

To Our Members Abroad – Pour Nos Membres à l'étranger

A model for each maker

Each maker introduced modifications in the design of the Order of Leopold's insignia, which allow us to identify and date them. If Allard, Buls, Heremans and Wolfers supplied the Ministry for Foreign Affairs during the XIX century, we still do not know who succeeded Dutalis, as the supplier of the Palace during the reign of Leopold I. Nothing points out that it should have been Bus. What was the reason then, for king Louis I having received a Star made by Dutalis and a cross (badge) made by the latter's colleague Buls?

Although in Belgium, in contrast with what happened in other countries, the return of the insignia in case of promotion or death was not required, some people did return the insignia of the Order of Leopold to the department of the Orders. This was indeed natural since it was considered that the insignia had been «lent» by the State. For saving reasons some of these were «retouched» in order to be awarded again. This could well explain the disparity in King Louis I set of insignia.

However, another hypothesis deserves our attention. King Ferdinand II and his father, the homonym Austrian Field-Marshal, who died in 1851, were two of the first recipients of the Order of Leopold, in July 15th 1835. Their insignia came undoubtedly from the orders made to Dutalis. Louis I could well have inherited the Star, military division, of the Order of Leopold, which had belonged to his father. The bequest from his grand-father seems more problematic, since according to a portrait at the Castle of Ehrenburg, in Cobourg, the Field-Marshal wears the Star of the Order of Leopold, civil division. Unless, we are facing a liberty taken by the painter...

A more detailed study of other insignia of the Order of Leopold preserved in Portuguese collections and archives will certainly give us new data.

The Phaleristic Society of Slovakia – Our newest sister society

Slovenská faleristická spoločnosť (SFS) has recently commemorated her first anniversary, having been founded on December 3rd, 2010., by a handful of Slovakian collectors headed by its present Chairman Pavol Marciš, who felt the need of establishing a more organised form of sharing information and knowledge about the theme which gathered them. SFS aims also at promoting research on Phaleristics and at establishing relations and collaboration with similar European societies. The SFS's activities begun in 2011 with the meeting of the Constituent General Assembly at Bratislava followed by the creation of the society's logo (its high aesthetical quality being due to Jaroslav Kozolka), and the launching of a website (<http://www.sfs.sk>), both essential pieces for the publicising of the new Society. However, its biggest initiative was the organization of the I International Phaleristic Congress, in cooperation with the *Muzeum Slovenského národného povstania (National Museum of the Slovakian Uprising –*

<http://www.muzeumsnp.sk/>), which took place at Banská Bystrica, on October, 22nd, 2011, with the attendance of over 50 delegates from several countries of Central Europe. After the Congress took place the General Assembly which elected the Board of Directors: Chairman - Pavol Marciš; vice-president Rudolf Rezníček; as members - Vlastimil Kozoň, Vladimír Považan, Gabriel Fekete and Miroslav Bujňák and the Treasurer – Ivan Chudý. During the Congress were awarded for the first time the Badges of Honour of the SFS. The Gold Badge was awarded posthumously to the Slovakian phalerist Ľudovít Trenčan, in recognition of his lifetime work; the Silver Badge was given to Friedrich Tusek (Austria), Ivan Koláčny (Czech Republic) and to Igor Graus (Slovakia) for his recent studies; and the Bronze Badge to Chairman Pavol Marciš for his outstanding work in establishing the SFS. There are rules for the award of each class of the aforesaid Badge and they are delivered in a case, numbered in the reverse and accompanied by a diploma.

Among the projects for 2012, are the edition of the Society's magazine – *Faleristická revue*, the edition of a book on the *Partisans's badges 1945-1989*, and the collaboration in the edition of a book on the Order of the White Lion, the more important decoration of the Czech Republic. In October, at Bratislava, the SFS will take place the II International Phaleristic Congress. Those interested in contacting the Society can do it: *Slovenská faleristická spoločnosť (SFS), Hollého 24 - 927 05 Šafa – Slovakia* or by E-mail: predseda@sfs.sk

To our fellow Chairman Pavol Marciš our gratitude for the information provided and our best wishes.

Legislation, practices and nonsense

Unfortunately, in Portugal little attention is paid to Symbolology and to its legislation and legal protection. Examples can be given by the frequent cases of disrespect regarding the State symbols, namely with our National Flag, incorrectly placed or displayed upside down, even in official ceremonies.

Another aspect of Symbolology which can be included in this note is related to Phaleristics. As I have already had the opportunity of calling public attention, legislation is often casuistic and very often not founded in a sound reflection, analysis and in a well-structured reasoning. Usually, excessive importance is given to formal questions instead of substance. And in the domain of Phaleristics, the latter is of paramount importance.

These notes rely on a personal analysis of the recent new Law of the Portuguese Orders of Merit (Law n^o 5/2011, 2nd March) and of some questionable and reiterated practices of the Chancery of the Orders of Merit – department in charge of the registry of all decorations conferred by the President of the Republic and of the authorizations given for the use of foreign decorations by Portuguese citizens. The Chancery also has an official website