Albertine in Brussels, public buildings such as the Federal Parliament in Berne or the Palais de Justice in Brussels, parks such as the Parc du Cinquantenaire in Brussels or the Schweizerischer Nationalpark in Zernez in the Engadin, comics such as Switzerland’s Globi or Belgium’s Tintin, and, of course, private and official photography and the cinema. Stamps, coins and banknotes are thus only part of a much wider history of the construction by public authorities and private individuals or associations of images of the nation. This study showed, however, that the analysis of stamps, coins and banknotes is a rewarding task for historians interested in the history of national identity and memory. The improvised manner in which bearers of value were created by an overwhelmingly amateur administration provided the necessarily loose and open framework within which the nation could be represented in a great variety of ways combining most of the diverse concepts, ideas and imaginations surrounding the nation.
Despite their small size and despite the fact that we often overlook them in our daily lives, even contemporary bearers of value deserve to be looked at quite closely. In March 1997, for example, a French plan to commemorate the 30th anniversary of de Gaulle's visit to Quebec on stamps showing the General on Montreal's town hall balcony and possibly displaying the slogan "Vive le Québec libre!" irritated the Canadian government and prompted it to try and prevent the issue of these stamps. Commemoration stamps were also called for by the British Royal Philatelic Society following the tragic death of Princess Diana on 30 August 1997. If indeed such stamps will be issued they will be part of the construction of the many national and international myths surrounding Diana but they will, of course, also be nothing less than contemporary successors of the highly successful and revealing Belgian commemoration stamps for Queen Astrid who died almost exactly 62 years earlier than Diana under rather similar circumstances.

4 See "Briefmarken-Zwist" zwischen Ottawa und Paris, in Neue Zürcher Zeitung, 24 March 1997
5 See Un francobollo, in La Repubblica, 1 Sept. 1997
6 Astrid died on 29 Aug. 1935. The death of Diana was immediately linked to the tragic ends of Grace Kelly and Queen Astrid who also died in car accidents, see, for example, La Repubblica, 1 Sept. 1997. Furthermore, a French journalist noted that Diana died not far away from the Place Reine Astrid in Paris, see Téléjournal, Antenne 2, 8 pm, 31 Aug. 1997
10. Abbreviations

ac archives centrales
AGR Archives Générales du Royaume, Bruxelles
anon. anonymous
b. belgas
BA Bundesarchiv, Bern
BNB Banque Nationale de Belgique, Bruxelles
cat. catalogue Iconographie, Billets de Banque, Belgique, Avant-projets
coll. collection
cT. centimes
EKfaK Eidgenössische Kommission für angewandte Kunst
EKK Eidgenössische Kunstkommission
fr. francs
GSMBA Gesellschaft Schweizerischer Maler, Bildhauer und Architekten
Imp. Imprimerie
LMU Latin Monetary Union
MP Musée Postal, Bruxelles
MR Monnaie Royale, Bruxelles
ONBDT Oeuvre nationale belge de défense contre la tuberculose
PTT Bib. PTT Bibliothek, PTT Generaldirektion, Bern
PTT Wertz. PTT Wertzeichenabteilung, Ostermundigen
Recueil Administration des Postes (ed.), Recueil chronologique des lois et des arrêtés concernant la Poste, Bruxelles 1964
SdB Service des Billets
SdC Service des Collections
SNB Schweizerische Nationalbank, Bern
SKV Schweizerischer Kunstverein
UPU Universal Postal Union
u. a. unclassified archive
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archives centrales

3240, 11.01.11.09
3240, 11.04.01.00
3240, 11.11.4.1
3240, box “Druckerij”

- Service des Billets, Correspondance et Documents, 5 Oct. 1876 - 30 June 1885
- PV Conseil d’Administration, 1883, 1885

Service des Collections

- Catalogue Iconographie, Billets de banque, Belgique, Avant-Projets

- dossiers of unclassified archive\(^1\) in cellar:

Belga 1925
Retrait des marks
Billets B.N. et Etat
Monnaies, monnayage et frappe
Monnaies correspondance
Guerre 1914-18
Presse (extr.)
illegible title

Musée de la Banque Nationale de Belgique

Salle 4: First and Second World War billets de nécessité

Imprimerie, Coffre du papier blanc

unclassified archive: unpublished banknote proposals

\(^1\) The dossiers have a descriptive title added by hand.
Musée Postal, Bruxelles

1877: Réclamation graveur belge...
1879: Commission des timbres-poste et télégraphe
1879: Affaires relatives à la commission de 1879
1879: Procédé de fabrication timbres-poste
1883
1884/1915
1889: Revendications des Flamands au sujet des inscriptions des timbres-poste
1891: gravure du timbre bilingue à 35 ct.
1896-1910: Interpellation à la Chambre au sujet des timbres-poste
1894
1896/7
1897: mise au concours du dessin...
1897: P. V. Séances de la Commission
1903: émission nouveau timbre-poste de 10 ct. à 2 frs.
1905: Dossier concernant les dessins de gravures-mères...
1910: timbres-poste “Caritas” reserve
1912: création timbre-poste à 5 frs.
1915: émission timbre-poste à l’effigie du Roi - vues de villes
1919: timbre “Roi Casqué”
1919: timbre Termonde
1919: timbre “Perron liégeois”
1920: timbre Croix Rouge - émission pendant la guerre - invalidation
1921: timbre avec surcharge “Eupen-Malmédy”
1921: Jeux Olympiques - surcharges
1921: timbre avec surcharge “Allémagne Duitsland”
1921: timbre type Montenez
1921: timbre type Houyoux
1922: timbre des invalides
1923: timbre des invalides
1849-1924: timbres commémoratives
1926: timbres innondations
1926/27: antituberculeux
timbres antituberculeux, 6. 12. 26
1927 - 1928: timbres antituberculeux “Caritas”
1928: “Lion héraldique”
1928-29: timbres antituberculeux “Cathédrales”
1929: timbre-poste type “Montenez” grand format
1929 - 30: timbres antituberculeux “Sites”
1929: timbres “Orval” avec surcharges
1930: timbres-poste et carte postale “Centenaire indépendence nationale”
1930: Exposition philatélique d’Anvers
1930: Exposition Anvers-Liège
1930: timbres antituberculeux, 1930-31, châteaux
1931: invalides “Prince Léopold en Caporal”
Timbre-poste “Cardinal Mercier” Monument
1931/32: timbres antituberculeux “Reine Elisabeth”
1932-33: timbres antituberculeux “Sanatoria”
1932: timbres-poste spéciaux dits F.N.R.S.
1932: à la gloire de l’infanterie
1932: Belgique Recolteante et Mercure

2 The dossiers of this archive are not catalogued but stored in a chronological order. After 1935 the dossiers are clearly numbered but the earlier ones only have a date or a descriptive title or at times both inscribed by hand. For reasons of simplicity, I abbreviated some of the longer titles and the missing text is indicated by (...).
1933: timbres spéciaux “Orval”
1933-34: timbres antituberculeux
1934: Léopold III (petit format et format moyen)
1934: Exposition universelle de Bruxelles 1935
1934: Peter Benoît
Timbres-poste spéciaux à l’effigie de S. M. Léopold III
1934-35: timbres antituberculeux “Chevalier”
1935: timbres antituberculeux, émission 1935-36
1935: petit sceau de l’État
1935: timbres “Avion”
1935: timbres-poste “Malle Poste”
1935: timbres “Appel de la Reine”
1935: timbres-poste Borgerhout, Charleroi
1936/1
1936/2
1937/1
1937/2
1937/3
1937/4
1938/1
1938/2
1938/3
1938/4
1938/5
1939/1
1939/2
1939/3
1939/4
23/6 Propagandapostkaarten tentoonstelling Memling 1939
1940/1
1940/2
1941/1
1941/2
1941/3
1942/2
1942/3
1942/4
1943/1
1943/2
1943/3
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1944/2
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1944/4
19/2, 1944
1945/1
1945/2
1945/3
1945/4

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600/6
600/7
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601
601/8
601/11
601/12
601/13
601/14
601/15
601/16
601/17
601/18
601/5
603/2
603/4
603/5
604/2
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605/1
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606/1
607/1
608/1

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Switzerland

PTT Bibliothek, PTT Generaldirektion, Bern

BG 0111
BG 0113
BG 0119
BG 0134
PAA 02029
PAA 02042
PAA 02046
PAA 02071
PAA 02084

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PTT Wertzeichenabteilung, Ostermundigen

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8 (E)/37
2200 Brüssel 3/4
6100 (A), 15
6100 (A), 17
6100 (A), 20
6100 (A), 22
6100 (A), 29
6100 (A) 1/1-15
6200 (A) 1/3
6200 (A) 1/42
6200 (A) 1/44
6200 (A) 1/45
6200 (B)
E 12/15
E 12/18
E 12/19
E 51/577-587

Schweizerische Nationalbank, Bern

classified archive:

300.00
301.6
320.1
330/339
334.0-6
340/344
Banknoten/CH, 19JH-V.EM, 1511-

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Collection Hasly Schaefer, Zürich

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Portraits of the Nation

Stamps, Coins and Banknotes in Belgium and Switzerland

1880-1945

Thesis submitted for assessment with a view to obtaining the degree of Doctor of the European University Institute

vol. 2

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Jury:

- Prof. Urs Altermatt, Université de Fribourg
- Prof. John Brewer, EUI (supervisor)
- Prof. Martin Conway, Balliol College, Oxford (ext: supervisor)
- Prof. Luisa Passerini, EUI

Florence, October 1997
European University Institute
Department of History and Civilisation

Alexis Schwarzenbach

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Florence, October 1997
1. Illustrations 1880-1913

1.1 Belgium

Stamps

Definitive stamps

1 1883, 50 ct., Leopold II
2 1893, 10 ct., Leopold II
3 1905, 2 fr., Leopold II
4 1912, 25 ct., Albert I

Special stamps

5 1894, advertisement Antwerp international exhibition 1895, 5 ct., Antwerp coat of arms
6 1896, advertisement Brussels international exhibition 1897, 5 ct., St. Michael striking the demon
7 1896, advertisement Brussels international exhibition 1897, 10 ct., St. Michael striking the demon
8 1910, fund-raising charity, 10 + 5 ct., Van Dijck, St. Martin

Coins

9 1832, 10 ct., o: lion with tables of Belgian constitution, r: royal initial
10 1866, 2 fr., o: Leopold II, r: Belgian coat of arms
11 1880, 100 fr., commemoration Cinquantenaire, o: Leopold I and Leopold II, r: Colonne du Congrès, allegory, Palais de Justice
12 1880, anon. unpublished proposal, commemoration Cinquantenaire, tables of the Belgian constitution
13 1904, 2 fr., o: Leopold II, r: numeral

Banknotes

14 1869, 100 fr., o: allegories of the arts, r: allegories of security and progress
15 1870, 1000 fr., o: allegories of Meuse and Escaut, r: miner and metallurgist
16 1888, 500 fr., o: allegories of the arts, science and literature, r: allegories topped by provincial coats of arms

1 The obverse (o) of coins is always placed on the left, the reverse (r) on the right.

2 The obverse of banknotes is usually placed above, at times to the left of the reverse.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>1888</td>
<td>50 fr.</td>
<td>portraits of Ceres, allegory of agriculture, r: portraits of Ceres, symbols of agriculture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>no date [1888]</td>
<td>detail, unpublished proposal by Hendrickx</td>
<td>50 fr., Leopold I and Leopold II</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>no date [1888]</td>
<td>detail, unpublished proposal by Hendrickx</td>
<td>50 fr., patriotic scene</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>1897</td>
<td>20 fr.</td>
<td>allegory of Belgium, r: 39 city coats of arms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>1907</td>
<td>unpublished proposal by Montald</td>
<td>1000 fr., o: “La machine = l’ouvrier géant des temps modernes”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>1909</td>
<td>100 fr.</td>
<td>o: quadrigas of Ceres and Neptune, r: allegory of agriculture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>1909</td>
<td>50 fr.</td>
<td>allegories of agriculture and justice, r: allegories of labour, art, science and commerce</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1.2 Switzerland

Stamps

Definitive stamps

24 1854, 10 ct., Helvetia
25 1882, 5 ct., numeral
26 1882, 30 ct., Helvetia
27 1907, 5 ct., Tell's son with apple and cross bow
28 1908, 25 ct., Helvetia
29 1910, 10 ct., Tell
30 1914, 3 fr., Mythen
31 1914, 5 fr., Rütli
32 1914, 10 fr., Helvetia and Jungfrau

Special stamps

33 1913, Pro Juventute, 5 + 5 ct., Helvetia and Matterhorn

Unpublished proposals, 1900 general stamp contest

34 L'Éplattenier, 2nd prize, Tell
35 Schmidt-Helmbrechts, honorary prize IV, tree
36 Hedwig Scherrer, honorary prize IX, woman with flag
37 Rob[ert] von Steiger, Buenos Aires, no. 18, Matterhorn
38 Gebr[üder] Fretz, no. 27, Helvetia, right smoking chimneys in the background
39 Huguenin-Jacot, no. 67, Helvetia
40 Walthard, no. 125, Tell
41 Turrain, no. 214, Helvetia
42 Mademoiselle E. Masson, no. 280, early modern Swiss soldier
43 Anneli Sprüngli, Clare Suter, nos. 285-296
44 Quartier-la-Tente, stud. théol., Neuchâtel, no. 376, Alpine landscape and Swiss cross
45 Wehrli, no. 430, mountains and Swiss cross
46 Verlagsanstalt Benziger & Co., no. 528, Swiss coat of arms in front of railway and telephone pylon
47 anon., cow touched by many hands
48 anon., Die Sieben ..., seven donkeys
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Coins</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>49 1850, 2 fr., o: seated Helvetia, r: numeral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50 1874, 2 fr., o: standing Helvetia, r: numeral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51 1883, 20 fr., o: Ceres, r: Swiss coat of arms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>52 1888, 5 fr., o: Helvetia, r: Swiss coat of arms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>53 1895, unpublished proposal by Landry, 20 fr., o: female portrait, r: Swiss coat of arms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>54 1897, unpublished proposal by Landry, 20 fr., o: female portrait, r: Swiss coat of arms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55 1897, 20 fr., o: female portrait (Vreneli), r: Swiss coat of arms</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Banknotes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>56 1907, 100 fr., o: Helvetia, r: portraits of Mercury</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>57 1911, 50 fr., o: female portrait, r: woodcutter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>58 1911, 100 fr., o: female portrait, r: reaper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>59 1912, 500 fr., o: Appenzelloise, r: Appenzell embroiderers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60 1911, 1000 fr., o: Vaudoise, r: foundry workers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>285</td>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td><img src="image" alt="Stamp 285" /></td>
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</table>

Anneli Springli und Clare Suter
Schülerinnen der Damenakademie in München.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>291</th>
<th>292</th>
<th>293</th>
<th>294</th>
<th>295</th>
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<tr>
<td><img src="image" alt="Stamp 291" /></td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Stamp 292" /></td>
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<td><img src="image" alt="Stamp 295" /></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Anneli Springli und Clare Suter
München.
2. Illustrations First World War

2.1 Belgium

Stamps

Definitive stamps

61 1915, 35 ct., Halles d’Ypres
62 1915, 40 ct., Dinant
63 1915, 50 ct., Louvain library
64 1915, 1 fr., port of Antwerp
65 1915, 2 fr., Congolese colonial scene
66 1915, 5 fr., Furnes
67 1915, 10 fr., Leopold I, Albert I, Leopold II

Special stamps

68 1914, fund-raising Red Cross, 20 + 20 ct., Monument de Mérode
69 1914, fund-raising Red Cross, 20 + 20 ct., Albert I

Coins

70 1914, 20 fr., o: Albert I, r: Belgian coat of arms
71 1915, 10 ct., o: lion, r: numeral

Banknotes

72 no date [1914], unpublished proposal by Mayné, 1000 fr., o: Leopold I, allegories of science and labour
73 no date [1914], unpublished proposal by Mayné, 1000 fr., r: Queen Louise-Marie, view of Antwerp
74 1914, 20 fr., o: Leopold I, r: numeral
75 1915, 5 fr., Société générale, o: Queen Louise-Marie, r: numeral
76 1916, 25 ct., billet de nécessité, Thielrode
77 1917, 50 ct., billet de nécessité, Gent
78 1918, 10 ct., billet de nécessité, St. Gillis
79 1918, 10 ct., billet de nécessité, Dendermonde
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>80</td>
<td>1916</td>
<td>Post-card with postmark <em>Lüttich</em>, German over-printed stamp, 10 ct., Germania</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>81</td>
<td>1917</td>
<td>Envelope with postmark <em>Brüssel</em>, German over-printed stamps, 6.25 fr., Emperor William II</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>82</td>
<td>1914</td>
<td>German propaganda envelope listing German victories in Belgium and displaying overprinted German stamp, Stuttgart, Ferd. Redwitz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>83</td>
<td>No date</td>
<td>German postcard, Albert I and his troops trapped in Antwerp</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>84</td>
<td>1916</td>
<td>Envelope sent from Belgian Post Office for Refugees in St. Adresse (F) to The Netherlands, 25 July</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>85</td>
<td>No date</td>
<td>Allied postcard, <em>Heroic and suffering Belgium</em>, view of destroyed city, allegory of Belgium in chains protected by Cardinal Mercier who points at Albert I and his troops</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Lüttich gefallen: 7. August
Einzug in Brüssel: 11. August
Namur genommen: 26. August
Antwerpen kapituliert: 9. Oktober
Deutsche Truppen am Meer bei Ostende: 15. Oktober

König Albert mit seinen armen Belgern in der Mausefalle.
La Belgique héroïque et martyr - Heroic and suffering Belgium
### Switzerland

#### Stamps

**Special stamps**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>86</td>
<td>1916</td>
<td>Pro Juventute, 5 + 5 ct, Bernese boy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>87</td>
<td>1917</td>
<td>Pro Juventute, 3 + 2 ct, Valaisanne</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>88</td>
<td>1919</td>
<td>Peace commemoration, 7.5 ct, two enemy soldiers shaking hands</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>89</td>
<td>1919</td>
<td>Peace commemoration, 10 ct, peace allegory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>90</td>
<td>1919</td>
<td>Peace commemoration, 15 ct, wounded soldier with broken sword under shining PAX</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Soldier stamps**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>91</td>
<td>1. Division, Battalion de montagne 12, guarding soldiers, Swiss flag, Valais coat of arms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>92</td>
<td>3. Division, Battalion 28, Adrian von Bubenberg (c. 1430-1479)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>93</td>
<td>3. Division, Füsiliere Kompanie IV/38, fusilier (first soldier stamp)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>94</td>
<td>5. Division, Battaglione 96, Ticinese soldier departing from his family</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>95</td>
<td>6. Division, soldier, Swiss flag, border stone, mountains</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>96</td>
<td>Festungstruppen, St. Gotthard, artilleryman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>97</td>
<td>Landwehrtruppen, Battalion 12, soldier protecting Helvetia guarding children</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Banknotes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>98</td>
<td>1914</td>
<td>20 fr., Eidgenössische Staatskasse, o: Helvetia and Arnold Winkelried, r: numerals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>99</td>
<td>1918</td>
<td>100 fr., o: Tell and Tell's chapel, r: view of Jungfrau mountains</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3. Illustrations 1919-1933/34

3.1 Belgium

Stamps

Definitive stamps

100 1919, 25 ct., Perron Liégeois
101 1920, 65 ct., Termonde town hall
102 1922, 40 ct., Albert I
103 1929, 75 ct., lion
104 1931, 2.45 fr., Eupen
105 1932, 10 ct., Ceres
106 1932, 35 ct., Mercury

Special stamps

107 1919, commemoration Liberation, 20 ct., Albert I, Roi casqué
108 1919, Belgian-occupied Germany, 5 ct., King Albert, overprint Allemagne, Duitsland
109 1920, Belgian annexation of Eupen-Malmédy, 30 pf., King Albert, overprint Eupen & Malmédy
110 1922, fund-raising for invalids, 20 + 20 ct., bandaged naked man supporting portrait of Albert I
111 1923, fund-raising for invalids, 20 + 20 ct., one-legged invalid with crutches
112 1926, fund-raising pro tuberculatis belli, 1.50 fr. + 25 ct., Elisabeth and Albert I
113 1930, Centenaire commemoration, 60 ct., Leopold I
114 1930, Centenaire commemoration, 1 fr., Leopold II
115 1930, Centenaire commemoration, 1.75 fr., Albert I
116 1930, advertisement Antwerp exhibition 1930, 35 ct., Rubens, self-portrait
117 1930, advertisement Liège exhibition 1930, 35 ct., Gramme
118 1930, fund-raising anti-tuberculosis, 70 + 15 ct., Oydonck castle
119 1931, fund-raising Exposition du Club Royal Philatélique des Invalides, 2.45 fr. + 55 ct., Crown Prince Leopold
120 1931, fund-raising anti-tuberculosis, 1.75 fr. + 25 ct., Queen Elisabeth
121 1932, fund-raising monument Cardinal Mercier, 1.75 fr. + 75 ct., Cardinal Mercier
122 1932, fund-raising monument Cardinal Mercier, 10 + 40 fr., Cardinal Mercier
123 1932, fund-raising monument A la gloire de l'infanterie, 1.75 fr. + 4.25 fr., Belgian First World War infantryman
124 1933, fund-raising Orval; 5 + 20 fr., Cardinal Van Roey, Crown Prince Leopold, Monseigneur Heylen

**Coins**

125 1922, 1 fr., *jeton*, o: allegory of Belgium, r: rod of Mercury
126 1930, 5 fr./1 b., o: Albert I, r: numeral
127 1930, 10 fr./2 b., *Centenaire* commemoration, o: Albert I, Leopold II, Leopold III, r: numeral

**Banknotes**

128 1920, 1 fr., o: Albert I and Elisabeth, r: provincial coats of arms
129 1921, 100 fr., o: Albert I and Elisabeth, r: armourer at work
130 1922, 20 fr., o: Albert I and Elisabeth, r: Brussels, Grand Place
131 1922, 5 fr., o: Albert I and Elisabeth, r: miner and industrial landscape
132 1922, 1000 fr., o: Albert I and Elisabeth, r: Halles d’Ypres, lace maker at work
133 1927, 50 fr./10 b., o: allegory of agriculture, r: allegory of abundance
134 1933, 100 fr./20 b., o: allegory of abundance, Albert I and Elisabeth, r: allegories of Meuse and Escaut
135 no date [1930-1933], unpublished proposal by Vloors, 100 f./20 b., r: allegories of Meuse and Escaut, left *coq wallon* and right *lion flamand*
3.2 Switzerland

Stamps

Definitive stamps

136 1934, 3 ct., Lauterbrunnen valley
137 1934, 5 ct., Pilatus
138 1934, 10 ct., Chillon castle
139 1934, 20 ct., Gotthard railway

Special stamps

140 1922, Pro Juventute, 10 + 5 ct., coat of arms of Fribourg
141 1923, Pro Juventute, 20 + 5 ct., coat of arms of Neuchâtel
142 1926, Pro Juventute, 20 + 5 ct., coat of arms of Aargau
143 1922, Pro Juventute, 40 + 10 ct., Swiss coat of arms flanked by a Habsburg knight (left) and Arnold Winkelried (right) alluding to the battle of Sempach (1386)
144 1927, Pro Juventute, 5 + 5 ct., orphan
145 1927, Pro Juventute, 10 + 5 ct., orphan
146 1927, Pro Juventute, 30 + 10 ct., Johann Heinrich Pestalozzi (1746-1827)
147 1928, Pro Juventute, 30 + 10 ct., Henri Dunant (1828-1910)
148 1929, Pro Juventute, 30 + 10 ct., Niklaus von Flüe (1417-1487)
149 1931, Pro Juventute, 10 + 5 ct., Wellhorn and Wetterhorn
150 1935, Pro Juventute, 30 + 10 ct., Stefano Franscini (1796-1857)
151 1932, 20 ct., commemoration disarmament conference Geneva, peace dove on broken sword
152 1932, 1 fr., commemoration disarmament conference Geneva, peace allegory
153 1932, 90 ct., commemoration disarmament conference Geneva, air mail stamp, aeroplane

Unpublished proposals, 1932 general stamp contest

154 Ed. Nilssen, 1st prize, numeral and postal symbol
155 Hans Lang, 1st prize, swearing hand
156 B. v. Grüningen, 2nd prize, female portrait
157 Gust[av] Reichle, 3rd prize, numeral
158 Otto Tschumi, 3rd prize, postal symbol
159 [Max] Bill, 3rd prize, three swearing hands
160 anon., no. 48, Alpine landscape with street
161 anon., no. 130, numeral
anon., no. 162, numeral -

anon., no. 192, chamois

anon., no. 202, peace dove with Swiss cross sheltering the western and eastern hemisphere

anon., no. 265, Matterhorn, entitled “Toursime Suisse”

anon., no. 268, peace symbol, allusion to disarmament conference 1932, sun inscribed with PAX

anon., no. 294, Helveticus

anon., no. 571, Swiss map

anon., no. 631, numeral and cow

anon. [same artist as above], no. 632, numeral and locomotive

anon., no. 790, electricity pylon in front of hydroelectric dam

anon. no. 836, plough

anon. no. 871, woman farmer and child

Coins

1920, unpublished proposal by Burkhard, 1 fr., o: standing shepherd with flag, r: Swiss cross

1922, 5 fr., o: shepherd, r: Swiss cross

Banknotes

1930, 20 fr., o: Johann Heinrich Pestalozzi (1746-1827), r: numerals

Other

Je suis partout, 2 April 1932, “La Suisse a émis un timbre spécial à l’occasion de la Conférence du Désarmement.”
4. Illustrations 1933/34-1939/40

4.1 Belgium

**Stamps**

*Definitive stamps*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Image</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>178</td>
<td>1934</td>
<td>75 ct.</td>
<td>Leopold III</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>179</td>
<td>1936</td>
<td>5 fr.</td>
<td>Leopold III</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>180</td>
<td>1936</td>
<td>50 ct.</td>
<td>Lion</td>
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</table>

*Special stamps*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Value</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>181</td>
<td>1934</td>
<td>35 ct.</td>
<td>advertisement Brussels international exhibition 1935, Palais du Congo belge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>182</td>
<td>1934</td>
<td>1.75 fr.</td>
<td>Grand palais de la section belge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>184</td>
<td>1935</td>
<td>1.75 fr. + 25 ct.</td>
<td>Queen Astrid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>185</td>
<td>1936</td>
<td>50 + 5 ct.</td>
<td>Crown Prince Baudouin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>186</td>
<td>1936</td>
<td>1.25 fr. + 5 ct.</td>
<td>Queen Astrid and Congolese children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>188</td>
<td>1938</td>
<td>2.45 + 7.55 fr.</td>
<td>Albert I and model of Albert memorial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>189</td>
<td>1938</td>
<td>1 fr. + 25 ct.</td>
<td>basilica of Koekelberg</td>
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<tr>
<td>190</td>
<td>1938</td>
<td>1 fr.</td>
<td>exhibition palace</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>191</td>
<td>1938</td>
<td>1.75 fr.</td>
<td>Albert canal, portrait of Albert I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>192</td>
<td>1939</td>
<td>1.75 fr. + 25 ct.</td>
<td>Rubens, self-portrait</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>193</td>
<td>1939</td>
<td>5 + 5 fr.</td>
<td>Rubens, Descente de Croix</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>194</td>
<td>1939</td>
<td>75 + 75 ct.</td>
<td>Memling, Martin van Niewenhove</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>195</td>
<td>1939</td>
<td>1.75 + 1.75 fr.</td>
<td>view of Orval</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>196</td>
<td>1939</td>
<td>2.50 + 2.50 fr.</td>
<td>Monseigneur Heylen, Virgin of Orval, Abbé général des Cisterciens, H. Smets</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
197 1939, fund-raising Orval, 5 + 5 fr., Albert I, royal chapel, Leopold III
198 1939, fund-raising Red Cross, 40 + 5 ct., Princess Joséphine-Charlotte, Prince Albert, Queen Elisabeth, Crown Prince Baudouin
199 1939, fund-raising Red Cross, 75 + 5 ct., Princess Joséphine-Charlotte, Leopold III, Prince Albert, Crown Prince Baudouin
200 1939, fund-raising Red Cross, 2.50 + 2.50 fr., Queen Astrid
201 1939, fund-raising Red Cross, 5 + 5 fr., Queen Elisabeth visiting a hospital

Coins

202 1934, 20 fr., o: Leopold III, r: crown
203 1935, 50 fr., commemoration Brussels exhibition, o: St. Michael, r: Belgian railway centenary exhibition palace
204 1936, 5 fr., o: Leopold III, r: numeral
205 1937, unpublished proposal by Petit, 50 fr., o: Leopold III, r: lion
206 1937, unpublished proposal by Wijnants, 50 fr., o: Leopold III, r: provincial coats of arms
207 1937, unpublished proposal by Samuel, 50 fr., o: Leopold III, r: allegory
208 1937, unpublished proposal by Jespers, 50 fr., o: Leopold III, r: lion
209 1938, 5 fr., o: lion, r: coats of arms of Brabant, Antwerp and Liège
210 1938, 25 ct., o: royal initials, r: coats of arms of Mons, Brussels and Bruges
211 1939, 50 fr., o: Leopold III, r: provincial coats of arms

Banknotes

212 no date [c. 1936], unpublished proposal by Vloors, 1000 fr./200 b., o: Leopold III, allegory of abundance, r: allegory of agriculture
4.2 Switzerland

Stamps

Definitive stamps

213  1938, 3 fr., Bundesbrief (1291)
214  1938, 5 fr., Niklaus von Flüe and the diet of Stans (1481)
215  1938, 10 fr., modern voting scene

Special stamps

216  1934, Pro Juventute, 5 + 5 ct., Appenzelloise
217  1934, Pro Juventute, 20 + 5 ct., Grisonne
218  1936, Pro Juventute, 30 + 10 ct., Zurichoise
219  1935, tax stamp, 5 ct., Protestant deaconess
220  1935, tax stamp, 10 ct., Catholic nun
221  1935, tax stamp, 20 ct., Henri Dunant
222  1936, fund-raising Wehranleihe, 10 + 5 ct., Fribougeois Armailli
223  1938, Bundesfeier, 10 + 10 ct., Tell’s chapel
224  1939, Bundesfeier, 10 + 10 ct., Laupen castle
225  1939, advertisement Landesausstellung, 10 ct., people bringing their products to the fair
226  1939, advertisement Landesausstellung, 20 ct., couple with child and shepherd listening to a poet
227  1939, advertisement Landesausstellung, 30 ct., Piz Rosegg
228  1939, commemoration Landesausstellung, 5 ct., blossoming apple branch and cross bow
229  1939, commemoration convention of Geneva (1864), 30 ct., view of Geneva, Red Cross coat of arms

Unpublished proposals for definitive stamps, 1935

230  Eidenbenz and Matter, Apfelschuss-Tell, Tell’s apple
231  Barraud, Dixi, female portrait
232  Hainard, Mélèze, female portrait

Unpublished proposals for Landesausstellung stamps, 1937

233  Gauchat, allegories of commerce, agriculture, industry and the arts
234  Eidenbenz, classical portrait
235 Jordi, sower in front of electricity wires
236 Weiskönig, Trachtenmädchen flanked by men symbolising industry and agriculture

Unpublished proposals for Landesausstellung stamps, 1938

237 Birkhäuser, light bulb
238 Reber, agricultural scene in front of hydroelectric plant
239 Meili, 22 stamps forming Switzerland (one void)

Unpublished proposals for Landesausstellung stamps, 1939

240 Surbek, male portrait
241 Surbek, female portrait
242 Surbek, male portrait
243 Surbek, female portrait

Coins

244 1936, 5 fr., commemoration Wehranleihe, o: allegory of peace, r: pro patria armis tuenda
245 1939, 5 fr., commemoration battle of Laupen (1339), o: shepherd with sling, r: Swiss cross

Other

246 1939, Landesausstellung, statue by Hans Brandenberger, Wehrbereitschaft
5. Illustrations Second World War

5.1 Belgium

Stamps

Special stamps

247 1940, fund-raising *Chapelle Musicale d’Argenteuil*, 5 + 5 fr., Prince Albert, portrait bust by Queen Elisabeth

248 1940, fund-raising *Secours d’Hiver*, 10 + 5 ct., coat of arms of Mons

249 1940, fund-raising *Secours d’Hiver*, 40 + 10 ct., coat of arms of Arlon

250 1940, fund-raising *Secours d’Hiver*, 50 + 10 ct., coat of arms of Bruges

251 1941, fund-raising anti-tuberculosis, 1.75 + 1.75 fr., Marguerite d’Autriche by Barend van Orley

252 1941, fund-raising anti-tuberculosis, 2.25 + 2.25 fr., Charles le Téméraire by Rogier van der Weyden

253 1942, fund-raising *Pour nos prisonniers*, 5 + 45 fr., left: inscription above monogram of Leopold III, right: prisoner writing to his family

254 1943, fund-raising *Pour nos prisonniers*, 1 + 30 fr., prisoners unpacking parcels, mother and child

255 1944, fund-raising *Secours d’Hiver*, 10 + 30 fr., St. Martin in front of Flemish landscape

256 1944, fund-raising *Secours d’Hiver*, 10 + 30 fr., St. Martin in front of Walloon landscape

257 1944, fund-raising anti-tuberculosis, 35 + 5 ct., Brabo legend, Antwerp

258 1944, fund-raising *Pour les prisonniers de guerre*, 5 fr. + 35 ct., Ruusbroeck (1294-1381)

259 1944, commemoration Liberation, 2 fr., lion, sign of victory

260 1945, commemoration Liberation, 2.25 fr., Leopold III, sign of victory

261 1945, fund-raising *Sinistrés*, 1 + 30 fr., Flemish and Walloon families in front of destroyed houses

262 1945, fund-raising *Sinistrés*, 1.75 fr. + 30 fr., reconstruction scene

263 1945, fund-raising *Les Résistants*, 10 + 15 ct., prisoner of war

264 1945, fund-raising *Les Résistants*, 20 + 20 ct., deportee and child

265 1945, fund-raising *Les Résistants*, 60 + 25 ct., execution victim

266 1945, fund-raising *Les Résistants*, 3.50 + 3.50 fr., Résistance fighter

267 1945, fund-raising *Les Résistants*, 5 + 40 fr., symbolic image of self-liberated Belgium
Collaboration stamps

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1941</td>
<td>Fund-raising for Legioen Vlaanderen, + 50 fr., medieval soldier</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1941</td>
<td>For Legioen Vlaanderen, + 50 fr., medieval archer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1941</td>
<td>Fund-raising for Legioen Vlaanderen, + 50 fr., sword and halberd bearers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1941</td>
<td>Fund-raising for Legioen Vlaanderen, + 50 fr., medieval knight</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1942</td>
<td>Fund-raising for Légion Wallonie, + 20 fr., statue of Godefroid de Bouillon in front of assembly of the Légion</td>
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<tr>
<td>1942</td>
<td>Fund-raising for Légion Wallonie, + 30 fr., standard bearer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1942</td>
<td>Fund-raising for Légion Wallonie, + 50 fr., assembly of the Légion</td>
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<tr>
<td>1942</td>
<td>Fund-raising for Légion Wallonie, + 100 fr., Légionnaire, agricultural and industrial background</td>
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Coins

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1941</td>
<td>5 fr., o: Leopold III, r: numeral</td>
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Banknotes

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<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1944</td>
<td>1000 fr., o: Albert I, Colonne du Congrès, r: Furnes</td>
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<tr>
<td>1945</td>
<td>500 fr., o: Leopold II, Antwerp, r: Congolese scene</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1945</td>
<td>100 fr., o: Leopold I, Brussels, Place Royale, r: Joyeuse Entrée of Leopold I in Brussels in 1831</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1945</td>
<td>Unpublished proposal by Vanpaemel, 100 fr., o: Leopold III, Palais de Justice, r: port (Antwerp?)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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5.2 Switzerland

Stamps

Definitive stamps

281 1941, 50 ct., Rütli oath statue by James Vibert
282 1941, 60 ct., self-portrait by Ferdinand Hodler as Tell
283 1941, 70 ct., fighting Swiss soldier at Marignano (1515), detail of Landesmuseum fresco by Ferdinand Hodler
284 1941, 80 ct., dying Swiss soldier at Marignano (1515), detail of Landesmuseum fresco by Ferdinand Hodler
285 1941, 90 ct., 16th century Swiss standard bearer by Niklaus Manuel
286 1941, 1 fr., Ludwig Pfyffer (1524-1594)
287 1941, 1. 20 fr., Jürg Jenatsch (1596-1639)
288 1941, 1. 50 ct., François de Reynold (1642-1722)
289 1941, 2 fr., Joachim Forrer (1782-1833)

Special stamps

290 1940, Bundesfeier, 5 + 5 ct., memorial, battle of Sempach (1386)
291 1940, Bundesfeier, 10 + 5 ct., memorial, battle of Giornico (1478)
292 1940, Bundesfeier, 20 + 5 ct., memorial, battle of Calven (1499)
293 1940, Bundesfeier, 30 + 10 ct., memorial, First World War mobilisation, Les Rangiers (1914-1918)
294 1941, Bundesfeier, 10 + 10 ct., map of central Switzerland, coats of arms of Uri, Schwyz and Unterwalden
295 1941, Bundesfeier, 20 + 10 ct., Hohle Gasse, Tell’s chapel
296 1941, air mail, aeroplane flying over Engadin, entitled Engiadina
297 1941, commemoration Anbauschlacht, 10 ct., ploughing farmer
298 1944, Bundesfeier, 10 + 10 ct., battle of St. Jakob (1444)
299 1945, Bundesfeier, 10 + 10 ct., Jura farm house
300 1945, Pro Juventute, 10 + 10 ct., Susanna Orelli (1845-1939)
301 1945, peace commemoration, 1 fr., peace dove, pax hominibus bonae voluntatis
302 1945, fund-raising Schweizer Spende, 10 + 10 ct., symbol of charity
303 1945, fund-raising Schweizer Spende, 3 + 7 fr., shipwrecked people in life-boat with Swiss flag
**Soldier stamps**

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<th>No.</th>
<th>Description</th>
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</thead>
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<tr>
<td>304</td>
<td>Artillerie, Schweres Feldhaubitzen Regiment 25, artillerymen with howitzer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>305</td>
<td>Grenztruppen, Gebirgsgrenzfüsilier Battalion 207, soldier on skis, Valais coat of arms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>306</td>
<td>Frauenhilfsdienst, woman soldier, Swiss flag</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>307</td>
<td>Infanterie, Füsilier Battalion 56, medieval and contemporary Swiss soldier, inscription: “Gestern, heute, immer”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>308</td>
<td>Infanterie, Mitrailleur Kompanie IV/74, soldier, sowing old man, inscription: “Bebaue-Beschütze”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>309</td>
<td>Kavallerie, Schwardron 24, cavalryman</td>
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<td>310</td>
<td>Radfahrer, Radfahrer Kompanie I/5, cyclist</td>
</tr>
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<td>311</td>
<td>Radfahrer, Radfahrer Kompanie III/5, General Guisan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>312</td>
<td>Sanitätstruppen, Gebirgssanität Abteilung 9, detail of Ferdinand Hodler’s <em>Landesmuseum</em> fresco Rückzug aus Marignano</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>313</td>
<td>Sanitätstruppen, Feld Lazarett 19, reproduction of Hans Brandenberger’s <em>Landi</em> statue Wehrbereitschaft, Swiss and Red Cross</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>314</td>
<td>Sappeure, Battalion Sappeure 1, profile of soldier, exploding bridge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>315</td>
<td>Territorialtruppen, Mitrailleurkompanie IV/154, soldiers behind machine-gun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>316</td>
<td>Territorialtruppen, Territorial Battalion 170, row of soldiers, Bernese coat of arms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>317</td>
<td>Kommadostab, commemoration 70th anniversary of General Guisan 1944, General Guisan</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Coins**

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<th>No.</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>318</td>
<td>1941, 5 fr., Swiss 650th anniversary commemoration coin, o: three swearing men, r: <em>promiserunt invicem sibi assistere auxilio</em></td>
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</table>

**Banknotes**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>319</td>
<td>1950, unpublished banknote by Erni, imagery created in 1942, 1000 fr., o: female portrait, r.: hydroelectric plant</td>
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</table>
6. Sources

1, 104, 108, 119, 268-275:


2-8, 61-69, 91-97, 100-103, 105-107, 109-118, 120-124, 178-201, 247-267, 304-317:

Museum für Kommunikation, Bern

9-11, 13-17, 20, 22, 23, 70, 71, 74, 75, 125-134, 202-204, 209-211, 276-279:

Banque Nationale de Belgique (ed.), Le franc belge, Bruxelles 1989

12: Monnaie Royale de Belgique, Bruxelles, 601/8

18: Banque Nationale de Belgique, Imprimerie, Coffre du papier blanc, Bruxelles

19, 21, 72, 73, 135:

Banque Nationale de Belgique, Service des Collections, Catalogue Iconographie, Billets de Banque Belgique, Avant-projets, Bruxelles

24-48, 86-90, 136-173, 213-243, 281-303:

PTT Wertzeichenabteilung, Ostermundigen


53: Bundesarchiv, Bern, E 12/19

54, 55: Schweizerisches Landesmuseum, Zürich

56-60, 98, 99, 176, 319:

Schweizerische Nationalbank, Bern

80-85: Collection Herry Schaefer, Zürich

174: Bundesarchiv, Bern, 6100 (A), 17

175, 244, 245, 318:

   Capon, Hans-Peter, HMZ Katalog, Schweiz, Liechtenstein, Zürich 1995

177: PTT Generaldirektion, PTT Bibliothek, Bern, PAA 02071

205-208:

   Monnaie Royale de Belgique, Bruxelles, 604/7

212, 280:

   Banque Nationale de Belgique (ed.), La monnaie et le portrait royal, Bruxelles 1991

246: Duttweiler, Gottlieb (ed.), Eines Volkes Sein und Schaffen, Die Schweizerische Landesausstellung 1939 Zürich in 300 Bildern, no place [Zürich] 1940