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Picturing the Singing Nation:
The Swiss Federal Singing Festivals
in the Nineteenth Century

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In their groundbreaking study *Who Sings in the Nation-State?*, Judith Butler and Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak articulated a vital question: who has the authority to decide and define inclusion in, and exclusion from, nation-states' collective "we."[1] While Butler and Spivak discuss singing the national anthem as a central example in this respect, the considerations in this paper scrutinize the source material of the Eidgenössische Sängerverein (Federal Singing Association), with an emphasis on visual sources; the focus of the paper is how visual sources communicate meaning and what they tell about the promotion and support of nation-building processes and the formation of a nation-state's collective identity within the framework of the Federal Singing Association. The inclusion and analysis of visual communication conveys the "understanding of the articulation, promotion and dissemination of political arguments"[2] and concepts. Furthermore, visual objects reveal specific mechanisms of the involvement of music activities, and they can be crucial facilitators in the nation-building processes. Accordingly, visual sources are not regarded as mere byproducts of nation-building processes; rather, they are essential allies. This is not to underestimate or dismiss the value of written sources but rather to critically assess and deconstruct their hegemony in the humanities. W.J.T. Mitchell revealed this supremacy to reflect the sovereignty of iconophobia that has permeated Western academic scholarship from the Enlightenment onward.[3] Based on Gottfried Boehm's notion that "what a sentence (the

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1 Butler and Spivak, *Who Sings the Nation-State?*, 63–65.
2 Landes, *Visualizing the Nation*, 6.
3 Mitchell, "The Pictorial Turn."

'logos') is able to do, that shall also be at the disposal of the artistic work, though in its own way,"[4] pictures are treated in this paper as objects of knowledge and reflection on a par with written source material. Like words, images can mirror and illustrate events and intellectual trends, and they have the potential to create and circulate ideas, arguments, and specific agendas. Consequently, Antoine de Baecque argued, with good reason, that it is possible to interpret the French "Revolution on the basis of its images."[5] This paper embraces the performative potential of visual sources.[6] For "images are not mined like ore; they are constructed for the purpose of performing some function within a given social cultural matrix," as Richard Leppert argued.[7]

Consistent with this view is replacing the highly logocentric concept of "discourse" with the term "viscourse," a concept established by Karin Knorr-Cetina to delineate the embedment of visual representations in ongoing communicative exchange.[8] The change in terminology allows for the examination of nineteenth-century visual culture in a non-discriminatory and equative manner. Shifting the focus toward the visual is not a new approach to articulating mechanisms and functions of nation-formation processes. However, emphasizing the long-neglected epistemological potentials embodied in non-verbal representations enables sources usually condemned to silence in music history research to speak. Such silence envelops the vast amount of visual material preserved in the holdings of the Federal Singing Association, Aarau (Switzerland), as well as other cantonal or city archives. This source corpus, which includes a wide variety of media and primarily objects that shape what Michael Billig defined as "banal nationalism,"[9] still has not been examined. In this paper, Billig's concept is stretched. Here, it refers not only to objects that remind citizens of established nations "daily [...] of their national place

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4 "Was der Satz (der 'Logos') kann, das muss auch dem bildnerischen Werke zu Gebote stehen." Boehm, "Die Wiederkehr der Bilder", 31. All translations in this paper are by the author unless otherwise stated.

5 Baecque, "The Allegorical Image of France", 139, see footnote 9.

6 Mitchell, *What do Pictures Want?*

7 Leppert, *Art and the Committed Eye*, 3.

8 Knorr-Cetina, "'Viskurse' der Physik"; Knorr-Cetina, "'Viskurse der Physik': Konsensbildung und visuelle Darstellung."

9 Billig, *Banal Nationalism*.

in a world of nations,"[10] but also to objects that—almost unnoticed—are inscribed in everyday social life as a fervent attempt or hope to establish community.

In closing these introductory remarks, it seems appropriate to briefly clarify how the terms "nation," "state," and "nation-state" are used in this essay.[11] The term "state" designates a territory with its own institutions and population, while "nation" denotes a group of people who imagine themselves as a community that shares specific commonalities but, above all, a commonly shared history and culture.[12] The more commonalities such a group of people share, the more homogeneous it is. Finally, a "nation-state" is an idea that fuses a nation and a state; that is, an entity consisting of a group of people who share specific commonalities and inhabit a territory with a clearly defined geography and institutions.

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Given the city's liberal leanings, it is hardly surprising that Aarau (from 1798-1803 the capital city of the Helvetische Republik (Helvetic Republic)[13] and later the capital city of the canton of Aargau) was crucial to the foundation of the Federal Singing Association in 1842. This organization vigorously pursued the coalescence of various local singing societies and, to this end, devoted itself to the organization of Federal Singing Festivals. The first of these was held in 1843 in Zurich and witnessed the participation of 80 singing associations.[14] The Federal Singing Festival included two competitive events (folk and art song repertoire) from 1856; these were expanded into four categories in 1893 (see Appendix). The division of the folk and art singing competition significantly promoted choral singing, according to the opening speech of Franz Vinzenz Lang (1821-1899), a member of the Cantonal Council of Solothurn and president of the 25th commemoration Federal Singing Festival held in

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10 Ibid., 8.

11 I am referring to Flint, *Introduction to Geopolitics*, 103–32.

12 Anderson, *Imagined Communities*.

13 The Helvetische Republik was installed by France and proclaimed on April 12, 1798. Further information on this topic is provided in Böning, *Der Traum von Freiheit und Gleichheit*; Hildebrand and Tanner, *Im Zeichen der Revolution*.

14 Thomann, *Der Eidgenössische Sängerverein*, 69.

Solothurn in 1868.[15] Only male choral societies were invited to compete, initially from the German-speaking part of Switzerland and later all over the country;[16] the festivals were initially held biennially and at longer intervals from the 1870s onwards (see Appendix). The festivals always included a banquet with ceremonial speeches and toasts and a main performance event including the present choirs; sometimes, singing societies from abroad participated.[17]

Figure 1 Federal Singing Festival Zurich, June 25 and 26, 1843, fairground, lithograph, signed J. Werner, printed Orell, Füssli & Cie., Zürich, image 19.4 x. 27.6 cm, folio 23.6 x 31.0 cm. Aarau: Archiv Eidgenössischer Sängerverein.

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15 See ibid., 65.

16 At the 1868 Festival held in Bern, all four national languages spoken in Switzerland were, for the first time ever, represented in the competition program. See ibid., 62.

17 At the 1864 Federal Singing Festival in Bern participated, for instance, the singing societies *Harmonie suisse* from Paris, *Société choral* from Strasburg and *Liederkranz* from Stuttgart; see "Correspondenz."

The Federal Singing Festival was a mass event that enveloped its few thousand participants within "the exclusive thought of the fatherland."[18] Indeed, by 1873, the membership of the Federal Singing Association boasted 92 choral societies and 7,500 individual members.[19] The expansive nature of the association's festivals is impressively evidenced by a vast number of visual documents, including a lithograph of the fairground at the first Federal Singing Festival held in Zurich in 1843 (Figure 1) and an engraving depicting the festival hall of the 1856 St. Gallen event (Figure 2). This latter event was attended by 55 Swiss singing societies and 14 guest choirs from Germany and Austria.[20] The engraving depicts the overwhelmingly crowded hall during the centerpiece event and a huge choir in the picture's foreground.
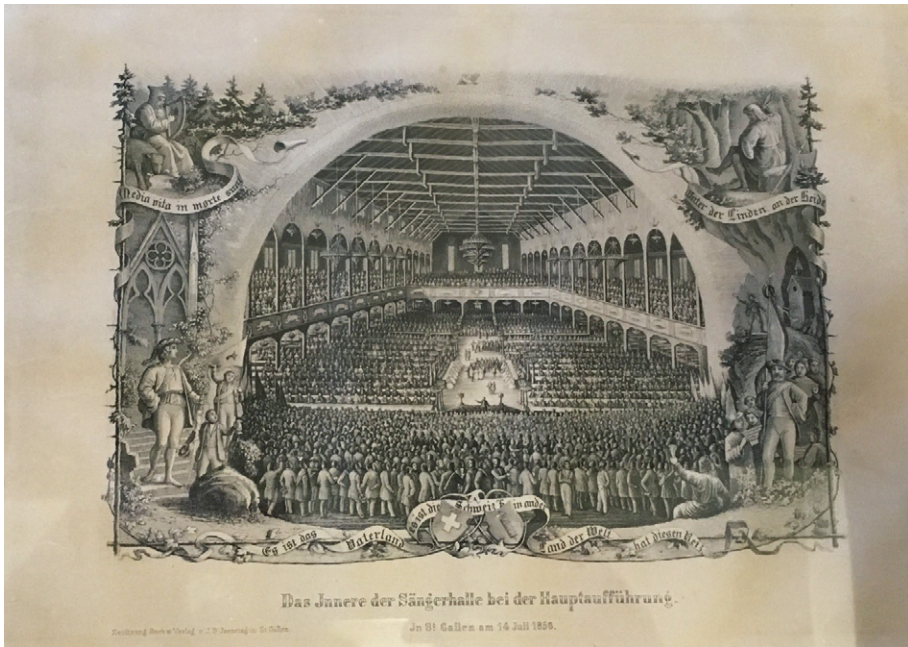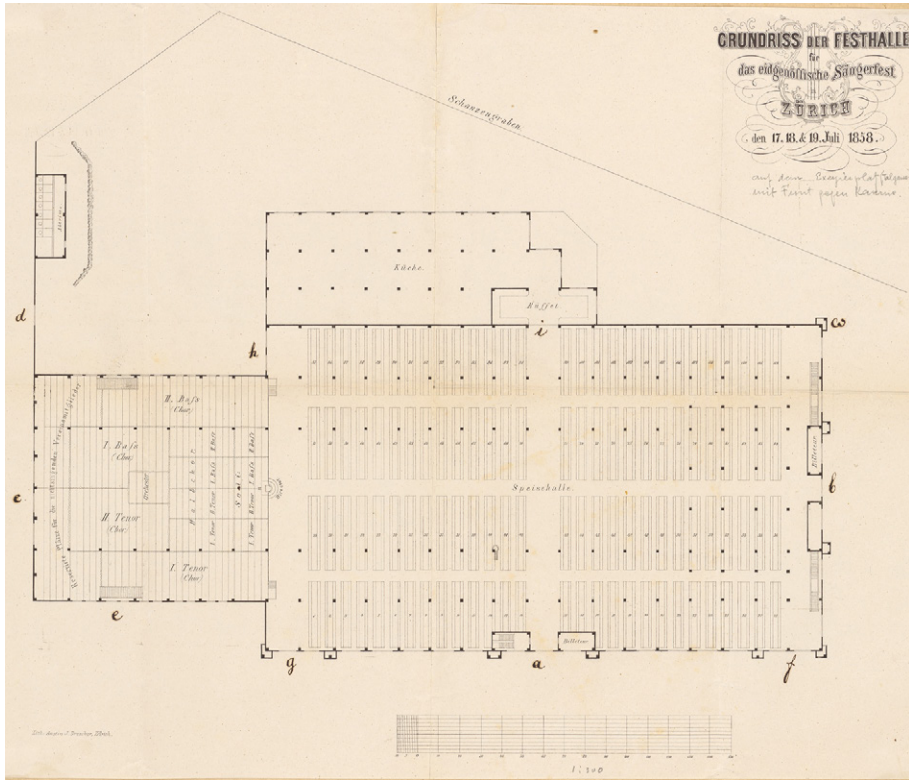

Figure 2 Federal Singing Festival St. Gallen 1856, festival hall, wood engraving. Aarau: Archiv Eidgenössischer Sängerverein.

18 Keller, "Am Mythenstein", 343.
19 Thomann, *Der Eidgenössische Sängerverein*, 37–40.
20 Ibid., 52–53.

Figure 3 Federal Singing Festival Zurich 1858, layout festival hall, lithograph, printed J. Drescher Zürich, image and folio 36.3 x 43.3 cm. Aarau: Archiv Eidgenössischer Sängerverein.

The visual narrative of the festival hall in St. Gallen, which was purposefully built to stage the festival (as was general custom), faithfully represents the popularity of the event and is supported by many other documents. For example, images of the layout and exterior view of the festival hall erected for the Federal Singing Festival held in Zurich in 1858 (Figures 3 and 4) constitute impressive examples. According to coverage in the *Eidgenössische Zeitung*,[21] 7,000 people filled this festival hall on the opening night, while 3,450 individual singers and 111 singing societies participated in the competitions.[22]

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21 "Das eidgenössische Sängerfest."
22 Thomann, *Der Eidgenössische Sängerverein*, 53–56.

Figure 4 Federal Singing Festival Zurich 1858, festival hall, wood engraving, image 15.0 x 19.0 cm, folio 16.4 x 20.0 cm. Zurich: Zentralbibliothek, Graphische Sammlung, Feste Sänger- und Musikfeste 1858 Zürich I, 1.

Owing to the prevailing liberal spirit of Aarau, the city proved to be ideal for the establishment of associations with a patriotic and liberal mission. The city eventually earned the reputation of an enlightening-liberal stronghold.[23] Thus, it is no surprise that the city hosted events that played a significant role in national identity formation.[24] In addition to the Federal Singing Association in 1842, the Federal Shooting Festival (1824)[25] and the Federal Gymnastic Association (1832) were founded in Aarau.[26]

These and countless other similar activities and events, many of which perpetuated an explicit patriotic and republican agenda, contributed

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23 Lüthi, "Aarau"; Lüthi, *Geschichte der Stadt Aarau*.

24 Ibid.

25 Further information about the Federal Shooting Festival and Society is provided in Henzirohs, *Die eidgenössischen Schützenfeste*; Schmid, *1824-1999: 175 Jahre Schweizerischer Schützenverband.*

26 On the history of the Federal Gymnastic Association in the nineteenth century, see Eidgenössischer Turnverein, *Festschrift zum 75-jährigen Jubiläum*; Capitani, "Neue Forschungen zur nationalen Festkultur."

to the image of the Swiss nineteenth century as the "century of associations."[27] Notably, more than 30,000 associations and societies were founded in nineteenth-century Switzerland that attended to a broad spectrum of concerns.[28] Numerous societies and associations contributed to the establishment of new forms of predominantly male sociability as part of the cultural assets of the newly emerging bourgeois society; further, they also significantly contributed to the formation of a national identity and an "imagined community"[29] respectively. Particularly, the nationwide gatherings and festivals of the shooting, choral, and gymnastic associations and societies took on an explicitly national character.[30]

Accordingly, the Federal Singing Association festivals were regarded as a decisive means of national education, national identity formation, and gender and cultural politics from their inception and throughout the nineteenth century. Johann Jacob Leuthy (1798-1855), a poet and prolific journalist, published an expansive report on the first federal festival in Zurich in 1843. He praised this festival as the "nucleus of the nation"[31] and the "mint of the public opinion"[32] and declared the event a national festival. Leuthy's political rhetoric was far from unconventional or beyond the ken. Indeed, this position was particularly widespread in the intellectual circles of Swiss Liberals and Radicals. The liberal awakening further exemplified this during the so-called period of Regeneration after the 1830 July Revolution in France and the subsequent rhetoric and armed conflicts between the liberal and conservative Swiss Cantons. This conflict initially resulted in the 1847 civil war, called the *Sonderbundskrieg*, and eventually in the 1848 formation of a unified federal nation-state. Within this context, one must examine a newspaper's interpretation of the 1880 Federal Singing Festival in Zurich as one of the "most idealistic folk festival[s] that we have," crucial for maintaining the always fragile "republican harmony."[33]

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27 Erne and Gull, "Verein."
28 See Evéquoz and Camp, *Vereinswesen*, 2.
29 Anderson, *Imagined Communities*.
30 Capitani, "Eidgenössische Feste."
31 Leuthy, *Beschreibung des ersten eidgenössischen Sängerfestes*, 106.
32 Ibid., 55.
33 "Eidg. Sängerfest in Zürich", 1.

The entwinement of the emerging association system and national rhetoric featured in political disputes and confrontations but also had a lasting influence on music, literature, and the visual arts.[34] In this context, Hans Georg Nägeli's (1773-1836) achievements were just as decisive in the construction and fostering of an imagined nation as, for instance, Gottfried Keller's (1819-1890) literary output and Ferdinand Hodler's (1853-1918) contribution to the visualization of a national identity.

Although the role of singing in general and in schools, which constituted the primary focus of the theories of Nägeli and Heinrich Pestalozzi (1746-1827)—the Swiss reformer of public education—, has been studied to the same extent as the political involvement of Nägeli's music writings in nineteenth-century music education in Switzerland,[35] the recognition of the nation-building qualities and the citizen-making mechanisms of these initiatives have been discussed only tentatively.[36]

The influence of Nägeli's writings and compositions as well as lasting furtherance of choral singing can hardly be overestimated. Therefore, it is no surprise that commemorations of his name and achievements pervaded the Federal Singing Festivals' speeches and toasts, as did his music and iconography. Nägeli's monument, which was erected in Zurich in 1848,[37] appears on the right side of the entrance card of the 1858 Zurich event (Figure 5). The card also includes the first two lines of the enormously popular song "Freut euch des Lebens" on the left. This song was an icon of the nineteenth-century choir movement and persistently considered an original composition by Nägeli. However, he composed only an arrangement, which was published in a highly successful print, that ultimately circulated all over the world in various translations.[38]

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34 For further details, see Baldassarre, "'Vater Nägeli'"; Roner, *Autonome Kunst als gesellschaftliche Praxis*; Staehelin, *Hans Georg Nägeli*.

35 Tröhler, "Die helvetischen Schulmeister"; Tröhler, "Curriculum History"; Tröhler, "Singen als Alchemie zur menschlichen Tugend."

36 Tröhler, Popkewitz, and Labaree, *Schooling and the Making of Citizens*.

37 For further details, see Baldassarre, "'Vater Nägeli'."

38 The extremely catchy original melody of the song was composed by Isaac Hirzel (1756-1833), who incorporated musical material of a piece for the flute by Friedrich Hermann Graf (1727-1797) and a composition by Luigi Borghi (ca.1745-ca.1806). For further information on the song and its international reception, see Walter, "Miszellen zu 'Freut euch des Lebens'"; Baldassarre, "'Vater Nägeli'", 57–59.
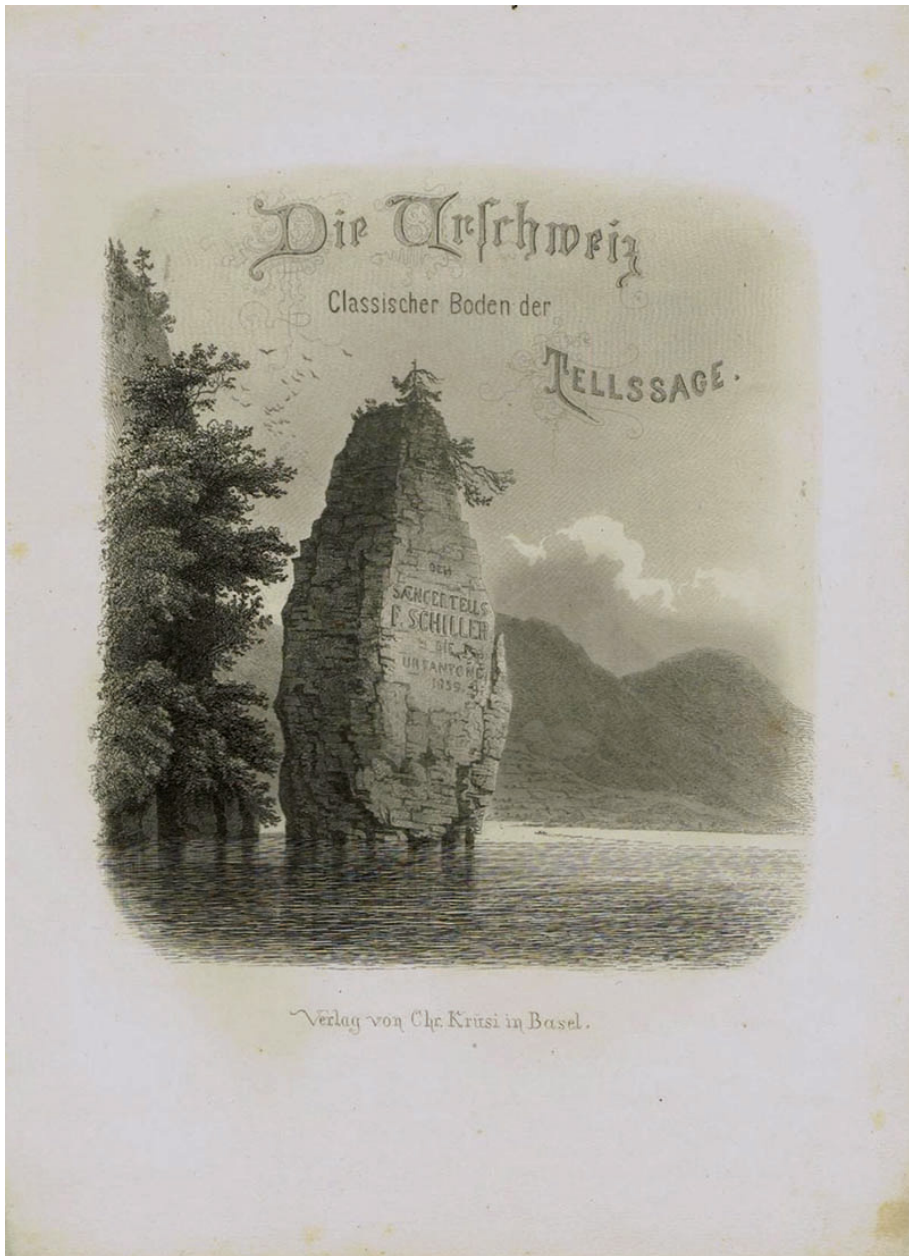
Figure 5 Federal Singing Festival Zurich 1858, entrance card, lithograph, 9.2 x 14.4 cm, printed Orell, Füssli & Cie., Zurich. Zurich: Stadtarchiv Zürich, Männerchor Zürich, Vereinsarchiv, 7, 7.2.

Some thirty years later, at the 1880 Federal Singing Festival held again in Zurich, the painter and illustrator Johann Friedrich Boscovits (1845-1918) produced a caricature for *Nebelspalter* (a Swiss satirical magazine founded in 1875) in which a portrait of Nägeli appears (Figure 6). The center-right placement communicates his unique status as the nation's "singer-father"[39] owing to his enduring influence on choral singing. Nevertheless, in 1850 the acting chair of the jury of the federal festival in Lucerne, the widely esteemed Swiss composer Franz Xaver Schnyder von Wartensee (1786-1868), felt it necessary to remind the singers not to neglect the humble and healthy songs, namely, the compositions of Nägeli, and to prioritize unpretentious yet artful singing.[40] In line

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39 Nägeli has been acclaimed the nation's "singer-father" in countless and not only music-related publications since the nineteenth century, see, for example: Fest-Comite, *Das Eidgenössische Sängerfest zu Zürich 1858*, 14; Sieber, *Karl Friedrich Zelter und der deutsche Männergesang*, 14; "Correspondenz-Nachrichten aus der Schweiz", 260; Zellweger, *Der Kanton Appenzell*, 187; and in Koch von Berneck's travel guide Nägeli is even honored as the "Orpheus of Switzerland" ("Orpheus der Schweiz"), Koch von Berneck, *In dreissig Tagen durch die Schweiz*, 107.

40 Address of Franz Xaver Schnyder von Wartensee on the occasion of the award ceremony, in Central-Comite Eidgenössischer Sängerverein, *Das eidgenössische Sängerfest in Luzern*, 37–40.

Figure 6 Johann Friedrich Boscovits (1845-1918), Federal Singing Festival Zurich 1880, caricature, lithograph, printer C. Knüsli Zürich, 44.2 x 59.0 cm, published in *Nebelspalter*. Zurich: Zentralbibliothek, Graphische Sammlung und Fotoarchiv, CC0 1.0.

with Nägeli's conception of the community-building power of singing, Schnyder von Wartensee claims that, of all the arts, only singing can "be grasped and mastered by an entire people."[41]

In 1861, Gottfried Keller published *Das Fähnlein der sieben Aufrechten*, a remarkable literary portrait of the Federal Shooting Association as a vehicle of national identity and a vital instrument for preserving direct democracy in the young Swiss federal state.[42] In the same year, he published the essay *Am Mythenstein*,[43] written on the occasion of the inauguration of the national monument *Schillerstein* (also known as *Mythenstein*) on October 21, 1860. This monument is a rock that rises from Lake Lucerne and that the so-called three Urkantone (the founding cantons of the Old Swiss Confederacy) endowed and dedicated to

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41 Ibid., 38.
42 Keller, *Das Fähnlein der sieben Aufrechten*.
43 Keller, "Am Mythenstein."

Figure 7 Kaspar Ulrich Huber (1825-1882), *Schillerdenkmal*, steel engraving, lithography, 32.0 x 23.0 cm, frontispiece of Eduard Osenbrüggen, *Die Urschweiz. Classischer Boden der Tellssage verherrlicht durch Schillers Freiheitssang*. Basel: Krüsi, 1872 (2nd ed.). Beromünster: Haus zum Dolder, library signature: D.HGs.303.

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Friedrich Schiller (1759-1805) on the centenary of his birth (Figure 7). Schiller, the German poet who established the Swiss founding myth in world literature,[44] was eventually transformed and appropriated as a Swiss national poet in the mid-nineteenth century based on a rather complex reception history[45] in which also Keller played a major role.[46] Both the inauguration of the monument and the monument itself played a significant role in strengthening national identity and is part of the nineteenth-century development of a specific festive culture whose common goal was "the articulation and demonstration of a national political will."[47]

In *Am Mythenstein*, Keller creates a stunning image of a group of singing individuals transforming into a collective singing whole. The transformation process is—as Keller argues—not only an expression and mise-en-scène of a "sublime patriotic festiveness," but also the foundation of a "national aesthetics," which he understands as a work of art that "goes hand in hand with the people's spirit" and simultaneously arises "out of the same."[48] The vocal performance Keller witnessed during the inauguration ceremony triggered reflection on the specifically Swiss conditions of an "authentic" Swiss national theater festival freed of the contemporary degenerate and corrupt theater culture as assumed by Keller.[49] In *Am Mythenstein*, the singing community and its performance symbolize the imagined Swiss national and patriotic community (as much as the crowds that gather for gymnastic and shooting events).[50] In this context, it is no surprise that Keller contributed to the 1858 Federal Singing Festival in his home city of Zurich. His poem *Sängergruß auf das Eidgenössische Sängerfest in Zürich 1858* (*Singer's greeting to the Federal Singing Festival in Zurich 1858*) (Figure 8) was set to music for male choir by Wilhelm Baumgartner (1820-1867), a Swiss cho-

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44 Schiller, *Wilhelm Tell*. The drama was premiered at the Court Theater of Weimar on March 17, 1804.
45 Zeller, "Schiller-Rezeption in der Schweiz."
46 Locher, "Das Schiller-Bild Gottfried Kellers"; Fiedler, *Konstruktion und Fiktion der Nation*, 215–16.
47 Fiedler, *Konstruktion und Fiktion der Nation*, 183.
48 Keller, "Am Mythenstein", 344–45.
49 See Keller, "Prolog zu einer Theatereröffnung."
50 Interestingly, Keller treats choral music in his famous and partly autobiographical novel *Der grüne Heinrich* in a remarkably similar manner. This novel was first published with Vieweg Verlag in 1855, and again in 1879 in a considerably revised version with G. J. Göschen'sche Verlagsbuchhandlung.

Figure 8 Gottfried Keller (1819-1890), Wilhelm Baumgartner (1820-1867), *Sängergruß auf das Eidgenössische Sängerfest in Zürich 1858 gedichtet von Gottfried Keller für Männerchor componiert von Wilhelm Baumgartner.* Zurich: Hug, 1858.

ral conductor, pianist, and composer who was one of Richard Wagner's closest confidants during the latter's exile in Zurich from 1849 to 1859.[51] Keller's high reputation among the Federal Singing Association, probably because of his liberal and cosmopolitan patriotism, is strikingly evidenced by the Association awarding him an honorary membership at the 1862 festival in Chur. He thanked the Association with the *Becherlied* (*Cup Song*), which Agathon Billeter (1834-1881) set to music.[52]

Equally relevant here is Ferdinand Hodler, who uniquely shaped the image and self-image of federal Switzerland in his paintings. *Le Grütli modern* (*The modern Grütli*, Figure 9), 1887-1888, for instance, constitutes a striking example of nation-building imaginary.

The canvas depicts the 1887 Federal Shooting Festival held in Geneva. It references one of the core mythical foundation narratives of Swiss

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51 Concerning the Baumgartner–Wagner relationship, see Wagner, *Briefe an Willhelm Baumgartner.*

52 Thomann, *Der Eidgenössische Sängerverein*, 61. For more information about the 1862 Federal Singing Festival in Chur, see Cherbuliez, *Vom eidgenössischen Sängerfest in Chur 1862.*

Figure 9 Ferdinand Hodler (1853-1918), *Le Grütli modern*, 1887-1888, oil on canvas, 100.0 x 131.0 cm. Geneva: Musée d'art et d'histoire, Dépôt de la Fondation Gottfried Keller (inv.-no.: 1911-0001).

nation-building, i.e., the Rütli Oath, iconographically documented since the mid-sixteenth century[53] in artifacts and artworks for which instance the so-called "Bundestaler" of ca. 1546 (Figure 10) by the Zurich medalist Jakob Stampfer (1505/06-1597) provides an example.[54]

It is assumed (or, better, imagined) that the Rütli Oath was performed at the foundation of the Old Swiss Confederacy by the representatives of the three founding cantons Uri, Schwyz, and Unterwalden. These figures were, respectively, the legendary trio of the Confederates of Werner Stauffacher of Schwyz, Walter Fürst of Uri, and Arnold von Melchtal of Unterwalden. Depending on the source, it is believed that this event occurred in 1307 or 1291 at Rütli, a meadow above Lake Lucerne near

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53 Further information about the iconography of the Rütli Oath and its political narrative(s) is provided in Maissen, "Von wackeren alten Eidgenossen und souveränen Jungfrauen", 286–90.

54 See Hahn, *Jakob Stampfer*; Gerber, "Medaillen zur Erinnerung an Schweizer Bündnisse", 239–40.

Figure 10 Jacob Stampfer, Bundestaler, front: Rütli Oath, ca. 1546. © https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/0/0b/Bundestaler_IS_obv.jpg (accessed December 23, 2021).

Figure 11 Johann Heinrich Füssli (1741-1825), *Die drei Eidgenossen beim Schwur auf dem Rütli*, 1779-1781, oil on canvas, 267.0 x 178.0 cm. Zurich: Kunsthaus (inv.-no.: 1989/0015).

Seelisberg.[55] The title of Hodler's canvas refers to the federal shooting festivals named "the modern Grütli" in the nineteenth century, and the painting's narrative is intended to promote a sense of national consciousness in the young federal state. In Hodler's canvas, the Rütli Oath is adapted for the modern age and renewed by the depiction of protagonists of different ages, origins, and statuses. Their handshakes in front of the official marksmen's hall present a patriotic and highly gendered act. As in Keller's novella *Das Fähnlein der sieben Aufrechten*, the male individuals shown in Hodler's canvas are transformed into one part of a collective whole, symbolizing the new Swiss nation by unmistakably referring to the timeless and iconographic tradition of the solitary male trio of the first Confederates. Stampfer's medal and the famous canvas by Johann Heinrich Füssli (1741-1825) (Figure 11) also depict this scene. In Hodler's painting, the trio is transformed into a male community

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55 Kreis, *Mythos Rütli*; Sablonier, *Gründungszeit ohne Eidgenossen*.

that is establishing a new law at the border of the valid legal order quasi by a social contract, denoting the concept of "diversity in unity," that Keller explained as follows:

> How diverting it is that there is not one monotonous type of Swiss, but that there are people from Zurich and Bern, Unterwalden and Neuenburg, the Grisons and Basel, and even two kinds of Basel people; and that Appenzell has a history of its own and Geneva another! The diversity in unity that God may preserve for us is the proper school of friendship.[56]

Notably, in the framework of nineteenth-century Swiss marksmen's fairs, not only shooting but also singing played a crucial role. This significance was particularly attributable to such singing's psychological dimension—confluence—and its directly felt bodily experience.[57]

<p align="center">* * *</p>

The emphasis on "diversity in unity" or imagined equality between a nation's citizens is central to nineteenth-century Swiss association movements and emerges from the political narratives in written and visual sources. These sources reflect vital attempts to express the Old Swiss Confederacy's complex political structure within a European environment ruled by a hierarchically determined monarchist or ecclesiastic sovereignty system. The most paradigmatic visual evidence in this respect is the new arrangement of the *Wappenkranz*, the depiction of the coats of arms for which, again, Stampfer's "Bundestaler" constitutes an impressive example. While the thaler's front (Figure 10) reveals—as mentioned above—the Rütli Oath, the reverse side depicts an outer circle formed by the coats of arms of the then thirteen cantons of the Old Swiss Confederacy, which encloses a smaller ring that represents the coats of arms of the allied regions and the Swiss cross in

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56 "Wie kurzweilig ist es, dass es nicht einen eintönigen Schlag Schweizer, sondern dass es Zürcher und Berner, Unterwaldner und Neuenburger, Graubündner und Basler gibt, und sogar zweierlei Basler! Dass es eine Appenzeller Geschichte gibt und eine Genfer Geschichte! Diese Mannigfaltigkeit in der Einheit, welche Gott uns erhalten möge, ist die rechte Schule der Freundschaft." Keller, *Das Fähnlein der sieben Aufrechten*, 55.
57 Hettling, "Das Fähnlein der Treffsicheren", 109.

the center (Figure 12). Crucially, the Swiss cross—which Stampfer is, presumably, the first artist to use as a political icon to symbolize the Old Confederacy[58]—is not symbolic of a "central power, [...] but the unifying idea of the 13 cantons."[59]

Figure 12 Jacob Stampfer, Bundestaler, reverse: Coats of arms and Swiss cross, ca. 1546. © https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/e/ec/Bundestaler_IS_rev.jpg (accessed December 23, 2021).

The persistence of the idea of "diversity in unity" and the unifying power of singing in nineteenth-century Switzerland is visually evidenced by a coin commemorating the 1875 Federal Singing Festival held in Basel. On the reverse side it depicts a seated Helvetia (the national personification of Switzerland) holding a lyre with the following edge

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58 See Hahn, *Jakob Stampfer*, 68. See also Marchal, "De la 'Passion du Christ' à la 'Croix Suisse'."

59 "Es [= das Schweizerkreuz] ist keine Zentralgewalt, [...] sondern gleichsam die verbindende Idee der 13 Orte." Maissen, *Die Geburt der Republic*, 264.

inscription: "Viele Stimmen & Verstand, doch eine Liebe zum Vaterland" ("Many voices & minds, but one love for the fatherland") (Figure 13).[60] In 1893, the medal for the festival, again held in Basel, bears the inscription "Kunst der Lieder einigt die Brüder" ("[The] art of song unites the brothers") (Figure 14).

Figure 13 Bronze medal, 1875, Federal Singing Festival in Basel, dim: 33 mm, 14.87 g; stamped F. Schwartz, Basel. Front: Basilisk with shield; Reverse: Seated Helvetia with lyre.

Figure 14 Aluminum medal, 1893, Federal Singing Festival in Basel, dim: 33 mm, 4.39 g; stamped A. Burger.

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60 See, in this respect, Ehrismann, "Im Chor vereint für Stadt und Land."

Johann Kaspar Zollinger (1820-1882), the State Councillor of Zurich, similarly expressed the sentiment of "diversity in unity" in a toast delivered at the 1880 Zurich Federal Singing Festival:

> It is true that we speak different languages and dialects, and if one hears someone from Basel or Berne or Zurich or Schaffhausen getting excited, one could argue about which of these languages, especially in musical terms, is the most beautiful; but even whether Welsch or German, there is, nonetheless, a secret sound that sounds through, there is a field of thoughts and feelings on which we all understand each other, on which, at the same moment, the most beautiful specific feature of our fatherland is expressed: diversity in unity.[61]

Furthermore, it is probably no coincidence that the 1848 Federal Singing Festival took place in Bern, the so-called "federal city," i.e., the de facto but not de jure capital city of modern Switzerland.[62] The choice of Bern made the 1848 Federal Singing Festival a highly symbolically charged, politicized event, given that the city served as the venue for the first meeting of the constitutional commission on February 17, 1848. Then, in only 31 meetings in 51 days, the commission prepared a draft constitution for the modern Swiss federal state. The draft was presented on April 8, 1848, and—with only a few amendments—adopted by cantonal people and governmental votes on September 12, 1848. Thus, while the rest of Europe was engaged in revolutionary uprisings or "failed revolutions,"[63] the Old Swiss Confederacy was surviving a civil war, i.e., the above-mentioned *Sonderbundskrieg*, and being transformed into a federal nation-state with a unifying constitution.

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61 "Wir reden zwar verschiedene Sprachen und Dialekte, und wenn man etwa Basler oder Berner oder Zürcher oder Schaffhauser sich ereifern hört, so könnte man darüber streiten, welche dieser Sprachen, besonders in musikalischer Beziehung, die schöneste sei; aber ob sogar Welsch oder Deutsch, es gibt gleichwohl einen heimlichen Klang, der hindurchtönt, es gibt ein Feld der Gedanken und Gefühle, auf dem wir uns alle verstehen, auf dem zugleich die schönste Eigenart unseres Vaterlandes zum Ausdruck kommt: in der Mannigfaltigkeit die Einheit." "Eidg. Sängerfest in Zürich", 2.

62 Schweizerische Bundeskanzlei, *Bundesstadtstatus der Stadt Bern*; Holenstein, "Die Hauptstadt existiert nicht."

63 As Heinrich Heine put it with regard to the 1830 revolution: "Eine Revolution ist ein Unglück, aber ein noch größeres Unglück ist eine verunglückte Revolution." ("A revolution is a misfortune, but an even greater misfortune is a failed revolution.") Heine, *Ludwig Börne*, book 3, 74.

The 1848 Federal Singing Festival symbolized the salvaged and re-newed federal brotherhood, "the settlement of the Swiss people in a new confederacy."[64] This agenda was articulated in the event's speeches, toasts, and music. For instance, the program of the main performance included two compositions for male choir by Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy; these were infused with a patriotic agenda: the famous Bacchus Hymn from the incidental music *Antigone* op. 55 performed under the title "Schwur der Männer" ("Oath of the Men"), and the "Festgesang der Schweizer" ("Festive Song of the Swiss").[65] The merging of political, patriotic, and artistic agendas at the Bern festi-val is particularly evident in the words of Jakob Christoph Schenkel (1820-1867), an influential politician from Schaffhausen and person-ification of the close relationship between male singing and liberal politics in the state and church of the period. When handing over the flag of the Federal Singing Association to the Bernese colonel and festival president Karl Friedrich Gerwer (1805-1876), Schenkel em-phatically uttered:

> Proclaim it loudly, thou Swiss men's singing, this victory of light against darkness! Out of the difficult struggle the union of the Swiss emerges new and rejuvenated, the old rotten building collapses, may its falling ruins cover a gloomy past forever.[66]

In such a context, it is hardly surprising that even the *Marseillaise*—the epitome of Western fraternizing music—was performed, as conveyed in the report of the festival's central committee.[67]

The manifestation and affirmation of brotherhood, community, and nation were also on the agenda of the next festival in 1850 in Lucerne (Figure 15).

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64 "… die Einigung des Schweizervolkes im neuen Bund." Thomann, *Der Eidgenössische Sänger-verein*, 44.

65 See Central-Comite Eidgenössischer Sängerverein, *Das Eidgenössische Sängerfest in Bern*, 37.

66 "Verkünde ihn laut, du Schweizer Männergesang, diesen Sieg des Lichtes gegen die Finster-niß! Aus dem schweren Kampfe geht der Bund der Schweizer neu und verjüngt hervor, das alte morsche Gebäude sinkt zusammen, mögen seine stürzenden Trümmer eine düstere Vergangen-heit auf immer bedecken!" Quoted in Elben, *Der Volksthümliche deutsche Männergesang*, 129.

67 Trümpy, "Der Freiheitsbaum", 121, footnote 81. Concerning the complex reception history of the *Marseillaise* as revolutionary music, national anthem, and forbidden rebellious piece of music, see Richard, *Les emblèmes de la République*, 197–224; Luxardo, *Histoire de la Marseillaise*.

Figure 15 J. Zimmermann & R. Wallis, *Festplatz, eidgenössisches Sängerfest Luzern 1850*, ca. 1850, lithography, image: 17.8 x 26.3 cm, folio: 22.2 x 33.2 cm; print: X. Meyer, Luzern. Zurich: Zentralbibliothek Zürich, Feste Sänger- und Musikfeste 1850 Luzern I, 1.

The choice of Lucerne as the host city is significant for the period immediately following the last Swiss civil war, the above-mentioned *Sonderbundskrieg* given that Lucerne played a crucial role in this conflict. The *Sonderbund* was founded in Lucerne on December 11, 1845, as a protective association aiming to safeguard the interests of the Catholic, rural, and conservative cantons against the increasing political influence of the Protestant, urban, and liberal forces that were striving for the unification of the Swiss Confederacy under a federal state. Indeed, the visual narrative of a propaganda poster issued from the Englin brothers' studio in Lucerne in 1845 leaves no doubt about the intentions of the *Sonderbund* (Figure 16).[68]

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68 The visual narrative is accompanied by an unequivocal explanatory comment: "Sie erfüllen eine heilige Bundespflicht, welche ihnen gebeut, jeden Artickel des Bundesvertrages mit gleicher Treu & Beharrlichkeit aufrecht zu erhalten & dafür Gut und Blut, Leib und Leben herzugeben, die bundesgetreuen Kantone." ["They fulfill a sacred federal duty, which commands them to uphold every article of the federal treaty with equal fidelity & perseverance & to sacrifice good and blood, life and limb for it, the cantons loyal to the Confederation."]

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Figure 16 Propaganda poster of the *Sonderbund*, lithograph, Studio Eglin Bros., Lucerne 1845. Lucerne: Zentral- und Hochschulbibliothek, Sondersammlung.

A temple-like edifice protects a stele with the coats of arms of the seven Catholic and rural cantons that had allied to defend cantonal sovereignty and the Catholic Church. Furthermore, a tiara, the Pope's crown, is depicted atop the temple, above which the Christogram glistens. In the foreground, a lion holds the federal treaty of 1815 and the broken fasces with the two important dates of the "Aargau monastery dispute," which

resulted from the 1841 abolition of monasteries in canton of Aargau that was created in 1803 with Aarau as capital city. Including the broken fasces is particularly interesting as fasces functioned, following the Skiluros parable, as a political symbol of unity and strength through united forces since the sixteenth century.[69] The reference to this parable can be found "on numerous popular representations, paintings, stained glass, stove tiles, *Neujahrsblätter* and medals"[70] well into the seventeenth century. In addition, the protective lion (generally symbolizing both Jesus Christ and monarchist sovereignty and courage)[71] conveyed a conservative and counter-revolutionary image of Switzerland, which could easily be perceived as an affront or provocation in liberal circles. It is likely that the Englin poster deliberately alluded to the *Löwendenkmal* (*Lion Monument*) erected in Lucerne in 1821 on the initiative of the Swiss Guard Officer Karl Pfyffer von Altishofen (1771-1840) in commemoration of the Swiss Guards massacred during the storming of the Tuileries Palaces in Paris on August 10, 1792 (Figure 17).[72] This monument caused significant indignation among Swiss liberal forces, leading them to disrupt its inauguration and attempt to damage it. Along with many other liberals, Ignaz Paul Vital Troxler (1780-1866), the famous and highly influential liberal Swiss politician, philosopher, and fervent champion of the Swiss federal state, regarded the monument "as the embodiment of the old monarchical order and a senseless glorification of mercenary."[73]

The choice of Lucerne to host the fourth Federal Singing Festival, in which 1,200 singers from 55 societies participated,[74] symbolized a form of national reconciliation understood as a "celebration of federal brotherly love."[75] In the official request letter of the Central Committee of the Federal Singing Association to the board of Lucerne's singing

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69 Further information is provided in Maissen, "Von wackeren alten Eidgenossen und souveränen Jungfrauen", 271–73.

70 "… auf zahlreichen populären Darstellungen, Gemälden, Scheibenrissen, Ofenkacheln, Neujahrsblättern und Medaillien …", ibid.

71 Jäckel, *Der Herrscher als Löwe*; Rubenson, "The Lion of the Tribe of Judah."

72 Meyer and Stüssi-Lauterburg, *Der sterbende Löwe*.

73 "Gemeinsam mit vielen Liberalen sah Troxler in dem Monument bloss eine Verkörperung der alten monarchischen Ordnung und eine sinnlose Verherrlichung des Söldnerwesens." Furrer, *Ignaz Paul Vital Troxler*, 238.

74 Thomann, *Der Eidgenössische Sängerverein*, 47.

75 Ibid., 46.

Figure 17 Bertel Thorvaldsen (1770-1844), *Löwendenkmal*, 1821, sculpture carved in sand-stone rock, ca. 1000.0 x 600.0 cm. Luzern, © foto: Beat Brechbühl.

association *Harmonie* (today *Luzerner Chor*), the following meaningful statement was included: "There is no more beautiful way for Lucerne to celebrate its concluded peace with the Confederation than with this festival of harmony."[76] In addition, in the official announcement of the festival that circulated among the Swiss singing societies, not only was love for the fatherland and the imagined national brotherhood emphatically stressed, but also—in the spirit of Nägeli's education policy—the special significance of music as a vehicle for community formation and nation-building. Consequently, "every federal singer" not only "knows that the art of music from time immemorial [...] is the most beautiful educational tool of mankind" but also "that the Swiss folk song is one of the most powerful bonding agents among the Confederates."[77] In this spirit, the singing competition at the Lucerne Festival turned out to be an effigy of a democratic civil society and a glorification of the unified fatherland.

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76 "Schöner nicht könne Luzern seinen geschlossenen Frieden mit der Eidgenossenschaft nach-feiern, als durch dieses Fest der Harmonie." Central-Comite Eidgenössischer Sängerverein, *Das eidgenössische Sängerfest in Luzern*, 5–6.

77 "Jeder eidgenössische Sänger weiss, dass die Tonkunst von jeher [...] das schönste Bildungsmittel der Menschheit ist [...] dass der schweizerische Volksgesang eines der mächtigsten Bindungsmit-tel unter den Eidgenossen ist." Ibid.

As outlined, the Federal Singing Festivals were, along with the Federal Marksmen's Fairs and the Federal Gymnastic Festivals, regarded as a "means of national education" and a "democratic part of the people's life."[78] In the festival's framework, singing was not intended to be part of an aesthetic education program but rather part of a sophisticated political plan to preserve the high educational standards of Pestalozzi and Nägeli. The statues of the Federal Singing Association clearly declare that the association's prime objective is pursuing "the awakening of sublime feelings for God, freedom and the fatherland, and the unification and fraternization of the friends of art and the fatherland."[79] Conveying and performing the "genuine republican spirit"[80] was the fundamental purpose of music making, not the music's aesthetics. Consequently, an anonymous correspondent of the German *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* felt, in a review on the 1846 festival in Schaffhausen, compelled to report on the festival's friendly and folksy elements as well as the patriotic aspects of the repertoire that the correspondent considered even more prominent than in the context of German singing festivals.[81] This may explain the reluctance towards and criticism of highbrow culture that prevailed in many Swiss singing and other societies, and the promotion of "naturalness" as an expression of the people of a free country blessed by God with numerous sublime natural wonders.[82]

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78 Leuthy, *Beschreibung des ersten eidgenössischen Sängerfestes*, 17.

79 See §1, "Der Zwecke des Eidgen. Sängervereins ist Ausbildung und Veredelung des Volksgesanges, Erweckung höherer Gefühle für Gott, Freiheit und Vaterland und Vereinigung und Verbrüderung der Freunde der Kunst und des Vaterlandes." Niggli, *Geschichte des Eidgenössischen Sängervereins*, 21.

80 Weber, "Das schweizerische Musikfest zu Schaffhausen", 24.

81 "Eidgenössisches Sängerfest in Schaffhausen."

82 See Leuthy, *Beschreibung des ersten eidgenössischen Sängerfestes*, 84. The coalescence of the idea of freedom and the particularities of the Swiss natural topography also played a decisive role with respect to nation-building processes and strategies of demarcation from the neighboring countries; on this subject, see, for instance, Zimmer, "In Search of Natural Identity"; Zimmer, "Forging the Authentic Nation"; Mathieu and Leoni, *Die Alpen! Les Alpes!*

Rituals are an essential part of nation-building and community formation. They contribute significantly to the ordering of life and the world; that is, every community continuously reassures itself of its values and norms and its existence as a collective body through symbolic actions. A central ritual performed at the Federal Singing Festival, as at all federal festivals, was the delivery of the Federal Singing Association flag to a representative of the festival's host, the entry of the individual singing societies and the erection of the *Fahnenburg*.[83]

The entry of the individual singing societies represented a highly symbolic process of transformation: the individual societies arrived with their flags and banners and gathered on an often clearly delimited fairground that they entered via a triumphal-like gate, as shown in numerous depictions (Figures 18-21). The aquatint of the 1856 Federal Singing Festival held in St. Gallen (Figure 21) illustrates the entry ceremony on July 13, 1856, and depicts marksmen and cannons on the left, spectators on the right, and the huge singing hall decorated with flags in the image's center.[84]

The ritual of gathering in one place and merging into a single group symbolizes the discarding of individual identity. In this symbolic transformation, the previous motif of the hortus conclusus appears (or is updated) in a secularized form, as it is transferred from the religious context of the sixteenth century to a form of political iconography.[85] The concept of the hortus conclusus is symbolized in the fairground by the festival hall, which was, generally, clearly differentiated from the "outside" by a sconce-like construction or other means of demarcation, such as a fence.

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83 Further theoretical reflections on the central rituals of festive culture in Switzerland, their reception and their continued existence in the twentieth century are provided in Schader, "Eidgenössische Verbandsfeste", particularly 360–84.

84 The cannon shooting formed a traditional part of the ceremonies. At the 1864 Festival held in Bern, 22 cannon shots were fired during the festive procession—one shot per canton (see Weibel, "Breitenwirksames musikalisches Festtum", 42). Cannon shooting was, however, not always welcomed. The Church Council of Zurich, for example, submitted in 1858 a petition to prevent disturbing cannon noise during Sunday services to which the organizers of the Singing Festival had to comply under the threat of police measures (see *Gesuch des Kirchenrathes, 14.07.1858*, Staatsarchiv Zürich, MM 2.141 RRB 1858-1889).

85 See Maissen, *Die Geburt der Republic*, 259–62.

FESTPLATZ.

Figure 18 *Festplatz eidgenössisches Sängerfest in Bern 1848*, 1848, lithograph, in *Das eidgenössische Sängerfest in Bern am 13. und 14. August 1848*. Bern: C.A. Jenni Vater. Aarau: Archiv Eidgenössischer Sängerverein.
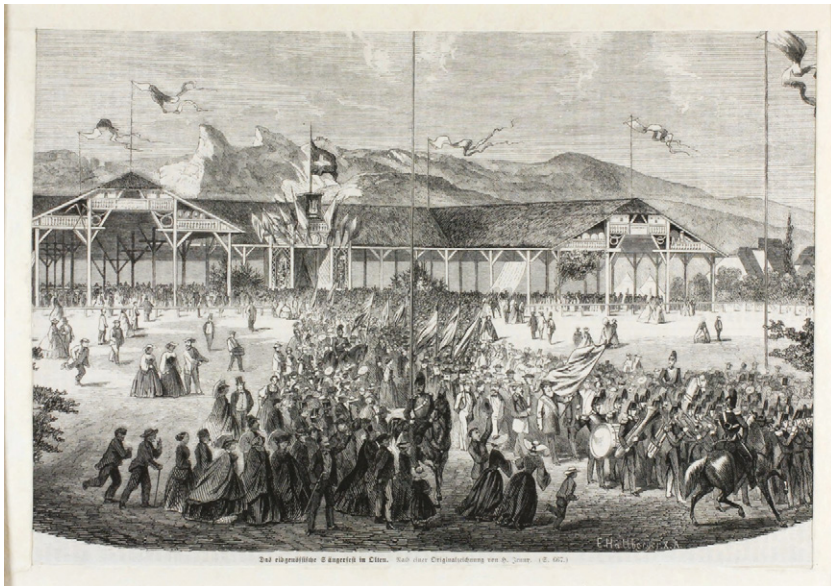
Figure 19 *Das eidgenössische Sängerfest in Olten. Die Basler mit dem Gnom Uto*, 1860, newspaper image, zincography, after an original drawing by Heinrich Jenny (1824-1891), 14.9 x 13.9 cm. Solothurn: Zentralbibliothek (call-no.: a0506).

Figure 20 Johannes Weber (1846-1912), *Der Festplatz des eidg. Sängerfestes*, 1880, wood engraving, 9.7 x 14.8 cm. Zurich: Zentralbibliothek Zürich, Graphische Sammlung, Zürich B1, Alte Tonhalle I., 4.

Figure 21 *Eidgenössisches Sängerfest St. Gallen*, 1856, aquatint, 14.8 x 20.8 cm. St. Gallen: Staatsarchiv.

The ritualization of "diversity in unity" was subsequently heightened by the delivery of the Federal Singing Association's official flag from the representative of the former festival to that of the current festival (a ritual still alive today)[86] and the erection of the so-called *Fahnenburg* (Figure 22; see also Figure 1). Here, the participating societies' flags were implanted—a performance perceive as a solemn act.

On the *Fahnenburg* was enthroned the symbol of the unified Swiss nation, either the Federal Singing Association flag or the Swiss flag—the white cross in the red field. Again, the flag with the Swiss cross represents "diversity in unity" and not the political dominance of federal institutions.

Thus, singing, masculinity, and the fatherland were inseparably connected and fused by feeling and the consciousness of a unified diversity. The leitmotifs of this unification were the fatherland and fraternity, which composed a testosterone-driven and imagined unity of men without a "libidinal bond."[87] Interestingly enough, Max Weber considered this specific "libidolessness" of one's action—that is, the singing within the framework of singing societies—to be one of the most significant contributors to the formation of "good citizens":

> a person, who is accustomed to let daily powerful feelings flow out of his chest through his larynx, without any relation to his actions, without the adequate reaction of this expressed powerful feeling in correspondingly powerful actions – and this is the essence of singing societies – becomes a person who, in short, very easily becomes a 'good citizen,' in the passive sense of the word.[88]

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86 This is evidenced by all reports on the 2023 Festival held in Gossau (SG). See for instance, Bolt, "Gossauer Trommelwirbel für die Fahne: Das Gesangsfest kann kommen."

87 Hettling, "Das Fähnlein der Treffsicheren", 103.

88 "ein Mensch, der täglich gewohnt ist, gewaltige Empfindungen aus seiner Brust durch seinen Kehlkopf herausströmen zu lassen, ohne irgendeine Beziehung zu seinem Handeln, ohne daß also die adäquate Abreaktion dieses ausgedrückten mächtigen Gefühls in entsprechend mächtigen Handlungen erfolgt – und das ist das Wesen der Gesangvereinskunst –, das wird ein Mensch, der, kurz gesagt, sehr leicht ein 'guter Staatsbürger' wird, im passiven Sinne des Wortes." Max Weber's speech at the first German sociology congress, Frankfurt/Main, 1910, published in Weber, "Rede anlässlich des Ersten Deutschen Soziologietages", 57.
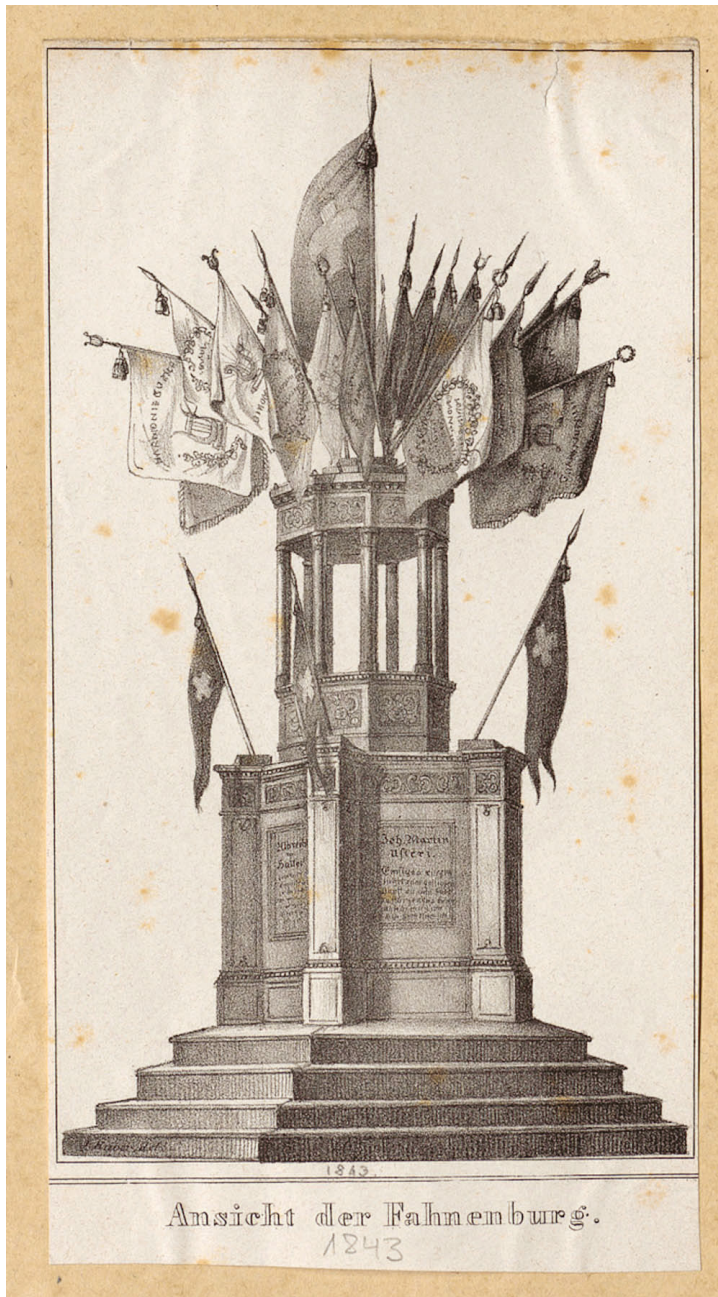
Figure 22 *View of the Fahnenburg, Federal Singing Festival Zurich 1843* ca. 1843, lithography, image: 17.6 x 10.1 cm. Zurich: Zentralbibliothek, Graphische Sammlung, Feste Sänger- und Musikfeste 1843 I, 1.

The agency of the Federal Singing Festival remained a utopia despite the emphatic written and visual declarations of nationhood and national unity, and despite the constantly verbally and visually invoked "diversity in unity." Indeed, the Federal Singing Festival formed an imagined nation of a masculine order, of chosen individuals, during the two or three days of the event. Only from 1868 in Solothurn were women included in the musical activities and allowed to perform an active and public singing role in the festival's opening ceremony.[89] The primary role women were assigned was that of silent spectators or background supporters in charge of, for example, the decoration of the festive hall or the production of flags of honor for the award ceremonies and giveaways.[90] First and foremost, however, women occupied the same role as in any other federal association: as wives supporting the male members as well as mothers and educators. These roles were unambiguously documented, for instance, in the toast delivered by a certain W. Küpfer on the occasion of the Bern Festival of 1848.[91]

Although the Federal Singing Festival provided the framework for acquiring civic qualities and becoming a good citizen, it neither desired nor could overcome the inherent contradiction between the unifying and utopian moment and the exclusion experienced in reality. Social utopias can rarely withstand social realities. The proclaimed democratic spirit in the Swiss association system appears to have been more of an illusion of social conditions than a reflection of reality.[92]

The Federal Singing Association, including its festivals, like the nineteenth-century Swiss association culture more broadly, was a masculinized alliance characterized by male solidarity, a bastion of the political system. Swiss politics was dominated by men until well into the twentieth century "not in spite of, but precisely because of excellently

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89 See Central-Comite Eidgenössischer Sängerverein, *Programm & Text zum 13. Eidgenössischen Sängerfest in Solothurn*, 15–16.

90 See, in this respect, the highly elucidating collection of poems as composed by the Basler Liedertafel for the "Damen Solothurns" ("Ladies of Solothurn") to express the association's gratefulness to the ladies awarding the performance of the Basler Liedertafel with their flag of honor. The collection, entitled *Den Damen Solothurns die Basler Liedertafel* (1868), is preserved in the holdings of the Eidgenössische Sängerverein in Aarau.

91 "Trinkspruch des W. Küpfer, Handelsmann in Bern", Central-Comite Eidgenössischer Sängerverein, *Das Eidgenössische Sängerfest in Bern*, 45–47.

92 For more information on this topic, see Baldassarre, "Der bürgerliche Wertehimmel über Zürich", 157–77.
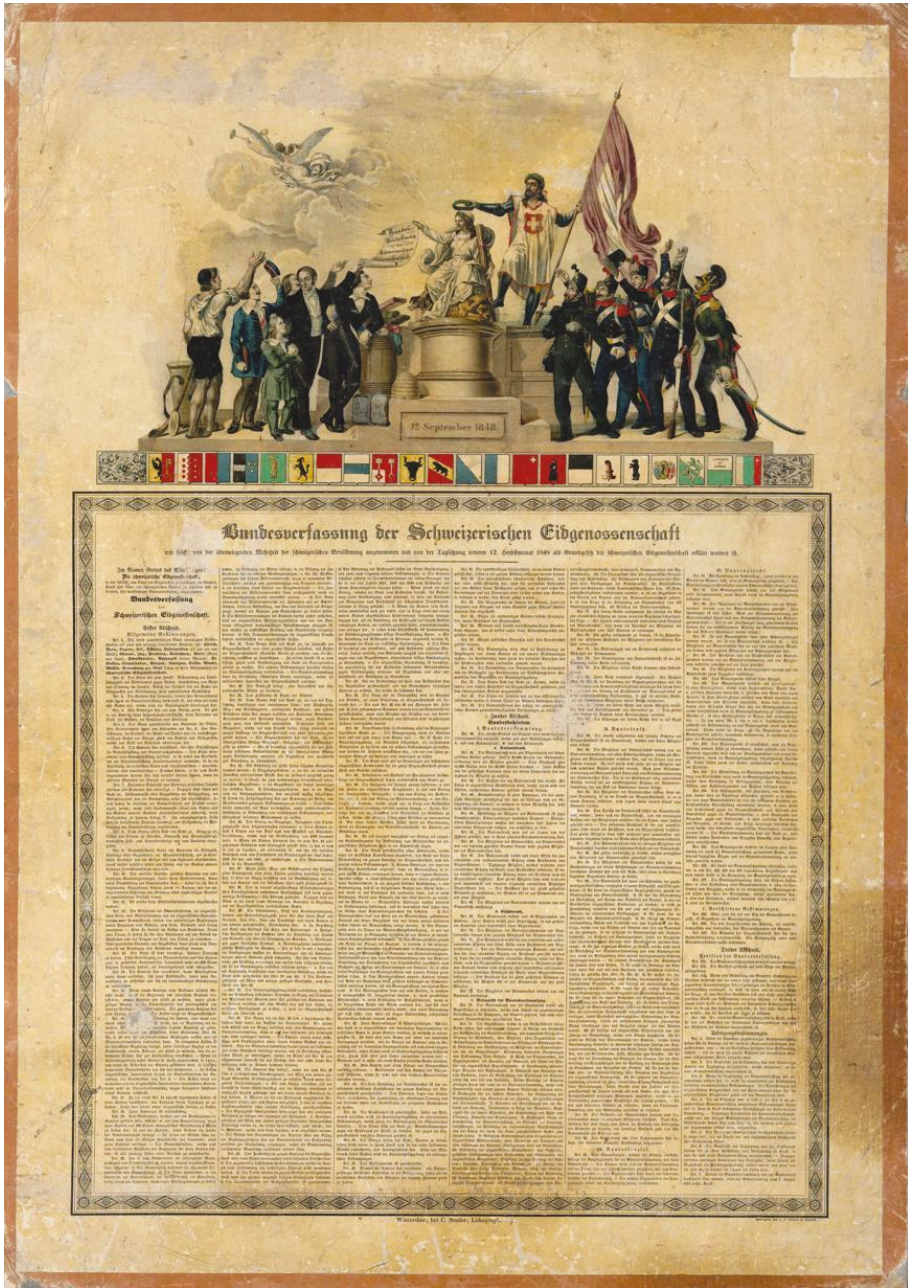
Figure 23a Commemorative sheet published on the occasion of the introduction of the Federal Constitution of September 12, 1848, lithograph: C. Studer Winterthur, print: J. J. Ulrich Zurich. Bern: Burgerbibliothek.

Figure 23b Commemorative sheet published on the occasion of the introduction of the Federal Constitution of September 12, 1848, detail, lithograph: C. Studer Winterthur, print: J. J. Ulrich Zurich. Bern: Burgerbibliothek.

developed democratic means."[93] Against a backdrop so defined by socio-political concerns, it comes as no surprise that the sovereign Swiss people depicted on the commemorative sheet produced on the occasion of the introduction of the new federal constitution of 1848 consisted of male citizens only, namely, military staff on the right, and, on the left, men in middle-class or bourgeois attire (Figures 23a and 23b). Equally remarkable is the fact that the allegoric Helvetia is crowned by a man who is identifiable as a representation of the Old Swiss Confederacy,[94] whereby the Old Confederacy and the New Federal State enter, as it were, into a marriage-like relationship. Within this relationship, the female personification of Switzerland embodies the polity in its abstract manner. At the same time, the man or men, respectively, represent the concrete political and military practice within the polity. This constituted a visual topos well-known since the early Western modern period. For instance, this motif is further exemplified by an illumina-

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93 Blattmann and Meier, *Introduction to Männerbund und Bundesstaat*, 7.

94 As far as the highly complex development of Helvetia as the personification of Switzerland is concerned, see Kreis, *Helvetia*; Maissen, "Von wackeren alten Eidgenossen und souveränen Jungfrauen", 286–90; Maissen, *Die Geburt der Republic*, 253–77; Maissen, "Inventing the Sovereign Republic."

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Figure 24a Anonymous, Representation of Helvetia courted by the European powers, ca. 1612, oil on canvas, 127.5 x 195.0 cm. Schwyz: Schweizerisches Nationalmuseum, Forum Schweizer Geschichte (inv.-no.: LM-65151).

Figure 24b Anonymous, Representation of Helvetia courted by the European powers, detail, ca. 1612, oil on canvas. Schwyz: Schweizerisches Nationalmuseum, Forum Schweizer Geschichte (inv.-no.: LM-65151).

tion of 1485 showing the Doge Marco Barbarigo (1413-1486) accompanied by a female figure who holds a banner with the Lion of St Mark and personifies the Republic of Venice.[95]

The abstraction of Helvetia as the personification of the Swiss state functions as the symbolical body of the state-forming idea of "diversity in unity," in a similar way to the, visually, extremely forceful example of an oil painting by an anonymous artist (ca. 1612). This canvas shows a woman (Helvetia) courted by male figures representing the European powers of the time, as indicated by the individual coats of arms (Figure 24a). The woman herself is wearing a headwear composed of the coats of arms of the thirteen Old Swiss Confederacy's thirteen cantons and the allied regions (Figure 24b).

Figure 25 Federal Singing Festival badges. Aarau: Archiv Eidgenössischer Sängerverein.

The value of the visual objects presented and discussed in this paper can hardly be overestimated. As "banal" objects, including the medals and badges (Figure 25), they were in everyday circulation and, thus, served as constant reminders to the citizens of their belonging to a defined yet imagined nation, particularly during the period between Federal Singing Festivals. Each citizen was reminded of their place and social role in the imagined community by essentially commonplace, yet nonetheless highly influential, objects that possessed an emotional power—paradoxically—not despite, but precisely because of, their banality.

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95 *Panegyric on Doge Marco Barbarigo*, 1485, fol. 1. London: British Library, MS Additional 21463.

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Appendix

The Festivals of the Federal Singing Association, 1843-1899[96]

1843, 25-26 June Zurich
   80 associations, 2,100 singers
   1st Prize: Sängerverein am Zürichsee; 2nd Prize: Limmattal-Gesangsverein;
   3rd Prize: Linkes Ufer des Zürichsees[97]

1846, 14-15 June Schaffhausen
   65 associations, 1,500 singers, including four guest associations from Germany
   1st Prize: Stadtsängerverein Winterthur; 2nd Prize: Sängerverein des Kreises
   Küsnacht; 3rd Prize: not awarded

1848, 13-15 Aug Bern
   80 associations, 1,400 singers

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96 Information is based on Thomann, *Der Eidgenössische Sängerverein*, 37–101.

97 Throughout the nineteenth century, the prizes were, in general, not awarded to individual choirs but to associations.

1st Prize: Sängerverein Harmonie Zürich; 2nd Prize: Sängerverein des Ober-
aargaus; 3rd Prize: not awarded

1850, 28-29 July   Lucerne
   55 associations, 1,200 singers
   1st Prize: Männerchor Frohsinn St. Gallen; 2nd Prize: Stadtsängerverein Win-
   terthur; 3rd Prize: not awarded

1852, 11-12 July   Basel
   40 associations, 1,400 singers, and Société chorale de Strasbourg
   1st Prize: Sängerverein Harmonie Zürich; 2nd Prize: Männerchor Frohsinn St.
   Gallen; 3rd Prize: Berner Liedertafel

1854, 16-17 July   Winterthur
   80 associations, over 2,500 singers
   1st Prize: Sängerverein Harmonie Zürich; 2nd Prize: Sängerverein der Stadt
   Zürich; 3rd Prize: not awarded

1856, 12-14 July   St. Gallen
   55 associations, 1,700 singers, and 14 guest associations from Germany and
   Austria; the festival hall had a capacity of 10,000
   Folk song repertoire—1st Prize: Männerchor Concordia Wil; 2nd and 3rd Prize:
   not awarded
   Art song repertoire—1st Prize: Basler Liedertafel; 2nd Prize: Sängerverein
   Harmonie Zürich; 3rd Prize: Sängerverein der Stadt Zürich

1858, 17-19 July   Zurich
   111 associations, 3,450 singers, and 500 participants of guest associations from
   Germany, Austria and France
   Folk song repertoire—no prizes awarded
   Art song repertoire—1st Prize: Berner Liedertafel; 2nd Prize: Basler Lieder-
   tafel; 3rd Prize: not awarded

1860, 7-9 July   Olten
   48 associations, 1,400 singers (the reduction in the number of participants was
   probably a result of the introduction of more stringent rules concerning the
   competition regulations)
   Folk song repertoire—no prizes awarded
   Art song repertoire—1st Prize: Sängerverein Harmonie Zürich; 2nd Prize:
   Basler Liedertafel; 3rd Prize: Berner Liedertafel

1862, 19-21 July   Chur
   47 associations, 1,800 singers
   First participation of a singing association from Italian-speaking Switzerland
   Folk song repertoire—mention of excellent performance: Liederkranz Burg-
   dorf, Sängerverein Horgen, Talverein Engiadina, and Männerchor Außersihl-
   Zürich
   Art song repertoire—1st Prize: Berner Liedertafel and Basler Liedertafel (ex
   aequo); 3rd Prize: not awarded

1864, 16-18 July   Bern
  100 associations, 3,000 singers, first participation of a choir from the Reae-
  to-Romanic speaking part of Switzerland
  Folk song repertoire—1st Prize: Männerchor Horgen; 2nd Prize: Ligia Grischa
  Illanz; 3rd Prize: Liederkranz Zürich; mention of excellency: Männerchor
  Altdorf
  Art song repertoire—no prizes were awarded, as no choir convinced the jury

1866, 21-23 July   Rapperswil
  55 associations, 2,000 singers
  Folk song repertoire—1st Prize: Liederkranz Genf; 2nd Prize: Männerchor
  Thun; 3rd Prize: Sängerverein Horgen; 4th Prize: Bieler Liedertafel; 5th Prize:
  Männerchor Harmonie St. Gallen
  Art song repertoire—1st Prize: Sängerverein Harmonie Zürich; 2nd Prize:
  Berner Liedertafel; 3rd Prize: Liedertafel Solothurn

1868, 11-13 July   Solothurn
  80 associations, 3,000 singers
  "... more associations from French-speaking Switzerland participated than
  ever before"[98]
  Folk Song—1st Prize: Männerchor Frohsinn Glarus; 2nd Prize Männerchor
  Langenthal; 3rd Prize: Sängerverein Horgen
  Art song repertoire—1st Prize: Basler Liedertafel; 2nd Prize: Männerchor
  Frohsinn St. Gallen; 3rd Preis: Männerchor Rapperswil

1870, 9-11 July   Neuchâtel
  54 associations, 2,800 singers
  Folk song repertoire—1st Prize: Studentengesangsverein Zürich; 2nd Prize:
  Männerchor Außersihl-Zürich; 3rd Prize: not awarded
  Art song repertoire—1st Prize: Männerchor Zürich; 2nd Prize: Chorale de La
  Chaux-de-Fonds; 3rd Prize: not awarded

1873, 5-7 July   Lucerne
  82 associations, 3,600 singers
  Folk song repertoire—of the 57 participating associations, 19 were awarded
  the rating "excellent" and 30 the rating "good"
  Art song repertoire—1st Prize: Basler Liedertafel and Männerchor Zürich (ex
  aequo); 3rd Prize: not awarded

1875, 10-12 July   Basel
  75 associations, 3,200 singers
  Folk song repertoire—1st Prize: Liederkranz Burgdorf; 2nd Prize: Männerchor
  Thun; 3rd Prize: not awarded
  Art song repertoire—1st Prize: Männerchor Zürich and Sängerverein Harmo-
  nie Zürich (ex aequo); 3rd Prize: not awarded

1880, 10-12 July   Zurich
  90 associations, 3,900 singers

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98 Thomann, *Der Eidgenössische Sängerverein*, 65.

Folk song repertoire—19 of 68 choirs were awarded "excellent achievement"
Art song repertoire—8 of 14 choirs were awarded a laurel wreath without ranking

1886, 10-12 July   St. Gallen
96 associations, 4,500 singers
Folk song repertoire—1st Prize: Männerchor Chur; 2nd Prize: Männerchor Richterswil; 3rd Prize: Männerchor Außersihl-Zürich
Art song repertoire—1st Prize: Männerchor Zürich; 2nd Prize: Basler Liedertafel; 3rd Prize: Berner Liedertafel

1893, 8-10 July   Basel
89 associations, 4,600 singers
Given the various discussion at and after the previous festival (St. Gallen 1886), the jury was expanded to three panels and a new competition concept was introduced: 1. Easy folk song repertoire (1st category); 2. Difficult folk song repertoire (2nd category); 3. Easy art song repertoire (3rd category); 4. Difficult art song repertoire (4th category)
Awards—1st category: 1st Männerchor Frohsinn Zürich, 2nd Männerchor Pfäffikon; 2nd category: 1st Männerchor Concordia Wil, 2nd Männerchor Wiedikon-Zürich; 3rd category: 1st Bieler Liedertafel, 2nd Männerchor St. Gallen; 4th category: Männerchor Frohsinn St. Gallen

1899, 8-10 July   Bern
95 associations, 6,500 singers
Awards: 1st category: 1st Männerchor Küsnacht, 2nd Sängerbund Wetzikon; 2nd category: 1st Studentengesangsverein Zürich, 2nd Sängerbund Uster; 3rd category: 1st Bieler Liedertafel, 2nd Männerchor Chur and Männerchor Luzern (ex aequo); 4th category: 1st Männerchor Zürich, 2nd Basler Liedertafel