

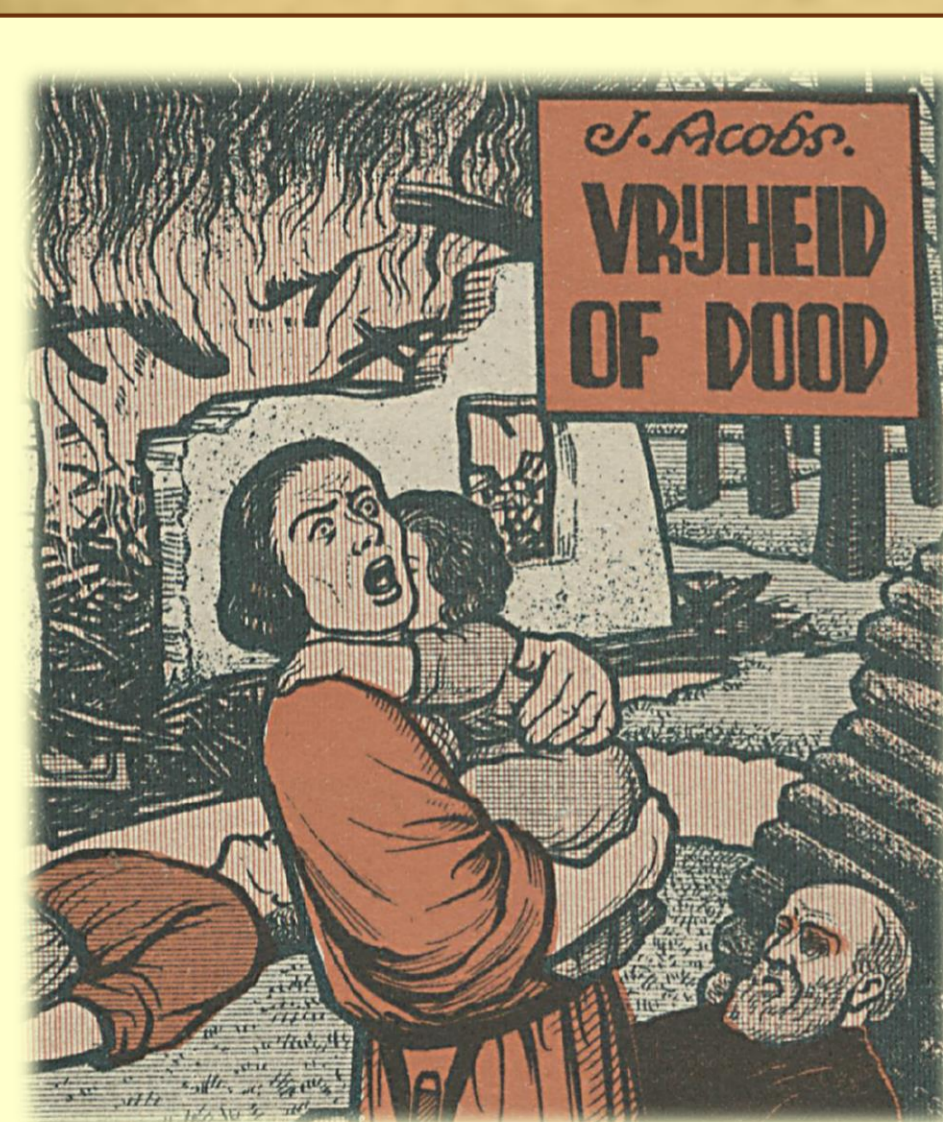
Chapter I

In Name of the Fatherland...?

*The portrayal of 'the fatherland' in Belgian World War One novels
1914-1940*



King Albert as personification of brave little Belgium



Research questions

1. Which meanings, shapes and forms do 'the fatherland' and patriotism take (on) within Belgian war novels?
2. How are 'the fatherland' and national feelings constructed rhetorically?
3. What is the position and/or function of this discourse within these novels?
4. How does this evolve over time?

Goals

- Show the different stances taken towards Belgium and highlight the many possible portrayals of 'the fatherland'.
- Correct existing stereotypes about nationalism in Belgian war literature.
- Generate a better understanding of the (changing) discursive construction and uses of this concept in war fiction to shed light on its meaning(s) and functions in other media and discourses during the war and in the interwar period.

Discourse & Rhetorical Analysis

- Study the use of rhetorical formal patterns, culturally determined templates and commonplaces related to the nation (Amossy, 2002).
- Analyse metaphors, recover their logic and trace shifts in their articulation and meaning (De Ridder, 2009).

Sources

- Extensive corpus of novels written during the war and in the interbellum in Dutch and French.
- In depth-analysis of selected key-works.

A Happy Family? The use of kinship metaphors in war fiction



*Soyons unis!... Flamands, Wallons,
Ce ne sont là que des prénoms,
Belge est notre nom de famille!
(Clesse, 1849)*

Volgens de Walen zijn Waal en Vlaming maar voornamen en België is de familienaam maar in waarheid betekent het: de Waal is de grote broer, die altijd voorgetrokken wordt (Hans, 1921).

The vocabulary of kinship was widespread in nationalistic discourse. Belgian war writers eagerly called upon this language, integrating metaphors of filial love and duty in their narratives. The different conceptions of this 'national family' and the relations amongst its members constitute a framework for the depiction of the fatherland.

- Which kinship terms are used and how?
- Why are these metaphors called upon in the novels. When are they used?
- In which genres are they common?
- How does this change during the war and in its aftermath?