

## **At the Intersection of Place Branding and Political Branding: Canadian Banknote Iconography and Political Priorities**

### **Abstract**

In 2012, the Bank of Canada began to release a new series of banknotes into circulation. Made of polymer and expected to last 2.5 times longer than previous versions, according to the Bank, these banknotes represent leading-edge technology and will expand the frontiers of banknote security. At the same time, compared to the previous “Canadian Journey” series, the overall iconography of the “Frontier” series has been noticeably changed. Over the course of their lifespan, more international visitors will be informed and influenced by Canadian banknote iconography than will Canadians. Throughout this article, I argue that the iconography of the “Frontier” series of banknotes is as much an expression of state power over a defined territory and its people, as it is a means to promote a particular view of Canada - both at home and abroad – that corresponds with the Conservative government of Stephen Harper’s political priorities and values. Considering that the Minister of Finance has authority over the “form and material” of the final design of all banknotes, I argue that Canadian banknote iconography is being used as an explicit means of political branding. In support of this, it is demonstrated that currency is increasingly being used as a means of mass communication more generally and through a quantitative content analysis of all banknotes produced by the central banks of Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa; I argue that there can be two different categories of banknote iconography, political and non-political. Not only is Canadian banknote iconography political, the overall change in the iconographic themes from the “Canadian Journey” series to the “Frontier” series is the result of a political transition from one political party to another and represents a visualization of the associated re-branding of Canada in the image of the Conservative party of Stephen Harper. Canadian banknotes iconography is controlled directly by the state, has been used a means of communication and political branding and now, as transnationalism flourishes across the planet, will become increasingly useful as a means of place branding.

## Introduction

In 2005, the International Banknote Society (IBNS) named Canada's 20-dollar banknote the "Banknote of the Year."<sup>1</sup> Released by the Bank of Canada in 2004 as a part of the "Canadian Journey" series, the note featured traditional artwork by Bill Reid of the Haida First Nation. At that time, the Bank of Canada had been in existence for 70 years and had issued a total of 42 banknotes of all denominations. This marked the first time that any aspect of First Nation culture appeared on a Canadian banknote.<sup>2</sup> With this iconographic choice, the Bank of Canada created a unique opportunity for Canadians to see First Nation culture on a daily basis, for them to ask questions and to learn more about First Nation's people of Canada's northwest and beyond. The political symbolism is clear, the government sought to formally include First Nation's people into the social fabric of Canada – to make mainstream what has long been ignored. Moreover, it perfectly reflected the values and the political priorities of the government in power.

At the time of designing the 20-dollar banknote, then Prime Minister Paul Martin was busy brokering an intergovernmental agreement involving the main national aboriginal organizations and the provincial and territorial governments. This agreement would come to be known as the Kelowna Accord.<sup>3</sup> By making substantial investment of \$5.1 billion over five years, the Kelowna Accord aimed to create the necessary conditions for aboriginal peoples to become full and valuable participants in the Canadian economy.<sup>4</sup> Though an agreement in

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<sup>1</sup> "Banknote of 2004," International Banknote Society, [http://www.theibns.org/joomla/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=78:the-2005-bank-note-of-the-year&catid=13&Itemid=51](http://www.theibns.org/joomla/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=78:the-2005-bank-note-of-the-year&catid=13&Itemid=51) (Accessed on May 30<sup>th</sup>, 2014).

<sup>2</sup> The Two Dollar Banknote of the "Scenes of Canada Series" released in 1974 features Inuit hunters.

<sup>3</sup> Lisa L. Patterson, *Aboriginal Roundtable to Kelowna Accord: Aboriginal Policy Negotiations, 2004-2005* (Ottawa: Parliament of Canada, 2006).

<sup>4</sup> Christopher Alcantara, "Kelowna Accord holds key to native renewal," *The Toronto Star*, Jan 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2013 [http://www.thestar.com/opinion/editorialopinion/2013/01/03/kelowna\\_accord\\_holds\\_key\\_to\\_native\\_renewal.html](http://www.thestar.com/opinion/editorialopinion/2013/01/03/kelowna_accord_holds_key_to_native_renewal.html) (accessed May 30<sup>th</sup>, 2014).

principle had been established, with the election of the Conservative government of Stephen Harper in 2006, the Kelowna Accord was never ratified and its memory slowly began to fade. In 2012, as a part of the “Frontier” series of banknotes, the Bank of Canada released a new 20-dollar banknote featuring the Canadian National Vimy Memorial located in France. Also in 2012, the Royal Canadian Mint released a set of five circulation coins to commemorate the war of 1812, one element of an overall War of 1812 commemorative advertising campaign worth \$28 million.<sup>5</sup> While American, Canadian and even British historians may argue over who actually won the War of 1812, all generally agree that it was the First Nations people of North America who lost. Simply put, they were no longer needed as military allies and therefore no longer considered as influential actors in the areas of national and international affairs.<sup>6</sup>

Rather than deal with the grave socio-economic issues faced by aboriginal people in Canada, the Conservative government of Stephen Harper’s focus remains squarely on the commemoration of Canada’s military history.<sup>7</sup> More than the War of 1812, “Operation Distinction”, mandated by Prime Minister Harper, will invest significant resources into the commemoration of dozens of historic military events through to 2020.<sup>8</sup> Ultimately, “Operation Distinction” is but one element in an overall campaign to disentangle Canadian national identity

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<sup>5</sup> Ian Austen, “Canada Puts Spotlight on War of 1812, With U.S. as Villain,” *The New York Times*, October 8, 2012, [http://www.nytimes.com/2012/10/08/world/americas/canada-highlights-war-of-1812-casting-us-as-aggressor.html?\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2012/10/08/world/americas/canada-highlights-war-of-1812-casting-us-as-aggressor.html?_r=0) (accessed on May 30, 2014).

<sup>6</sup> Rand Boswell, “Documentary ponders ‘betrayal’ of aboriginal dreams after War of 1812”, *The National Post*, October 9, 2011 <http://news.nationalpost.com/2011/10/09/betrayal-of-aboriginal-dreams-after-war-of-1812-pondered-in-new-documentary/> (accessed on May 30<sup>th</sup>, 2014).

<sup>7</sup> Susana Mas, “Canada’s aboriginal well-being efforts ‘insufficient,’ UN envoy says,” *CBC News*, May 12, 2014 <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/canada-s-aboriginal-well-being-efforts-insufficient-un-envoy-says-1.2639509> (accessed on May 30<sup>th</sup>, 2014).

<sup>8</sup> The Canadian Press, “Cost of ‘Canada 150’ commemorations comes out of military operations budget,” *CBC News*, March 14<sup>th</sup>, 2014, <http://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/cost-of-canada-150-commemorations-comes-out-of-military-operations-budget-1.2572425> (accessed on May 30<sup>th</sup>, 2014).

from the values that, for half a century, had been shaped by Liberal governments.<sup>9</sup> Accordingly, the Conservative government of Stephen Harper “has sought to bring Canada’s collective identity in line with the conservative principles that prevailed during its pre-liberal past, with militarism and monarchism as the main anchorage points.”<sup>10</sup> Featuring both a portrait of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II and a representation of the Canadian National Vimy Memorial, the 20-dollar banknote of the “Frontier” series will serve as an indispensable yet stealthy employed means to this end. On a daily basis and at the expense of Canada’s First Nation heritage, Canadians will be reminded of the importance of their military history. This shift in iconography however, has implications far beyond the national borders of Canada.

What of the way in which international visitors to Canada absorb, understand and learn from the iconographic images being represented on Canadian banknotes? In 2012, Canada received 16 million international overnight visitors, 15.6 million in 2011, and 15.9 million in 2010. Together this represents more people than the entire population of Canada.<sup>11</sup> Given that, over the course of a lifespan of any particular banknote, it is likely to be seen by more international visitors than Canadians it is imperative to consider the latter as an important audience for the consumption of banknote iconography. In recognizing this, one must consider how banknote iconography might serve as a means of both political branding and place branding. While it is natural to consider that the choice of iconography on a national currency is made

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<sup>9</sup> Yves Frenette, “Conscripting Canada’s Past: The Harper Government and the Politics of Memory,” *Canadian Journal of History*, no. 49, (Spring-Summer 2014): 52.

<sup>10</sup> Donald Ipperciel, “Le tournant conservateur au Canada et le nouveau Nation Building canadien,” *Etudes canadienne/Canadian Studies*, no. 73 (2012): 26.

<sup>11</sup> Canadian Tourism Commission, “Tourism Snapshot 2012 Year-in-review”; “Tourism Snapshot 2011 Year-in-review”; “Tourism Snapshot 2010 Year-in-review”, [http://www.tcr.gov.nl.ca/tcr/publications/2010/Tourism\\_Snapshot\\_Year\\_In\\_Review\\_2010.pdf](http://www.tcr.gov.nl.ca/tcr/publications/2010/Tourism_Snapshot_Year_In_Review_2010.pdf); [http://www.tcr.gov.nl.ca/tcr/publications/2011/Tourism\\_Snapshot\\_Year\\_In\\_Review\\_2011.pdf](http://www.tcr.gov.nl.ca/tcr/publications/2011/Tourism_Snapshot_Year_In_Review_2011.pdf); [http://www.tcr.gov.nl.ca/tcr/publications/2012/Tourism\\_Snapshot\\_Year\\_In\\_Review\\_2012.pdf](http://www.tcr.gov.nl.ca/tcr/publications/2012/Tourism_Snapshot_Year_In_Review_2012.pdf). (accessed on May 30<sup>th</sup>, 2014).

exclusively with a national audience in mind, what is left to wonder is the level of consideration given to an international audience and how certain iconographic elements might serve both the national and international political priorities of the issuing government. In other words, how, through banknote iconography, governments inform and influence by the process of image management. In recognizing this, it is surprising that few authors have focused on how banknote iconography helps frame the way that people actually “imagine” the issuing state. That is to say, how the banal presence of images that bear subtle value based messages effect the way in which people both identify with and perceive of the nation, not only among those who speak the same “common economic language” but among those who have little experience with or prior knowledge of the issuing country, those who are not members of the so called “imagined community”.<sup>12</sup>

The purpose of this research project is therefore to provide a critical analysis of Canadian banknote iconography as a means of mass communication, place branding and political branding. Though the main focus is banknote iconography, in certain cases iconography that appears on coins will also be considered. The first section, “Currency as a Means of Mass Communication”, outlines the important communicative power of currency, which is mainly, but not exclusively, achieved through the visual representation of themes by selected iconography. Considering that the most effective forms of communication are often those considered so banal and normal that they go unnoticed, banknotes are perhaps the best way to communicate a particular message over a long period of time. This section also provides examples of how currency is increasingly being used as a means of mass communication in Argentina, in Canada and in the United Kingdom. In Argentina and Canada subtle value based political messages recently depicted on their banknotes

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<sup>12</sup> Benedict Anderson, *Imagined communities: reflections on the origin and spread of nationalism* (London: Verso, 1991).

correspond with the prevailing political priorities of the government in power. Beyond iconography, however, there has been an effort in the United Kingdom to associate the resiliency of its currency with that of its economy. The second section, “ Power and the Choice of Banknote Iconography”, examines the merit of categorizing banknote iconography based on the locus of power over its final selection and design. Accordingly, there can be two different categories of banknote iconography, political and non-political. By comparing the evolution of banknote iconography between Canada, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa it is demonstrated that over a long period of time the iconographic themes tend to vary according to the category of banknote iconography. Flowing from this analysis, it is demonstrated that the change in iconography from the “Canadian Journey” series to the “Frontier” series represents a shift in political context brought about by a change in the political party in power. Therefore, Canadian banknotes are being used as a means of political branding. The third section, “Banknotes as a Means of Political Branding and Place Branding”, situates Canadian banknote iconography at the intersection of political branding and place branding and ultimately describes how the practice of using banknote iconography to inform and influence an international audience fits perfectly within the current Conservative government of Stephen Harper’s foreign policy focus on economic diplomacy.

### **Currency as a Means of Mass Communication**

In the introduction to his book *Mass Communication: Issues, Perspectives and Techniques*, Detrani suggests that the essence of mass communication has not changed in over six hundred years. Regardless of the medium, he insists, mass communication consists of conveying something to a large number of people in the most expedient and efficient way

possible.<sup>13</sup> According to Hewitt currency is “among the most mass-produced objects in the world, painstakingly designed for millions of people to use” and as such “a banknote is in effect an advertisement,” offering “an unparalleled opportunity for officially-sanctioned propaganda, to colour the recipients view.”<sup>14</sup> In cases where banknotes of the same currency are issued in varying forms by competing commercial banks, such as the Scottish Pound and the Hong Kong Dollar, banknotes are commonly designed in such a way as to advance the brand of the issuing bank. This is exemplified by the words of Harry Baines, then Company Secretary and Group Counsel of the Bank of Scotland:

...soon it will actually be a cost rather than a benefit to issue banknotes, in pure financial terms, but ... it's superb advertising. It's advertising in a way that no other of our competitors, other than our Scottish competitors, [has] any ability to do so it's very valuable to us, it's very precious to us and that's it. So that's why it's important to get it [banknote design] right.<sup>15</sup>

In the same way that banknotes issued by the Bank of Scotland serve as a promotional tool in a competitive environment, banknotes issued by central banks serve to promote the nation with which they are associated. The main difference however, is that the communicative power of national banknotes is more absolute as they circulate within a defined territory free from competing issues. Every Canadian and every international visitor to Canada is guaranteed to interact with Canadian banknotes and is therefore subject to the narrative that these banknotes serve to communicate.

Until recently few scholars have considered currency as a means of communication let alone as a means of mass communication. According to Lauer, this is because “physical

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<sup>13</sup> Jason Detrani, *Mass Communication: Issues, Perspectives and Techniques* (Oakville, ON: Apple Academic Press, 2011), Introduction.

<sup>14</sup> Virginia H. Hewitt, *Beauty and the banknote* (London: British Museum Press, 1994), 11.

<sup>15</sup> Jan Penrose, “Designing the nation. Banknotes, banal nationalism and alternative conceptions of the state,” *Political Geography*, 30, no. 8 (2011): 435.

circulating money is often taken for granted; it is ubiquitous and prosaic to the point of invisibility.”<sup>16</sup> Lauer therefore does not consider it surprising that some of the most eminent scholars of communication, such as McLuhan and Habermas have tended to overlook or simply glance over the mass communication function of money even while addressing the subject. In a similar vein, Eric Hobsbawm, in his essay on the mass production of nationalist tradition in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, only briefly acknowledges that money is the “most universal form of public imagery.”<sup>17</sup> Moreover, in an article entitled *Conscripting Canada’s Past: The Harper Government and the Politics of Memory*, which is a commentary on the political manipulation of the past in contemporary Canada, Frenette only briefly mentions the shift in iconography from the “Canadian Journey” series to the “Frontier” series as being of any significance despite the fact that the 20-dollar banknote of each issue are featured on the cover of the *Canadian Journal of History* in which the article was published.<sup>18</sup> More generally, this is also the case for a book entitled “Political Communication in the Anglophone World”, where the cover displays images of banknotes representing Jamaica and Tanganyika (now Tanzania) without actually discussing banknotes or currency throughout the book.<sup>19</sup> Lauer, for his part, considers currency as a means of mass communication for the simple fact that “the visual imagery of money is an assertion of the issuer’s legitimacy.”<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> Josh Lauer, “Money as Mass Communication: U.S. Paper Currency and the Iconography of Nationalism,” *The Communication Review*, 11, no. 2 (2008): 110.

<sup>17</sup> Eric Hobsbawm, “Mass-producing traditions: Europe, 1870-1914,” in *The Invention of Tradition*, ed. Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 281.

<sup>18</sup> Frenette, “Conscripting Canada’s Past,” 55.

<sup>19</sup> Theodore Sheckels, *Political Communication in the Anglophone World: case studies* (Lanham, MD : Lexington Books, 2013).

<sup>20</sup> Lauer, “Money as Mass Communication,” 112.

Nonetheless, scholars have tended to study banknote iconography from a historical, a geographical, a political, a social, and a cultural perspective.<sup>21</sup> These contributions have provided tremendous insight into the relationship between banknote iconography and national identity, more specifically how banknote iconography can be used to help construct and reproduce the process of territorialization, nation building and state making. Some argue that each one helps to reinforce and reproduce the other.<sup>22</sup> Ultimately, at the heart of every argument is the idea that banknote iconography serves as a medium through which messages can be communicated. In other words, more than simply being considered as a medium of exchange, a store of value, a measurement of wealth and a standard of deferred payments; currency must also be considered as a means of communication. As Gilbert notes, currency is not a neutral economic tool, as the economists would have it, but it embodies cultural, political, and economic values.<sup>23</sup> Banknote iconography, in effect, gives form to these values, which are then systematically transmitted across millions of people through countless personal, repetitive yet necessary acts of transaction. As one of the few instances of bodily proximity and somatic contact between social strangers, Mwangi describes the act of transaction as “a monetary recognition of a common ‘imagined community.’”<sup>24</sup>

According to Helleiner, national currencies foster national identities not just at the propagandistic level but also through cultivating a collective memory and nationalist culture.<sup>25</sup> This is because national currencies “bring citizens of a nation together in a concrete sense by

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<sup>21</sup> Eric Helleiner and Emily Gilbert (editors), *Nation-states and money: the past, present and future of national currencies* (London; New York : Routledge, 1999).

<sup>22</sup> Emily Gilbert, “Common cents: Situating money in time and place,” *Economy and Society*, 24, no. 4 (2005): 375

<sup>23</sup> Emily Gilbert, “Currency in Crisis,” *Scapegoat* Winter-Spring (2013): 23.

<sup>24</sup> Wambui Mwangi, “The Lion, the Native and the Coffee Plant: Political Imagery and the Ambiguous Art of Currency Design in Colonial Kenya,” *Geopolitics*, 7, no. 1 (2002): 35.

<sup>25</sup> Eric Helleiner, “National Currencies and National Identities,” *American Behavioural Scientist*, 41, no. 10 (1998): 1414.

creating a common economic language with which to communicate.”<sup>26</sup> Accordingly, national currencies have often been likened to national languages in that both serve as a means to increase “communicative efficiency” within the nation, thus permitting and reinforcing the development of national identities. In this sense, through its ability to reduce everything in the nation to a common “language”, a national currency enables citizens not just to communicate economically but also to think in a similar way and to situate themselves in common fashion within the national community.<sup>27</sup> It goes without saying that those who do not understand the common language may in fact pay more attention to detail when trying to interpret it. Indeed, the most obvious way in which national currencies encourage citizens to think in a similar way is through the imagery that appears on them.

Iconography on national currency is designed primarily for a national audience though in certain cases decision makers take into account the impact that the selected iconography might have on an international audience. Hymans, for example, describes the release of a new series of Japanese banknotes in the 1980s as “a conscious effort to signal Japan’s commitment to internationalization, a signal meant to be heard by both internal and external audiences.”<sup>28</sup> According to Mwangi, there is a distinction to be made between looking and seeing. He suggests that banknotes are not necessarily meant to be looked at for any length of time but rather are only meant to be seen as a matter of habit. His analysis of this concept in the context of the evolution of banknote iconography in colonial Kenya reveals that the East African Currency Board was quick to alter the iconography of its banknotes once it became clear that they were beginning to

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<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid., 1418.

<sup>28</sup> Jacques E.C. Hymans, “International patterns in National Identity Content: The Case of Japanese Banknote Iconography,” *Journal of East Asian Studies*, 5, no. 2 (2005): 329

be looked at more critically by native Kenyans.<sup>29</sup> Not only that, when the Board realized that the audience for their banknotes extended beyond the territorial borders of colonial Kenya they decided upon iconography that would serve to “forcefully insist that East Africa was part of the global economy.”<sup>30</sup> Hymans also emphasizes the international reach of banknote iconography in suggesting that money serves as a means of state legitimization both within and without its national borders. Beyond the national audience, then, it is important to consider the influence that banknote iconography might have on those who do not normally ‘see’ it out of habit, notably international visitors.<sup>31</sup> How does Canadian banknote iconography inform their view of Canada? Not only would all of these international visitors have used Canadian banknotes while in Canada, they likely took a moment to look at them.

Whereas banknote iconography leaves an immediate impression in the minds of international visitors, it has a more gradual impact on Canadians. That is, over a long period of time, iconography serves to manufacture consent among the population. This begs the question of how ordinary citizens absorb the messages being communicated and how they understand their relationship vis-à-vis this state sponsored expression of power? Lukes suggests that power is at its most effective when least observable and that consent is a psychological state involving some kind of acceptance, not necessarily explicit, of the socio-political order or of a certain aspect of that order.<sup>32</sup> The manipulation of banknote iconography is effectively an example of what Kozolanka calls “communication by stealth”. According to Kozolanka, “the entry of sophisticated communication-based strategies into a central position in governing and

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<sup>29</sup> Mwangi, “The Lion, the Native and the Coffee Plant,” 31-62.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid., 58.

<sup>31</sup> In 2012, for example, Canada hosted 265,000 international students. Citizenship and Immigration Canada, Facts and Figures 2012 – Overview: permanent and temporary residents, Canada – Foreign students present in Canada on December 1<sup>st</sup> by source country and Canada – Total entries of foreign students by source country, <http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/resources/statistics/facts2012/index.asp> (accessed on June 2nd, 2014).

<sup>32</sup> Steven Lukes, *Power: A radical view*, Second Edition, (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), Introduction.

campaigning blurs the line between the two, as well as the line between the political and the administrative arms of government.”<sup>33</sup> Therefore, whoever has final authority over the design of banknotes has at their disposal a powerful means of political branding and identity building.

An example of this occurred in Argentina where there was a conscious effort to produce a banknote that would not only serve to bolster the government’s legitimacy at home, but also send a strong message to the international community - one that is perfectly in line with its current governments political priorities. On the occasion of the 32<sup>nd</sup> anniversary of the Falkland War, President Christina Kirchner announced the release of a new 50 Peso banknote. On one side is an image of the Falkland Islands, known as los Islas Malvinas in Argentina, which are recognized by international law to be a British overseas territory. On the other side is an image of Antonio “El Gaucho” Rivero an Argentine folk hero who in 1833 was involved in the killing of five leading members of a British sponsored settlement on the Falkland Islands. In 1834, Rivero was acquitted by trial in London as it was determined that, at the time of the killings, neither a British local government nor a local judiciary had been established on the Falkland Islands meaning that the Crown Court had no jurisdiction over the territory. Thus, the legend of “El Gaucho” was born and Antonio Rivero came to represent the beginning of what would later be described by Kirchner as an “eternal fight” for the Falkland Islands.<sup>34</sup>

The Argentinean government has, since 1833, maintained its claim over the islands and has recently used the United Nations Security Council as a platform to broadcast it.<sup>35</sup> In 2011,

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<sup>33</sup> Kristen Kozolanka, “Communication by Stealth: The New Common Sense in Government Communication,” in *How Ottawa Spends 2009-2010: Economic Upheaval and Political Dysfunction* ed. Allan Maslove (Montreal-Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2009).

<sup>34</sup> Keith Perry, “Argentina to issue new banknote with Falklands map and snit-British folk hero,” *The Telegraph*, April 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2014, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/southamerica/falklandislands/10741713/Argentina-to-issue-new-banknote-with-Falklands-map-and-anti-British-folk-hero.html> (accessed on May 30th, 2014).

<sup>35</sup> Paul Vale, “Falkland Islands: Cristina De Kirchner Reasserts Argentina’s Claim Over Disputed Territory at UN,” *The Huffington Post*, August 6<sup>th</sup>, 2013, [http://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/2013/08/06/falkland-islands-cristina-kirchner\\_n\\_3714545.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/2013/08/06/falkland-islands-cristina-kirchner_n_3714545.html) (accessed on June 2nd, 2014).

China ratified its support for Argentina's claim, thus reciprocating Argentina's support of China's claim to Taiwan as a province.<sup>36</sup> In 2012, the Chinese Government sparked a diplomatic dispute with the release of a new passport that displays the outline map of China as including Taiwan and other disputed islands in the South China Sea.<sup>37</sup> In both cases, it is clear that officially sanctioned political iconography was used as a means of communication, as an expression of political priorities and official policy. To acknowledge this however, is to reflect on the potential audience in each particular case. The main difference between a passport and a banknote as a means of mass communication is that few Argentines will ever actually see a Chinese passport, not to mention ever actually look at it, whereas millions of Chinese visitors to Argentina will absorb the message that the 50 Peso note represents. When in Argentina, diplomats, heads of state, business leaders and visitors from around the world will constantly be reminded of Argentina's position over the Falkland Island dispute.

Meanwhile, just two weeks before President Kirchner announced the new 50-peso banknote in Buenos Aires, the Royal Mint in England announced that in 2017 it would introduce a new £1 coin said to be "the most secure coin in the world". Prior to making his official announcements in the House of Commons, Chancellor Osborn seized the opportunity to reassure the world of the strength of Britain's economy. He tweeted – to his 80 thousand followers<sup>38</sup> – a photo of himself holding the new £1 coin next to the budget box with the following caption: "Today I will deliver a Budget for a resilient economy – starting with a resilient pound coin."<sup>39</sup>

Far from the overt nationalist message delivered by President Kirchner during the announcement

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<sup>36</sup> "Q&A: Argentina's diplomatic offensive on Falklands," *BBC News*, June 14<sup>th</sup>, 2014, <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-latin-america-18424768> (accessed on June 2nd, 2014).

<sup>37</sup> "China passports claim ownership of South China Sea and Taiwan," *The Guardian*, November 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2012, <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2012/nov/23/china-passports-ownership-sea-taiwan> (accessed on June 2nd, 2014).

<sup>38</sup> George Osborn, Twitter, [https://twitter.com/George\\_Osborne](https://twitter.com/George_Osborne) (accessed on June 2nd, 2014).

<sup>39</sup> "New pound coin designed to combat counterfeiting," *BBC News*, March 19<sup>th</sup>, 2014 <http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-politics-26632863> (accessed on June 2nd, 2014).

of the 50-peso banknote, the message delivered by Chancellor Osborn was subtler and reflected the economic rather than political priorities of his government.

In Canada, the most tangible proof that currency is taking on more of a communicative function is that, in conjunction with the release of the “Frontier” series, the administration of the Currency Museum passed from “Currency” to “Communications.”<sup>40</sup> This trend is also visible with regards to the increasing prevalence of commemorative coins in general circulation. In both 1976 and 1988, the Royal Canadian Mint produced non-circulation commemorative coins to mark the Olympic games in Montreal and in Calgary but to mark the Vancouver 2010 Olympic games the Royal Canadian Mint decided to release up to “350 million” coins featuring designs related to the Olympics into circulation. According to Lawrence Cannon, then Minister of Transport, Infrastructures and Communities, “The Mint’s goal is to touch every Canadian with the spirit of the 2010 Winter Olympics Games.”<sup>41</sup> Similarly, in 2012, the Royal Canadian Mint announced the release of five commemorative coins celebrating the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the war of 1812. Following the Olympic tradition, this series was also released into general circulation. Then Minister of Finance Jim Flaherty, on behalf of his government, encouraged Canadians “to take this unprecedented opportunity to learn more about our history and to take pride in our traditions by collecting these exciting new circulation coins from the Royal Canadian Mint.”<sup>42</sup>

Importantly, according to the Royal Canadian Mint Act, the Minister of Finance “may determine

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<sup>40</sup> Ken Ross, “Head Office Renewal – Currency Museum & National Currency Collection”, Management Council Briefing Note, Bank of Canada, November 22, 2011.

<sup>41</sup> Royal Canadian Mint, “The Royal Canadian Mint Launches 3-year Coin Program to Commemorate the Vancouver 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games,” *Press Release*, January 26<sup>th</sup>, 2007, <http://www.mint.ca/store/news/the-royal-canadian-mint-launches-3year-coin-program-to-commemorate-the-vancouver-2010-olympic-and-paralympic-winter-games-5000084?cat=News+releases&nId=700002&parentnId=600004&nodeGroup=About+the+Mint#.U3owoXbGzEt> (accessed on June 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2014).

<sup>42</sup> Royal Canadian Mint, “The Royal Canadian Mint Announces Series of Five Commemorative Circulation Coins Celebrating the 200<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the War of 1812,” *Press Release*, <http://www.mint.ca/store/news/the-royal-canadian-mint-announces-series-of-five-commemorative-circulation-coins-celebrating-the-200th-anniversary-of-the-war-of-1812-15300010?cat=News+Releases&#.U3oxjHbGzEs> (accessed on June 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2014).

the design of any denomination of a non-circulation coin” and the Governor in Council “may determine the design of any circulation coin to be issued.” Considering that, the Governor in Council (i.e. the Governor General on the advice of Cabinet) may determine the design of any circulation coin to be issued; it is unlikely that political considerations were not taken into account when deciding upon the themes.

This is all the more unlikely when we consider how perfectly the War of 1812 fits into the Conservative government of Stephen Harper’s focus on the military. In fact, according to Cohen, the founding president of the Historica-Dominion Institute, the Conservative government’s commemoration of the War of 1812 is little more than “propaganda”, part of a campaign to “politicize history.”<sup>43</sup> Indeed, Canadians have shown a general lack of enthusiasm for the War of 1812, preferring in stead to commemorate events that are perceived to have had a more tangible impact on their lives such as the centennial of women’s suffrage or the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms.<sup>44</sup> Nonetheless, Taylor has described the War of 1812 as “a perfect war for politicians”. This is exemplified by the human figures that appear on the war of 1812 commemorative circulation coins: Sir Isaac Brock, Tecumseh, De Saleberry, and Laura Secord. According to Taylor:

The fact that they [those depicted on the coins] are, respectively, an anglo, a native, a female and Quebecer gives Ottawa’s marketing efforts the kind of racial, linguistic and gender inclusiveness that every government brochure, poster and ad campaign inevitably strive for.<sup>45</sup>

Ultimately, the War of 1812 commemorative circulation coins serve the same purpose as government brochures, posters and ad campaigns. In the end, their design and development resemble a marketing campaign whose purpose it is to promote the particular political priorities

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<sup>43</sup> Austen, “Canada Puts Spotlight on War of 1812, With U.S. as Villan.”

<sup>44</sup> Frenette, “Conscripting Canada’s Past,” 64.

<sup>45</sup> Peter Shawn Taylor, “1812: A perfect war for politicians,” *Macleans*, September 18<sup>th</sup>, 2012, <http://www.macleans.ca/news/canada/a-perfect-war-for-politicians/> (accessed on June 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2014).

of the current government. If this is the case for commemorative coins in Canada, then it is only logical that it would also be the case for Canadian banknotes. After all, according to the Bank of Canada Act, S. 25(4), the “form and material” of banknotes are also subject to approval by the Minister of Finance.<sup>46</sup>

April 30<sup>th</sup>, 2013 marked an important day for then Minister of Finance Jim Flaherty, then Governor of the Bank of Canada Mark Carney, and others involved in coordinating the launch of the new 5-dollar and 10-dollar polymer banknotes of the “Frontier” series. To the delight of many, Canadian astronaut Chris Hadfield – at a cost of over \$13,000 – unveiled the 5-dollar banknote live while in command of the International Space Station.<sup>47</sup> Also present was Chairman of the Board at VIA Rail Canada Paul G. Smith. On the new 10-dollar banknote is shown VIA Rail’s *Canadian*, which still runs from Toronto to Vancouver. On their official website VIA Rail noted that with the release of the new banknote “all Canadians will have an opportunity to carry a reminder of VIA Rail’s role in Canadian history, in the palm of their hand.”<sup>48</sup> Minister Flaherty seized the opportunity to praise the Canadian values represented by the new choice of iconography. “Canadians can be very proud of their new polymer banknotes,” said Minister Flaherty, “one can see not only the unique story that each of the five denominations tells, but the unifying theme that underlies them all – the profound courage, determination, and ingenuity of our nation and its people.”<sup>49</sup> For VIA Rail, it can be argued that the new 10-dollar banknote represents an amazing marketing opportunity, an advertisement in motion with a reach

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<sup>46</sup> Bank of Canada Act, Section 25, Article 4, <http://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/PDF/B-2.pdf> (accessed on March 9, 2014).

<sup>47</sup> Daniel Schwartz, “Bank of Canada unveils new \$5 and \$10 polymer banknotes”, *CBC News*, April 30, 2013, <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/bank-of-canada-unveils-new-5-and-10-polymer-banknotes-1.1373060> (accessed on March 9, 2014).

<sup>48</sup> “VIA Rail: A ‘Treasured’ Company” <http://www.viarail.ca/en/about-via-rail/our-company/quarterly-reports/2013-second-quarter/highlights> (accessed on March 9, 2014).

<sup>49</sup> Jeremy Harrison, (2013) “Bank of Canada Unveils New \$5 and \$10 Polymer Banknote,” *Bank of Canada*, April 30, 2013, [http://www.bankofcanada.ca/wp-content/uploads/2013/04/press\\_300413.pdf](http://www.bankofcanada.ca/wp-content/uploads/2013/04/press_300413.pdf) (accessed on March 9, 2014).

that extends not only to every single Canadian citizen but also to all international visitors to Canada. Not surprisingly, the Sr. Manager of Advertising and Promotion of VIA Rail was thrilled to learn that an early model of the banknote's design featured the VIA Rail logo.<sup>50</sup> One could only imagine that the value of such a visible advertising space, in monetized terms, would be extremely high. Indeed, VIA Rail will benefit from this exposure for as long as the banknote is in circulation and at the same time, the Conservative government of Stephen Harper will benefit politically for having granting it to them. Ultimately, the image of the VIA Rail's *Canadian* on the 10-dollar banknote speaks two different messages to two different audiences. On one hand, Canadians and international visitors alike might interpret the iconography as representing an amazing feat of science, technology and engineering realized thanks to the ingenuity of many Canadians (in addition to the tremendous work of thousands of Chinese labourers). On the other hand, Canadians will constantly be reminded that linear projects are a natural and normal part of Canadian nation building and frontier conquering. Considering that the construction of pipelines will continue to be a major political priority of the Conservative government of Stephen Harper, institutionalizing into circulation a map of Canada that is covered in straight lines will certainly have a long term yet unconscious impact on public opinion towards other linear projects in the decades to come.

### **The Power of Representation and the Choice of Banknote Iconography**

As a means of mass communication, banknote iconography has been shown to be an important medium through which central banks can promote particular national values and political priorities to both a national and international audience. In the Canadian context, both the iconography of the "Frontier" series of banknotes and the War of 1812 commemorative

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<sup>50</sup> E-mail Correspondence between the Sr. Manager, Advertising and Promotion for Via-Rail and the Assistant Corporate Secretary at the Bank of Canada, January 14, 2011

circulation coins serve to promote the political priorities of the Conservative government of Stephen Harper. This is not surprising considering that the final approval with regards to the design of both Canadian banknotes and coins rests at the ministerial level. This section will explore in more detail the design process of banknote iconography as well as the relationship between selected iconography and political priorities. In examining the evolution of Canadian banknote iconography in comparison with that of Australia, New Zealand and South Africa it will be demonstrated that while not all banknote iconography can be considered political, Canadian banknote iconography has always been.

In explaining the process by which banknote iconography is chosen Pointon suggests that selected imagery “is attributable to individual designers working to briefs issued by committees that are themselves answerable to governors.”<sup>51</sup> In response to this Penrose wonders whether the locus of power with regards to the ability of self-representation on national currency, what is an ‘official’ state product, ultimately rests with elected officials who govern the state, with public servants who administer the state, or with people in charge of the note issuing bank, which may operate independently from the state? He also argues that Pointon’s simplistic description of the design process overlooks the diversity and complexity of banknote production.<sup>52</sup> Penrose suggests that the power of representation can be deployed through three general processes: competitions, committees, and commissions, the former having “the greatest potential for openness and, thus, for allowing non-elite contributions to banknote creation” while the latter two are “more limited in accessibility and accountability.”<sup>53</sup> Within these general processes there are however many caveats to keep in mind; control over the final decision is crucial and

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<sup>51</sup> Marcia Pointon, “Money and Nationalism,” in *Imagining Nations* ed. G. Cubitt (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1998).

<sup>52</sup> Penrose, “Designing the nation,” 432.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*

sometimes all that matters are the interests of the individual or body being answered to. In trying to understand the motivation behind banknote design and production, understanding the political interests of the decision maker is necessary.

According to Penrose, the “closest established states get to banknote production is through the institution of a central bank and, in many cases, the bank’s independence from the state is established in law and jealously guarded.”<sup>54</sup> In situations where the bank’s independence, with regards to the design and production of banknotes is not established by law, the motivation behind the design of banknote iconography is deemed political. This would be the case if the final decision with regards to its overall design rests with a high level partisan official, such as a minister of finance. Conversely, banknote iconography is considered non-political when the final decision over its design rests with a non-partisan official, such as the governor of a central bank. Canadian banknote iconography is considered to be political. This is true for the simple fact that according to the Bank of Canada Act, S. 25(4), the “form and material” of banknotes is subject to approval by the Minister of Finance.<sup>55</sup> In the context of the Canadian parliamentary system, it is important to note that the Minister of Finance ultimately decides whether or not he or she wishes to consult with other members of Cabinet on this decision. When designing the “Canadian Journey” series of banknotes, the Bank of Canada had considered replacing the portraits of the Queen and the prime ministers with those of famous Canadian inventors and artists, but Prime Minister Jean Chrétien intervened in order to retain them.<sup>56</sup> Banknote iconography is also considered political in South Africa. In 2012, Nelson Mandela became only the second person ever to be depicted on South African banknotes. As is the case

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<sup>54</sup> Ibid., 438.

<sup>55</sup> Bank of Canada Act, Section 25, Article 4, <http://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/PDF/B-2.pdf> (accessed on March 9, 2014).

<sup>56</sup> The Art and Design of Canadian Banknotes (Ottawa: Bank of Canada, 2006), 96 <http://publications.gc.ca/site/eng/299636/publication.html> (accessed on June 4th, 2014).

for the Bank of Canada, according to the South African Reserve Bank Act of 1989, the form and material of all banknotes must be approved by the Department of Finance.<sup>57</sup> Despite general disillusionment with the ruling African National Congress, it is sometimes suggested that they continue to benefit from the “liberation dividend” - the deeply engrained belief that people owe their liberation to the party, to Nelson Mandela’s party.<sup>58</sup> It is perhaps not surprising that some have accused the Reserve Bank of South Africa for what they consider to be the political appropriation of Mandela’s legacy.<sup>59</sup>

Examples of non-political banknote iconography appear on both the Australian and New Zealand Dollars. In both cases, control over the design of iconography legally rests with either the Reserve Bank of Australia or the Reserve Bank of New Zealand. In fact, according to the Reserve Bank of New Zealand Act of 1989, “the Bank shall determine the denominations, form, design, content, weight and composition of its banknotes and coins.”<sup>60</sup> Another example of non-political banknote iconography is the often-cited case of the former banknotes issued by the Bank of the Netherlands. Before the implementation of the EURO, for twenty years Ootje Oxenaar worked with the Bank of the Netherlands as the principle designer for the Dutch Guilder. Initially Oxenaar was instructed to design banknotes containing portraits of famous historical figures that would not create any political problems, but over time he was given increasing latitude to personalize the notes to his liking, thus replacing traditional portraits with a bird on the hundred-guilder note and a sunflower on the fifty-guilder note. Despite the fact that

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<sup>57</sup> South African Reserve Bank Act, Section 14, Article 2, <http://www.acts.co.za/south-african-reserve-bank-act-1989/> (accessed on June 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2014).

<sup>58</sup> Azad Essa, “South Africa’s ANC in landslide victory,” *Aljazeera*, May 11<sup>th</sup>, 2014, <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/africa/2014/05/south-africa-anc-landslide-victory-2014510165856126664.html> (accessed on June 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2014).

<sup>59</sup> Jarod Sacks, “The new Randela bank notes bring the legacy of Nelson Mandela full circle. And not in a good way,” *The Daily Maverick*, November 13, 2014, [http://www.dailymaverick.co.za/opinionista/2012-11-13-randela-the-icon-re-imaged/#.U3fy\\_XbGzEs](http://www.dailymaverick.co.za/opinionista/2012-11-13-randela-the-icon-re-imaged/#.U3fy_XbGzEs) (accessed on June 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2014).

<sup>60</sup> Reserve Bank of New Zealand Act 1989, Section 25, Article 2, <http://www.legislation.govt.nz/act/public/1989/0157/latest/DLM200013.html> (Accessed on March 9, 2014).

the Bank President, who was ultimately responsible for approving the design, considered them to be “awful”, he respected Oxenaar’s professional opinions and was prepared to accept them as long as security concerns were accommodated.<sup>61</sup> It is difficult to imagine that those responsible for approving the final design of political banknotes would take such a *laissez faire* approach to the design of what is in fact a promotional tool.

In designing political banknotes, politically motivated decision makers, at the very least, will always ensure that politically sensitive images do not appear. This was the case for the “Birds of Canada” series released by the Bank of Canada in 1986. Ultimately, birds were chosen as the primary iconographic element because they were considered “a fairly neutral subject...that cannot be seen as promoting the interests of any particular group or region.”<sup>62</sup> Perhaps more overtly, politically motivated decision makers might choose certain iconographic elements that serve to bolster the image of the party or to inspire a sense of pride and nationalism. This was the case in 1954 when the Bank of Canada made a deliberate effort to decorate their banknotes with “a prominent Canadian dimension [...] by replacing the earlier allegorical figures with Canadian landscapes.”<sup>63</sup> To that effect, Gilbert has argued that the depiction of landscape on Canadian currency helped in the process of national identity building.<sup>64</sup>

In some cases, it is possible that both political and commercial considerations are given primary importance when deciding upon the final design. This occurred in colonial Kenya in the context of the Mau Mau Uprising when in 1958 the East African Currency Board issued a new series of notes that, according to Mwangi, “abandoned all tropes and symbolic associations with

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<sup>61</sup> Penrose, *Designing the Nation*, 432-433.

<sup>62</sup> *The Art and Design of Canadian Banknotes*, 81.

<sup>63</sup> Emily Gilbert, “Forging a National Currency: Money, State-Making and Nation Building in Canada,” in *Nation-States and Money: The Past, Present and Future of National Currencies*, ed. Emily Gilbert and Eric Helleiner (London: Routledge: 1999), 33.

<sup>64</sup> Gilbert, *Common Cents*, 375.

naturalism and noble savages and adopted an aggressively economic, indeed, capitalist reinterpretation of the nature of British colonialism in East Africa.”<sup>65</sup> Mwangi explains that this radical redesign was motivated by both political and commercial considerations owing in part to a fear that banknotes inscribed with Mau Mau propaganda were circulating freely among Africans and to a desire to advertise the economic productivity of the territory in such a way that might attract direct investment from the forces of global capital.<sup>66</sup> This example shows how political and commercial consideration can converge when choosing banknote iconography. What is not clear in this example is whether or not the East African Currency Board acted free from political intervention in deciding upon the design of its banknotes. According to Horvath, the central responsibility of colonial currency boards was to “de-politicize the colonial monetary system, leaving the monetary responsibility in the hands of the colonial center.”<sup>67</sup> Mwangi explains the important role that played banknote designers and the fact that the Board rejected an initial proposal in favour of depicting cash crops, but he does not detail whether or not the Board acted independently from political intervention. In this sense, it is difficult to determine whether or not these notes are to be considered political or non-political. Ultimately, it leads to wonder whether there is any relevance to such categorizations of banknote iconography at all. For it is entirely possible that an independent East African Currency Board acted in a such way that would promote political and commercial interests free from political intervention.

In order to demonstrate that political banknotes and non-political banknotes tend to display different iconographic elements it is necessary to compare the evolution of the iconographic tendencies of banknotes issued by central banks that are both independent of and

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<sup>65</sup> Mwangi, “The Lion, the Native and the Cofffee Plant,” 55.

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*, 56.

<sup>67</sup> Julius Horvat, *International Currency Arrangements and Policies* (New York: Nova Science Publishers Inc, 2006), 7.

influenced by political considerations. In order to do so, a method of quantitative content analysis of banknote iconography first introduced by Hymans in his 2004 article *The Changing Color of Money: European Currency Iconography and Collective Identity*, will be employed to compared the iconographic evolution of banknote iconography in Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa.

In designing his methodology Hymans began by challenging the conventional hypothesis on the nature of currency iconography which, he believes is exemplified by the work of Gilbert and Helleiner, co-editors of *Nation-States and Money: The Past, Present, and Future of National Currencies*, wherein they suggest that “policy makers inspired by nationalist thinking took full advantage of advances in printing technology in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries to provide detailed imagery of their vision of the nation on their coins and notes.”<sup>68</sup> The choice of iconography, rather than being the result of the pedagogically minded state using the issuance of money to promote national narratives, Hymans suggests, is “a bid for contemporary relevance and legitimacy, the state will select iconography that reflects the transnational spirit of the times.”<sup>69</sup>

Hymans’ method of analysis consists of coding human figures that appear on banknotes along a two dimensional typology of core values and ontologies that reflects the cultural shift theories of both Meyers and Ingelhart. According to Hymans:

“The first dimension of the typology is the perceived locus of social actor hood: i.e., are the main motive forces of history states, or mass societies/social classes, or individuals? The second dimension of the typology is the perceived principal *goal of life* – i.e., is it to

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<sup>68</sup> Emily Gilbert and Eric Helleiner, “Introduction,” in *Nation-States and Money: The Past, Present, and Future of National Currencies*, ed Gilbert and Helleiner (London ; New York : Routledge, 1999): 8.

<sup>69</sup> Jacques E.C. Hymans, “The Changing Color of Money: European Currency Iconography and Collective Identity,” *European Journal of International Relations*, 10, no. 1 (2004): 8.

honour eternal truths (traditionalist), or to gain security and welfare (materialist), or to pursue personal self-expression (postmaterialist/post-modern)?”<sup>70</sup>

In line with his hypothesis, Hymans claims that these “cultural shifts” would be reflected by banknote iconography in the following way. First, it is supposed that there would be a shift from depictions of actual or metaphorical actors who embody the state, to depictions of societal actors such as economics classes, and finally to depictions of individual non-state actors. Second, it is supposed that there would be a shift from depictions of godlike or ornamental figures in classical or antique garb (a reflection of materialist life goals), to depictions of figures involved in the ‘real world’ of politics, economics and social struggles (a reflection of materialist life goals), and finally to depictions of figures from a concrete time period engaged in the cultural or scientific pursuits (a reflection of post-materialist life goals).<sup>71</sup> These axes are reflected in Table 1. Finally, Hymans argues that according to the Inglehart-Meyer point of view, the bulk of banknote iconography should shift diagonally from the top left of Table 1 to the bottom right. According to the “conventional theory”, on the other hand, which supposes the state as a pedagogue uses banknote iconography as a tool, there should be little change over time with the majority of the iconography remaining in the top row of the table.

**Table 1 – Possible Iconography choices**

Goal/Actor	Traditional	Materialist	Post-Modern (or Post-Modern)
State	State symbols in classical/antique garb, classical gods, or purely ornamental figures	Historical heads of state, generals, other statesmen	Representatives of ‘official culture’

<sup>70</sup> Jacques E.C. Hymans, “East is East, and West is West? Currency iconography as nation-branding in the wider Europe,” *Political Geography*, 29, no. 2 (2010): 99-100.

<sup>71</sup> Hymans, “The Changing Color of Money,” 9.

Society/Class	Classical/antique imagery of mass class, sector or region representatives	Imagery of real-world mass, class, sector or region representatives at work	Imagery of real-world mass, class, sector or region representatives at play
Individual	Historical non-state actors from classical/antique era or representations of individual-level virtues	Historical non-state actors who made significant social or economic contributions	Historical non-state actors who made significant contributions to the sciences or the arts and letter

Hymans has employed this method of content analysis to support his cultural shift theory on three separate occasions, each time taking into account a data set encompassing all banknotes produced by central banks in a defined geographical area and time frame. In the article described above, Hymans constructed a database taking into account 1,368 banknotes produced by the central banks of the 15 members states of the European Union, including East Germany (circa March 2004) until the creation of the Euro in 2002.<sup>72</sup> Flowing from this analysis, he concludes that “rather than using their currency to indoctrinate the public with a set of specifically national values, European state elites have traditionally tried to use their currency to enhance their public legitimacy by embracing the values currently fashionable in pan-European society.”<sup>73</sup> It is important to note however, that the “shifts” described above did not occur simultaneously across all of the currencies analyzed. The iconographic representations on the British Pound, for instance, have evolved relatively slow in comparison to that of the Dutch guilder.<sup>74</sup> In a separate study, Hymans examines the evolution of banknote iconography for the 10 post-Communist

<sup>72</sup> Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, United Kingdom – The EURO expanded to include an additional 10 countries in May 2004.

<sup>73</sup> Hymans, “The Changing Color of Money,” Abstract.

<sup>74</sup> Hymans, “International Patterns in National Identity Content,” 322.

entrants to the European Union.<sup>75</sup> In this case, the dataset consists of 619 banknotes produced since the founding of their national central banks to September 2009. Hymans concludes that “the values and ontologies expressed on Central/East European banknotes have historically tracked closely with the trends visible on their West European counterparts” and that “contrary to the conventional assumption of a deep-rooted normative gulf separating the national identity discourses of so-called ‘New’ and ‘Old’ Europe, there is in fact a longstanding normative cross-pollination between them.”<sup>76</sup>

These studies indicate the value of contemplating the evolution of banknote iconography in both a quantitative and comparative context. In each case, Hymans analysis produced interesting and valuable conclusions on the purpose of particular choices with regards to selected iconography. Throughout these examples, however, Hymans often refers to “elites” without precisely determining who in fact was responsible for the final design of the notes. In a similar way, Gilbert and Helleiner refer to the state and to policy makers without explaining where the final approval over banknote design rests. In a study wherein Hymans take into consideration a dataset comprising of 71 separate yen banknotes produced by the Bank of Japan from 1885 to 2005 he acknowledges that that Finance Minister Watanabe Michio considered banknote revision his personal project and consulted exclusively with the Prime Minister on the topic. By locating the locus of power with regards to the design of Japanese banknotes with the Prime Minister, Hymans comes to the important conclusion that Japanese leadership used European banknote norms as a model in a “conscious effort to signal Japans’ commitment to internationalization, a signal meant to be heard by both internal and external audiences.”<sup>77</sup> In this

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<sup>75</sup> Bulgaria, Czech Republic (including Czechoslovakia), Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia.

<sup>76</sup> Hymans, “East is East, and West is West?,” Abstract.

<sup>77</sup> Hymans, “International Patterns in National Identity Content,” 329

case, despite the fact that Japanese banknotes are political, politicians decided to use their influence to harmonize the design of Japanese banknotes with European designs in such a way that would communicate their political priorities to a national and international audience.

Hymans therefore confirms the hypothesis of Gilbert and Helleiner. Banknotes can in fact be manipulated and used as a pedagogic tool should their final design be the prerogative of political forces.

Hymans method of content analysis will be applied to the Canadian context, where, as has previously been established, the Minister of Finance must approve the final design of all banknotes. The purpose of this analysis is to track the evolution of Canadian banknote iconography over time in order to determine whether or not Canadian Minister's of Finance have allowed Canadian banknote iconography to shift in accordance with Hymans hypothesis. In a comparative context, the iconography of Australian, New Zealand, and South African banknotes will also be analyzed. These four countries were chosen in part because of their similarities, all former settler societies under British dominion, but also for their differences with regards to the locus of power over banknote design. It will be shown that, with respect to the banknotes of the nations mentioned above, the general trends and themes in design differ between those considered political (Canada, South Africa) and those considered non-political (Australia and New Zealand). Banknotes in Australia and New Zealand, for example, are heavily adorned with images of prominent national figures other than political leaders; whereas banknotes in Canada and to an even greater extent South Africa tend to display political leaders and anonymous human figures. The main challenge in employing Hymans' methodology to compare and analyze banknote iconography is that it does not take into consideration images of non-human figures such as animals and landscapes; iconographic elements commonly featured on Canadian, South

African, and New Zealand banknotes. Hymans acknowledges the shortcoming of his methodology in this regard and wonders if ignoring “other pictorial elements creates a seriously warped vision of the iconographic messages being sent by the notes?” His conclusion is that there are strong reasons to believe that it does not.<sup>78</sup> This is surprising considering that non-human elements often represent up to half of the iconographic elements depicted on most banknotes. For example, of the data set of 619 banknotes issued by Central/Eastern European central banks used in Hymans analysis, there are 517 non-human figures depicted which accounts for 41% of all iconographic representations.<sup>79</sup> By considering non-human iconographic elements, this analysis will shed light on the ways in which both non-political and political banknotes are sometimes designed for the sake of political neutrality.

The database used in this analysis consists of all the regular mass produced banknotes of Canada, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa, starting with the founding of their national central banks up to May 2014. In constructing the database, the *Standard Catalogue of World Paper Money* served as an invaluable resource.<sup>80</sup> It is recognized that, to a certain extent, the classification of the iconographic elements on each note is a matter of subjectivity, though every attempt was made to ensure consistency. For example, despite the presence of multiple iconographic elements on the same banknote, classification was based on the primary element, that is the one most prominently featured on each side of the banknote. Moreover, images of the reigning monarch at the time of issue are considered to be representatives of ‘official culture’ as opposed to historical heads of state. It goes without saying that, in order to speak more generally about the potential difference between iconography chosen for political and non-political

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<sup>78</sup> Hymans, “East is East, and West is West?,” 100.

<sup>79</sup> Ibid.

<sup>80</sup> George S. Cuhaj, *2013 Standard Catalog of World Paper Money – Modern issues: 1961-Present* (Krause Publications, 2013); George S. Cuhaj, *Standard Catalog of World Paper Money, General Issues, 1368-1960* (Krause publications, 2012).

banknotes, a greater sample of countries would have to be considered. This analysis is simply to lay the groundwork and to suggest that there is merit in categorizing banknote iconography based on the locus of power and in taking into consideration nonhuman iconography elements. As a result, Hymans' previous studies on Western and Central/Eastern European banknote iconography could benefit from including these categories as variables. Knowing whether banknote iconography is political or non-political may provide a greater understanding of the motivations behind choosing certain images over others and may also shed light on the nature of the design process.

**Political Banknotes**

Canada									
Date of first issue in the series	# of notes	# of human figures	# of non-human figures	Actor			Goals		
				State	Society /Class	Individual	Traditionalist (classical)	Materialist (historical)	Post Materialist (culture)
1935	9	18	0	9 (50%)	9 (50%)	0	9 (50%)	2 (11%)	7 (39%)
1937	8	16	0	8 (50%)	8(50%)	0	8 (50%)	2(12.5%)	6 (37.5)
1954	8	8	8	8 (100%)	0	0	0	0	8 (100%)
1969	7	10	4	8 (80%)	2 (20%)	0	0	6 (60%)	4 (40%)
1986	7	7	7	7 (100%)	0	0	0	4 (57%)	3 (43%)
2004	5	9	1	7 (78%)	1 (11%)	1 (11%)	0	3 (30%)	7 (70%)
2013	5	8	2	5 (62.5%)	2 (25%)	1(12.5%)	1(12.5%)	2 (25%)	5(62.5%)
Total	49	76	22	52(67.5%)	22(28.5%)	3 (4%)	18 (23%)	22 (29%)	37 (48%)

South Africa									
Date of first issue in the series	# of notes	# of human figures	# of non-human figures	Actor			Goals		
				State	Society /Class	Individual	Traditionalist (classical)	Materialist (historical)	Post Materialist (culture)
1921	5	8	1	0	8 (100%)	0	0	8 (100%)	0
1925	3	6	0	3 (50%)	3 (50%)	0	0	6 (100%)	0
1928	5	5	5	0	5 (100%)	0	0	5 (100%)	0
1948	5	5	5	5 (100%)	0	0	0	5 (100%)	0
1961	4	4	4	4 (100%)	0	0	0	4 (100%)	0
1966	3	3	3	3 (100%)	0	0	0	3 (100%)	0
1974	6	6	6	6 (100%)	0	0	0	6 (100%)	0
1992	5	0	10	0	0	0	0	0	0
2005	5	0	10	0	0	0	0	0	0
2012	5	5	5	5(100%)	0	0	0	5 (100%)	0

Total	46	42	49	26(62%)	16 (38%)	0	<b>0</b>	42 (100%)	<b>0</b>
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### Non-political Banknotes

Australia									
Date of first issue in the series	# of notes	# of human figures	# of non-human elements	Actor			Goals		
				State	Society /Class	Individual	Traditionalist (classical)	Materialist (historical)	Post Materialist (culture)
1913	4	3	5	0	3 (100%)	0	0	3 (100%)	0
1923	4	7	1	5 (71%)	2 (29%)	0	0	2 (29%)	5 (71%)
1933	4	8	0	4 (50%)	4 (50%)	0	0	4 (50%)	4 (50%)
1939	4	8	0	4 (50%)	4 (50%)	0	0	4 (50%)	4 (50%)
1954	4	6	2	6 (100%)	0	0	0	4 (67%)	2 (33%)
1966	7	14	0	2 (14%)	0	12 (86%)	0	0	14 (100%)
1992	5	9	1	1 (11%)	0	8 (89%)	3 (33%)	0	6 (67%)
Total	32	55	9	22 (40%)	13 (24%)	20 (36%)	3 (6%)	17 (31%)	35 (63%)

New Zealand									
Date of first issue in the series	# of banknotes issued	# of human figures	# of non-human elements	Actor			Goals		
				State	Society /Class	Individual	Traditionalist (classical)	Materialist (historical)	Post Materialist (culture)
1934	4	4	4	4 (100%)	0	0	0	4 (100%)	0
1940	5	6	4	6 (100%)	0	0	0	6 (100%)	0
1967	6	6	6	6 (100%)	0	0	0	0	6 (100%)
1983	7	7	7	7 (100%)	0	0	0	0	7 (100%)

1992	5	5	5	1 (20%)	0	4 (80%)	0	0	5 (100%)
1999	5	5	5	1 (20%)	0	4 (80%)	0	0	5 (100%)
Total	32	33	31	25 (76%)	0	8 (14%)	0	10 (30%)	23 (70%)

For Hymans' cultural shift theory to hold, over time, the bulk of the images should shift towards the bottom right hand corner of Table 1 at the intersection of "individual" in terms of the actor and "post materialist" in terms of the goals. As is shown above, Canadian banknote iconography only partially shifted. That is, while there has been a shift towards "post-materialist" it has not been accompanied by a shift towards "individual" rather, the actor axis has been consistently dominated by "state". This is not the case for both Australia and New Zealand where the iconography on each currency shows a positive trend towards both "individual" and "post-materialist". In the case of South Africa, however, Hymans theory is not supported. In the entire history of banknotes issued by the South African Reserve Bank, there has never been a human figure depicted that would fall into the "individual" or "post-material" category. Ultimately this analysis serves two purposes. First, it serves to corroborate the perspective of Gilbert and Helleiner with regards to political nature of Canadian banknotes. According to Gilbert, the formation of a Canadian national currency was not the result of a 'natural' or inevitable evolution of monetary organization, but deliberately 'forged' through strategies and policies.<sup>81</sup> As a result of the consolidation of money into a single currency as well as the centralization and monopolization of the power to issue currency, she continues:

"The population was compelled to become dependent upon the state's authority for fulfilling their financial obligations and for legitimacy of the currency through policing. And this population was shaped into a national public by the very images produced on the currency, which were manipulated to forge the nation as an 'imagined community', particularly through representations of Canadian landscape in the early twentieth century. Money was thus a product not simply of nation-building, but also of state making."<sup>82</sup>

<sup>81</sup> Gilbert, "Forging a National Currency," 46.

<sup>82</sup> Gilbert, "Common cents," 375.

Country	Total # of human figures	Total number of non-human elements	Ratio of human figures to non-human figure elements	# of identifiable human figures	Percentage of identifiable human figures that do not represent the state
Australia	55	9 (14%)	6.1	39	51%
Canada	77	23 (23.4%)	3.34	13	15%
New Zealand	33	31 (48.4%)	1.064	8	50%
South Africa	42	50 (54.3%)	0.84	2	0%

Second, it serves to suggest that political banknotes and non-political banknotes tend to display different iconographic elements. Of the four national banknotes analyzed, not only do political banknotes have a greater likely hood of displaying anonymous human figures, the human figures that are displayed tend to be associated with “official” culture and state representatives, whereas non-political banknotes have a tendency to display recognizable human figures that are not associated with the state, such as artists or scientists. Nevertheless, it is intriguing but not surprising that the non-political banknotes of Australia and New Zealand have also displayed a considerable number of human figures with an association to the state. According to Penrose,

“Once the canon of objects and images that represent the state has been established, anyone attuned to this symbolic repertoire has the capacity to design official state objects that do the work of reifying the state and inspiring loyalty to the attendant nation. Notably, this includes those who have been constructed as non-state actors by the conceptual division of state from society.”<sup>83</sup>

Penrose demonstrates this by considering the prevalence of nationalist iconography on Scottish commercial banknotes, which, as ‘non-state’ forces, contribute to the constriction and

<sup>83</sup> Penrose, “Designing the Nation,” 430.

intensification of the stateless nation's symbolic presence. Following Hymans', cultural shift theory, banknote iconography in Australia and New Zealand began to shift away from showing human figures with an association to the state without direct government intervention.

Interestingly, when the Reserve Bank of New Zealand released its 1999 series of banknotes, aside from slight alterations owing mainly to upgrades in the security features, the iconographic elements remained the same, that is to say that there was no change in the overall iconographic theme of the notes. This raises another important question that the existing literature on banknotes iconography does not adequately address. That is, why, when central banks create new issues of banknotes it is often the case that they also change the iconography?

As was previously demonstrated by Mwangi, banknote iconography can change as a result of the transformation of political context. In some cases, a change in political context is accompanied by the prevalence of neutral iconographic elements. It is perhaps no coincidence that immediately after the official end of Apartheid, the South African Reserve Bank saw fit to remove the one and only human image of Jan van Riebeeck, the first colonial administrator and founder of Cape Town, in favour of politically neutral images of the Big Five animals. In Canada, there is a relatively high level of non-human elements depicted on the 1954 "Scenes of Canada" series as well as the 1986 "Birds of Canada" series, in both cases as was previously demonstrated, political considerations played important roles in guiding the final design. The "Birds of Canada" series, for example, was released at a time when national unity was being increasingly threatened by a growing independence movement in the Province of Quebec.

In most cases it is assumed that the decision to design and to print a new series of banknotes is intimately related to the prevalence of counterfeit bills in circulation. However, an overview of Canadian counterfeit trends and the issue dates of previously released Canadian

banknotes reveal two interesting facts that serve to put into perspective the timing of the release of the “Frontier” series. First, the Bank of Canada has developed new iconographic themes on average every 11 years. Excluding the short-lived 1935 series, a new design appeared on average every 13 years. Second, in 2012 for the eighth-year in a row, the number of counterfeit banknotes in circulation had fallen; down 92 per cent from the peak in 2004 which was the lowest level since the mid-90s.<sup>84</sup> Australia has also experienced a relatively low level of counterfeit banknotes in recent years, nevertheless, according to a spokesman of the Reserve Bank of Australia:

“To ensure that this remains the case, the bank has been working for some time on a program that will result in an upgrade of Australia's banknotes. These upgraded banknotes will incorporate a number of new security features but most of the existing design elements such as the colour, size and portraits on the current banknote series will be unchanged.”<sup>85</sup>

Instead of creating new themes, existing themes will be redesigned to capture Australian characteristics through “youthful” and “energetic” design qualities.<sup>86</sup> Moreover, in 2011, the governor of the Reserve Bank of New Zealand, Allan Bollard, announced that a new series of banknotes would be released progressively as of 2014. According to Bollard, the upgrade is to maintain New Zealand’s low counterfeit levels. In a survey conducted by the Reserve Bank, it was found that the public was satisfied with the colours, design and themes of existing notes and,

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<sup>84</sup> Ben Fung and Enchuan Shao, “Modelling the Counterfeiting of Bank Notes: A Literature Review,” *Bank of Canada Review*, Autumn 2011, <http://www.bankofcanada.ca/wp-content/uploads/2011/11/fung.pdf> (accessed on June 3rd, 2014).

<sup>85</sup> Adam Shand, “First look at our potential new banknotes – and the untold tale behind their design,” *The Australian*, September 27<sup>th</sup>, 2012, <http://www.theaustralian.com.au/national-affairs/policy/first-look-at-our-potential-new-banknotes-and-the-untold-tale-behind-their-design/story-fn59nsif-1226482167158#mm-premium> (accessed on June 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2014).

<sup>86</sup> “Bank note designs cash-in on ‘youthful’ image,” *News.com.au*, September 27<sup>th</sup>, 2014, <http://www.news.com.au/finance/money/bank-note-designs-cash-in-on-youthful-image/story-e6frfmd9-1226482261212> (accessed on June 3rd, 2014).

as a result, the Reserve Bank announced that it would not make any significant changes to the overall themes of the notes themselves.<sup>87</sup>

In 1997, for the first time, the Bank of Canada held public consultations across the country on themes relating to what would eventually become the “Canadian Journey” series. The results of the focus groups suggested a consensus on depicting images of Canadian wildlife. However, with the series being launched at the beginning of the new millennium, the Minister of Finance proposed developing a theme that would project a more modern image of Canada, one that reflected the country’s diversity, history, and values.<sup>88</sup> Given previous political involvement in the design of Canadian banknotes, the fact that Canadian counterfeit levels were at a historic low and that the “Frontier” series began to be released in 2011, only 7 years after the final issues of the previous “Canadian Journey” series, the Conservative government of Stephen Harper chose to issue a new series of banknotes not out of necessity but rather out of desire; to decorate Canadian banknotes with lasting iconography that is more reflective of its political priorities and values. Thus, the change in iconography of the “Frontier” series is the result of a change in political context, from one political party to another.

### **Currency as a Means of Political Branding and Place Branding**

Given that the design of Canadian banknotes has always suffered from political intervention, it is not surprising that the choice of iconography for the “Frontier” series is the manifestation of a shift in political ideology represented by a change in government from Liberal to Conservative. That being said, the use of banknotes as a means of political branding is not a

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<sup>87</sup> Sonia Speedy, “New Zealand banknote upgrade project under way,” *Reserve Bank of New Zealand Press Release*, July 21<sup>st</sup>, 2014, <http://www.rbnz.govt.nz/news/2011/4468984.html> (accessed on June 3rd, 2014).

<sup>88</sup> Jill Moxley, Helen Meubus, and Maura Brown, “The Canadian Journey: An Odessey into the Complex World of Bank Note Production.” *Bank of Canada Review*, (2007): 50 <http://www.bankofcanada.ca/wp-content/uploads/2010/06/moxley-meubus-brown.pdf> (accessed on March 9, 2014).

new phenomenon in Canada. In fact, the iconography of the “Canadian Journey” series closely reflects Liberal values and political priorities. Nimijean, for example, has explored the concept of “Brand Canada” in relationships with the branding strategies of the Liberal governments of Jean Chrétien and Paul Martin. Accordingly, Nimijean argues that Chrétien had both policy and political reasons for branding Canada via the ‘Canadian Way’. In policy terms, the Canadian Way sought to distinguish Canada in an increasingly globalised world in which countries compete for foreign direct investment and skilled labour.<sup>89</sup> That being said, according to Nimijean:

The Canadian Way is a product of the Canadian experience: the accommodation of diversity (bi-national, multicultural, a relationships with Aboriginal peoples); and orientation toward community, technology and communications (a small population dispersed over a large land with challenging climate); a unique place that is innovative and competitive, and seeks to preserve its distinctiveness due to the presence of the American neighbors to the south); and an institutional framework that reflects these values.

This definition very closely describes the kinds of iconographic elements that appear on the banknotes of the “Canadian Journey” series: exploration and innovation, democracy and equality, First Nations arts and culture, community, remembrance.

Considering that the iconography of the “Canadian Journey” series is representative of the Liberal brand, it is logical to conclude that the Conservative government of Stephen Harper be interested in re-branding Canadian banknotes in such a way that would reflect Conservative values and political priorities. Or, at the very least to remove certain iconographic elements that are closely associated with liberal mythology such as peace keeping. According to Flanagan and Marland, ‘de branding’ the liberal party played an important role in the development of the new Conservative party. Not only that, “by all accounts Harper was the decision maker on party

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<sup>89</sup> Richard Nimijean, “Articulating the “Canadian Way”: Canada™ and the Political Manipulation of the Canadian Identity,” *British Journal of Canadian Studies*, 18, no. 1 (2005): 28.

branding matters”.<sup>90</sup> In concluding their analysis of branding techniques used by the Conservative party during its formative period, Flanagan and Marland suggest the need to use a branding lens to scrutinize the Conservative party’s permanent campaign of leveraging government resources to support the party’s message. After all, as is explained by Bunn, when states emphasize “the visual”, including maps, postage stamps, currency, and official Web sites, they inform and educate their own populations and those beyond about where they are, who they are, and what they are about.<sup>91</sup> According to Flanagan and Marland, since 2006,

Blue colour schemes have been introduced on Government of Canada websites and in Economic Actions Plan advertising; red has all but vanished. Other government advertising campaigns have projected a Conservative version of Canadian patriotism, such as urging recruits to fight with the Canadian Forces and raising awareness of the War of 1812 bicentennial.<sup>92</sup>

Therefore, the Conservative government used banknote iconography as a means of political branding, as a tool to be leveraged in support of the party’s message. What is left to wonder, however, is whether or not any consideration was given to how the selected iconography might influence and inform an international audience.

According to Van Ham, place branding is similar to intellectual property. He notes that a place brand represents the “totality of the thoughts, feelings, associations and expectations that come to mind when a consumer is exposed to an entity’s name, logo, products, services, events, or any design or symbol representing them.” He also situates the concept of place branding firmly within the theoretical framework of constructivism indicating that “place branding, as a part of soft power, centers around concepts like values, norms, and rules in international

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<sup>90</sup> Alex Marland and Tom Flanagan, “Brand New Party: Political Branding and the Conservative Party of Canada,” *Canadian Journal of Political Science*, 46, no. 4 (2013): 967.

<sup>91</sup> Stanley D. Brunn, “Stamps as messengers of political transition,” *The Geographical Review*, 10, no. 1 (2011):19.

<sup>92</sup> Marland and Flanagan, “Brand New Party,” 969.

politics.” Moreover, he suggests that place branding is part of a wider discourse that involves propaganda at one end of the spectrum, and public diplomacy at the other.<sup>93</sup> Interestingly, Van Ham describes the EU as a master brand, suggesting that the existence of the EURO, a supranational currency, has helped make the EU the most frequently used name across Europe and is an invaluable brand asset. Within the aforementioned spectrum, banknote iconography in Canada is an important visual tool that serves to brand Canada both at home and abroad.

According to Van Ham, “a brand is best described as a customer’s idea about a product; the ‘brand state’ comprises the outside world’s ideas about a particular country.” Ultimately, Van Ham concludes,

The traditional diplomacy of yesteryear is disappearing. To do their jobs well in the future, politicians will have to train themselves in brand asset management. Their tasks will include finding a brand niche for their state, engaging in competitive marketing, assuring customer satisfaction, and most of all, creating brand loyalty.<sup>94</sup>

Rather than disappear, however, the ‘traditional diplomacy of yesteryear’ (Public Diplomacy) has been transformed to take on a greater economic focus. In recent years the concept of place branding has been of growing interest among academics, consultants, and governments. The academic journal, *Place Branding and Public Diplomacy*, for example was first published in 2004 and considers itself to be “the first and only journal to concentrate on the practice of applying brand strategy and other marketing techniques and disciplines to the economic, social, political and cultural development of cities, regions and countries.” First published by the name *Place Branding*, in 2006 Public Diplomacy was added to the title perhaps as an exercise in branding in and of itself. After all, aside from academics and researchers, the main readership for

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<sup>93</sup> Peter Van Ham, “Place Branding: The State of the Art,” *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 616, *Public Diplomacy in a Changing World* (2008): 135.

<sup>94</sup> Peter Van Ham, “The Rise of the Brand State: The Postmodern Politics of Image and Reputation,” *Foreign Affairs*, 80, no. 5 (2001): 6.

this journal consists of “Ministries of Foreign Affairs – Ministers, Ambassadors and their staff working in international relations, public diplomacy, media relations, press offices and public affairs.”<sup>95</sup> Surely making clear the association between place branding and public diplomacy helps to legitimize the practice and value of place branding among influential government officials who are already very familiar with the idea of public diplomacy. According to its editors, “public diplomacy and place branding are not synonyms but their overlaps are sufficient to justify a journal which considers both activities in their own right and at their point of convergence.”<sup>96</sup> With respect to banknote iconography, political branding and place branding converge for the simple fact that banknote iconography inevitably speaks to both a national (political) and international (place) audience.

Public diplomacy as the actions of governments to inform and influence foreign publics was first conceived of in parallel with traditional diplomacy whose aim it is to directly inform and influence foreign governments. According to Huijgh, public diplomacy can be loosely defined as “the involvement (information, sensitizing, reaching out, mobilizing, creating understand, and cooperating) of public opinion at home and abroad in foreign policy-making and conduct.”<sup>97</sup> Huijgh provides an overview of the evolution of public diplomacy from the Liberal government of William Lyon Mackenzie King (1921-1948) to the Conservative government of Stephen Harper (2006 - ) and reveals that “Canadian scholars and federal officials were among the first to raise awareness of public diplomacy’s domestic dimension”, that is “the involvement of Canadians in reaching out to foreign peers on shared international policy concerns.”<sup>98</sup> This

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<sup>95</sup> “About the Journal,” *Place Branding and Public Diplomacy*, <http://www.palgrave-journals.com/pb/about.html> (accessed on June 3rd, 2014).

<sup>96</sup> Ibid.

<sup>97</sup> Ellen Huijgh, “The Ebb and Flows of Canada’s Public Diplomacy with a Domestic Foundation,” *International Journal of Canadian Studies*, 47, (2013): 149.

<sup>98</sup> Ibid., Abstract.

innovative approach to public diplomacy reached its height in 2005 with the institutionalization of public diplomacy (with associated strategies and activities including an explicitly domestic dimension) into a single division within the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (now the Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development). While the minority Conservative government of Stephen Harper (elected in 2006) continued some of the initiatives set out for the division, in 2010 it was disbanded and the term “public diplomacy” was gradually phased out from government communications.<sup>99</sup>

In 2005, for example, the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade released its International Policy Statement accentuating the role of Canadian citizens in Canada’s promotion to the world as an innovative, dynamic, diversified, and globally engaged nation.<sup>100</sup> Recent reports on plans and priorities, however, reveal that the Conservative government is seeking to shape the international agenda through diplomacy inside and outside Canada to the country’s benefit and advantage in accordance with Canadian interests and values.<sup>101</sup> While the term “public diplomacy” may have vanished from Government communication, with notable differences and similarities, its practice continues to thrive. Though government activities that resemble the practice of public diplomacy’s domestic dimension have declined, they remain stealthily present in a more scattered, decentralized, and targeted way, with greater emphases on

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<sup>99</sup> Ibid., 158.

<sup>100</sup> Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, *Canada’s International Policy Statement: A Role of Pride and Influence in the World*, (Ottawa: Government of Canada, 2005), 32.

<sup>101</sup> Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development, *Report on Plans and Priorities 2013–2014* (Ottawa: Government of Canada, 2013), strategic outcome 1; Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development, *Report on Plans and Priorities 2012–2013* (Ottawa: Government of Canada, 2012), strategic outcome 1; Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development, *Report on Plans and Priorities 2011–2012* (Ottawa: Government of Canada, 2011): points 1.3 and 2.1; Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development, *Report on Plans and Priorities 2010–2011*, (Government of Canada, 2010), point 1.1.

trade and defense.<sup>102</sup> Ultimately, what remains is a strong focus on the domestic dimension of informing and influencing foreign publics and what has changed is the way in which the overall message is being controlled and communicated.

The evolution of the Conservative government of Stephen Harper's approach to international education provides an important example that serves to illustrate the aforementioned differences and similarities. Notably, how the Conservative government has embraced the idea of using branding techniques to promote Canada abroad. In May 2012, the "Understanding Canada – Canadian Studies" program that, for decades, had the mandate of promoting Canadian Studies abroad, was cancelled. The decision to cancel the program was made to focus programming "on the departments core mandate first."<sup>103</sup> In 2014, this "core mandate" with regards to international education was clearly expressed through the public release of Canada's International Education Strategy, the main goal of which is to increase the number of international students in Canada from 239,131 in 2011 to more than 450,000 by 2022.

<sup>104</sup> Rather than focus on the benefits of promoting academic relations between nations, the International Education Strategy focuses primarily on the economic dimension of international education as a service export. With regards to the similarities and differences previously mentioned, under this new orientation a national brand for education in Canada "Imagine Education au/in Canada" was created under which provincial and territorial education institutions operate while representing themselves abroad. Canadian educational institutions are therefore fulfilling the domestic dimension of Canada's economic diplomacy while the message (the brand) is being centrally managed within the Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and

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<sup>102</sup> Huijgh, "The Ebbs and Flows of Canada's Public Diplomacy with a Domestic Foundation," 158.

<sup>103</sup> "Understanding Canada no more," The Globe and Mail, June 19<sup>th</sup>, 2012, <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/globe-debate/columnists/understanding-canada-no-more/article4332911/> (accessed on June 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2014).

<sup>104</sup> Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development, *Canada's International Education Strategy: Harnessing our knowledge advantage to drive innovation and prosperity* (Ottawa: Government of Canada, 2014): 11.

Development in consultation with the Provinces and Territories. Rather than being a means of public diplomacy, international education has become a tool of economic diplomacy, which according the Global Market Action Plan, has been entrenched as the “driving force behind the Government of Canada’s trade promotion activities throughout its international diplomatic network.”<sup>105</sup>

Economic diplomacy, put simply, is the use of all available economic tools of the state to the benefit of its national interests. Though the practice of public diplomacy has taken on a distinctive economic focus under the current Conservative government of Stephen Harper, its main goal remains the same. That is, to inform and influence foreign publics. In effect, banknote iconography is an important tool of place branding that can help influence a country’s overall image in the minds of millions of international visitors. According to Anholt, the father of place branding, more than anything else people find it difficult to respect a country that does not have a claim to excellence in the area of science and technology.<sup>106</sup> The 5-dollar banknote of the “Frontier” series, on which is depicted the Canadarm2 and Dextre, and the 100-dollar banknote, on which is depicted a scientists peering through a microscope, ultimately serve to brand Canada in the minds of international visitors as a world leader in the area of science and technology. Certainly, these images could serve to support Canada’s brand in the area of international education as they might inspire prospective students in the areas of science, technology, engineering and mathematics, to consider Canada as a potential study destination.

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<sup>105</sup> Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development, *Global Markets Action Plan: The Blueprint for Creating Jobs and Opportunities for Canadians through Trade* (Ottawa: Government of Canada, 2013): Introduction.

<sup>106</sup> Simon Anholt, “Austrade Simon Anholt Interview”, June 4, 2009, 2:40 – 3:20, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2vMmbv8cul0> (accessed June 4<sup>th</sup>, 2014).

## Conclusion

Throughout this paper, two significant contributions to the study of banknote iconography have been made. First, it has been demonstrated that, as a means of mass communication, banknote iconography serves to inform and influence both a national and international audience, the latter of which is achieved primarily through the presence of international visitors, perhaps most importantly, foreign delegations and business leaders. Second, in locating the locus of power over the final design of banknote iconography with the authority of final approval, a distinction has been made with regards to what has been called political and non-political banknote iconography. These distinctions have been confirmed through a quantitative content analysis and comparison of the evolution of banknote iconography in Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa. While further comparative research would be required to confirm the integrity of these distinctions more generally, it has been demonstrated that over time non-political banknote iconography in Australia and New Zealand has shown a greater shift from iconographic representations of state centric actors and official state culture to representations of individual societal actors and postmodern culture whereas political banknote iconography in Canada and South Africa has shown a greater tendency to focus on iconographic representations of state centric actors and official state culture. Moreover, it has been demonstrated that when performing a quantitative content analysis of banknote iconography it is essential to consider both sides of each note, one of which is often decorated with non-human figures.

Ultimately, in situations where political considerations dominate the decision-making process, banknote iconography is susceptible to be manipulated and controlled for political purposes. In Canada, considering that more international visitors than Canadians will see any

particular banknote over the course of its lifespan, greater consideration should be given to how banknote iconography can be leveraged to improve Canada's image abroad. This would certainly fit within the framework of the Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development's focus on economic diplomacy considering that banknotes may be considered a "domestic dimension" of Canada's outward looking foreign policy.

In the Canadian case, it has been demonstrated that the new "Frontier" series of polymer banknotes recently released by the Bank of Canada is as much an expression of state power over a defined territory and its people, as it is a means to promote a particular view of Canada - both at home and abroad – that corresponds with the Conservative government's political priorities and values. As has been demonstrated, the selection of VIA-Rail's *Canadian* serves the long term political objectives and priorities the Conservative party of Stephen Harper. In a similar way, the idea of Canada as a leader in science, technology and innovation will benefit from both the images of the Canadarm2 and Dextre on the 5-dollar banknote and the scientists peering through a microscope on the hundred-dollar banknote. Similarly, the idea of Canada as a "Warrior Nation" will be reinforced so long as the Canadian National Vimy Memorial remains on the 20-dollar banknote. Notably, this may be a long, long time. It is estimated that the new polymer banknotes will last 2.5 times longer than the previous version.<sup>107</sup> Underneath it all, in the subtlest of ways, what is currently being communicated to the Canadian audience is that Canadians have always defined themselves in relation to their ability to overcome and to tame the vast frontier that is Canada. Notably, according to the political priorities of the Conservative government of Stephen Harper, in order to ensure Canada's future prosperity, Canadians must once again devote their ingenuity and determination in conquering Canada's vast frontier. After

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<sup>107</sup> Daniel Schwartz, "Bank of Canada unveils new \$5 and \$10 polymer banknotes," *CBC News*, April 30<sup>th</sup>, 2013 <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/bank-of-canada-unveils-new-5-and-10-polymer-banknotes-1.1373060> (accessed on March 9, 2014).

all, according to Stephen Harper, developing Canada's oil sands, the second largest oil deposit in the world, is "an enterprise of epic proportions, akin to the building of the pyramids or China's Great Wall. Only Bigger."<sup>108</sup> International visitors, on the other hand, who are abstracted from questions of national identity, only see Canada as technologically and naturally rich country, with a population that is able to innovate and overcome challenges.

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<sup>108</sup> Stephen Harper, "Address by the Prime Minister at the Canada-UK Chamber of Commerce," July 14, 2006 – Londo, UK, <http://pm.gc.ca/eng/news/2006/07/14/address-prime-minister-canada-uk-chamber-commerce> (Accessed on June 23rd, 2014).

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