

THE CARNIVAL OF BASEL: A CONTRIBUTION TO ITS HISTORY¹

A citizen of Basel² wrote in 1908, “When the great and long-expected day has finally arrived, and at the stroke of four the signal is given for the entrance of His Majesty Carnival, the city becomes the theater of intense life and activity whose meaning and value only the natives of Basel can appreciate”. This opinion, according to which only “Baselers” understand the real meaning of their fêtes, is still quite widespread, and it is almost a sacrilege that

Translated by Jeanne Ferguson

¹ This text is drawn from *Unsere Fasnacht* (ed. P. Heman), Basel, 1971, pp. 17-23. It is a condensation of a lecture given October 29, 1967, before the *Tübinger Vereinigung für Fasnachtsforschung* and first appeared in the *Basler Nachrichten* of November 12, 1967. We translate as “carnival” both the German *Fastnacht* and the specifically Basel *Fasnacht*, always capitalizing when it concerns this most important of the Basel festivals.

The list of abbreviations for sources:

BN: *Basler Nachrichten*

BZ: *Basler Zeitung*

Hoffmann-Krayer, *Kl. Schr.*: Eduard Hoffmann-Krayer, *Kleine Schriften zur Volkskunde*, ed. Paul Geiger, Basel, 1946

NZ: *National-Zeitung*

SETTELEN: Emil Settelen, *Geschichte des Quodlibet Basel, 1858-1908* Festschrift zur 50. Gründungsfeier October 24-25, 1908.

SNZ: *Schweizerische National-Zeitung*

SVF: *Schweizerischer Volksfreund*

² SETTELEN, p. 107 *et seq.* (goes back to 1901).

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someone from the outside, such as I am, should try to explain the customs that give Basel its eminent place in folklore.

In 1939, when I was a young student, I had the opportunity to experience my first carnival in Basel; I was given to understand how incomparable the events that took place were. One did not witness a "procession" (*Umzug*) as in the Zurich *Sechseläuten* but many separate "parades" (*Züge*). Year after year, the press also insisted on the fact that the Baselters not only invested a great deal of money in their festival but also an appreciable amount of sentimental values. The carnival stimulated not only wit and a sense of fun; for many people it also served as an escape valve for a sentimentality that the Basel citizen little appreciated the rest of the year.

Later, however, going through older press accounts for my research on folklore, I was led to see things in a way that filled me with a satisfaction that was not untinged with malice. If, in our day, you treat the carnival of Basel (*Fasnacht*) as *Fasching* or *Carneval*, you are apt to receive a rough answer, or at least an ironic smile of commiseration. And yet, our author of 1908, one who was familiar with the carnival, tolerates along with the press, even the earliest, the entry of "Prince Carnival" into Basel, and when in other passages he recommends the "cultivation of a true spirit of carnival"³ he shocks no one: his generation does not see in it an importation from Germany. It is easy to find hundreds of references for the use of *Fasching* or *Carneval*, as well as *Umzug* (procession), in the press of all tendencies. We will see that this widespread idea of the incommensurable antiquity of carnival in its present form is, from the point of view of historical folklore, as significant as it is erroneous. If here the author must brandish the scalpel of historical criticism, permit him to at least profit from his Glarus origins: he will not be cutting into his own flesh, and those who are intimates of the carnival will console themselves with the idea that he lacks a close attachment to the incomparable customs of Basel.

Our scalpel, alas, is not yet as sharp as could be desired. There are lacunae in the documentation that cannot be filled except at the price of very long research. Precious additions have been

³ *Ibid.*, p. 100.

supplied by the Seminary of folklore, but as far as remote times are concerned, we are hardly more advanced than Eduard Hoffmann-Krayer, whose work goes back almost seventy years.⁴ In addition, the press after 1893 has not yet been systematically and diligently searched.⁵ Ideally, we should have a “book of the carnival charters”; it would help us to understand how the Baseler particularities were often able to develop from almost fortuitous circumstances, because it is not the archetype but the local typology that interests us.

THE MIDDLE AGES

Most astonishing in the Basel carnival is certainly its existence itself. If we consider how successful other reformed cities were in combatting carnival as a festival that was sometimes considered pagan, sometimes Papist, we can measure the particular obstinacy that was necessary in Basel, a city of legendary piety, in order to maintain it. Before 1529, the date of the victory of the Reformation, it seems to differ little from those of European cities. The bloodbath of the eve of Ash Wednesday in 1376 entered history under the name of “*Carnaval sinistre*” and marks the beginning of our history of the carnival. The first known official interdictions⁶ date from the beginning of the 15th century; they inform us that masked men, challenging the public, paraded in the street from the period of Advent and disturbed the Christmas Mass. The public “appeal” of 1436 shows how incomprehensible and shocking such disturbances were for the foreign members of the Council.* The bans touching the Christmas season seem to have been successfully imposed, since from the second decade of the 16th century the

⁴ Hoffmann-Krayer, “Die Fastnachtsgebräuche in der Schweiz”, Schweizerisches Archiv für Volkskunde, 1, 1897; taken up in *Kl. Schr.*, p. 25 *et seq.* Other material relative to the subject is found *ibid.*, p. 112 *et seq.* (chapter dealing with the Basel New Year and related festivals)

⁵ Copying out has been carried on since then. The material is found in the Seminar für Volkskunde (seminary of ethnology and folklore) of the University.

⁶ State Archives of Basel, *Libre des proclamations*, 1. Some references go back to 1414.

* Council of Basel, Ferrara, Florence, which sat first at Basel from 1431 to 1437 (Editor’s note).

town council was content with forbidding masquerades and *chahut* during the carnival season proper. These bans appear so repeatedly that their lack of success is apparent. It seems that the corporation in particular complained about the masked bands that invaded their meeting rooms, disturbing the traditional festivities in that period of the carnival.

THE BASELER DATE

An anonymous history of the carnival that appeared in 1936 notes for the year 1529⁷: “Deferral of the Basel carnival to the Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday after Ash Wednesday”. As though the council had nothing more urgent to do than to fix a new date, that is, a reformed date, for the fête! No document, of course, bears out this affirmation. The anonymous author was the victim of a widespread opinion, namely, that this unusual date was chosen with the intention of annoying the Catholics. Hoffmann-Krayer also finds this explanation “highly probable”,⁸ and yet we do not think that any confession argument could have intervened in the choice of this belated date for the carnival. As for the texts that tell us, like the essay that appeared some years ago, that the choice of the Basellers shows “a desire to set themselves apart from the former carnival and a wish for new and original forms”, they are lucubrations.⁹ Before 1830 or thereabouts, Basel had little of original to offer, not even the date of the carnival, since it was found in the villages of the cantons of Zurich and Bern and even within the Catholic regions of central Switzerland. The Reform brought only one important element: Ash Wednesday lost all meaning, and the reformed churches did not share the zeal of the Catholic churches of the Counter Reformation for respecting this day. In certain rural Catholic parishes, the ban was not yet imposed even at the middle

⁷ *Die Basler Fastnacht im Wandel der Zeiten*. Zusammengestellt vom Chronisten der Rumpel-Clique. Basel, 1936.

⁸ Hoffmann-Krayer, *Bilder aus dem Fastnachtsleben im alten Basel*, Zurich, 1896, p. 4. See also his book, *Feste und Bräuche des Schweizervolkes*, Zurich, 1912, p. 125 (new version by Paul Geiger, Zurich, 1940, p. 162).

⁹ Heinrich Burkhardt, “Volkbrauch und Volkskunst”, in *Die Schweiz*, ed. Emil Egli, Constance, 1958, p. 162.

of the last century; we know that in these villages masks were still worn the Sunday and indeed the Monday after Ash Wednesday. This Monday was called *Hirs-* or *Hirschmontag*, in Alsace, *Hirzmontag*.¹⁰ The etymology of the name is disputed; for us it suffices to know that even a citizen of Basel, Bieler,¹¹ used it in the middle of the 18th century to designate the Monday of carnival. Very probably, this is inherited from a usage anterior to the Reformation.

Even though for Basel we have not found a mention of this Monday in documents previous to the Reformation, we are certain of one thing: since before 1529, Ash Wednesday was not enough to interrupt carnival activities (corporation banquets on Ash Wednesday, torch races, bonfires on the mountains, spectacles given the Sunday following and on the day of the “old carnival”).

THE REFORMATION

The first proclamation of reform (April 1, 1529) does not mention carnival. The interdictions, repeated each year, were still in effect. In 1526 and 1532¹² they referred especially to masks. It was only in 1546, when the new regime was consolidated, that a general interdiction appeared,¹³ based on a subtle reasoning: from the moment that the Reformation had suppressed Lent, the merry-making that preceded it became superfluous. This document, like certain judicial accounts of the same period, proves that the authorities were not at all disposed to tolerate carnival, even set for a new date.

Yet, at the same moment appeared the first mention of carnival

¹⁰ See especially H. Pfännenschmid, *Fastnachtsgebräuche im Elsass*, Colmar, 1884.

¹¹ J.H. Bieler, *Im Schatten unserer gnädigen Herren, Aufzeichnungen eines Basler Überreiters 1720-1772*, ed. P. Koelner, Basel, 1930, p. 56 (this concerns the year 1757). In addition, we have a reference from 1605 for “Hirss Montag”, provenant from Sissach (Basel State Archives, archives of the Church HH 15.1,89 v.).

¹² State Archives of Basel, Livre des proclamations 2,75,80 Cf. Hoffmann-Krayer, *Kl. Schr.*, p. 86 *et seq.*

¹³ State Archives of Basel, Livres du Conseil, A 6 (“black book”), p. 117 r.

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Monday, in its present form. In 1540, the chronicler Fridolin Ryff¹⁴ related a general military inspection that took place “the Monday after the old carnival”. After the inspection, each corporation paraded with its banner and its “insignia”, and there were week-long festivities. If the authorities had really wished to irritate the Catholics by modifying the carnival date, our chronicler would not have failed to polemicize against the Papists, as he does elsewhere in his book. We must assume that the council chose a traditional date for this inspection, thus one from before the Reformation.

THE “INSIGNIA” (*Zeichen*)

With these “insignia” mentioned by Ryff, the presence of which certainly did not obey the order of the authorities, we touch on a central element of the old Basel carnival. It is impossible to doubt here a survival of the early Middle Ages, even if, for the moment, we do not have verified proof of this heritage. The “insignia” are the representative masks that accompanied warriors. Still today, for example, in Petit-Bâle, which was originally politically independent, the three “insignia of honor” (lion, griffin and *wilder Mann*) come out into the streets, flanked by various martial attributes, some weeks before the official date for carnival. We know, however, that in the 15th century the time for masks began early in the year, and we have documents showing that in the 18th and 19th centuries the “animals” of Petit-Bâle went every year to Grand-Bâle for carnival.¹⁵ The corporations of the outlying areas also paraded with their “insignia”.

A strong consciousness of their own identity permitted the societies of Petit-Bâle to remain unshakeably attached to their insignia, despite the church’s opposition, as we may read in the work of Ed. F. Knuchel. In the third decade of the 18th century, when the authorities again appeared a little more indulgent toward carniv-

¹⁴ *Basler Chroniken*, Vol. I, ed. Wilhelm Vischer, Leipzig, 1872, p. 158; cf. Hoffmann-Krayer, *Kl. Schr.*, p. 71.

¹⁵ Cf. Ed. Fritz Knuchel, *Die Umzüge der Klein-Basler Ehrenzeichen. Ihr Ursprung und ihre Bedeutung*, Basel, 1914, (new edition with title *Vogel Gryff*, Basel, 1944).

al,¹⁶ the usages of Petit-Bâle could again be resumed. Beginning with that date, the sources mention parades of a military nature, one for each quarter, in which were also masks. If still today many “cliques” bear the name of a quarter of the city, it is due to the survival of an authentic tradition. The same is true for the particularity of always having the masks form up in groups. The military element also imbues the famous *Morgenstreich*, whose name means nothing other than “guard of the day” (for the inspection). This is explained by the fact that in the first half of the 19th century it was constantly necessary to forbid the carrying of arms in the parade. Similarly, we understand the presence of the indispensable fifes and drums.

EVOLUTION AFTER 1798

We have given the most important elements constituting the heritage of the past. For the rest, everything that appears today in the carnival was added in the 19th century. The revolution of 1798 put the principal adversary, the Church, out of action for some years. But the contingencies of the political situation did not permit the Basel citizens to celebrate carnival before 1802. The press began to be interested in it in the years that followed.¹⁷ Particularly precious for us is the account of a young German¹⁸ who actively participated in an important procession in 1809. Men and women of the upper classes appeared in it in costume. The *landammann** of Switzerland, of a great Basel family, received a delegation of the carnival in 1812;¹⁹ in 1820 the director of the police, also belonging to a highly-placed family, took part in a procession.²⁰ This social factor explains that the elements of *Fasching* and *Carneval* had been able to implant themselves in Basel: the rich merchants of

¹⁶ See especially Bieler (cf. note 11 *supra*).

¹⁷ Thus in Heinrich Zschokke's *Schweizer-Bothe* and in the Zurich *Schweizerische Monats-Chronik*.

¹⁸ Gottlob Heinrich Heinse, *Reisen durch das südliche Deutschland und die Schweiz in den Jahren 1808 und 1809*, Leipzig, 1810, Vol. II, p. 164, *et seq.*

¹⁹ *Schweizer-Bothe*, 1812, p. 68.

²⁰ *Schweizerische Monats-Chronik*, 1820, p. 68. Cf. Paul Rud. Koelner, *Die Basler Fastnacht*, Basel, 1913, p. 35.

* Title of chief magistrate in certain Swiss cantons.

the city obviously had the means to go and observe what was done in other places.

Imported elements existed, certainly: for example, the great procession of princes in Louis XIV costumes in 1805²¹ and the “little nude siren of the Danube” that one reader mentions in a reproachful tone. Also significant is this opinion of a rightist newspaper in 1843:²² “Our carnival this year... shows few really comical things; it seems, on the whole, that the true humor of carnival that still flourishes in certain Rhenish cities... loses more and more ground here”. By “carnival humor” the paper meant the caricature of certain personalities, an element that occasionally appears from 1802 but is not clearly manifested until after 1848: the new federal constitution put political subjects in the foreground.

THE LANTERNS

Calicots are mentioned in the press for the first time in 1848.²³ Old descriptions of the *Morgenstreich* tell us that formerly torchbearers provided light for the drummers. Since that was not without danger, some ingenious person, to whom we cannot erect a monument because we do not know his name, had the idea of putting lights in painted lanterns, the kind in vogue for patriotic celebrations after the French Revolution. We have a first iconographic document going back (perhaps) to the carnival of 1830;²⁴ press reports are sometimes belated. It was not until 1848, however, that lanterns became a fixed element of the *Morgenstreich*. For the moment we do not know with certainty when the images painted on the lanterns began to refer directly to the theme of the afternoon parade; our first evidence goes back only to the 1870's. We also know that at the same period lanterns carried inscriptions and were artistically done. The editor of the *Schweizerischer Volksfreund*

²¹ *Schweizer-Bothe*, 1805, p. 88.

²² BZ 1843, p. 230.

²³ SNZ 1848, no. 61.

²⁴ Reproduced with this date in *D'Basler Fasnacht*, ed. under the sponsorship of Basler Fasnachts-Comité, Basel, 1939, on the back of p. 76. The dating is doubtful; we find the same engraving in Robert B. Christ, Eugen A. Meier, *Fasnacht in Basel*, Basel, 1968, p. 23, dated 1858!

(which was then the name of the *National-Zeitung*)²⁵ wrote in 1878: “The mounting (of the lantern) is made by a master iron-smith... what is more difficult is to find a good artist for the paintings, because the faces must be comical and well-done, if not, the entire effect is lost. The situation becomes critical when, in spite of the best will in the world, one cannot put one’s hand on a poet who can compose the necessary verses”—verses that were only rarely composed in dialect.

SOME SOCIOLOGY

If we believe the sources, the privileged class retired from carnival in 1833, the fateful date of the division of the canton. Characteristically, a pastor wrote in 1840:²⁶ “The coarseness and increasing indecency of the masked people prove that it is more and more the lower classes who put on masks during our carnival”. Disagreeing with most of his colleagues, he would not for all that purely and simply forbid it but transform it into a festival for children; little boys would be authorized to play the drum, but they would parade without masks under the surveillance of adults. This well-intentioned proposal was adopted in the following year and repeated in 1843.²⁷ The adults again took over, definitively, the “festival of youth”. All the same, after that the press, in common accord with the authorities, watched over the behavior and morals of the carnival. We see here, as we often see, the transformation of external prescriptions into naturally admitted norms. *Décolleté* dress in the style of Munich or Cologne is *a priori* unthinkable in Basel.

Of course, everything the press criticized did not disappear. The editor of the *Volksfreund* detested the *Waggis*. In 1879,²⁹ he

²⁵ SVF 1878, no. 58, in *Plaudereien aus Basel*, a regular column by the editor, Fritz Amstein.

²⁶ (Anonymous), *Über die Veredlung der Vergnügungen der arbeitenden Klassen, Zwei gekrönte Preisschriften*, ed. by the Société bâloise d'utilité publique, Basel, 1840, p. 86.

²⁷ BZ 1841, no. 53, (anonymous), *Ein Basler Jugendfest—als Faschingsfeier*, in *Der Wanderer in der Schweiz*, 7th year, 1840/41, p. 213 *et seq.*; BZ 1843, no. 58.

²⁸ SVF 1879, no. 54, *Lokales*.

bluntly treats the “*Waggis* and *hommes-patates*, which we see every year”, (from what date?) as “rubbish”. In the following years, he returns to the charge. Nevertheless, in our day the *Waggis* is generally considered as a mask of the classical type. (In the city we know of peasants’ masks from the 15th century; the caricatures of Alsatians are only verified from the Franco-Prussian war;²⁹ in 1875 there was a float of market women from Neudorf; the following year someone called “Jeanbadis” advertised³⁰ for participants in a parade devoted to the people of Sundgau, in southern Alsace).

From 1851 we find announcements inviting the “friends of the carnival” to participate in a parade. It is in this context that we see mentioned for the first time in 1859 the term “clique” (more frequently “section” or “club”).³¹ It seems that for the most part these were *ad hoc* associations. The people recruited by the announcements certainly did not belong to the upper class. Alongside the temporary association we occasionally see societies with completely different aims parading during the carnival, such as, in 1870, the society of young merchants and often from 1866 on the gymnastic society.³² The society “Quodlibet” had a large role; this was a sort of social club that organized theatricals and public dances.³³ After 1866 it more than once actively participated in the carnival, sometimes in the processions, sometimes excelling (after 1884) in particularly successful subjects. In that way this society consciously worked to maintain a certain order and level in carnival activities. It is not by chance that the carnival committee founded in 1910 and still in existence used the “Quodlibet” as a model. The list of its members, which was published and which we have, shows that the “Quodlibet” did not recruit the “good old Baselters” but rather the new middle class. Besides, this could easily have been divined from the themes of their parades; they praised progress, in agreement with the radical policy of the time, and polemicized in the best style of the *Kulturkampf*.

If, after several decades, a part at least of the upper class again

²⁹ SVF 1875, no. 40.

³⁰ SVF 1876, no. 44.

³¹ BN 1859, no. 50 (announcement): “Fötzelklicke!! assemblée générale ce soir chez Toni...”.

³² SVF 1870, no. 38; 1866, no. 47; 1871, no. 52, etc.

³³ Cf. SETTELEN (see note 1).

took part in the carnival, it is partly because of a greater tolerance of some reformed pastors³⁴ but also, on the evidence, because of the political situation: social democracy had a great deal of influence on the politics of Basel after the end of World War I. Now, a carnival in which the authorities could be mocked was obviously supported by the opposition. The political right, at that time in the minority, could have been tempted by the occasion to express itself as offered by the carnival. The way in which the Basellers treat local, federal or international politics during carnival is a story in itself; some disappointments await the faithful. The spirit of Basel, long celebrated in the newspapers, does not triumph in every case with the same brilliance.

TRADITIONALISM AND DEVELOPMENT

In spite of all its critics, the carnival was never seriously in danger after 1848. The members of the “Quodlibet”, together with the radical press, vigorously countered the sporadic attempts to suppress or limit the festival while taking care to combat certain excrescences in their own ranks. In 1855 the *National-Zeitung* qualified the carnival as “belonging to the people”.³⁵

Conscious of their particular identity, from then on the people of Basel did not want to abandon anything among the forms that had gradually been created; this fact merits attention. In 1876 a journalist wrote on the subject of the *Morgenstreich*:³⁶ “Another new element to appear was the fanfare. Several good, genuine Basellers asked us to protest against the use of brass instruments in

³⁴ For example, see a significant remark by Karl Barth, dating from 1923 (*Karl Barth und Eduard Thurneysen, Ein Briefwechsel aus der Frühzeit der dialektischen Theologie*, Munich-Hamburg, 1966, p. 116). Barth gives a slogan in dialect directed against a pastor who was an enemy of carnival, which more or less says this: “This is why we must have our carnival, and even if that makes a lot of commotion, you, the pastor, refrain from touching it, you are the last to do so”. And he comments, “A word to the wise, which should be put into a pastoral theology. The Church would do better to throw light on all this affair by keeping its distance, instead of wanting to combat it directly like a Savonarola, since it is well known that had no success...” (Information obligingly supplied by R. Thalmann)

³⁵ SNZ 1855, no. 41 (following a decision projected by the authorities to reduce the festival to Monday only).

³⁶ SVF 1876, no. 56; *Morgenstreich*.

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the *Morgenstreich*. The *Morgenstreich* is there solely for the *Ruesen* (fifes and drums), not for brass". (Quite recently, the problem was again posed when the *Guggenmusiken* wanted to participate in the *Morgenstreich*; there again tradition was being tampered with).

In 1855 there was also the resurgence of the proposal for a big, general procession, an idea that had been adopted several times in the past. But the *Volksfreund* was energetically opposed:³⁷ "Small, distinct processions are much more in the Baseler character". How quickly a traditional form is interpreted as the expression of an "ethnic character"! Leaving aside the error in reasoning, let us recognize that this strongly testifies to the consciousness of formal local particularities. In 1883 a reader again brings the date of the carnival into the discussion and suggests that Basel stop annoying the Catholics by placing its celebration after Ash Wednesday.³⁸ We have explained why this idea, *a priori*, had little chance of being heard, but we will not withhold the answer made by another reader:³⁹ he argues that Basel took the date for its carnival because of its financial advantages, since it drew many foreign visitors. Besides, economic factors had long since entered into consideration within the organization of the greatest of all Basel festivals. In the last century, periods of financial crisis regularly brought with them a decrease in the number of parades. Some associations sought to remedy this by issuing carnival stock. It was only in 1911 that the official insignia, indispensable today, was created on the model of the insignia of the former masked balls.⁴⁰

We could also mention the recommendations to café owners to not charge too much for the traditional soup* and onion tarts after the *Morgenstreich*. The traditional carnival menu appears from 1861⁴¹ (a jubilee *manqué!*) accompanied, in the old days, with hot

³⁷ SVF, 1885, no. 15.

³⁸ SVF 1883, no. 8.

³⁹ *Ibid*, no. 10.

⁴⁰ According to the *Fastnachtsführer* (Carnival guide) of 1911.

⁴¹ This sentence, that I formulated too quickly, has had unexpected follow-ups; in 1969, a restaurant proposed in a menu comprising old Basel specialties, the combination "flour soup and onion tart with a cup of chocolate", a specialty claimed to date from 1861. It is the book by Robert B. Christ (1968; see note 24), in which my sentence was slightly transformed, that is at the source of the disturbing proposal. Christ says this on page 79: "The daily press mentions in 1861 for the

chocolate. The renters of masks and costumes, who often came from elsewhere, also did good business. The domino dominated (in the true sense of the word) their merchandise. Halfmasks were still highly appreciated in the last century. The most expensive articles carried the name "Parisian masks". We do not see *Waggis* in these catalogues before 1892, but we frequently see its half-brother, the *Dummpeter*.

In 1950, Eduard Strübin delicately mocked the "purism" that today reigns in the Basel carnival and observed that it may be considered as an "art form".⁴² As it exists today, it requires a gigantic organization and long preparation, which is contradictory to the idea of "popular custom"; nevertheless, it is certain that most of the population await carnival with impatience and find in it, in a way, a form of accomplishment.

Patently, after the afflux of foreign elements in the first half of the 19th century, a style proper to Basel developed in the last half of that century, a style that in the meantime was imitated, with more or less success, by other places in Switzerland. In spite of purism, certain transformations have occurred, even recently. The most decisive is undoubtedly the applauded appearance of the *Guggenmusiken*. It is true that the fanfare groups have voluntarily participated for many years in the afternoon procession; we have evidence from as early as 1835.⁴³ When in 1871⁴⁴ a musical group presented "humoristic music of the future", the result was, without

first time the combination of flour soup and onion tart, at this period always accompanied by hot chocolate as the only suitable drink". In reality, café owners proposed chocolate among other beverages, as one of the possibilities of refreshment. To avoid future misunderstandings, let us be more specific as to what our restaurateurs propose, using sources studied up until now: chocolate for the *Morgenstreich* from 1857 (BZ no. 54), onion tarts, in 1858 (BZ no. 43); in the SVF these latter are found in 1861 for the first time (nos. 46-47). The "combination" with chocolate does not appear until 1865 (No. 54): "Fresh onion tarts, coffee and chocolate on carnival Monday at 4.00 in the morning". A variant, in the same paper, "The popular onion and flour soup, coffee, punch, hot wine and grog" (first known mention of flour soup, in 1870 (SVF no. 54): "At the *Morgenstreich*, Monday and Wednesday, flour soup, hot chocolate, grog and onion tarts" and the competitors offered "flour soup and chocolate".

⁴² Dr. H.C. Eduard Strübin, *Die neuere Entwicklung der Fastnacht in Basel-Land*. In *Schweizerisches Archiv für Volkskunde*, 46, 1950, p. 90 et seq.

⁴³ *Der Wanderer in der Schweiz*, 1, 1834/35, p. 160.

⁴⁴ SVF 1871, no. 52.

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doubt, similar to what we hear today. In the first decades of our century, we are certain that an orchestra was presented under the present name: otherwise how would the *National-Zeitung* have been able to write in 1934, apropos of a “Guggemuusig” present in the *Morgenstreich*: “That is again in existence? Bravo!”⁴⁵ The word has been found on a ticket dated 1911. These formations have become more and more numerous since 1934, and much has been written for and against them. Since 1948, the *Guggenmusiken* appear in the streets on Tuesday; the *Guggezyschtig* (*Gugge* Tuesday) has thus become an integral part of the carnival. As an ethnologist, we do not question the value, or lack of it, of this innovation in folklore, but we affirm that from a “political” point of view its acceptance has been beneficial for the carnival. New strata of the population have been taken into account in this way without abandoning the ancient (more or less ancient, as we have seen) elements. In the end, that had been the policy of the preceding generations, which we have come across during our brief survey of the history of the carnival. This history, rich in its successes as in its failures, is a remarkable phenomenon, even for someone who is not from Basel. We hope that it will someday be written using material from all the necessary sources.

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⁴⁵ NZ 1934, no. 83. In No. 84 a description of Monday afternoon mentions a “*Waggismusik* of about 30 men”.