

Troubles in the Rubble Petar Grujic's report on page 4 makes it clear what is happening to Yugoslav universities: last year while Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic was allowing his troops to storm through Kosovo, he and his far-right coalition partner Vojislav Seselj were also launching an attack on academia. A new law has stripped universities of their right to govern themselves. The victims are "opposition minded" academics—those opposed to the regime. As is happening to the Yugoslav press, it's a crack-down on freedom of expression (officially, a crack-down on "lies"). Science in Serbia, hit by sanctions, has not looked healthy for some years now. The present situation may finally choke it to death. Only time will tell.

Clockwise from right Les Curies France, Gauss Germany, Volta and Marconi both Italy



Goodbye€ to all that There are many different heights to which a physicist can aim: a laboratory prize, a respectable citation index, being recognized as an authority, head of a large facility, or even a society. Higher up the scale is the Nobel, for those with truly striking and powerful insight. But no achievement quite measures up to that of appearing on a banknote. It is an accolade reserved for "demi-gods", and is so high up the scale that it can't be achieved in a lifetime (correct us if we are wrong). These are the thinkers that have achieved the status of cultural currency, in other words they are well-known ambassadors of both physics (or astronomy *etc*) and their country. They can be answers to quiz questions, the subjects of many different biographies, road names even, and their portraits will appear in school text books.

The portraits that appear on the banknotes above are, as far as we can tell, those that will be replaced when euro notes are issued three years from now. They are to be replaced by seven euro notes which display only symbolic drawings. The bridge on the five euro note, for instance, is symbolic of Europe's architecture and single currency but is not, according to euro officials, a specific monument (although its resemblance to a particular bridge in France is notable).

These new banknotes will be the same across the land of the euro. One side of each new euro coin, in contrast, will be decorated according to the wishes of individual countries. So Schrödinger, who until April of this year appeared on an Austrian banknote, could one day reappear on one side of a euro coin. But if so, it would be at the cost of heads of state and the rest of Austria's heritage.

It is a small shame, but a shame nonetheless, that while in one great stride 11 European countries are more strongly linked and possibly more competitive, Europe's cultural and intellectual heritage is displayed on its currency in a weaker fashion. A physicist appears on a banknote when a country acknowledges their contribution to society. And this perhaps is something that does not happen enough.

The aim of Europhysics News is not to make money but to inform. It is, as stated above right, a magazine of the community. This means that it benefits from all contributions made. Please don't forget to send us an email this year. If you know that a physicist has appeared on a banknote, for example, let us know who and we will compile a list. Or just email us your thoughts on our magazine: eneditor@univ-mulhouse.fr

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The cover image is a ten-times magnification of a metal foam see page 17

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