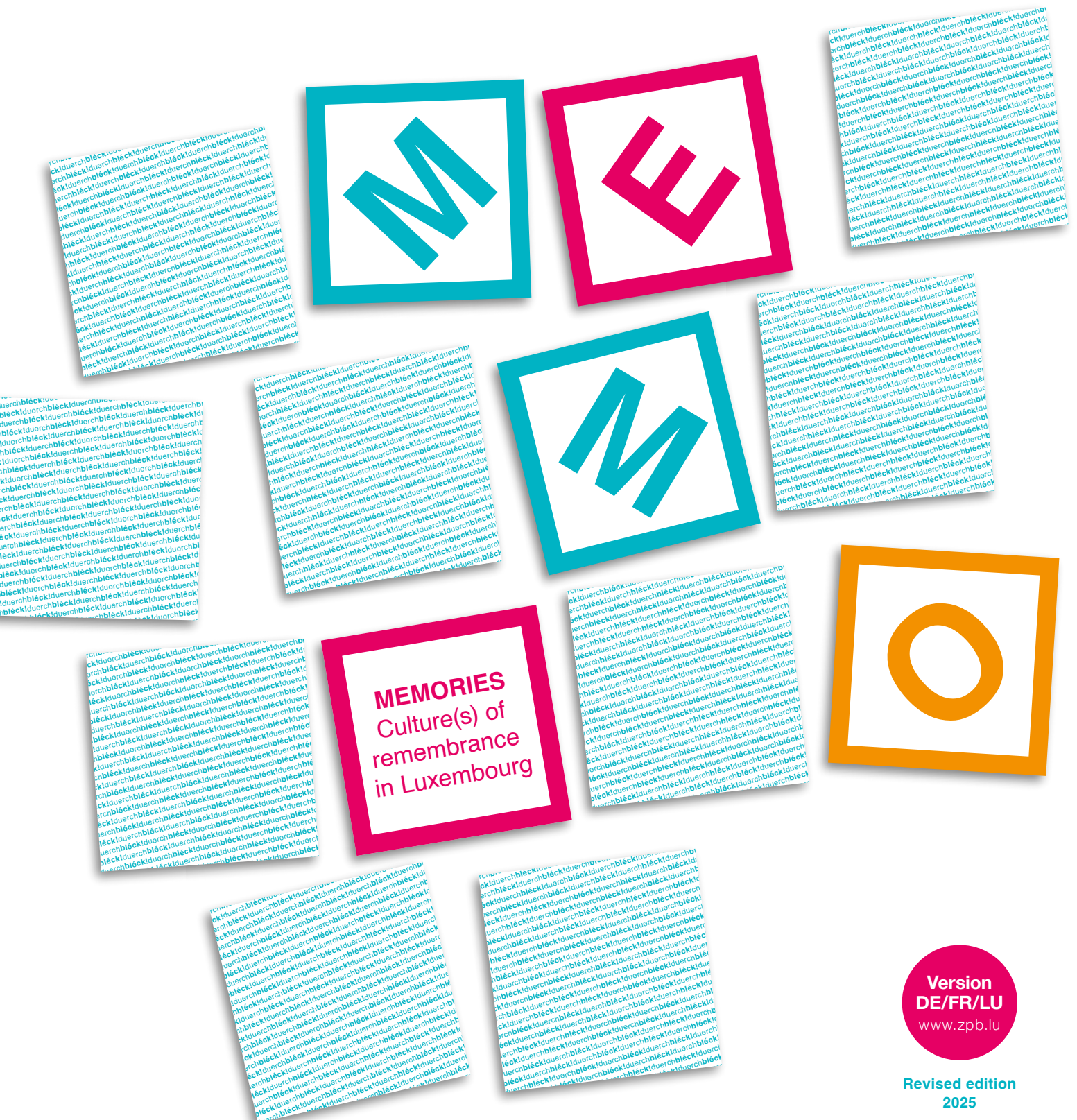


duerchbléck!

Politik verstehen Nr. 7



Version
DE/FR/LU
www.zpb.lu

Revised edition
2025

Table of Contents

3	Foreword
4	Background information

ACTIVE POLITICS

8	Impulses
8	Past in mind
10	Remembering in the future
11	Forms and efficiency
12	Build your monument: National Commemoration Day 2055

LEARNING POLITICS

18	Streets full of freedom
20	Mute witnesses?
22	From the <i>Gëlle Fra</i> to the Golden Lady
24	Way of remembering
25	Celebration and commemoration days
26	Remembering in the month of May
27	Commemorations during the dictatorship
28	Fancy a fake?
30	Industrial brand
32	The Shoah in Luxembourg
34	Remembering war
36	‘Toppled’ monuments
40	Imprint

Foreword

What do we do?

The Centre for Citizenship Education (Zentrum für politisch Bildung) is an independent foundation established to:

- promote understanding of politics, democracy and current social challenges;
- strengthen civic engagement;
- facilitate participation in political life and the public discourse.

What does *duerchbléck* offer?

In addition to background information, the booklet provides suggestions for political trial action under *Active Politics*, and copy templates for different focal points of the respective thematic booklets under *Learning Politics*.

The impulses offer pupils an introduction to the topic and do not require any specific previous knowledge. Methods pages follow (scenario method) as a way to strengthen competence in action, methods, factual and judgement skills.

The purpose of this booklet is provide not only an opportunity to get to know and understand the practice of culture(s) of remembrance as it exists today in Luxembourg, but also to question it critically. School, politics and the civil society play an important role in shaping memory. Remembering confronts the students in a hortatory capacity, often as a moralizing appeal from the elderly. For them, this means being reminded rather than being involved in the process of remembrance culture themselves. In many schools there are moments of remembrance, of commemoration, which often tie in with public-collective remembrance politics. Enabling students to reflect on the culture(s) of remembrance in their country and to develop future perspectives on this topic is another aim of this booklet. It is intended to consider the challenges of a culture of remembrance in the future in a Luxembourg society which, according to the 2021 census, consists of up to 75% of people with some kind of migration background.

Remembering always shows a certain image of the past. This issue of *duerchbléck* deals primarily with collective remembrance as a public phenomenon and less with the individual-private remembrance, which is told over again and again from generation to generation.

Your duerchbléck! – Editorial team

Background information

For teachers and multipliers.

The way individuals and society deal with the past is generally described as a culture of remembrance. The more diverse the society, the more diverse the cultures of remembrance.

First of all it is important to distinguish between the individual concepts. **Memory** as well as **remembrance** are the way to remember something, to store it and to revive its contents. **Remembering**, on the

other hand, means having something preserved in memory and becoming aware of it again, similar to **commemoration**, which addresses someone or something in retrospect with honour and recognition. Commemoration and remembering therefore describe a conscious (performative) act that is carried out, while memory and remembrance describe the individual's ability to remember and commemorate. Although the term of 'remembrance' is used for collective acts.

What is collective public remembrance?

A distinction is drawn between communicative and cultural memory. In communicative memory, personal experiences are passed on orally. This process is limited to three generations maximum.

Cultural memory is divided into two areas: active functional memory, e.g. celebration and commemoration days, and passive memory, e.g. museums, archives, data collections. Active functional memory contains a selection of what a society from the past considers worth remembering, updating and celebrating, e.g. the *Journée de commémoration nationale* [National Commemoration Day] What is considered worth remembering evolves with society, with current challenges and issues.

Function of remembering

Remembering forms identity

In families, travel and school groups, for example, memories constitute an emotional cement of sorts. In nations, states and ethnic groups, a collective memory is formed with the help of different media, such as speeches, texts, pictures, films, monuments, anniversaries, commemoration rites, by building museums and erecting memorial sites. This creates a collective identity, which is not a matter of origin and descent, but of participation. Individual remembrances are selected, fixed, generalized and handed down over generations. This memory is stored through repetition (e.g. through a certain ceremony or celebration) and material or virtual permanence (e.g. in the form of monuments, memorials, online exhibitions).

Remembering is selective

Who remembers what and why? The selection of what should belong to the collectively significant past, present and future, who tells it and in what way or who feels part of the 'collective', is by no means uncontroversial. Collective memory varies with the change in political relevance. Remembering can be used and staged in many different ways, including in order to promote social cohesion, democratic values, solidarity, civil courage, empathy and the ability to act. The *Journée de la mémoire de l'Holocauste et de la prévention des crimes contre l'humanité* [Day of remembrance of the Holocaust and the Prevention of Crimes against Humanity] which is celebrated in Luxembourg annually on 27 January, the day on which the Auschwitz concentration camp was liberated, is a case in point. But remembering can also be misused for propaganda purposes. This was the case during the German occupation, for example, when the *Gauleiter* staged 10 May as a day commemorating Luxembourg's return to the so-called Greater German *Reich*. Most Luxembourgers felt that this occupation of neutral Luxembourg was unjust.

Remembering is staged

National memory tends to emphasize positive historical references. What does not fit into the picture is often forgotten. Victories are easier to remember than defeats, the so-called "mission civilisatrice" rather than the injustices and crimes of colonialism, resistance easier than collaboration. Innocent suffering is highlighted in the national memory in the form of the role of the victim. Guilt and shame, on the other hand, find their way into national memory only slowly, as they cannot be integrated into a positive collective self-image. The resistance of the Luxembourgish

people, the suffering of the forced recruits and of those resettled is at the forefront of Luxembourg's collective public culture of remembrance. Since 1946, the *Journée de Commémoration nationale* has been celebrated on the Sunday closest to 10 October. It commemorates the resistance of the Luxembourgish population against the background of the personal status survey ordered in 1941 by *Gauleiter* Gustav Simon, which was intended to get the people of Luxembourg to the idea of Germanism as espoused by the Nazis.

Commemoration days are socio-politically motivated. In the first years after the war until the mid-1950s, numerous local *Monuments aux Morts* [War Memorials] were inaugurated. Remembering Second World War has been celebrated in Luxembourg for decades as an identity-forming element.

Remembering takes time

The *Monument national de la solidarité luxembourgeoise* on Kanounenhiwwel, inaugurated in 1971, commemorates resistance fighters and those forcibly conscripted by the Nazi occupiers. However, it does not mention other victims of exclusion, persecution and murder, such as the Jewish population, people with disabilities, Yenish, Sinti, Roma, Black people and homosexuals. More recently, there has also been an increased interest in Luxembourg in integrating the issue of guilt into the national self-image. From the 1970s onwards, historical scholarship began to take a closer look at collaboration and the persecution of the Jews. This led to conflicts with the existing culture of remembrance, which considered the Luxembourgers primarily as victims. Since the beginning of the 21st century, there has been an even more critical academic reappraisal of Luxembourg's Nazi past. Investigations into the role of the Luxembourg administration in the persecution of the Jewish population did not result in an official apology from the government and parliament to the Jewish community in Luxembourg until June 2015. In June 2018, the Kaddish Memorial was inaugurated in Luxembourg City in honour of the victims of the Shoah, and since 2025, a memorial wall at the same location has commemorated the names of those murdered.

This central public remembering was nonetheless preceded by a decentralised remembering of the persecution of the Jews. An annual commemoration ceremony has been held at the *Auschwitz Monument* near the monastery *Cingfontaines* near Clervaux since 1969. In July 1941, the Gestapo ordered Jews to be transported to this 'Jewish retirement home', which was in reality a kind of collection point.

From there, between 1941-1943 the inmates were deported to ghettos and concentration camps. A commemorative plaque on the building of the Ministry of Education in the *Rue Aldringen* has, since the 1980's, recalled the destruction of the capital's synagogue by the Nazis. The destroyed synagogues in Medernach and Esch-sur-Alzette are also remembered. The *Mémorial de la Déportation* [Deportation Memorial] in the former Luxembourg-Hollerich station has since the 1990's commemorated the deportation of Jews, forced recruits and resistance fighters. Memorial stones have been laid from 2013 onwards, on private or municipal initiative, in various Luxembourg municipalities. In the meantime, these *Stolpersteine* [literally, 'stumbling stones', i.e. memorial stones] have been laid down by the artist Gunter Demnig in more than 25 European countries. These brass-plated stumbling stones are set into the pavement to commemorate the victims of the Nazi era in the last place of residence they had chosen themselves. As of 2025, there is no monument in Luxembourg specifically commemorating the persecution of members of the LGBT+ community. This is partly due to the fact that, even decades after the war, homosexuality in Luxembourg was still associated with shame and exclusion and was, in some cases, criminalised until the 1980s. Since 2015, the Rosa Lëtzebuerg association has held a memorial service at the *Escher Monument aux morts*.

Actors

The state and politics are actors in the collective public culture of remembrance and in the historical-political discourse. In 2016 the Comité pour la mémoire de la Deuxième Guerre mondiale [Committee for the Memory of World War II] was set up by the government, an association of the interest groups of the Resistance, forced recruits and the Jewish community. Alongside the state actors, the communities for instance are an important part of the ceremonial organization of remembrance, as they hold festivities on the eve of the national holiday. In addition, individuals, schools, interest groups, civil society, museums and scholarship help to keep the cultures of remembrance alive through their dedication and commitment. Their initiatives influence historical awareness and contribute to the diversity of the culture of remembrance.

Places of Remembrance

A place of remembrance comes into being when large groups of people are addressed and consider it relevant to their identity. If this is not the case, the question arises as to what extent the place



Esch: Memorial service for LGBT+ victims of the Nazi era.

of remembrance can still be considered as such. Once placed in public space, memorials exist over many generations and are usually no longer removed from listed monuments (e.g. *Huelen Zant* [Hollow Tooth]) or fall into oblivion. The number of places of remembrance therefore increases, and at the same time it becomes more difficult to find suitable places for further topics where timely remembrance is possible. A distinction is also drawn between material and immaterial places of remembrance.

Material places of remembrance

- Naming streets, squares and bridges seems to be the most common and simplest form of appreciation of a person, event or geographical occurrence. The designations can also indirectly reflect democratic principles such as freedom, equal rights, freedom of expression, etc. Municipalities usually decide which names are to be given and, where appropriate, can take account of initiatives and proposals from civil society.
- Cemeteries are also places of remembrance. The military cemeteries in Sandweiler and Hamm, for example, commemorate the American and German soldiers who fell during the Battle of the Bulge in the winter of 1944/45: The Germans were buried in two provisional cemeteries on the territory of Sandweiler and the Americans on the territory of Hamm. As victors and defeated, outside their respective homelands, they found their final resting place in Luxembourg, 1.5 km apart. After the war, dead German soldiers, who were buried in 150 different places in Luxembourg, were relocated to Sandweiler. The German military cemetery was laid out from 1952 and inaugurated in 1955. The war cemetery is supported by the *Volksbund Deutsche Kriegsgräberfürsorge* e.V. [German War Graves Commission] financed by donations among other sources. The Luxembourg American Cemetery and Memorial is the American military cemetery with memorial in Hamm. It was completed in 1949 and officially inaugurated in 1960. The area was given to the American Battle Monuments Commission for an indefinite period of time. 5,076 American soldiers are buried here, including General Patton.
- Memorial plaques and monuments, such as the *Léifrächen* in memory of the miners who lost their lives in open-cast mines and underground mines, also belongs to the material places of memory.

Immaterial places of remembrance

- Dances (Echternach dancing procession), persons, legendary figures (Melusina) but

also concepts such as freedom, resistance or mottoes (*'Mir wëlle bleiwe wat mir sinn'* ['We want to stay what we are']) etc.

- Holidays are also immaterial places of remembrance for the population; the 11 official days off in Luxembourg have different origins:
 - a religious-cultural origin (Easter Monday, Ascension Day, Whit Monday, Assumption Day, All Saints' Day, Christmas Day and Boxing Day; New Year);
 - a political origin, e.g. national holiday, the Grand Duke's Birthday which in Luxembourg is celebrated on 23 June, regardless of the actual date of birth of the respective head of state, or 1 May, Labour Day, which is celebrated both at home and abroad; on 9 May all EU Member States commemorate the idea of a Europe where people can live in peace and unity. Only in Luxembourg has this day been a day off since 2019. On 9 May 1950, the French Foreign Minister Robert Schuman, who grew up in Luxembourg, gave a speech in Paris in which he presented his vision of a new kind of political cooperation in Europe – a cooperation that would overcome nationalism and make wars between European states unimaginable. Robert Schuman's proposal is the cornerstone of today's European Union.
- Different celebrations accompany the respective holidays. Whereas the religious holidays are celebrated more in the family and as church festivals, the national holiday is celebrated by all the country's citizens. Labour Day commemorates the working population beyond Luxembourg's borders. Europe Day, the latest official day off, gives rise to new celebrations and traditions related to the EU.
- Commemoration days emphasize different themes and are not days of leave from work. Official celebrations are nonetheless held on the *Journée de Commémoration Nationale*. International Women's Day on 8 March or the *Journée de la mémoire de l'Holocauste et de la prévention des crimes contre l'humanité* on 27 January, for example, are celebrated by the respective interest groups and underpinned with meaningful activities.

Change of meaning and perception

Monuments and holidays are subject to a change in meaning and perception. Some places of remembrance acquire additional functions over time. Their existence can also be questioned.

- Originally, the *Monument du Souvenir* (Gëlle Fra, 1923) designed by the Luxembourgish artist Claus Cito in 1923, served to honour

Luxembourgish volunteer soldiers of the First World War.

It has had an eventful history (demolished by the Nazis in 1940, it was rediscovered in 1980 and re-inaugurated in 1985). Today, it commemorates the Luxembourgish volunteer soldiers of the two world wars and the Korean War, as well as the volunteer anti-fascist fighters in the Spanish Civil War (1936-1939). The *Gëlle Fra* also stands for the freedom and resistance of the Luxembourgish people. Today, the monument erected on Constitution Square is a national symbol. The war memorial is known colloquially as *Gëlle Fra* [Golden Lady], although it actually consists of the base, an obelisk, various inscriptions and the *Gëlle Fra* itself. The *Gëlle Fra* sub-element is used as an independent symbol, as a recognition feature for Luxembourg, and has in the meantime been appropriated for advertising purposes, e.g. in countless marketing articles, on the front pages of newspapers or in graphic design for exhibitions. On the flyer on the history of women's suffrage in Luxembourg, published by the Ministry of Equal Opportunities *Gëlle Fra* is depicted with a Venus symbol in her hand. In 2001, a replica made of a pregnant *Gëlle Fra* by the Croatian artist Sanja Ivekovic, called the 'Lady Rosa' triggered a polemic. Erected only a few meters from the original, the art object made critical reference to the reduction of the woman in historiography. Three words were written in three languages on the pedestal: kitsch, whore, resistance. In 2010, *Gëlle Fra* travelled to the World Expo in Shanghai as an ambassador for Luxembourg. She has also become a spatial reference point for the population of the capital, as well as for numerous groups of tourists, who start their city tour from here.

- The legitimacy of older monuments and street names which commemorate colonial history as a *mission civilisatrice*, for example, is controversial today. As a reflection of their time, they reproduce racist ideas and obscure exploitation, violence and coercion in former European colonial territories. How should one deal with these historical testimonies? Should they be demolished or redesigned? In 1938 the Cercle colonial luxembourgeois had the *Fontaine Cito* built in Bascharage. It commemorates the Luxembourgish engineer Nicolas Cito, who was commissioned to build the first Matadi-Léopoldville railway line in the Belgian Congo. 5,500 Congolese forced labourers lost their lives in the process. In 2020, a collective of artists drew attention to the participation of Luxembourgers in the oppression and exploitation of African peoples during the colonial period by redesigning the monument. In addition to engineers such

as Cito and representatives of the Catholic Church, this also included, for example, Luxembourgers who were civil servants in the Belgian colonial administration.

- What applies to a monument can also apply to an entire area. Esch-Belval is of symbolic significance for the industrial heritage of *Minett* by preserving the closed blast furnaces. The renaming of the Belval-*Usine* [Factory] station to Belval-*Université* [University] in 2018 illustrates the current structural change of this area and thus the change of meaning to a new urban district with a university campus, offices, shops and apartments. In the capital, however, industrial Heritage, such as steel production facilities in the Eich district, has largely disappeared, except for a few street names.
- The *Huelen Zant* on the Bock [Bock Rock], on the other hand, is a neo-romantic piece of staged history. This place, too, has undergone a change of meaning. At the end of the 19th century, the government decided to convert the cornerstone on the Bock (which had to be demolished under the Treaty of London of 1867) into the ruins of the legendary former Siegfried Castle. Many tourists from Luxembourg and abroad marvel at this 'fake', which is taken for a part of the medieval castle complex and awakens romantic notions.

In modern societies, historical references are multiplied and globalized. Public remembrance can contribute to social cohesion, it can bring people together, but can also divide them. The challenge for the culture(s) of remembrance in Luxembourg is to recognise what more than 80 years after the end of the war, can be experienced, lived and celebrated today in a diverse (migrant) society.

Impulses on the topic

Past in mind



40 min.



As of the age of 12



Distinguish different types of memory rituals. This introductory exercise is intended to make the student aware that groups of people share memories relating to certain historical events. In this way, the students should be able to clarify the ambiguity of the pair of concepts so as to gain a better understanding of 'historical remembering' and remembrance.

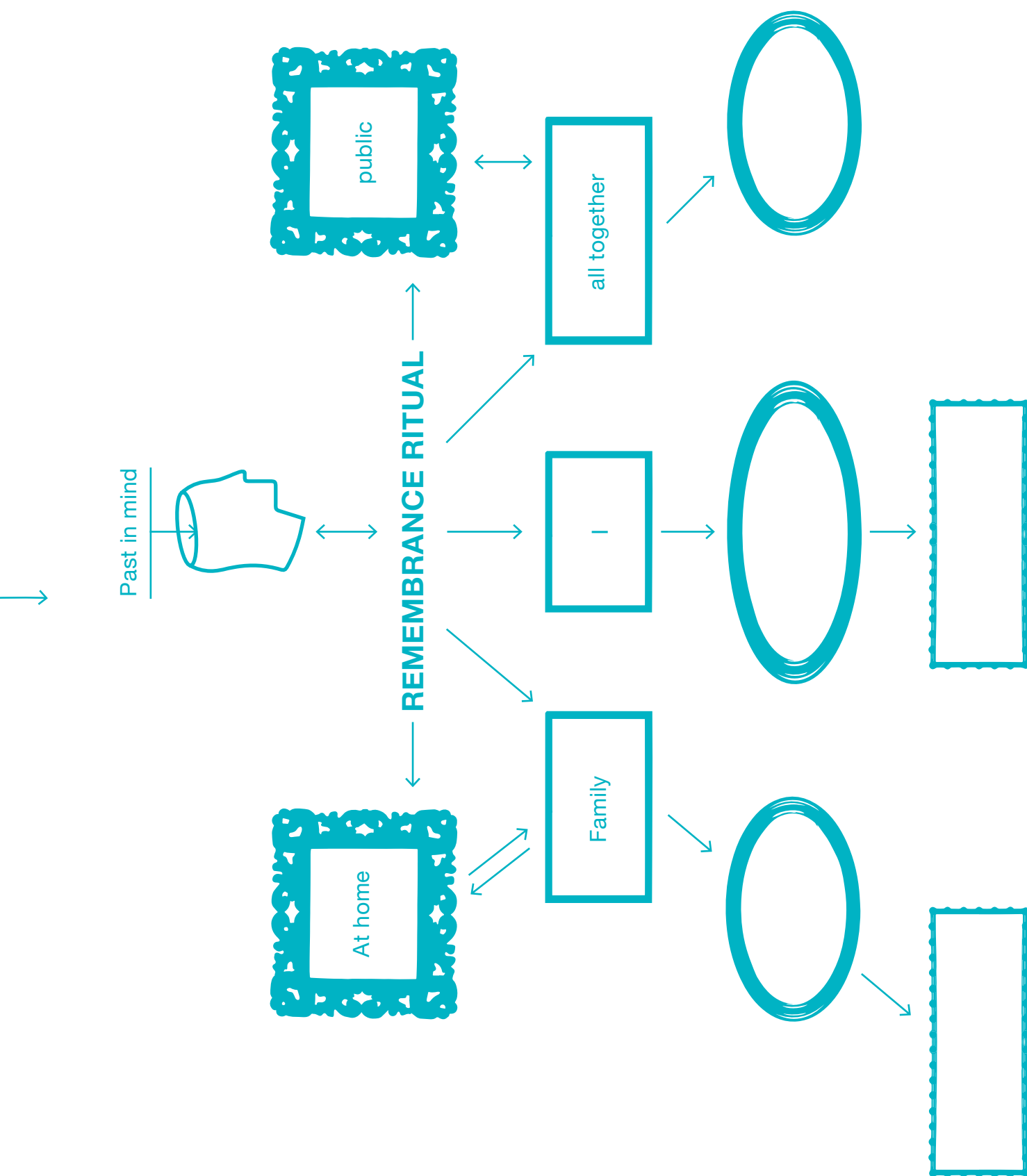
Organizational matters:

The students are asked to perform a public-collective and a private ritual of remembrance in groups of four, using the Mind map. The results will be presented afterwards in the plenary session. The teacher will go over a list on the flip chart or on the blackboard in two columns of public (outside in public, on streets or squares, ...) and private (e.g. in the family or in a very personal way) forms of remembrance rituals and shows the students how remembrance of the past can manifest itself privately, publicly or collectively.

What do you remember?

Add to the Mind map.





Remembering in the future



50 min.



As of the age of 12



First identify, then reflect on significant contemporary events and persons

Organizational matters:

The teacher asks the participants to write a profile of a person, event or place.

The profile can of course also be a combination of all three. The guiding question should be: What person, event or place is most likely to be memorable from today's perspective? The participants should develop an awareness that commemorating is always the result of a process.

In 50 years I want to remember...

Imagine: In the year 2075 you are the mayor of your municipality and wish to organize a commemoration ceremony or erect a monument. What do you remember?

Person ○ / Place ○ / Event ○

Name

Age

Occupation

Place / Country

Stands for

Memorable, because

This is how it should be remembered

For specialists: A society is constantly changing. In 2075, who do you think will remember the people, places, or events you introduced? Who might not? Why?

Forms and efficiency



50 min.



As of the age of 12



Get to know different forms of remembering and reflect on their efficiency

Monument
Library
Feature film
Documentary film
Digital museum
Holiday
Architecture
Photo album
App
World War II

Knowledge archiving
Holiday
Private remembering
Migration
Escape
Rout Bréck [Red Bridge] (Pont Grande-Duchesse Charlotte)

1



2



3



4



5

6



7



8

9



Efficiency

Photo 1: ○ ○ ○ ○ ○

Photo 2: ○ ○ ○ ○ ○

Photo 3: ○ ○ ○ ○ ○

Photo 4: ○ ○ ○ ○ ○

Photo 5: ○ ○ ○ ○ ○

Photo 6: ○ ○ ○ ○ ○

Photo 7: ○ ○ ○ ○ ○

Photo 8: ○ ○ ○ ○ ○

Photo 9: ○ ○ ○ ○ ○

- Gather information on the foregoing examples and note them down in keywords.
- Assign two terms to each photo: the theme and form of this remembrance (a theme appears three times).
- Finally, on a scale of 1-5, assess the forms of remembrance and their efficiency (1 = least significant for you; 5 = has the greatest effect on you). Justify your assessment.

Build your monument: National Commemoration Day 2055

Topics	Design of a future scenario, raising of awareness for remembering in the present and the future
Competence	Competence to act and judge, creativity
Duration	6 x 50 min.; also suitable for a project day
Methods	Scenario method, conception and analysis of a monument and the corresponding holiday, change of perspective
Materials	Copy templates and drawing sheets, pens or tablet
Learning goals	Using the scenario method, the learners should develop a concept for the design of a 'new' commemoration day for all residents of Luxembourg and an associated material or digital remembrance. Possible visions for the future will be developed, based on the current socio-political situation. In 2025, Luxembourg will have 681,973 inhabitants; non-Luxembourgers will make up around 48% of the population, and almost half of the resident population will have been born abroad (STATEC 2025). The method is suitable for dealing with comprehensive and longer-term issues. The learners get to know the scenario method from a methodological point of view. In terms of content, they can deal creatively and critically with forms of remembering in the future that take the preservation of democratic principles into account. In working through the questions, the learners will recognize what remembering could look like in the future and to what extent it reflects the society of today.
Course	The guiding question in working through the following method is: What should the future collective memory of a country look like in which almost three quarters (75%) of the population have a migration background (STATEC 2021 census)? Almost 50 percent of Luxembourg's inhabitants do not have Luxembourg nationality.
Step 1: Preparation	First, guide the learners by means of an impulse of your choice into the subject. Starting from CT 1, the students should first express themselves spontaneously on the topic of the <i>Journée de commémoration nationale</i>. This will give them a picture of their ideas which will be considered critically after a deepening phase (step 2-5).
Step 2: Creative Phase	Now divide the class into groups of four. Based on CT 2, each group prepares its concept for a day of remembrance for the people of Luxembourg and the associated monument. The results are then presented and compared in class. What similarities and differences can be identified?

Step 3: Problem analysis and current situation

The concepts developed by the young people are based on current facts and development factors. This is done using CT 3. What does the actual situation look like and why could it be perceived as problematic? How is the population in Luxembourg expected to develop in the coming decades? What influence does this demographic change have on commemoration?

Step 4: Scenario development

The task now is to develop the two extreme scenarios for the *Journée de commémoration nationale 2055* from the findings and insights: a scenario 1 (parallel societies are strengthened, the gap between foreign nationals and Luxembourgers is widening, the population groups are drifting apart instead of growing together) and a scenario 2 (common 'we' feeling, solidarity, social cohesion are strengthened, Luxembourg invents a new and diverse commemoration that seeks to bring all citizens on board). Learners should be given the opportunity to think in both directions from the very beginning. Teachers should be careful not to intervene in a judgmental way, except when students question fundamental democratic principles (human dignity, human rights, equality, freedom, etc.).

Two approaches are possible: either each group works out scenarios 1 and 2, or half of the group works out one of both. The pupils then present their results in writing in the form of a fictitious press release and a newspaper report based on CT 4. This is about the change of perspective, namely to present the celebrations once from the perspective of the organisers and once from the perspective of the observing reporter.

Step 5: Evaluation and recommendations for action

Based on the scenarios, concrete measures and strategies are finally being planned and determined.

The visions of the future presented in the press releases are discussed on the basis of the following guiding questions:

- Are the scenarios complete? Are they conclusive?
What is missing? Possible gaps are filled with imagination and creativity.
- Who can do something? Who should do something (e.g. politics, science, economy, population, civil society ...)?
- What must or should be done first? What further steps must/should follow?
- Finally, the original drafts for the process of the *Journée de commémoration nationale 2055* and the associated monument will be revised once again and adapted to scenario 1 or 2, depending on the findings.

Politics and Remembrance: *Journée de commémoration nationale* ①

The inhabitants of a city, a region or a nation remember together certain historical events or persons at selected places of remembrance. Such collectives do not have a common memory per se, but form one with the help of speeches, texts, monuments, anniversaries and/or rituals. Here, symbols and always the same procedures play an important role. Remembering is thus handed down through generations, and creates identity.

The term 'place of remembrance' means more than just pure localities. Shared memories can manifest themselves in a place, a certain person, a mythological figure, a ritual, a symbol or a custom. A place of remembrance can only be described as such if it enjoys the acceptance of a sufficiently large population group. If this is not the case, the question arises as to what extent the place of remembrance can still be considered as such.



Traditional wreath-laying ceremony on the occasion of the *Journée de commémoration nationale*

M1

QUESTIONS IN CLASS

Do you know what the *Journée de commémoration nationale* is?

Yes ☐

No ☐

If so, have you ever participated in this commemorative ceremony?

Yes ☐

No ☐

Class result:

___ Yes votes

___ No votes

National Commemoration Day in Luxembourg

A nation with no memory of the past is on the wrong path to the future. It is up to us to keep alive for younger generations the memory of 10 October 1941, when the Nazi Gauleiter tried to extort from the Luxembourgers a written confession that they were Germans by means of a *Personenstandaufnahme* [civil status census]. The fact that this census travesty was cancelled when the Nazis saw that more than 90% had answered 'Luxembourger' was interpreted as a first significant success of the Resistance. This is why this symbolic date is of capital importance in the collective memory of our country. On this day, we reiterate our commitment to democracy and human rights. We thank the courageous men and women of yesteryear for setting a living example of the importance of guaranteeing freedom to every human being. May the memory of those dark times and dramatic events continue to strengthen our commitment to a free society in a Europe of solidarity.

12.10.2019 - Press release by the Ministère d'État, on behalf of the members of the Government (translated from French)

- Carry out the survey in the class. Then analyse the class result. What percentage of your class's classmates are familiar with the *Journée de la commémoration nationale*? What percentage of them do not know the *Journée de la commémoration nationale*? How do you explain this result? Make a list of these reasons.
- Examine the official proclamation of the government (M1) on the occasion of the *Journée de commémoration nationale* 2019 and research the most recent version.
 1. What is being remembered?
 2. What values are appealed to?
 3. What emotions do the messages want to evoke in the reader?
 4. What other principles of democracy (freedom of expression ...) do you consider important? What would you stand up for?
 5. Why can the *Journée de commémoration nationale* be considered out of date? Justify your answer.
- Can you find out where the commemoration ceremonies around October 10th will take place?

Our vision of a new memorial day ②

Memorial days commemorate historical events or personalities who have played a prominent role for a country and thus contribute to a sense of community. In some cases, such memorial days can become official holidays, such as Europe Day on 9 May, which is an official holiday in Luxembourg since 2019.

Develop a concept for a national memorial day for the population of Luxembourg. It should take into account the cohesion in society and the respect of democratic principles (such as tolerance, solidarity, human dignity, respect for human rights ...). The draft should include both the celebration of this day and a monument to it.

Reflect on the following:

- Who or what do we remember?
- Why is this remembering important?
- Where do we remember (centrally/decentrally)?
- Who is WE? Who remembers?
- When do we remember?
- What should the memorial day be called?

This is what our (analogue, digital) monument looks like:

- Make a sketch of the monument, the building...
- Label the sketch.
- Which symbol do you use?
- Write a script (motto, slogan) for the monument.
- Write an accompanying text with the necessary explanations.

Sequence of the memorial day:

Motto

Sentence with a certain summarizing statement

Slogan

Memorable, effectively worded slogan

Symbol

Emblem, identification mark

Remembering in a migration society ③

On 1 January 2020, Luxembourg had a population of 626,100 inhabitants, 47.4 per cent of whom were non-Luxembourgish. According to Eurostat forecasts (EUROPOP2023), Luxembourg's population will reach approximately 866,782 inhabitants in 2045 and approximately 897,072 inhabitants in 2050, representing an increase of approximately +43% compared to 2020. About a fifth of our population will be over 80 by then.

Wiltz: Fatima pilgrimage



According to statistics, persons without a migrant background are Luxembourgers who were born in Luxembourg to parents both of whom were also born in Luxembourg. A migrant background is determined by:

- Nationality
- Place of birth
- Birthplace of the parents.

In Luxembourg, 26.3% of the population has no migrant background (2021 census).



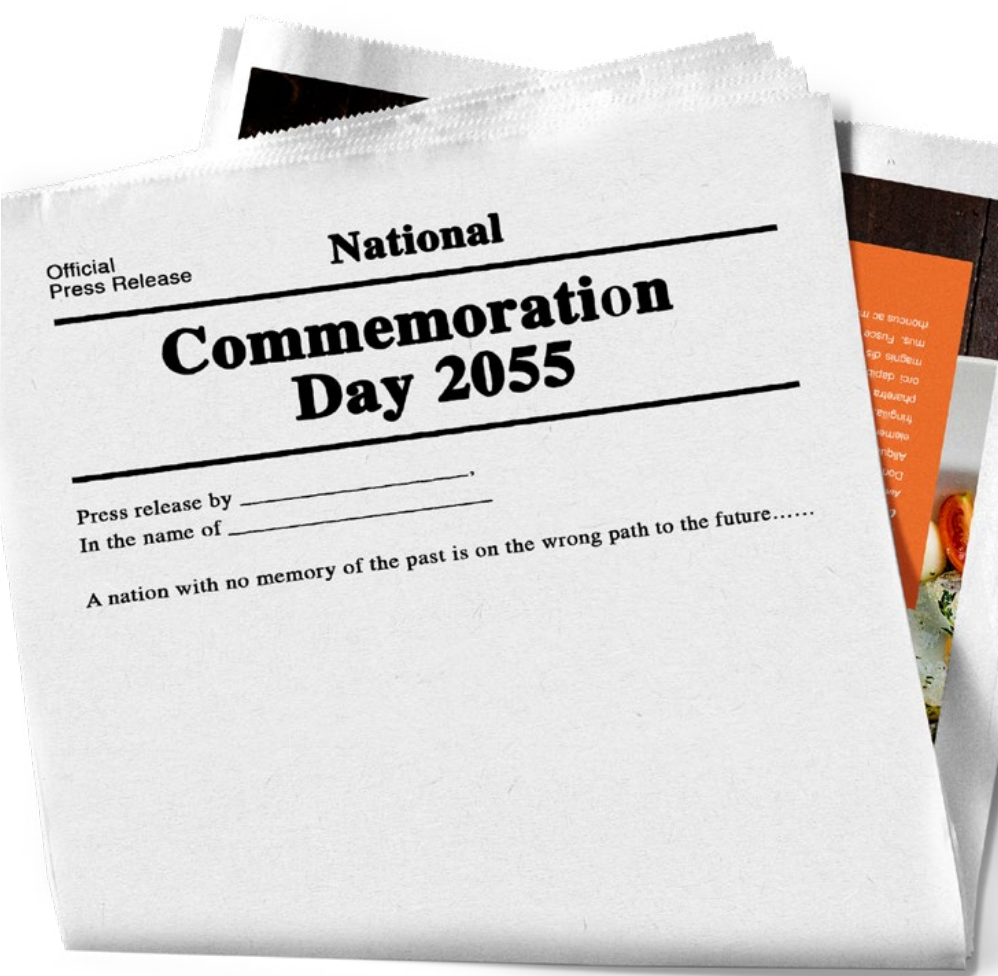
Luxembourg-Kirchberg: European Investment Bank (EIB)



Esch: L'embrassade (The Embrace); Monument for the centenary of Italian immigration to Luxembourg (1892-1992)

- Look at the pictures. Find out about the proportion of the Luxembourg population with a migration background. Where do these people come from? Why did they want or had to come to Luxembourg? What about yourself? What does the migrant background in your family look like? Discuss the matter in class.
- How could the national commemoration in Luxembourg change by 2050 if
 1. ... the demographic trend continues/
 2. ... there are no more contemporary witnesses from World War II? Are there other historical events that are suitable for collective remembrance?

The *Journée de commémoration nationale* 2055 in the Press! ④



Scenario 1

Parallel societies are strengthened, the gap between foreigners and Luxembourgers widens, the population groups drift apart instead of growing together.

Scenario 2

A common 'We' feeling is brought about, thereby strengthening solidarity and social cohesion. Luxembourg invents a new, multifaceted commemoration that strives to bring all citizens on board.

Newspaper report on the festivities:

- Choose scenario 1 or scenario 2 in the group, and then write a government press release (similar to CT 1) about how the 2055 commemoration day should look.
- Then write a newspaper report on the sequence of the celebration.
- In a further step, revise your initial draft on the sequence of the memorial day and the design of the monument. What changes? What remains?
- Finally, the individual drafts are presented and discussed in class (see leading questions under Step 5).
- Present your designs with the accompanying press release and newspaper reports in school, as part of an exhibition on the *Journée de commémoration nationale* 2055.

Streets full of freedom

Many squares and streets in Luxembourg commemorate historical events or bear the names of famous people from the world of politics, business or culture. Others also have a direct or indirect reference to democratic principles such as freedom or human rights.

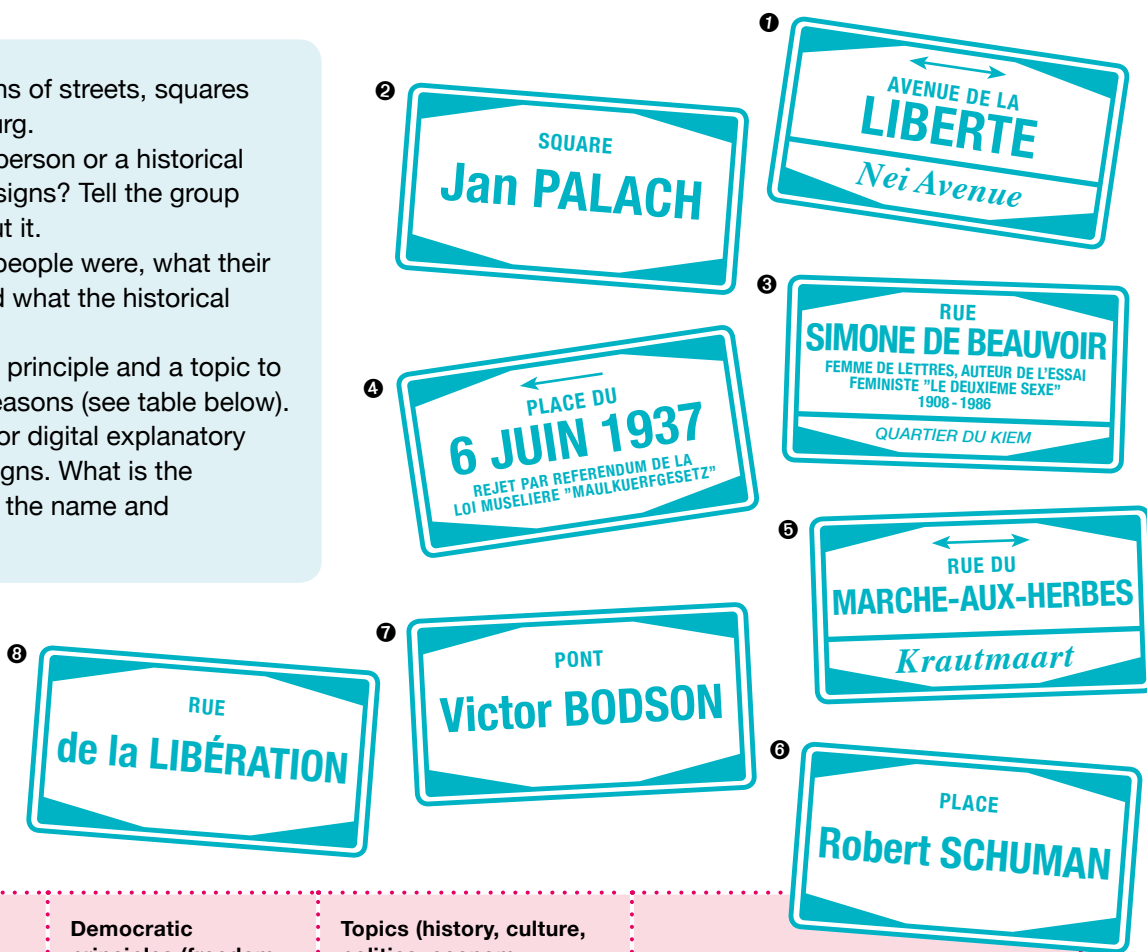
When new streets, squares, bridges or parks are built, suggestions are made on how to name them. Who decides what or who is to be remembered by the names? In this case, the City of Luxembourg has a Commission

which analyses and assesses the proposals. The Board of Aldermen then decides which name will be selected and finally appear on the corresponding sign.

In Luxembourg, street names are traditionally bilingual, French and Luxembourgish. It is also common for streets and squares to have an older name used by many people in addition to the official name. This older name can sometimes be even more popular.

- The collage depicts signs of streets, squares, bridges from Luxembourg.
- Do you recognize a person or a historical event on one of the signs? Tell the group what you know about it.
 - Find out who these people were, what their significance was and what the historical events were about.
 - Assign a democratic principle and a topic to the signs and give reasons (see table below).
 - Create an analogue or digital explanatory flyer for one of the signs. What is the connection between the name and democracy?

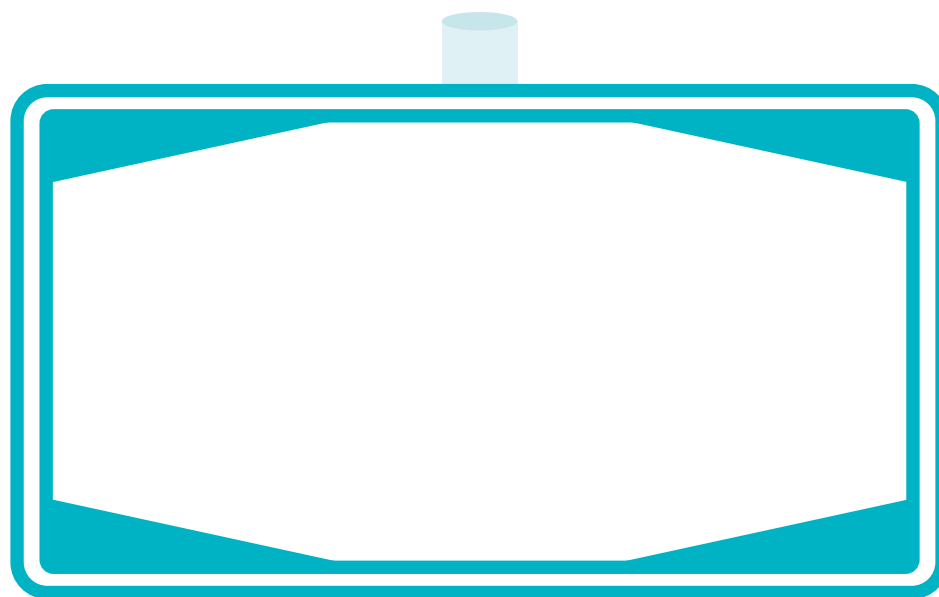
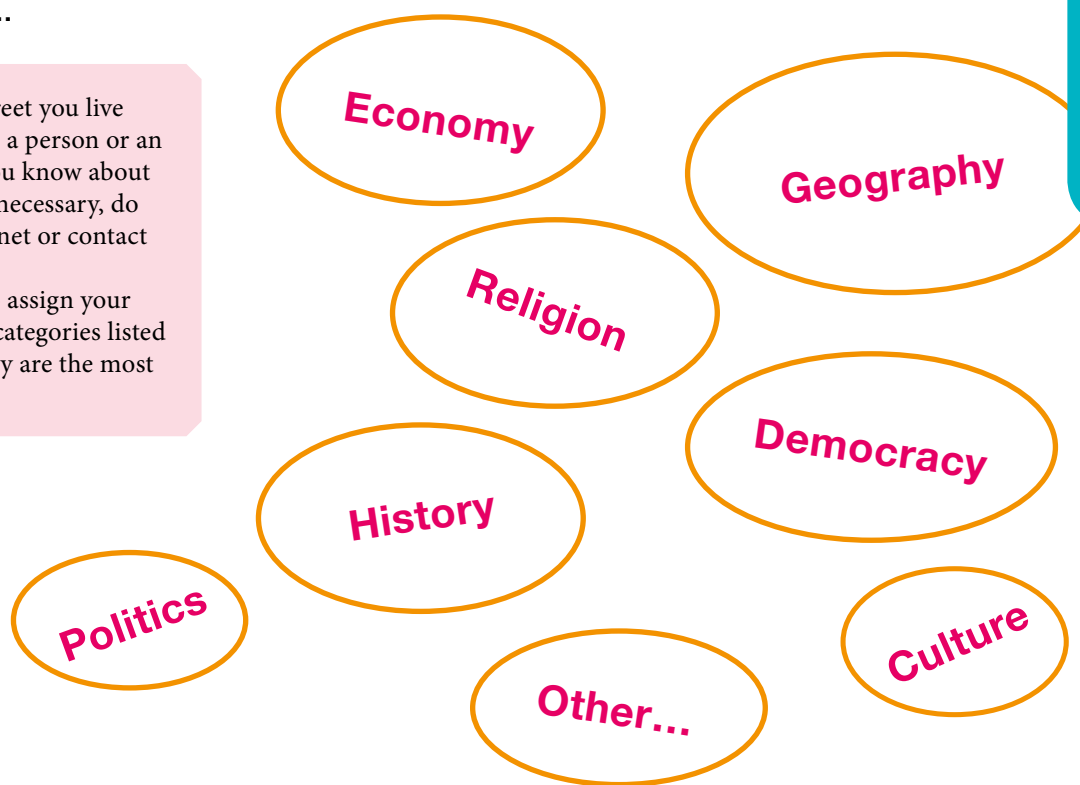
In the 'name' of democracy



Name	Place	Democratic principles (freedom, equal rights, freedom of expression, etc.)	Topics (history, culture, politics, economy, religion, geography, other, etc.)	Reason
e.g. Marie Carmes-Heffenisch	Dudelange	Freedom, freedom of expression	Politics and resistance during the Nazi occupation	From 1941 on, distributed illegal newspapers and hid seven resistance fighters. In June 1944, she was arrested and taken to the Ravensbrück concentration camp. She returned to Luxembourg in June 1945 and was awarded the <i>Médaille de l'Ordre de la Résistance</i> [Order of Resistance Medal] in 1968.
...				

What a street name says...

- What is the name of the street you live on? Does the name refer to a person or an event perhaps? What do you know about the origin of this name? If necessary, do some research on the Internet or contact the municipal authorities.
- Then use the blackboard to assign your street names to one of the categories listed above. From which category are the most street names?



Imagine: Your greatest dream is to see your name on a street sign! Put your name on a street sign already! What is your merit? Why should your name appear on a street sign?

Reasons:

Mute witnesses?

On your way to school, sports or leisure activities, you may pass by monuments that remind you, more or less unconsciously, of historical events or people e.g. war memorials, equestrian statues etc. A special form of the monument is the memorial. It should remind of a historical event and thereby stimulate the observer to think about it. Monuments always say something about the time in which they were built. We can therefore see today what seemed so important and memorable to people in the past, and that they wanted to remember it for a long time.



- Observe very carefully: Which monuments do you come across in your everyday life?
- You can use the *Gëlle Fra* as an example, to work through a checklist that will enable you to analyse a monument. You can then apply this approach to a monument of your choosing.

CHECKLIST

1. Description

- Which event or which personality does the monument commemorate?
- How is it composed? What do the individual parts stand for?
 - Symbols,
 - Figures,
 - Inscriptions.
- Produce and label a sketch of the selected monuments.
- Pay attention also to the location and design of the monument on the site and its central or decentralized location.

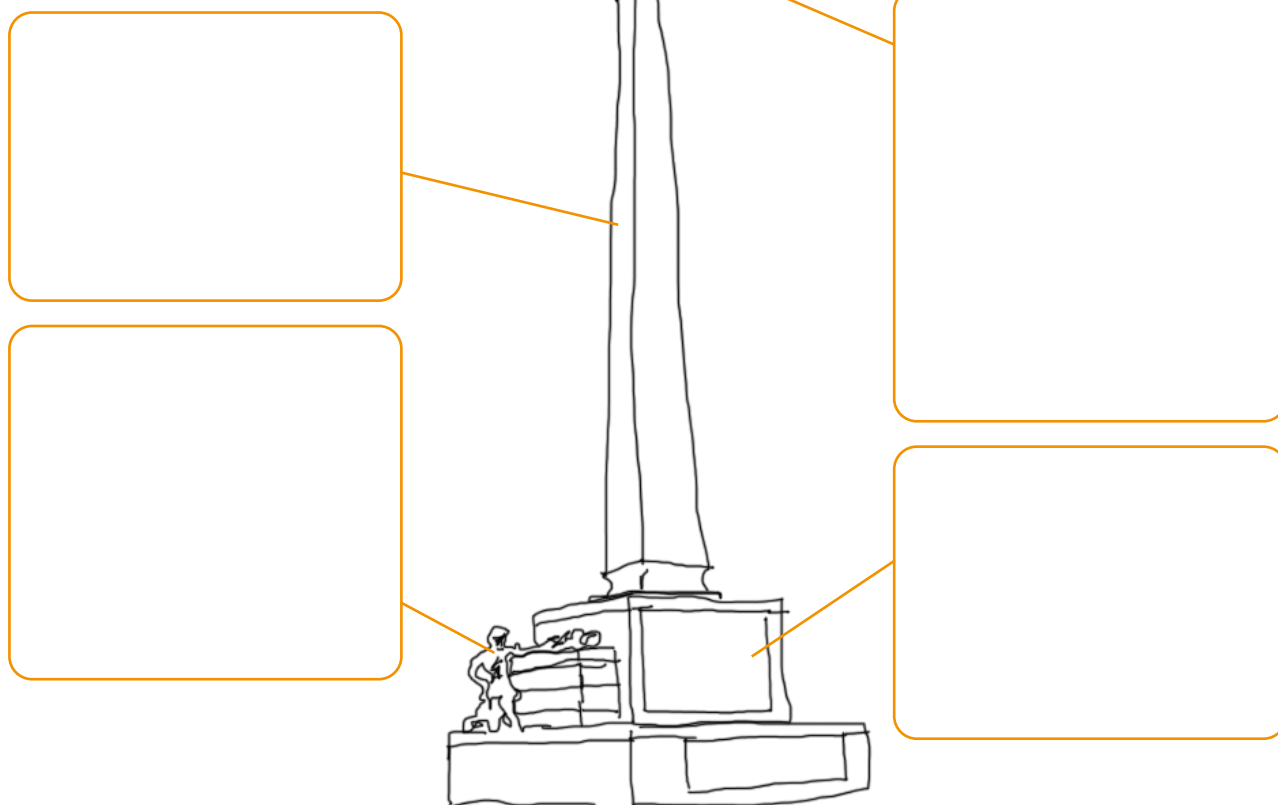
2. Background

- Who built or had it built, when and why?
- Has the monument changed in the course of time?
- Check its function:
 - ☐ Precise representation of the past
 - ☐ Interpretation of the past
 - ☐ Veneration of life, hope
 - ☐ Veneration of a person, a group of people, a profession.
 - ☐ Veneration of ideals
 - ☐ Hero worship
 - ☐ Veneration of the Nation
 - ☐ Fight against evil
 - ☐ Promoting reconciliation
 - ☐ Expression of desperation
 - ☐ Respect for democratic principles
 - ☐ Other:
 -

3. and today...

- How will the monument be perceived by the public?
- Are there festivities around the monument? If so, which ones?
- Decide: How important is the monument for you? Justify.
 - ☐ The monument has one important message to this day.
 - ☐ The message is difficult to decipher today, but it is an important witness of the history of my place of residence/my country.
 - ☐ The message of the monument is outdated or even problematic. It should be demolished or redesigned.

- Read the explanatory text.
Structure the text in colour:
Description, 2)...., 3)... (Checklist).
Then label the individual parts
of the memorial. Also indicate what
they stand for.



The *Monument du Souvenir* [Monument of Remembrance] is a war memorial. It was built in 1923 on the *Place de la Constitution* in memory of the Luxembourg soldiers who died in World War I. It was created by the Luxembourg artist Claus Cito and was raised by appeals for donations from the population and financed by the state by a surcharge on stamps.

The monument consists of a pedestal with a stone sarcophagus, bronze figures and various inscriptions. The cenotaph symbolizes the timeless wake of ancient warriors. They are depicted without recognizable uniforms to avoid misunderstandings, as Luxembourgers fought as volunteers in foreign armies. A gilded female figure – goddess of peace with a laurel wreath – who gave the monument the name *Gülle Fra*, is enthroned on top of the 21-metre high obelisk. The dominion-winner symbol is supposed to remind of the human greatness of the volunteer soldiers.

The Nazi occupiers demolished the monument in October 1940. Any remembrance of Luxembourg's independence and the German defeat of 1918 were to be erased. The base area was rebuilt after the war. The badly damaged statue

was shown in an exhibition in 1955 and fell into oblivion, although commemorative ceremonies were regularly held in front of the pedestal. In memory of the horrors of the Nazi occupation, one would leave the monument in its destroyed state. It was not until 1980 that the statue was rediscovered, restored with public funds and inaugurated with pomp and ceremony in 1985. A third dedication by Grand Duchess Charlotte for the victims of 1939-1945 was added to the quotations of allied generals. The monument also commemorates the two Luxembourgish casualties in the Korean War (1954-1956).

Today, the *Gülle Fra* stands for the resistance of the Luxembourg people during the Nazi occupation and is considered a national symbol. It commemorates the Luxembourgish volunteer soldiers of both World Wars, the Spanish Civil War and the Korean War. Celebrations are held on 10 September (liberation of the capital, 1944) and on the occasion of the *Journée de commémoration nationale*.

From the *Gëlle Fra* to the *Golden Lady*

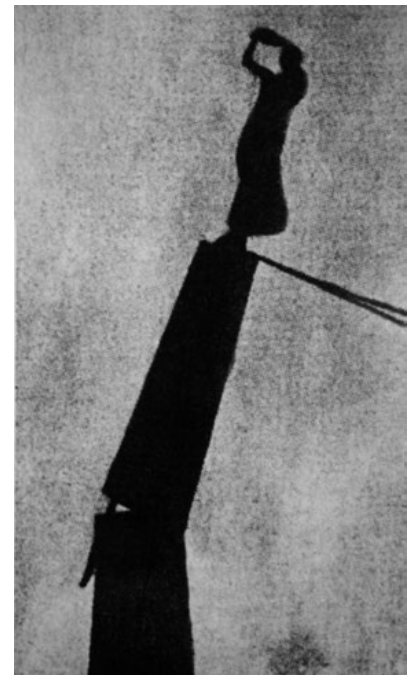
The mindset of people and societies is constantly changing. These changes have an impact on the views and values of people, and this is reflected in the way monuments are treated. It is possible that a monument no longer represents the views and beliefs for which it was originally intended. Today, the *Monument du Souvenir* [Monument of Remembrance] is perceived very differently by the population. At official celebrations like

the *Journée de commémoration nationale* the focus on the *Monument du Souvenir* is as a war memorial. Take a look at the copy template 'Mute witnesses?' to find out more about the history of the *Gëlle Fra*. The statue of the *Gëlle Fra* has, moreover, gained in importance as a symbolic figure. It shapes the cityscape, has become a tourist attraction in the capital and is considered a recognition element for Luxembourg at home and abroad.

The *Gëlle Fra* as a place of remembrance



Inauguration of the *Monument du Souvenir* on 27 May 1923, in the *Place de la Constitution*



Demolition of the *Gëlle Fra* on 21 October 1940 under the Nazi occupation.



Wreath-laying ceremony in front of the *Monument du Souvenir* on 13 October 2019.

- Add the following captions to each photo: Invoke remembrance, Create remembrance, Erase remembrance. Then think about when 'remembering' actually stops.
- Search for current photos of the *Journée de commémoration nationale* on the Internet. What role does the *Monument du Souvenir* play? What other monuments are officially commemorated on this day? Who or what do they commemorate? Describe the commemoration ceremony. Which groups of people are depicted? Which are missing? To whom is the commemoration addressed? Do you feel addressed by the celebration? Give reasons for your answer.

The Gëlle Fra today

Front cover of
Revue, March
2020



EmoXies: Nation Branding,
Let's make it happen, inspiring
Luxembourg, 2018



Flyer by the Ministère de
l'égalité des chances, 2019



National holiday
2019



Meeting point
for tourists



The Gëlle
Fra as a
souvenir



World Expo in
Shanghai, 2010



- What role does the *Monument du Souvenir* play in public life outside the commemoration ceremonies?
- What significance does the *Monument du Souvenir* have for you?
- Interview your parents, grandparents and, if possible, great-grandparents. You can also interview passers-by. Ask them what associations they make with the *Gëlle Fra*, what memories they have of the monument. Make short videos and present them to the class.

Way of Remembering through the City of Luxembourg

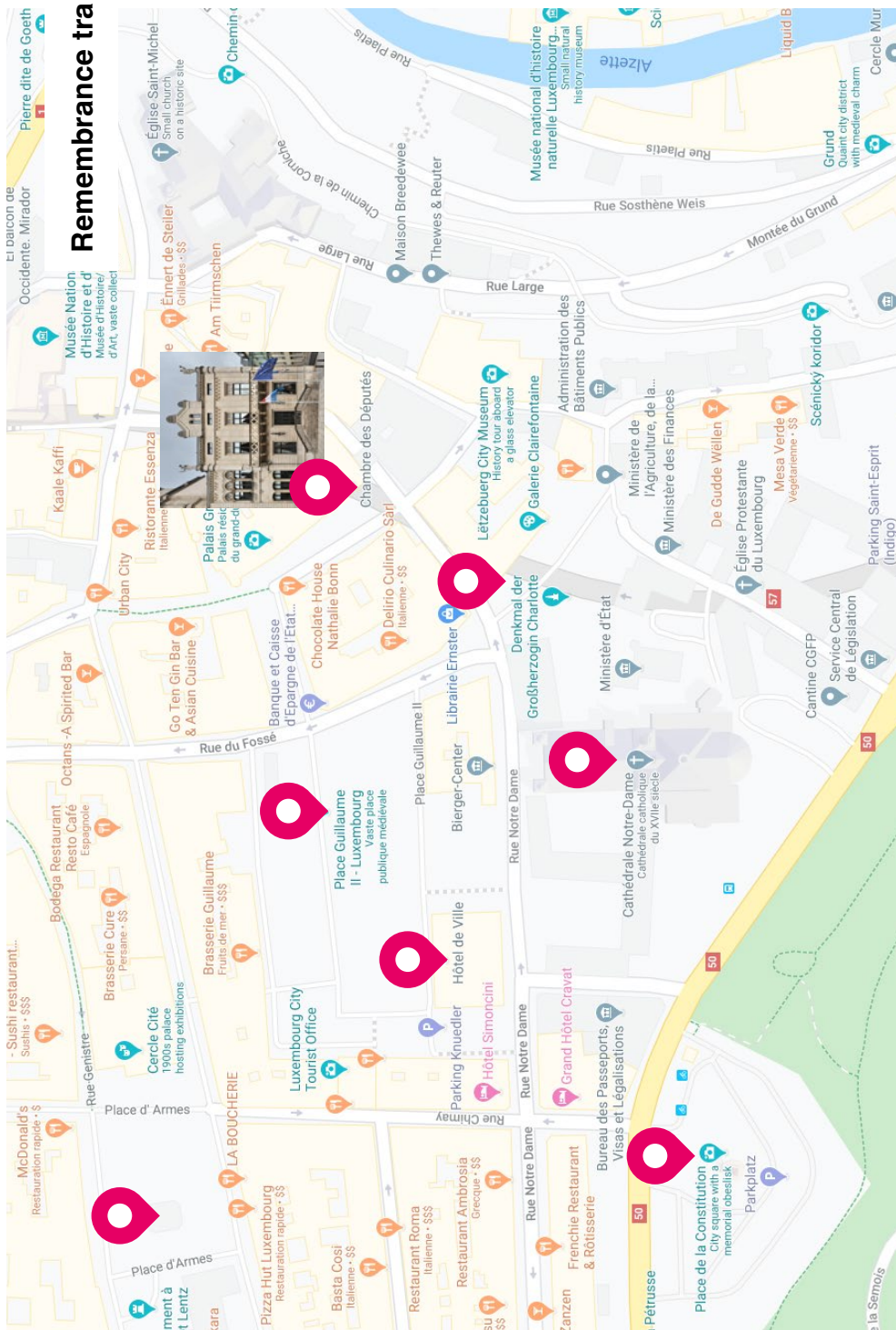
Some places of remembrance are located at these points. They have to do with the 'past'.

- Use a map app to search which place or remembrance it is in each case.
- Get information about the place, the street names, the building, the monument etc. Add a photo at the points. Which past do they attest to?
- Supplement the map with others points, i.e. other sights, which can be linked to 'Remembering' the past.

➤ You will arrive in the capital by public transport. Connect the individual points so as to create an interesting path of remembrance for yourself/your class/your project.

You can also put together other itineraries on the theme of remembering: 'Luxembourg in World War II' or 'Monuments and memorials in the capital', 'Travel and migration ...', 'Freedom and democracy', 'Religions in the capital'. Perhaps you can think of other themes ... and of course consider other cities and places in Luxembourg!

You can use map apps that can prove helpful for orientation searching and for orientation purposes. There are even way will enable you to share your of remembrance with others, e.g. <https://en.actionbound.com/bounds>



Celebration and commemoration days

The state determines official celebration and commemoration days. These then become public events, on specific days and at specific places, and anyone can take part. Important events are showcased through them. The ceremonies usually follow a specific programme and are staged thereby. They are an occasion to look back into the past, but can also be an opportunity to take a look at the present and the future of a community.

Official holidays are non-working days in Luxembourg, whereas commemorative days are not public holidays, such as the *Journée de commémoration nationale* or religious celebrations, such as the 'Echternach dancing procession', the pilgrimage to the tomb of Saint Willibrord in Echternach, the breaking of the fast Eid Al-Fitr following the month of Ramadan or the Jewish day of atonement, Yom-Kippur.



National holiday



Europe Day

Official work-free holidays in Luxembourg	Date?	What is remembered?	Political, cultural, historical, religious origin	Which official festivities take place?	National or international significance?	How do you celebrate this day?	Reference to democracy or to democratic values?
...							

According to the Labour Code (art. L.232-2), there are 11 legal holidays in Luxembourg. Create a table. Indicate each time whether this day means something to you or whether you are simply happy about the day off.

- Look for some examples of celebration or commemoration days that are not work-free. How important are these days to you? Give reasons.
- Should everyone simply be able to choose eleven holidays a year? Which days would you choose?

Remembering in the month of May

Every day of the year is a day of celebration or commemoration somewhere in the world. Sometimes even several events are commemorated on one day. Such occasions are celebrated locally, regionally, nationally or internationally. Remembering always also means making a selection from what seems to be worth remembering to a society in a certain place, at a certain time. Yet such a selection is often contested.

The merry month of May: The following dates stand for ...

1 May

3 May

8 May

9 May

10 May

11 May

17 May

INTERNATIONAL DAY
against homophobia

EUROPE DAY
Official holiday since 2019

SCHUMAN DECLARATION
Robert Schuman announces his idea
of the European Community for Coal
and Steel, the forerunner of today's
EU, 1950

LABOUR DAY
Official holiday since 1946

CONGRESS OF LONDON
Which established Luxembourg's neutrality,
1867

END OF WORLD WAR II
IN EUROPE
1945

WORLD PRESS
FREEDOM DAY

GERMAN INVASION
OF LUXEMBOURG
1940



- Connect the dates with the associated events. Then search for photos of the celebration and commemoration days here in Luxembourg.
- Are these dates official holidays in Luxembourg? Are the events that are remembered positive or negative?
- Create a personal ranking of the holidays and commemoration days in May from 1 to 7. Begin with the event that still seems most important to you today (1) and proceed on down to the event that concerns you least (7).
- In which month were you born? Make a list of memorable events, commemorations and holidays that will be celebrated in that month.

Commemorations during the dictatorship

Public commemoration ceremonies can be misused for propaganda purposes in dictatorships or authoritarian states.

On 10 May 1940 German troops occupied neutral Luxembourg. The Luxembourg government and the Grand Duchess Charlotte fled into exile. After a short period, Luxembourg was placed under

the military administration of the Nazi *Gauleiter* Gustav Simon. As head of the civil administration, he reported directly to the dictator Hitler and had a free hand: democracy was abolished, parties, trade unions and associations were dissolved, the press was censored, and freedom of opinion and assembly was banned.

Nazi propaganda in the *Luxemburger Wort*

1. Call in the *Luxemburger Wort*, 9/10 May 1942 (translated from German)

10th May, Luxembourg's fateful commemoration day

The people of Luxembourg commemorate May 10th in a special way, because on this fateful day they were given their old homeland back and the new Great German Empire was opened to them.

Tomorrow, Sunday, 10th May, at 9 a.m., wreaths will be laid at the Klausen Cemetery of Honour in a simple celebration by the *Wehrmacht* and the party at the tombs of the dead heroes who gave their lives to protect Luxembourg.

Afterwards, units of the *Wehrmacht* and the NSDAP will march through the streets of the city. At noon, the local units will march in front of the building of the head of the civil administration in Adolf Hitler *Strasse* past the city commander and the NSDAP divisions and the political leaders of the *Volksdeutsche Bewegung* [Ethnic German Movement] in front of the district leader and the regional leader of the *Volksdeutsche Bewegung*, Professor Dr. Kratzenberg.

The people of Luxembourg will on these days commemorate the heroic efforts of the German soldiers and thank them for saving Luxembourg from the devastation and destruction of the war and for opening the way for them to the Great German Empire.

- Read the call in the *Luxemburger Wort* of 9/10 May 1942 and look at the photos. Work out to what extent the way of commemoration was imposed on the Luxembourg people. Consider the following aspects:
 - Why is 10 May a day of remembrance according to the text?
 - Who calls for commemoration?
 - How is it celebrated?
 - What kind of behaviour and attitude is expected from Luxembourgers on this day by the occupying forces?
 - To what extent are historical facts distorted?
- Why was 10 May in Luxembourg not a special commemoration day after 1944/45?

2. Report on the commemoration day in the *Luxemburger Wort*, 11 May 1942

The celebration of the second anniversary of 10 May, which is crucial for Luxembourg



Luxembourg begins the second anniversary of the decisive 10 May 1940 in a dignified manner. In the middle: the wreath-laying ceremony at the Tombs of the Dead Heroes at the Klausen Cemetery of Honour. Left and right. Excerpts from the march of the local troops in front of the city commander and the NSDAP divisions, in front of the district leader.

Fancy a fake?

Many buildings and ruins tell something about the history of Luxembourg and have thus something to do with the remembrance of the past. A popular motif for tourists and locals is the so-called *Huelen Zant* [Hollow Tooth] in the capital. It has been the destination of many tourists for almost 150 years, but the truth of the

matter is that it is a fake. Why? That is for you to find out. In general, the following applies: how and what is remembered and which buildings are listed as worthy of preservation for society, are based on decisions of politicians, interest groups or private initiatives.

M1

In the name of tourism



The Bock

Montée de Clausen, 1343 Luxembourg

The Green Travel Guide

Description: On this flat rocky outcrop, once connected to the city by a drawbridge, (now the Castle Bridge), are the ruins of the Castle of Luxembourg. The Hollow Tooth tower is the only remnant of the castle, which had undergone many alterations and was finally demolished in 1875. The view from the height of the ruins to the Rham Plateau, (...) is very rewarding. The square gate on the left is called 'Jacob's Tower'. The buildings on the right are barracks built by Vauban.

Source: *viamichelin.de*
(translated from German)

Online reviews of the *Huelen Zant*

TIBERIU_BARANYI – *History remembered* ★★★★★

Dent Creuse - the hollow tooth if you like - also in architecture the term is used for hollow spaces. (...) This is the last remaining portion of the original guard tower of the stronghold that was seating on top of this hill in the early 900 --- so this piece is more than a 1K years old so this landmark is definitely one of the oldest in the city and it got preserved as such. (...) A true Luxembourg icon.

CLODY59 – *Vestiges of the Past* ★★★★★

(translated from French) This tower is purportedly the only vestige of the castle built in the 10th century on the Bock. Located on the side of the road, near the stop of the little train.

MARIANE RADO – *Local Guide* ★★★★★

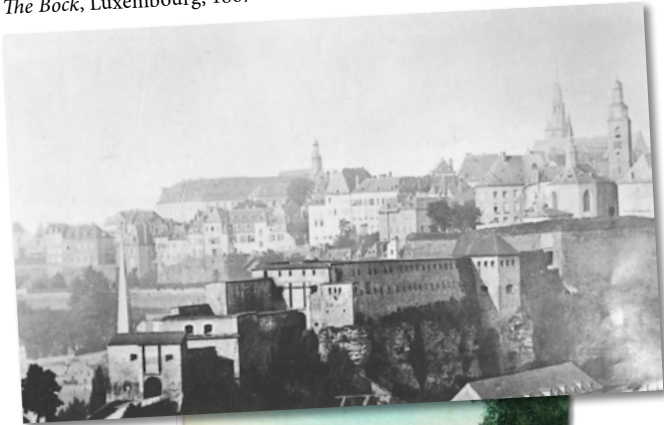
(translated from German) If you have been to L., this is certainly one of the places you must have visited. Especially if you are interested in the historical background of the city. The UNESCO cultural areas loom very large here.

- Locate the *Huelen Zant* in Luxembourg City on the map. Which other tourist attractions are mentioned in the guide or in the reviews? Find your way on the map.
- How is the *Huelen Zant* described by tourists? How is it presented in the online travel guide?
- Compare the presentation in the travel guide with the photographs of the Bock from 1867. What did you notice?

The Huelen Zant - a fake!

The political neutrality of Luxembourg was laid down in the Treaty of London on 11 May 1867. The fortress, which was commonly known as the 'Gibraltar of the North' was torn down. The government decided to rebuild the cornerstone of the fortress on the *Bock* as a remnant of the former Siegfried Castle. In 1994, UNESCO declared the former fortifications and the old town of Luxembourg a World Heritage Site.

The Bock, Luxembourg, 1867



Postcard, Ruine de Lützelburg, 1905

M3

Excerpt from an article in the press entitled *Tourisme et identité nationale* [Tourism and national identity], by André Linden and Guy Thewes, published in 'forum' Nov. 2015, pp. 42-44.

... The Société pour la recherche et la conservation des monuments historiques dans le Grand-Duché [Society for the Research and Conservation of Historic Monuments in the Grand Duchy] was founded only in 1845. Luxembourg protagonists became aware of the importance of conserving historical monuments both as part of the national memory and as a means of attracting tourists. The embellishment societies that were created in the second half of the 19th century were interested in preserving historical monuments and in developing tourism. (...)

Thus, some of the places that today are among the classics of tourism are ex novo creations. The *Bock* is a good example of such a process of 'fabricating' curiosities. A military structure, the *Bock* was dismantled after 1867. In the romantic spirit of the time, Édouard André, the French landscape architect in charge of the reconversion of the fortification grounds, proposed to build a medieval ruin [Lucilinburhuc] to add a picturesque touch (...).

- Identify the *Huelen Zant* in the respective photos. When were these photos published?
- Compare the depiction of *Huelen Zant* with the text excerpt (M2-M3). To what extent is the *Huelen Zant* a construct? Why was the *Huelen Zant* built on this site? What is the significance of this construct, according to the author?
- Is the *Huelen Zant* a fake, a false remembrance of the past?
- Are there other buildings that pretend to be from another time, but are in fact more recent? Find out, for example, about the meeting room of the Chambre des députés [parliament] or the Cité judiciaire [courthouse].
- In your opinion, is alteration of historical buildings justified? Why? Why not?

Industrial brand

The industrial areas in the *Minett* are witnesses of Luxembourg's economic boom. Whether iron ore mines, blast furnaces, former open-cast mining areas, workers' houses and districts, many things bear witness to its industrial past and present in the 'Land of the red earth'. There has been a fundamental structural change in the various industrial areas since the 1970s. The economic environment changed as iron and steel factories and mines closed. There were effects on work and nature. The south of the country has changed its face since then: economic activity has diversified, for example in the Belval industrial area, mountain bike trails run through disused open-cast mining areas that are now protected, and former workers' houses now provide a home for people from all walks of life. The city of Esch was European Capital of Culture in 2022.

M1

Of steel workers and students

Official renaming of Belval station in September 2018



1



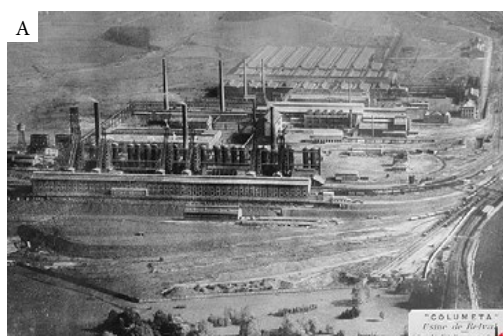
2



3

M2

Reconversion of an industrial area



Columeta: Belval plant of the *Société Métallurgique des Terres Rouges*



B

- Which functional change of the Belval site is illustrated by the picture sequence M1?
- Compare the industrial site of Esch-Belval with the site Belval today M2.
- Find out what activities are carried out on Esch-Belval today.
Label photo B with your findings.
Research the historical past on the website of www.belval.lu

M3

Voices on the industrial past of Luxembourg?

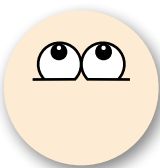
History has the peculiarity that it imposes on today's generations the dates around which collective and individual memory is, can and must be organized. (...) Luxembourgers have always considered their steel industry as an essential bridge in their flag, as a fourth national colour, as it were. When ARBED flourished, the country moved forward. When ARBED was in difficulty, the whole country shared the anxieties of steelworkers and took an active part in the company's recovery. (...) (...) And here, where we stand today, is a special place, for in Belval that what was coming together, that what is present is being worked on, and that what may come and what must come is dreamed about. Here they have worked so long and so hard, and here is where an important part of a new, modern, not only freshly-painted but newly-imagined, freshly-designed Luxembourg emerges.

J-C. Juncker, Prime Minister of Luxembourg (1995-2013), on the occasion of the 100th anniversary of the establishment of ARBED in 2011. ArcelorMittal remains an important employer in Luxembourg at the present time.

As a child, the *Minett* for me was associated with noise; hammering, banging, sirens that howled when shifts changed or there was blasting in the mines. There were also explosions when slag was dumped. The air was always full of black dust from the blast furnaces. The vegetables, the laundry in the garden of the workers' housing estates were always dusty. When my father went with his lunch bag for shift change, he was never alone. The place was always teeming with people on their bicycles or on foot, who came to the steel works, or who left tired and grimy. In the entire *Minett* there was smoke 24 hours a day, steel production was much filthier than today. The waste water from the *Schmelz* simply ran into the [river] Alzette. Artificial mounds of slag appeared everywhere. No one was thinking about the environment at the time. Every village had its steel works, Schiffange, Dudelange, Rodange, and yet they were still villages with farms in their midst, the grocery on the corner, and the coal merchant. The workers were Luxembourgers and Italians, who were already second or third generation citizens, and Portuguese who little by little immigrated. There were also many French cross-border commuters who worked in the steel works. The *Minett*, you see, my childhood.

Testimonial by a *Minetter* about his childhood in Schiffange in the mid-1970's, 2020.

What does industrial history mean to me?



I'm from and I relate to the industrial area

.....

Is Luxembourg's identity linked to the country's industrial history? Yes ☐ No ☐

Is my identity linked to the country's industrial history? Yes ☐ No ☐

For me it is important/not important to remember the industrial past, because

.....

In my opinion, this is how remembrance of the industrial past should be shaped and celebrated

.....

.....

.....

- What importance does the political world give to industrial history in Luxembourg - for the country, for the individual? What does the ordinary citizen from the region remember?
- Compare a *Minetter's* account of his childhood with your childhood memories. What differences, similarities do you notice? Then fill in the box: What does industrial history mean to me?
- Find out whether your community or region remembers the past of work? In what way?

The Shoah in Luxembourg: Only remembering...?

The term 'Holocaust' refers to the systematic extermination of the Jews and other population groups (e.g. Sinit and Roma) under National Socialism. The Hebrew term is 'Shoah' which means 'Great Catastrophe'. The persecution of the Jews is still a topic in school lessons, in research, the civil society and politics.

Contemporary witness accounts in books, films or monuments in public space are different forms of remembrance. Remembering yesterday is accompanied not only by the remembrance of the victims but also by the desire to influence the actions of today and thus to remember so as to shape the future.

M1

Have you already stumbled?



Small brass stumbling stones are placed in the ground where people last lived.

The artist Günter Demnig remembers the victims of the Nazi era.

Laying of 'Stumbling Stones'

- Ettelbruck and Esch-Alzette (2013)
- Differdange (2014)
- Belvaux and Mondorf-les-Bains (2015)
- Remich (2016)
- Grevenmacher (2017)
- Echternach (2019)
- Junglinster (2021)



Information box on the persecution of Jews in Luxembourg:

Before the Nazi occupation, more than 3,900 Jews lived in Luxembourg. Three quarters of them fled to Belgium or France when the country was occupied May 1940. The Nazis introduced racial laws as of September 1940. Jews were discriminated against and were without rights. From that time on, Jewish citizens were forbidden to work, their property was confiscated, forced labour was used, Jewish organisations were disbanded, synagogues were damaged or destroyed, isolation and legally decreed discrimination in everyday life applied. In July 1941, the Gestapo ordered that Jews who were unfit for work be transported to the 'Jewish retirement home Cinqfontaines'. This was a place of internment for Jewish people in a converted monastery. A total of seven deportation trains set out from Luxembourg between October 1941 and June 1943. The Jews were therefore systematically persecuted in, and deported from, Luxembourg also. Of the approximately 700 Jews deported from Luxembourg - 300 of them from Cinqfontaines - only 56 survived the extermination camps. These figures do not however include Jews who fled Luxembourg and were subsequently murdered in the camps.

M2

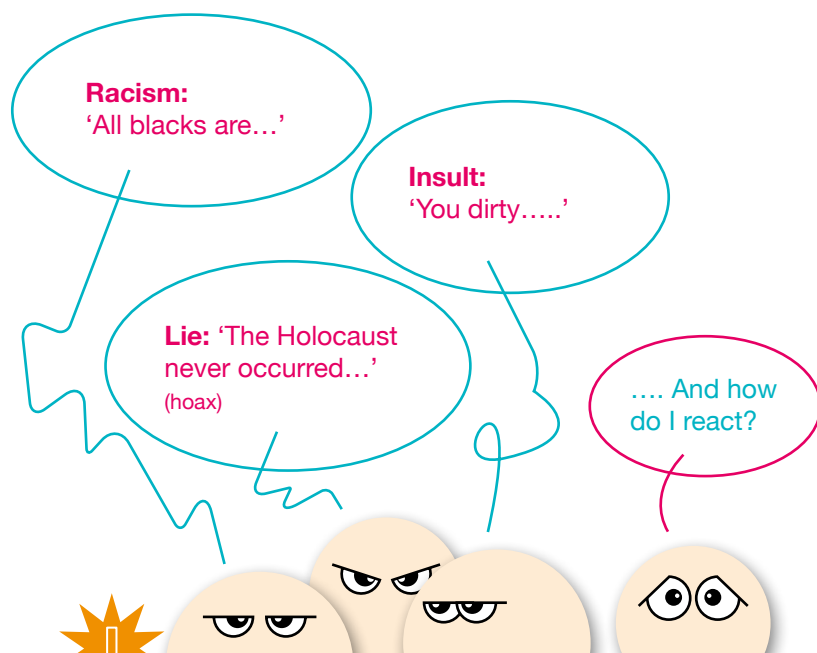
Inauguration of the Monument in memory of the victims of the Holocaust, 17 June 2018



'Kaddish' Monument in Luxembourg City. The government and parliament apologized officially to the Jewish community in Luxembourg in 2015.

- Read the info box. How were the Jews discriminated against in Luxembourg?
- Have a look at the different ways of remembering the persecution of the Jews (M1-M2). Who remembers? In what form is remembrance taking place? Is an individual or a group remembered? Which of the forms of remembrance appeals to you the most? Why? Where do you see the possibilities and limitations of the individual forms of memory?
- Why are they referred to as 'Stumbling Stones'?
- Have you ever taken part in a commemoration ceremony or visited a monument that bears witness to the persecution of the Jews? Describe your impressions in class.

... or also acting?



The Penal Code in Luxembourg prohibits

Racism: the idea to the effect that people with certain biological characteristics are inherently superior or inferior to others.

—
Discrimination: Discrimination against individuals or groups, depending on their particular origin, skin colour, religion, sexual orientation, state of health, etc.

Revisionism/negationism: Denial of the mass extermination of the Jews; denial or relativization of the German guilt for the outbreak of the World War II; denial, approval, trivialization of genocide or crimes against humanity and war crimes.

Source: Code Pénal, Livre II, Titre VII, Chapitre V (articles 454 à 457-10).



Moral courage: Courage that someone demonstrates to others by representing human and democratic values (e.g. human dignity, justice) in public, regardless of the possible consequences.

Some tips for action

- Inquiries: 'What exactly do you mean by that?' 'Where do you get your information from?'
- Score points with background knowledge, without lecturing
- Respond with irony to take the wind out of the sails of what is being said, but without provocation
- Identify contradictions
- Get rid of the definite article. The more general the statement, the more difficult it is to counter.
- Address emotions associated with the statement. 'I don't know you like this?'
- Send an I-message and express feelings: 'That is just your opinion, I mean ...'
- Bring in own experience into the discussion
- Seek support: involve other people in the discussion

OR

- Do nothing. It does not concern me.

- Read the bubbles. Match them with the crimes in the penal code.
- Remembering yesterday calls for action today. Have you already experienced discrimination, racism, revisionism or negationism in your everyday life, real or virtual? If possible, give everyday examples. Have others shown moral courage and helped you?
- How do you act when you are confronted with it? Read the tips and tick the options you prefer. Give reasons for your choice! When is silence useful? When can it become dangerous?

Remembering war

After the American troops had liberated Luxembourg for the first time in September 1944, the war returned with the Battle of the Bulge in winter 1944/45 in the *Éislek* region (north of the country). Luxembourg was liberated a second time in one of the most costly battles of the World War II. Two military cemeteries in Hamm and Sandweiler bear witness to this battle. More than 15,000 American and German soldiers have found their final resting place here. Some died in the war as 'liberators of Europe', others in the name of a dictatorship.

Many survivors from both sides and civilians recorded what they experienced during this battle. A distinction is made between first-hand testimonials that were written down in contemporary events, such as diary entries, and those that were recorded as memories much later, with a time lag, such as in interviews with contemporary witnesses.

War cemeteries as places of remembrance



German military cemetery near Sandweiler, established in 1952. The natural stone crosses are inscribed with up to 6 names.



Luxembourg American Cemetery and Memorial created in 1949 and inaugurated in 1960.



Over 5,000 members of the US armed forces are buried in Hamm, on the Luxembourg American Cemetery and Memorial site, which spans over 21 hectares and is American territory. A few kilometres away in Sandweiler is the German military cemetery. A total of 10,913 German soldiers, who died during the Battle of the Bulge, rest here.

Look at the photos. Then form three groups.

- One group will look up information about the Battle of the Bulge. How long did it last? What does this battle mean for Luxembourg? How is this battle still remembered in Luxembourg today?
- The second and third groups will each look up information about one of the two military cemeteries. How long have they existed? Why and for whom were they created? Describe the design of the cemetery areas. What commemorative ceremonies are held there today? Are there any differences in the design regarding winners or losers of the war?
- Organise a tour of the military cemeteries. Present the results on site.

First-hand testimonials from the Battle of the Bulge



The German soldier
Erhard Mitzinnek

First-hand testimonial of a German Wehrmacht soldier

The US soldiers taken prisoners during the hard fighting for Café Schumann were brought to our command post at the beginning of January (...) I had the opportunity to meet and talk with the Americans on several occasions. We were, after all, human beings who wore different uniforms, but were lying in the same mud, had the same needs, desires and thoughts. (...) I didn't consider them 'gangsters' as the Nazi propaganda was trying to feed us. (...)

R. Gaul, F. Karen, and F. Rockenbrod: Lëtzebuerg 1944-1945. Ein dokumentarischer Bildband über Befreiung und Ardennenoffensive, 1994, p. 212. (translated from German)

Diary entry of a Luxembourg mother

Monday, 25 December 1944

(...) For the children, life in the cellar is as good as in the living room. (...) Three German officers are in the kitchen. They follow me into the parlour. (...) The radio is lying on the floor, smashed to pieces; all the cupboard doors are open. The desk is broken open. (...) My aunt whispers to me: 'There are some upstairs, too.' I climb the stairs anxiously. An SS raced towards me like a wild lion, holding a cocked revolver to my chest with his right hand while waving three tricolour flags in his left. (...) These flags had been worn by the children on the anniversary of independence, and had since been forgotten in a drawer. (...) Every second I thought I would hear that fatal shot. (...) My children come first, so I raced confusedly through the rain of shrapnel and bricks across the yard into the cellar.

Josephine Jacques, in: Virun 60 Joer. D'Ardennenoffensiv an d'Befreiung. Texter a Biller zesummegadroen vum Mathieu Claude a Mersch J. Syndicat d'initiative Gemeng Bauschelt, pp. 27-28. (translated from German)



The Luxembourg mother Josephine Jacques with her daughters (1941)



The American soldier
George Fisher

Remembrance of an American soldier

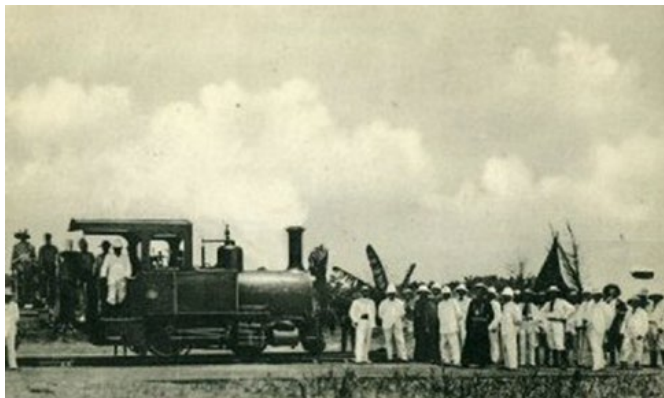
At that time, I experienced (...) the terrible clashes (...) for the forest area of Café Schumann. Suddenly I felt a heavy blow and fell down. My leg hurt and was covered in blood. The comrade next to me screamed for a paramedic in desperation. (...) Finally I was bandaged up and carried on a stretcher to the vicinity of the Café Schumann. (...) I was congratulated by my comrades for my non-life-threatening wound which enabled me to leave the hell of Nothum.

R. Gaul, F. Karen, and F. Rockenbrod: Lëtzebuerg 1944-1945. Ein dokumentarischer Bildband über Befreiung und Ardennenoffensive, 1994, p. 195. (translated from German)

- Read the three first-hand testimonials. What are the similarities and differences in the experience of war? How do the two soldiers feel about war? How does the mother experience the Battle of the Bulge?
- The 75th anniversary of the Battle of the Bulge was celebrated in 2019. Gather information on the following questions: Who was commemorated, where and when? How was this done? What is your opinion about this commemoration?
- Do you think that it is important to remember battles like the Battle of the Bulge? Give reasons for your answers.

‘Toppled’ monuments

Monuments are a product of their time. They are erected in public space and their right to exist is often not questioned. Hundreds of Luxembourgers were drawn to the colonies in the 19th and 20th centuries in search of prospects, work or adventure. One of them was the engineer Nicolas Cito (1866-1949) from Bascharage. He was involved in particular in the construction of the Matadi-Léopoldville railway line in the Belgian Congo. For his efforts he was appointed director of the *Compagnie des Chemins de fer du Congo* [Railway Company of the Congo]. He was later named Consul General of Luxembourg in Brussels. A monument to Cito was erected in his home town in 1938.



Arrival of the first locomotive in N'dolo (Léopoldville), driven by the engineer Nicolas Cito (1866-1949), 16 March 1898.



Belgian Congo (1885-1960): The Congo, rich in rubber deposits, belonged to the Belgian king Leopold II from 1885 to 1908. Only in 1908 did the Congo become a Belgian colony. His reign was characterized by systematic plundering of the country, forced labour, the slave trade, mutilations, rapes, and killings. The construction of the first railway line linking Matadi and Léopoldville made it possible to open up the Congo economically. Historians have estimated that for every 50 metres of railway line, one African or Chinese worker died, also under the supervision of Luxembourg engineers. The country was exploited and the African population was oppressed by white people until the Congo gained independence in 1960.

Remembering 1938, Remembering 2020



Cito Fontaine, erected at the initiative of the *Cercle colonial luxembourgeois* [Luxembourg colonial circle], Bascharage 1938

TO OUR GREAT
COMPATRIOT,
NICOLAS CITO
ENGINEER,
COLONIAL PIONEER,
GENERAL CONSUL
OF LUXEMBOURG
BORN IN
BASCHARAGE,
25 JANUARY 1866
DIED 18 JUNE 1949,

ERECTED
12 JUNE 1938



In memory of 5,500 colonial forced labourers who died during the construction of a railway line in Congo. For a Luxembourgish culture of remembrance in which black life matters.

Action of the artists' collective *Richtung 22*, 2020

With the wave of protests against racism in 2020 emanating from the USA, monuments relating to the colonial era and the slave trade are increasingly coming under fire worldwide. They are being torn down from their pedestals, sprayed with paint or redesigned.

Questioning remembering

M1

Interview with the Luxembourg historian Régis Moes, 12 June 2020:

‘(...) Monuments of all kinds are part of history and show us how the world was then, how it was seen and how we may have looked wrongly at an era in the past. But it is not up to the historian to say whether these still belong in public space today: That is a social debate. But if monuments are no longer wanted there, they should be placed in the storage of a museum or its exhibition, where the context is explained, so that the colonial period, with all its aspects, is not forgotten; and where explanations are provided as to why these monuments stood for a long time on a central square of this or that city and were then removed.’

Régis Moes, Vom ‘Kolonial-Pionier’ und unserem Prinzen in Mosambik, in *Tageblatt*, 12.6.2020, p. 7. (translated from German)



Take position! What do you think should happen to the monument *Fontaine Cito*?

- ☐ Leave unchanged
- ☐ Demolish it
- ☐ Redesign it (e.g. add explanatory panels)
- ☐ Other possible action:

.....
.....

M2

Speech by French president Emmanuel Macron, 14 June 2020:

‘The Republic will not erase any trace or name of its history. It will not forget its works, and will not unbolt statues. Instead, we must look lucidly together at our entire history, all our memories, our relationship with Africa in particular (...) with a desire for truth and under no circumstances revisit or deny what we are. (...)’

Le Parisien.fr (translated from French)

M3

Statement of the Hamburg historian Jürgen Zimmerer, 19 June 2020:

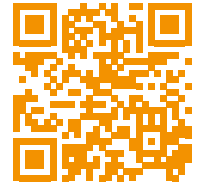
‘I would lay down or turn upside down [monuments to the colonial and slave trade heritage] and thus make the toppling part of the local monument. (...) As a historian, I am interested in preserving historical sources and of course these monuments are part of this, but they must be radically deconstructed, de-theorized, i.e. this potential for glorification (...) must be taken away from them in order to open the view to the history behind it, namely the history of exploitation, racism, oppression and also the victims. (...)’

Interview with Jürgen Zimmerer about the toppling of monuments, <https://www.3sat.de/kultur/kulturzeit/gespraech-mit-juergen-zimmerer-100.html>, call date: 19.06.2020 (translated from German)

- Compare the remembering of Nicolas Cito in 1938 with his remembering in 2020. Who had the monument erected in his honour? Where and when? Then describe the transformation of the monument by the artists’ collective, *Richtung 22*. How does the artists’ collective argue its approach?
- Work out the different positions to the current critical approach to monuments. What is the role of the monuments in each case? What options for action are recorded by the individuals in dealings with these monuments?

Further offerings from the ZpB on the subject of remembrance and responsibility

All our offerings on the topic of
remembrance are available at www.zpb.lu
and via the following QR code.



Centre Cinqfontaines. Place of remembrance and educational centre

The ZpB offers school classes
workshops on the Shoah
and guided tours of the
memorial site.
cinqfontaines.lu



50 Faces, 50 Stories

The box is an educational
resource that presents over
50 war biographies. The box
is available in digital and print
formats and allows various
topics related to World War
II to be addressed from a
Luxembourg perspective.
Languages: DE, EN, FR



duerchbléck! Nr. 10, Konscht an Demokratie

The educational brochure
explores history and memory
in art and literature, as well as
architecture and monuments.

Languages: DE, FR
<http://www.edulink.lu/3rx3>



The 2nd World War in Luxembourg

The brochure is aimed at anyone
interested in the history of
Luxembourg during the Second
World War. An educational booklet
for secondary schools is also
available online or in print.

Languages: DE, FR, EN, LU

Photos:

- P. 11: Patton-Monument: © Véronique Krettels, 2020 •
National Library: CC-BY-SA / GilPe • App izi travel:
asti.lu • national holiday: © SIP / Charles Caratini •
Red Bridge: © Editpress / Alain Rischard • Poster 'Mos
Stellarum' © Tarantula.lu • Poster 'The Living Witness' ©
Paul Thiltges Distributions 2021 • photo book: CC01.0 /
Visser Philips Christiaan
- P. 14: Wreath-laying ceremony © SIP / Charles Caratini
- P. 16: Bank Kirchberg © Le Républicain Lorrain / Philippe
Neu • Monument pour le centenaire de l'immigration
italienne au Luxembourg © Steve Hoegener • Fatima ©
Editpress / Jean-Claude Ernst
- P. 20: Monument of Remembrance: CC-BY-SA / Ernmuhl
- P. 22: Desaix E. © Photothèque de la Ville de Luxembourg •
demolition Gëlle Fra: unknown author • Wreath-laying
ceremony © SIP / Charles Caratini
- P. 23: cover Revue N°12, 18.03.2020 © Revue • Emoxie Gëlle
Fra: nationbranding.lu flyer © mega.lu • Meetingpoint
for tourists © 2020 Luxemburger Wort: Chris Karaba •
National Holiday © SIP / Charles Caratini • Gëlle Fra
as a souvenir: © Julien Schockmel • Gëlle Fra Shanghai:
CC-BY-SA-3.0 / Fanghong
- P. 24: Parliament: CC-BY-SA / Cayambe
- P. 25: Europe Day © Editpress / François Aussems •
National Holiday © Editpress / Didier Sylvestre
- P. 26: cover Escher Tageblatt, 8. Mai 1945 • Memorial plaque
© Michelle Schram, 2020
- P. 28: Huelen Zant: CC-BY-2.0 / Wolfgang Staudt Otets
- P. 29: Bock 1867: unknown author / public domain •
postcard: CC 0 Brück & Sohn Kunstverlag Meißen
- P. 30: Columeta © industrie.lu • Inauguration station Belval-
Université © rail.lu • Belval © Editpress / Pierre Matgé
- P. 32: Stumbling stone: CC-BY-SA Francisco Peralta Torrejón •
Kaddish Monument © 2020 Luxemburger Wort /
Chris Karaba
- P. 34: Luxembourg American Cemetery and Memorial:
CC-BY-SA Dudva • German military cemetery
Sandweiler: CC-BY-SA / Petra Klawikowski
- P. 36: Arrival of the first locomotive in N'dolo: Public domain
• Cito-Fontaine: CC-BY-SA-3.0-LU / self published work
• Action of the Artists' collective, 2020 © Richtung 22



duerchbléck!

Imprint**Editor:**

Zentrum fir politesch Bildung
Fondation d'utilité publique, RCSL G2336
28, route de Diekirch
L-7220 Walferdange
info@zpb.lu

Authors:

Véronique Krettels, Steve Hoegener,
Michelle Schram
2nd revised edition – Luxembourg 2025

Layout and Design:

Bakform

Free Download:

www.zpb.lu

Copyright:

The text and illustrations are protected by copyright. The text may be reproduced free of charge in schools for teaching purposes.