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## **Africa: disputed political propaganda on postage stamps**

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# African Studies Centre Leiden

# African Postal Heritage

APH Paper 41

## AFRICA: DISPUTED POLITICAL PROPAGANDA ON POSTAGE STAMPS

Jan Heijs

Version July 2020

### Introduction

Postage stamps and related objects are miniature communication tools, and they tell a story about cultural and political identities and about artistic forms of identity expressions. They are part of the world's material heritage, and part of history. Ever more of this postal heritage becomes available online, published by stamp collectors' organizations, auction houses, commercial stamp shops, online catalogues, and individual collectors. Virtually collecting postage stamps and postal history has recently become a possibility. These working papers about Africa are examples of what can be done. But they are work-in-progress! Everyone who would like to contribute, by sending corrections, additions, and new area studies can do so by sending an email message to the APH editors: Ton Dietz ([dietzaj@asc.leidenuniv.nl](mailto:dietzaj@asc.leidenuniv.nl)) and Jan Jansen. You are welcome!

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Illustrations cover page:

ASC Leiden postage stamp Nederland (2011): ©African Studies Centre Leiden

Cape of Good Hope postage stamp 1853:

[http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/7/7c/Cape\\_Triangular\\_Postage\\_Stamp.jpg/400px-Cape\\_Triangular\\_Postage\\_Stamp.jpg](http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/7/7c/Cape_Triangular_Postage_Stamp.jpg/400px-Cape_Triangular_Postage_Stamp.jpg)

Egypt postage stamp 1914:

[https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/4/4b/Post\\_Stamp\\_Egypt.jpg](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/4/4b/Post_Stamp_Egypt.jpg)

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Are indicated with \* in the text at the chapter.

## 1. Preface.

This article is about “disputed political propaganda” in Africa. Not all different postage stamps or marks about a subject will be shown (in that case this article would become far too detailed), but in every chapter some powerful items are shown.

Political propaganda is disputed when other countries do have political objections against postage stamps or marks. Sometimes objections only exist in the press, by a government or by a message from the postal administration of a country to the Universal Postal Union.

Sometimes the pictures on postage stamps or marks are regarded as so insulting that postal administrations refuse to deliver the mail because of a valid postage stamp or mark. Mail is returned, postage stamps or marks are blacked out or corrected and valid franked mail is applied with postage due (because the postage stamp is not recognized in the country of destination because of the political propaganda). In that case it is called “postalwar” (“postkrieg” in the German language). See for the exact philatelic definition of postal war [www.postalwar.info/definition](http://www.postalwar.info/definition), the website of the writer of this article. Both kinds of “disputed political propaganda” get attention in this article.

## 2. Colonial Era.

### 2.1 Canada 1898: annexation of South West Africa and Orange Free State in the British Empire.

Since the 16th century there is an ongoing battle in the world to get colonies by many countries. The British Empire wants to show its success and they introduced one uniform postal rate for all the colonies all over the world including the UK. In 1898 Canada issued a postage stamp depicting all the parts of the British Empire in a red colour which gives a quite overwhelming impression.



But not all the red areas are really part of the British Empire during that year. South-West Africa, and Orange Free State are not (and two-third part of Western Borneo in Asia also not).

\*See “Guide mondial des Timbres Erronés », Jean Pierre Mangin, 1999, p. 125.

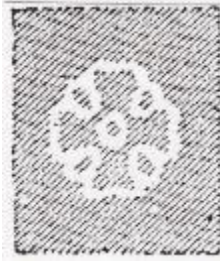
### 2.2 Sudan 1903: Christian or Islamic watermark?

In 1903 the United Kingdom issued the first postage stamps for Sudan, depicting a camel jockey from Sudan. So Sudan was satisfied. The watermark of the postage stamp was meant to be an open flower. But for the Muslims it was more looking like a Christian cross with evil tongues. The U.K. withdrew the postage stamp and edited a new one with an Islamic symbol as watermark: a crescent moon (and a star).

\*Mijn Stokpaardje”, March 1991, p. 98.



1903 Sudan camel jockey



Watermark "open flower"



Watermark moon and star.

### 2.3 Algeria-Morocco-Tunisia 1943-45: "V"-sign by French government in exile

In 1943, during World War II, the French government in exile issued stamps and marks in Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia featuring the "V" and the text "Un seul but la victoire" (Only one goal: victory) as a symbol of the Allies against Germany. These stamps and marks were not accepted by the German postal authorities and were blackened. Therefore letters to neutral Switzerland with the respective stamps or marks, which had to pass German-controlled areas, were blackened.

\*Postkrieg Spezialkatalog 1870-2008, J. Heijs, nr. 7, 2011, p. 35.



1943 Postage stamps Algeria



1943 Metermark Algeria



1943 Postage stamp Morocco



1943 Metermark Morocco.



1943 Postage stamp Tunisia



1943 Metermark Tunisia.





1943: Letter Tunisia – Switzerland: metermark blackened in transit by Germany.

#### 2.4 Federal Republic of Germany: 1965, 1972 “Afrika Korps 1941-1943”

1965. The Hannover post office used a metermark announcing the “9. Bundestreffen des deutsches Afrika-Korps 1941-1943” (9th Meeting of the German Africa corps) from 6.9.1965 - 3.10.1965. The postal authorities in the German Democratic Republic overpainted this metermark because it was regarded as a revanchist attempt to keep the national socialist traditions alive (sixteen different colours do exist)

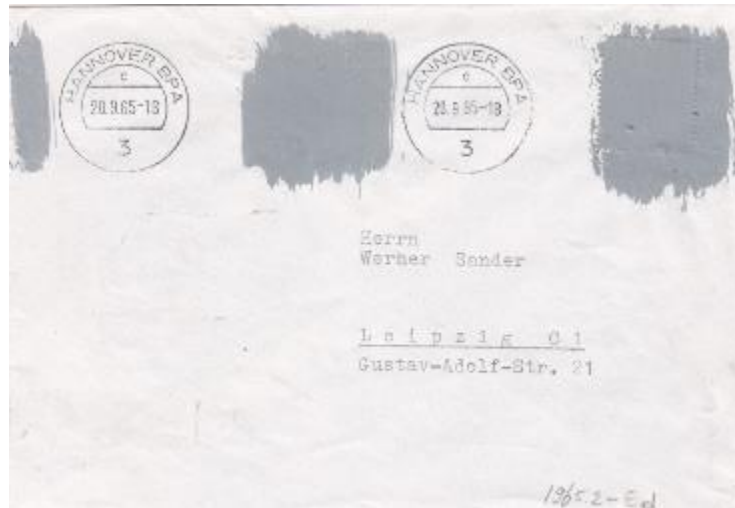
\* Postkrieg Spezialkatalog 1870-2008, J. Heijs, nr. 7-2011, p. 127.



Metermark Afrika Korps 1941-1943



Metermark Afrika Korps 1941-1943 overpainted in black



Metermark Afrika Korps 1941-1943 overpainted in grey

In 1972 Mainz used a special postmark for the 12th meeting of the German Afrika Korps 1941-1943. The Federal Republic of Germany took another counter measure this time. It returned the mail to the sender with a cachet "Zurück, Sendung verstösst gegen die gesetzl. Bestimmungen der DDR": "Retour, mail is contrary to the law in the German Democratic Republic".

\* Postkrieg Spezialkatalog 1870-2008, J. Heijs, nr. 7-2011, p. 173.





### 3. Decolonisation.

#### 3.1 Africa for the Africans by non-African countries.

Several countries supported the struggle for political and economic independence .

So did the UNO on this letter dated 12-3-1986 with a meter mark in the French language: “Décolonisation, liberté, indépendance” which means: “Decolonisation, freedom, independence”.



The same was done by the German Democratic Republic on this letter dated 20-11-1959 by the metermark in German “Afrika den Afrikanern” which means “Africa is for the Africans”.



The Soviet Union was very active with propaganda for independence in Africa on stamps, or postmarks. I show two of them.

On the 15th of April 1961 the Soviet Union had an “African Day” on which they had a general philatelic issue on independence depicting an african human breaking out of the chains on the letter, the postage stamp and the extra (red) mark because of the 5th. World Congress of Unions.



A postcard has also been issued on the 15<sup>th</sup> of April 1961 with a picture of Lumumba, the first president of Congo. Also announcing that the “University of the Friendship between People” gets a new name: “Lumumba university”.



Support for economic independence was given by, for example, a Dutch non-governmental organisation “Fair Trade” and “World Shops” (232 in 2020) in the Netherlands. They sell art and coffee which was bought for a better, more fair, price than on the world market (buying coffee started during the seventies in Tanzania.)



Letter from the Dutch national organisation of World Shops 13.10.98 “Wereldwinkel: een goede zaak” / “World shop: good business.”

When the Dutch coffee company “Douwe Egberts” celebrated its 250th anniversary (1753-2003) a special postage stamp was issued on 3/6/2003 in the Netherlands.

A national protest against it was organised by Fair Trade and the World Shops together with two Unions, some Christian organisations and several organisations for development aid. They produced a protest sticker you could stick on mail bearing the Douwe Egberts postage stamp. The Dutch text is “250 jaar Douwe Egberts, toch is het geen feest” “250 year Douwe Egberts, despite that it is not worth to party”. They explained that Douwe Egberts is not paying a fair price and, by doing that, they accept children’s labour, lack of unions etc. The coffee was coming from, among others, Kenya.



Letter with Douwe Egberts postage stamp and protest label from 2003.

Sticker with four protest labels

### 3.2 Egypt/Sudan 1951-53: Greater Egypt, Kingdom ends, including the Royal collection of postage stamps.

The King of Egypt, Farouk I, did not recognize the dual power of Egypt and the U.K. on Sudan by an agreement of 1936. So in 1951 the king became “King of Egypt and Sudan” and this was shown by an overprint on a set of Egyptian postage stamps and by a set of special postage stamps on this occasion.

\*"Postzegels verzamelen", Frank Arneau, 1981, p. 112.



In 1952 there was a military uprising against the corrupt monarchy and its government. It was the end of the reign of King Farouk and in 1953 Egypt became a Republic.

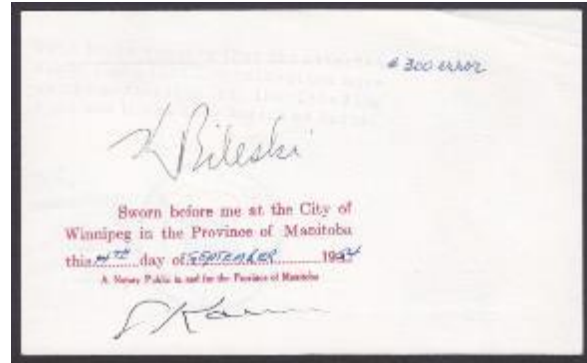
King Farouk's huge collection of postage stamps was sold by the Republican administration. The proceeds from sales were spent by the new government to the benefit of the Egyptian people.

In order to use this propagandistic move, and because of commercial reasons, the postage stamps were sold on special paper including a declaration by a notary that this postage stamp had been part of the Royal collection and a special mark at the reverse of the postage stamps to prove this. The text on the reverse says the attached postage stamp should be a “#300error” but it is a cheap 2 mills postage stamp. So if the attached stamp matches with the declaration is doubtful. But it is still a proof that selling a collection of postage stamps was propaganda for the Republican government. The violet text on the reverse of the declaration (upper left corner) is very difficult to read: “This is to certify that the attached #300 error stamp comes from the collection once in the possession of the late King Fuad and the ex King Farouk of Egypt.”

\*“The palace collection of Egypt”, Febr. 1954, Harmer Ltd. London.



1953 From the Royal Egyptian stamp collection.



1954 Proof of being part of the Royal collection.



1953 special mark on the reverse to prove it was from the Royal collection.

### 3.3 Egypt 1957: France and the UK leave the Area of the Suez Canal.

Following Egypt’s nationalisation of the Suez Canal in 1956, French and British troops occupied the Canal-Zone. Egypt issued special propaganda stamps celebrating the withdrawal of the French/British troops. France did not accept the 1957 stamp of 10 Mills depicting the withdrawal of the troops with the Arab-French text “Evacuation 22-12-1956”, nor the 10 Mills stamp of the set “Egypt – tomb of aggressors”, depicting the French-British invasion. Mail bearing these stamps was returned with a handwritten “non admis” or with a sticker “INADMIS-RETOUR / Convention Postale Universelle, / (Art. 59, par. 1d)”.

\*Autour de l’opération Mousquetaire, November 2006, L’Echo de la timbrologie.

\*Bulletin officiel des P.T.T., 17 Sept. 1957, p. 217

\* Postkrieg Spezialkatalog 1870-2008, J. Heijs, nr. 7-2011, p. 102.



1957 Postage stamp “Evacuation 22-12-56”



1957 Postage stamp “Egypt tomb of Agressors”





1957 Letter Egypt – France: Refused in France because of the postage stamp “Egypt – tomb of aggressors” according to UPU art. 59, par. 1d.

#### Explanation of Art. 59, par 1d:

The Universal Postal Union (UPU) is the worldwide organisation for postal administrations of countries. The UPU cannot declare a stamp issued by a member’s postal administration invalid. According to the UPU Convention, the issue of stamps should contribute to better understanding between nations, their different cultures and to international friendship (UPU Convention, Ottawa 1957, C14.).

Article 59 of the UPU Convention allows members to refuse to deliver mail if certain conditions (danger, live animals etc.) are met. Article 59, Number 1d. reads:

#### “Prohibitions:

The insertion in letter-post items of the following articles shall be prohibited:

- a ...
- b....
- c...
- d. Objects of which the import in the country of destination is forbidden....”.

So this article is about the content of mail, not for postage stamps, but despite that it is used by postal administrations.

\*Text of the UPU Convention Brussels 1952, original in the French language: “UPU les actes de l’union postale universelle, revision de Bruxelles 1952, direction generale des PTT des Pays Bas, La Haye 1953.

### 3.4 Southern Rhodesia 1965-70: Seeking independence

Southern Rhodesia declared itself independent from Great-Britain as Rhodesia. On 11/12/1965 the British government announced stamps issued by Rhodesia to be invalid and thus letters with these stamps would be applied with postage due. Many countries under British influence decided to comply.

The following stamps and stamp series were affected:

- a. Independence issue (8.12.1965)
- b. Stamps with independence overprint (17.1.1966)
- c. Stamps with decimal currency (April 1970)
- d. Post and telecommunication (1.7.1970)



a.

b.

c.

d.

The other valid stamps in (Southern) Rhodesia were officially not targeted by the applied postage due but there are occurrences. Such letters must be correctly franked and still be applied with postage due.

There are two important periods:

- During the years 1965-67 with hand-written remarks on letters, mostly with independence stamps.
- As of April until October 1970 the stamps with decimal rates were affected, because at that time Great Britain didn't have a decimal currency.

During the first period many protests were launched. As a consequence, during the second period, a sticker declaring the postage due was applied. 152 return-marks, also used for normal mail, do exist and from 1970 on five different stickers are known. One red sticker of the UK and Jersey had four different stickers. Zambia applied such letters with postage due.

The measures ended on 18/10/1970 in Great Britain, April 1971 in Mauritius and 1976 in India.

Postal administrations that took postal measures against these postage stamps were:

- United Kingdom
- Guernsey
- Jersey
- Gibraltar
- India
- St. Christopher, Nevis & Anguilla.

And the African countries:

- Zambia
- Malawi
- Mauritius
- Kenya

\*Further reading is provided in the book; "The surcharging of Rhodesia's mail", Mitchell and Tring, Bulawayo, Rhodesia, 1978 (91 pages).

\*Rhodesia, UDI recalled, James Machy, Gibbons Stamp Monthly may, 1997

\*Rhodesia UDI, J. Buchanan, The Stamp Magazine, may 1989.

\*In March 2018, Mike Hughes, member of the Rhodesian Study Circle in Britain, published a book with the title 'Postal Sanctions against Rhodesia 1965-1980'. It is accessible via [www.rhodesianstudycircle.org.uk](http://www.rhodesianstudycircle.org.uk) and contains many interesting facets of the Rhodesian UDI period (postage due rates and calculations ; interrupted postal links ; specific cachets) and, in



particular, shows examples of postal war measures taken by postal administrations which had so far not been registered.

Also see: African Postal Heritage Paper 24 part 3, pp 142-152 (Dietz, Ton: Southern Rhodesia, Rhodesia and Zimbabwe).



a. Independence issue (8.12.1965) postage due in the UK



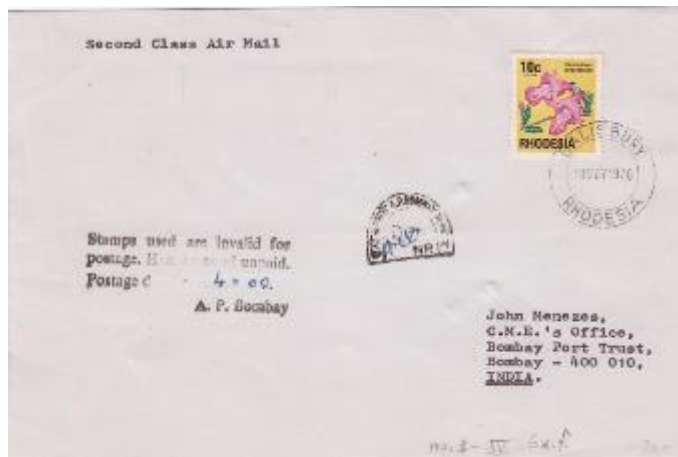
b. Stamps with independence overprint (17.1.1966) postage due in the UK (and a Good Luck Rhodesia sticker of the Central African Trade Fair“ which shows that the political propaganda is not only on postage stamps, but postage stamps are part of a wider campaign.)



c. Stamps with decimal currency (April 1970) postage due and red sticker in the UK



c. Stamps with decimal currency (April 1970) postage due in Zambia



c. stamps with decimal currency, postage due in India.



a. Independence issue (8.12.1965) postage due in Kenya



d. Post and telecommunication (1.7.1970) postage due in Jersey



c. stamps with decimal currency, postage due in Mauritius

Propaganda **against** the unilateral Rhodesian independence.

Of course there is some counter propaganda. The Independence postage stamp became a private reprint adding (in the right upper corner) the word "illegal" before the text "Independence 11 nov. 1965" and the "word "due" behind "postage" (see the left upper corner and the right side of the postage stamp).



Liberation movements may attend UPU congresses as observers.

The UPU decided in her congress in Lausanne 1974 that “national liberation movements recognized by the Organisation of African Unity or by the League of Arab States may attend UPU congresses as observers” (Resolution C3) and instructed “the Executive Council of the UPU and the International Bureau to take all steps calculated to give concrete material help to those movements.” (Resolution C4). In resolution C4 the movements of the following countries are mentioned: Southern-Rhodesia, Namibia, Angola and Mozambique.

I don't know what the effect was of these resolutions.

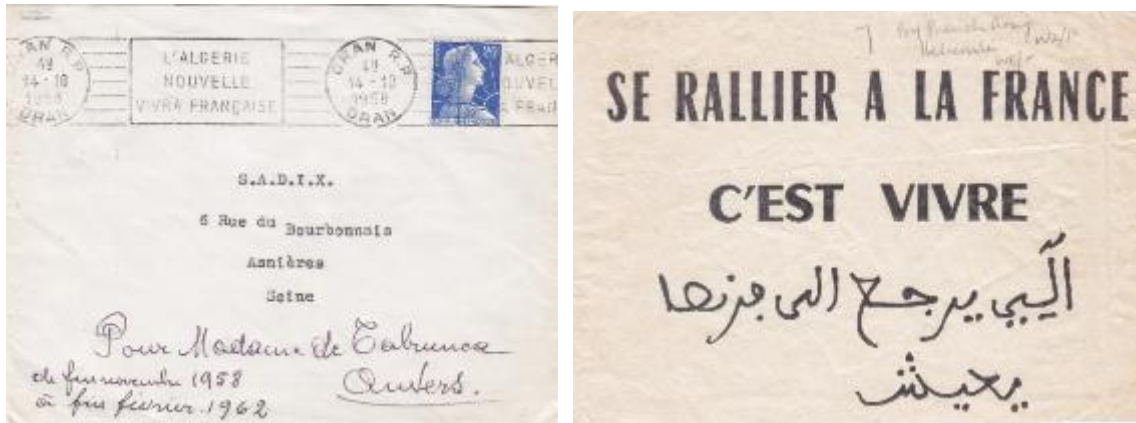
\*UPU act compendium of congress decisions 1947-2012. UPU 2012.

### 3.5 France – Algeria: postage stamp “Harkis”

The first of November 1954 the independence movement declared Algeria independent. A war was going on and on the 5th of July 1962 Algeria became independent.

France did not accept it and during this war it had a propagandistic meter mark “L’Algerie nouvelle vivra francaise” which means “The new Algeria will be French” here on letter from Oran 14-10-1958. But also villages where the rebels were ruling got the same message, but on leaflets dropped from a helicopter; “se raillier a la France c’est vivre”, which means “Remaining to France means to live”.





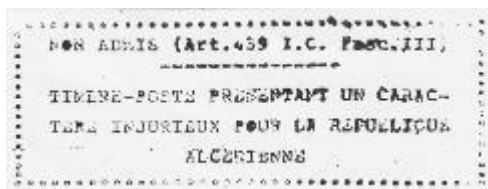
Algeria remembers the 1 November of 1954 as the first day of the revolution. So 4 months after the independence a meter mark remembering this day was issued. This picture postcard was sent on the first of November 1962 as an FDC and also remembers it. And it was sent to the Netherlands as a souvenir of the revolution.



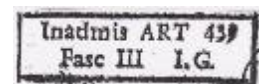
No wonder that Algeria refused a French stamp issued 9th December 1989 commemorating the French “Harkis”. Harkis was the name of North-African soldiers (165,000) who fought, during the French-Algerian conflict (1954-1962), together with the French against the Algerian independence movement. Only a few thousand soldiers were repatriated to France in 1962. Algeria declared this stamp illegal, hence invalid, and returned mail bearing this stamp with handwritten notation, French sticker or postmark.



France 1989, Harkis



Sticker: Not allowed (Art. 439 I.C. Fasc III), Postage stamp is an insult to the republic of Algeria.



Postmark: Inadmis = not allowed



1990: cover France- Algeria, returned from Algeria because of postage stamp

### 3.6 South Africa 1959: Claim on Antarctica.

In 1959 South Africa issued a postage stamp with a claim on Antarctica.

Because in 1947/1948 the Prince Edward Islands became part of South Africa (accepted by the former British colonial masters) a British claim on Antarctica could no longer exist. So South Africa claimed the Marion Islands, south of the Prince Edward Islands.

South Africa officially claimed a part of Antarctica in 1961, when the Antarctica Treaty was signed and all the participating countries declared that no country would annex Antarctica and this continent could only be used for scientific research.

In order to continue the claim South Africa issued postage stamps in 1971 remembering the ten years anniversary of the Antarctica Treaty. This was done again in 1991 for the 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, including a connecting red line on the postage stamp with a map and a bilingual text on the sheet edge of the postage stamps.

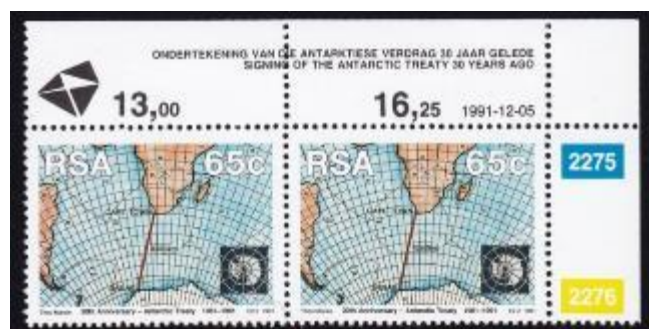
\*\*"Atlantic or Indian ocean?, Marion Island", Gibbons Stamp Monthly, Sept. 2009.



1959 South Africa claims Antarctica see red line.



1971 10 years Antarctica treaty without claim



1991 30 years Antarctica Treaty, this time with red line/claim and text on the sheet edge.



#### 4. Independent Africa.

##### 4.1 South-Africa 1948 - 1991: Apartheid.

In 1909 South Afrika was seen as one big colony by the United Kingdom as a Union of old colonial areas. In June 1934 South Africa became an independent state within the British Commonwealth having the right to leave it, which it did in 1960. In 1959 South Africa was hoping to expand the country with more ex-colonies which was expressed by annexing not only the mandate area of South West Africa/namibia, but also British colonies that wanted independence: Bechuanaland (now Botswana), Basutoland (now Lesotho), Swaziland (now Eswatini), and South Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe). Only the Portuguese colony Mozambique (East of South Africa) was not claimed. The annexing was done by drawing eastwards the northern border of South West Africa until Mozambique, shown on the map on the postage stamp.



1959 Map annexing the UNO mandate South West Africa (see 4.3) and the colonies Bechuanaland and South Rhodesia. With a red line it also claimed a part of Antarctica (see also 3.6).

From 1948 on a strict system of Apartheid was implemented. It was condemned by the International Court of Justice of the UNO in the Hague in 1971, followed by the UNO itself in 1973.

The African National Congress, founded 1912, was forbidden in 1961, and many leaders were killed or put in jail, as also was done with Nelson Mandela.

Much international support for the fight against Apartheid was given, and the year 1978 was even called the International Anti Apartheid year. Among many others these postage stamps of several other countries supported this.



1978 Tanzania



1978 GDR



1986 Senegal illustrates it very powerfully by portraying Nelson Mandela, in jail at that time, on all three postage stamps, grabbing hands with blood, broken chains and a peace pigeon chasing the skeleton as symbol for apartheid.



In 1987 the GDR supported the 75th anniversary of the ANC, here a postage stamp on an FDC.

Also street names in neighbourhoods with South African names were changed. The Pretoriusplein in Amsterdam was renamed in Steve Bikoplein, a murdered anti Apartheid fighter. The Botha street, a white Apartheid politician, was renamed in A. Luthulistraat, an anti Apartheid fighter. Sadly no postoffice was in these streets, so no postal illustration can be found.

In 1983 a newly-built neighbourhood in Delft got a Bikolaan, in which there was a postoffice and yes, you can clearly read this in the register label.



Registered mail dated 20/1/1992 with a registered label "DELFT Bikolaan"

Internal corruption problems in the South African administration and internal and external pressure, (e.g. by an economic and cultural boycott), lead to a more liberal administration from 1979/1980 on. But sending this letter with a "Free Mandela" sticker on 11/XI/1986, of course private and not issued by the postal authorities, to Belgium was still very dangerous. Officially you could get five years in prison because of having this sticker. Name and address of the sender, from the village Kelvin, is written on the reverse. Who exactly blacked out the word "free" is not known. And why not black out the complete sticker? Probably it was a lower African postmen who did not know the law exactly (political propaganda on mail is forbidden in nearly every country) or he was a fan of Mandela.  
\*Franco Francesca, collector of political propaganda in South Africa.



Blacked out the word "free" on the Nelson Mandela sticker.

In 1989 president De Klerk was chosen as the new President, and Mandela was released on 11/2/1990. In 1991 the Apartheid stopped, in which year Austria and the UNO Vienna planned a first flight before the Apartheid stopped. So the special postmark was hit by the economic and cultural boycott. See next chapter.

#### 4.2 South-Africa 1991: Economic and Cultural Boycot.

The postal authorities of the UNO in Vienna made a special postmark for the first flight of the Austrian airline on 5/7/1991 to Johannesburg (South Africa) and Nairobi (Kenya) depicting the skyline of Johannesburg.



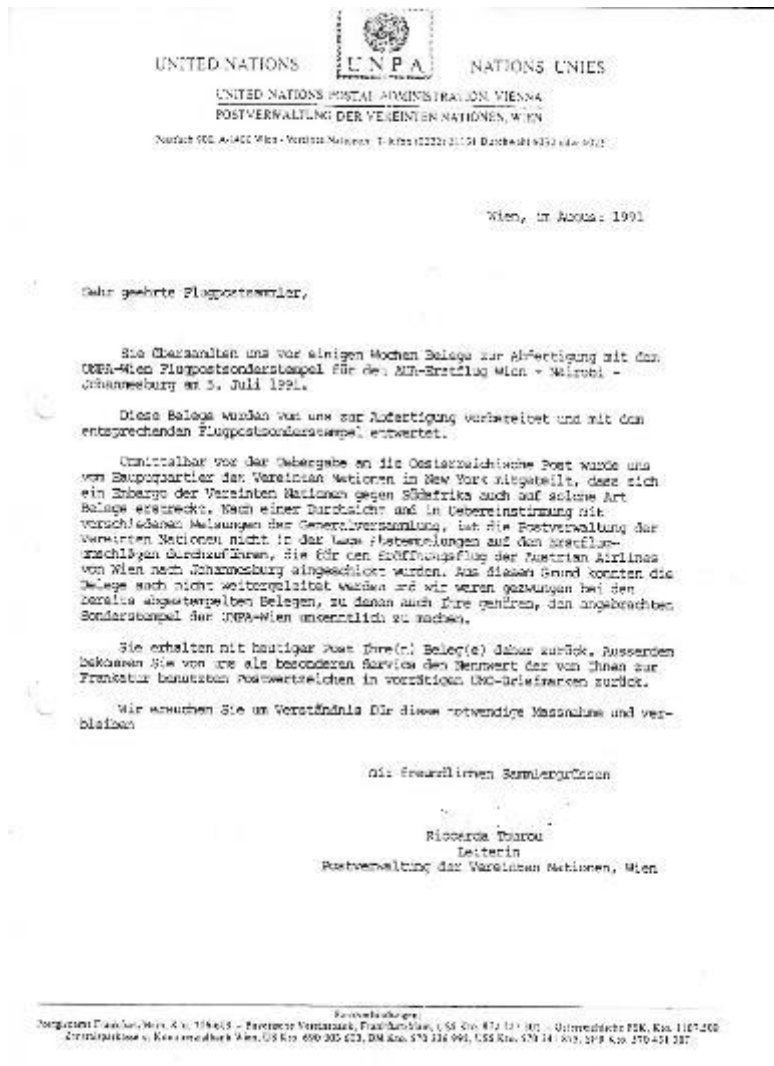
But the UNO had condemned Apartheid in a resolution in 1962 (Nr. 1761) and asked members voluntarily for an economic and cultural boycott of South Africa. After many covers of collectors had already been prepared with this special postmark, the UNO in New York decided that this kind of postmarks for a First Flight were forbidden because of the resolution. That is why the UNPA Vienna had to black out the postmark. Only normal mail was sent with this flight, not the first flight covers.



First Flight cover to Johannesburg, postmark blacked out. First Flight cover to Nairobi, postmark blacked out.

So the collectors who had sent a first flight cover, in order to get it returned with this special postmark after the flight, got it returned with a blacked out postmark. The reason for it was explained in a special letter and all collectors got new valid postage stamps to pay for the used postage stamps on the first flight letter. Of course the letter is ending with apologies.

\*UNPA-Wien, Erstflug blieb daheim, Deutsche Briefmarken Zeitung, 19-1991.



Letter of the United Nations Postal Administration of Vienna (in the German language) in which is explained why the special postmark was blacked out.

#### 4.3 Namibia 1990: Independent.

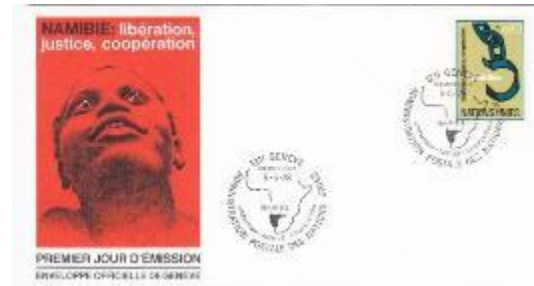
After World War I South Africa got a mandate to rule temporarily the former German colony South West Africa / Namibia. In 1949 South Africa incorporated it. From 1960 the SWAPO was the resistance movement for a free Namibia. In 1966 the UNO asked South Africa to withdraw, which - in the end - they did in 1988 and Namibia became independent in 1990.

Many countries and the UNO supported the independence of South West Africa / Namibia on postage stamps. Among others India, GDR, Cuba and Algeria.

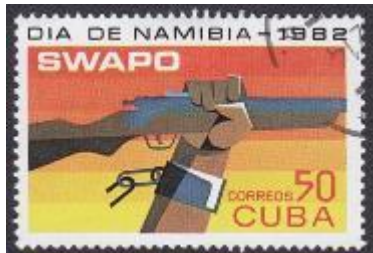




1975 UNO FDC



1978 UNO FDC



1982 Cuba



1990 Algeria



1975 India



1981 German Democratic Republic (GDR)

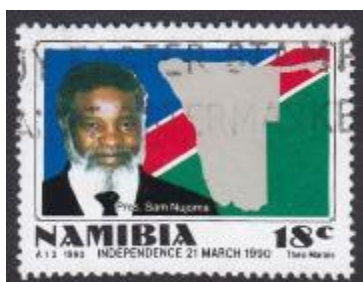
After Namibia got independent in 1990, the South African postmarks still were used, only the name "S.W.A." was removed.



Namibia 1992: Registered letter with postmark "Katutura" without "S.W.A.", postmark 1988 with "S.W.A."



But South Africa kept the economic important area and harbour of Walvisbaai, which never had been part of the German colony. But Walvisbaai was incorporated by Namibia in 1994. On a postage stamp of Namibia, with a map of the country, this was already done four years earlier in 1990.



1990 postage stamp with map, Walvisbaai already incorporated in advance. It should have a gap at the coastline (see yellow part on the postage stamp at the right.)



1994 incorporation of Walvisbaai, see the yellow part at the coastline.

#### 4.4 Spanish Sahara 1976 : Independent or part of Morocco-Mauritania-Algeria?

Spanish West Sahara was a colony of Spain since 1884. It has a lot of phosphate, an important raw material. This postage stamp shows the map of Spanish West Sahara remembering 25 years of the Spanish Franco regime.



There were many protests against the Spanish regime (e.g. in 1920, 1932, 1936, 1958 and 1970). From 1964 on the UNO asked the Spanish government to make West Sahara an independent country. In May 1973 the Front Polisario started the struggle for independence, including military action. In 1975 Morocco asked Spain urgently not to make West Sahara independent but to hand it over to Morocco because in former times it was part of Great Morocco (nowadays Morocco, a part of Algeria, Mauritania and Spanish West Sahara). On defensive grounds also Mauritania wanted a part of Spanish West Sahara. On a secret summit Spain, Morocco and Mauritania agreed on the 14th of November 1975 that Morocco and Mauritania each got a part of West Sahara. Morocco the northern 2/3 part and Mauritania the rest. Polisario and Algeria did not agree and Polisario continued the struggle for independence, from a basis in Algeria.

Mauritania changed the borders on a postage stamp in 1976 and incorporated the southern 1/3 part of it. But high costs of the guerrilla war against Polisario lead to a peace treaty in 1978 in which Mauritania recognized the independence of Western Sahara. The old borders are seen on the postage stamp of 1980.

\*Demokratische Arabische Republik Sahara, Polisario Komitee, Nederland 1980.



1975 Mauritania: borders without a part of Spanish Sahara



1976 with a part of Spanish Sahara



1980 again without a part of Spanish Sahara



<https://i.redd.it/ao0qjqq0dgi21.jpg>

But Morocco was very eager to “return” Spanish Sahara to their country. Something else was, and still is, absolutely not acceptable for the UN. Already in October 1975, so before the agreement between the three countries, Morocco had already sent troops into Spanish Sahara. And it organised the so called Green March (green is the colour of the Islam) in order to stimulate Moroccan people to go and live in the Spanish Sahara.

\*Der Grüne Marsch, Berner Briefmarkenzeitung 5/6-2018



1976 First anniversary of the Green March.



1982 Railway of the unity between Morocco and Spanish Sahara.

Both: No border between Morocco and Spanish Sahara **but also not between Morocco and Algeria!!!!!!**

After that, Morocco issues every year a postage stamp on the anniversary of the Green March (also see: APH 6 part 5 (Dietz Ton, Sahara: post 1975 Sahara).



1976: nr 2



1987: nr 16



2000: nr. 25



2009 nr 34

The fight between Morocco and Polisario is constantly changing the areas in which Polisario has some power on the ground. It is shown by the Moroccan postage stamp promotion Sahara and the print on it “14-8-1979 reconquering of the province of Oued-Eddahab”



1979: Promotion Sahara with map.

Algeria supports Polisario. The grounds on which Morocco claims the area are the same grounds on which Morocco can claim a part of Algeria. Thousands of Saharians live in refugee camps near Tindouff in Algeria. In 1976 Algeria shows Western Sahara as an independent state on a postage stamp with the (French) text: “solidarity with the Saharan people”. When Morocco is showing a map of the country on postage stamps (including the former Spanish Sahara )never a border between Morocco and Algeria is shown.



1976: Algeria, solidarity with the Saharan people.

Polisario in exile designed (with the support of communist Cuba) and sold their own “postage stamps”, and no postal administration recognises these ‘stickers’. But they are of propagandistic value. The French name on these stickers is SAHARA OCC. R.A.S.D, which means: SAHARA WEST, Saharan Arabic Democratic Republic. Here first the 1990 one with a map, and then the fifteenth anniversary of the proclamation of the RASD republic. Many others stickers have been issued without any political or propagandistic item. They all are depicting good selling items on the thematic philatelic market, like soccer or animals.

\*Government in exile, Brunström, Gibbons Stamp Monthly, 2017-02



1991: XV anniv. Proclamation of the RASD



1990: soccer



1991: fish.

#### 4.5 World Refugee Year 1959: Egypt and Sudan and the Cold war.

In April 1960, 70 mostly western-oriented countries issued stamps for the proclaimed UN World Refugee Year. Since most of the refugees at that time came from communist countries, four of them protested by declaring these stamps invalid. These countries were Poland, Czechoslovakia, Soviet Union and Romania. Some covers were delivered without objection, but most covers were not delivered. However, the World Refugee Year stamps of for example Egypt were depicting politically correct items in the view of the communist countries, namely Palestine refugees from Israel in refugee camps. Nonetheless mail with those stamps were not delivered in Romania.

\* Postkrieg Spezialkatalog 1870-2008, nr. 7-2011, page 108-113.

World Refugee Year postage stamps of African countries:





Egypt: Palestinian refugees, World Refugee Year

Sudan: World Refugee Year.



Registered letter from Syria (postage stamp with the same picture as the Egyptian one, Palestinian refugees) to Romania. In Romania it was blacked out with a special postmark with the (Romanian) text " Fighting for peace we guarantee the life, tranquillity and hapiness of our children". (A cover from Sudan or Egypt is only known in a black and white copy.)

## 5. References.

All references are indicated with a \* in the text.

So it is more clear to which subject the literature belongs.

More information on postal war can be found on the website [www.postalwar.info](http://www.postalwar.info)