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## STAGING THE NATION IN AN INTERMEDIATE SPACE: CULTURAL POLICY IN LUXEMBOURG AND THE STATE MUSEUMS (1918-1974)

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## **Abstract**

Cultural policy has been analysed from various perspectives, from sociology over cultural studies to political science. Historians have also been interested in cultural policy, but they have barely reflected on a theoretical framework. In addition, cultural policy has not been thoroughly researched in Luxembourg. The present thesis aims to contribute to this gap and examines how national cultural policy in Luxembourg evolved from the 1920s to the early 1970s. It investigates the presence of the national idea in cultural policy and possible tensions and connections between the concept of the nation and the use or inclusion of foreign cultural references. Drawing on the concept of *Zwischenraum* (intermediate space) coined by the historian Philipp Ther, the study considers Luxembourg as a nationalised intermediate space with the tensions that this status entails. Furthermore, it investigates how the State Museums, particularly the history section, evolved in the cultural policy context. Three interconnected aspects are considered to analyse the evolution of cultural policy: structures, actors and discourses.

Three main periods are considered chronologically: the interwar period marked by efforts of nation-building and an increasingly interventionist state; the Nazi occupation of Luxembourg (1940-1944), when the idea of an independent nation-state was turned into its opposite; the post-war period until the early 1970s, subdivided into an immediate post-war period marked by restitution and reconstruction, and the 1950s and the 1960s characterised by a state-administrator and a conservative cultural policy. These periods, however, are not always neatly separable and reveal continuities. For each period, the State Museums are analysed in their cultural policy context: from their construction in the age of nation-building, over their ambiguous situation during Nazi occupation, to their new missions in the post-war period.

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## INTRODUCTION

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The late Raymond Williams once noted that “culture is one of the two or three most complicated words in the English language.”<sup>1</sup> Though he did not reveal what the other most complicated words would be, it is difficult to argue against his observation. The abundance of literature on the topic illustrates the multi-faceted and complex nature of culture. Over the last decades, it has become an explicit policy domain in many countries worldwide. Cultural policy is far from an easy subject to tackle, partially because of the interdisciplinary nature of culture-related research.

Despite cultural policy researchers – mostly scholars from fields other than history – having produced a plethora of literature on the topic, such as in France, Great Britain, the Nordic countries and the US, the case of Luxembourg has remained chiefly a blank page. Yet, in Luxembourg, too, cultural policy has evolved from an implicit into an explicit policy domain supervised by its ministry. Luxembourg City was twice European Capital of Culture in 1995 and 2007. In 2017, the southern city of Esch-sur-Alzette, marked by its industrial past, won the bid for European Capital of Culture in 2022. New cultural infrastructures such as the Philharmonie and the Musée d’art moderne Grand-Duc Jean (MUDAM) have enriched the cultural landscape. More recently, creative industries have attracted interest from policymakers. The specificities characterizing Luxembourg – a small territory, a diverse population and a language policy based on multilingualism, to name a few examples – make for a compelling case for cultural policy history.

However, cultural policy is not a recent invention in Luxembourg, despite the apparent and accelerated development of the last decades. Cultural policy is driven by specific interests or objectives, pursued by actors with motivations and intentions. It is not an innocuous field, especially as national cultural policy is linked to the idea of the nation. In Luxembourg, discourses surrounding the nation and national identity have been present in cultural policy throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century: from the era of nation-building and the Centenary of Independence in 1939 to the nation-branding initiative of the government launched in 2014. The nation has been a persistent concept.

The present study would like to respond to an existing gap in Luxembourgish historiography and cultural policy research. It will analyse the evolution of national cultural policy in

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<sup>1</sup> Raymond Williams, *Keywords: A Vocabulary of Culture and Society* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1983), 87. Interestingly, Terry Eagleton makes a similar statement, without naming Williams (“‘Culture’ is said to be one of the two or three most complex words in the English language [...]” (Terry Eagleton, *The Idea of Culture* [Malden: Blackwell Publishing, 2000], 7).

Luxembourg from the 1920s to the early 1970s by investigating the use of cultural policy to promote a vision of the nation. For its case study, I will focus on the State Museum, particularly the history and art section, to examine the implementation of cultural policy in a national cultural institution and its relationship with the state. The history and art section of the State Museum was the predecessor of the National History and Art Museum (Musée National d'Histoire et d'Art, MNHA) in Luxembourg City.

The following research questions and sub-questions will guide this study:

1. How did national cultural policy in Luxembourg evolve from the interwar period to the early 1970s?
  - a. How was cultural policy shaped by the dynamic relationship between actors, discourses and structures?
  - b. How did cultural policy evolve within broader national and international contexts?
  - c. Were there any specificities of cultural policy in Luxembourg?
2. How did the precursor of the MNHA evolve within the cultural policy context?
  - a. How did the relationship between the institution and the state evolve?
  - b. Was the museum instrumentalised for specific purposes, and if yes, how?
  - c. What role did the idea of the nation play?

The first chapter will clarify the methodology and framework of the study and shed light on the formulation and choice of these questions. At this stage, however, it was preferred to introduce the questions at the very beginning of the study.

The choice of the interwar period as a starting point is based on a series of considerations. The subsequent chapters will provide more explanations concerning contextual and cultural reasons. Some scholars attribute the emergence of what would today be recognised as cultural policy to the post-war period.<sup>2</sup> Yet, I argue that this limits the scope of cultural policy history – as will be shown, the interwar period is a relevant counter-example. At the time, “cultural policy” was not an explicit policy category; instead, policies related to culture were subsumed under *arts et sciences*. The state became increasingly interventionist, and cultural initiatives were often inspired by the general context of the interwar period. Cultural policy changed then, while the post-WWI political landscape took on a new shape. Following a liberal era, Luxembourg entered a phase of conservatism and nationalism. The First World War thus marks

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<sup>2</sup> David Hesmondhalgh et al., *Culture, Economy and Politics: The Case of New Labour*, New Directions in Cultural Policy Research (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), 5.

a historical turning point. It will, however, not be treated in a distinct chapter and might only be shortly referred to when necessary or helpful. The Second World War and the occupation of Luxembourg will receive much greater attention. The cultural policy during the German occupation (1940-1944) will be studied in detail in a distinct chapter. This period is barely comparable to the previous and the following ones – though the continuities will not be ignored.

The choice of the early 1970s as the second temporal point of reference might be perceived as a rather peculiar one at first. The reasons are historical as well as pragmatic. From a contextual viewpoint, cultural policy in the 1970s underwent considerable changes in Luxembourg and other countries. In the grand duchy, the advent of a liberal-left government in 1974 marked a paradigm shift, even though it should be noted that the new cultural policy introduced after 1974 did not entirely break with previous approaches. The general context was characterized by societal developments, demographic changes, crises, discourse about mass media, or the end of economic growth that had served as a backdrop to the extension of the welfare state. For pragmatic reasons, I need to respect some ethical and personal arrangements. The pragmatism of my choice is mainly due to the introduction of the archival law passed in August 2018. Thus, I could only use folders accessible to the public or folders to which I was granted access under the new regulations.

For the period after 1974, folders related to the Department of Cultural Affairs have not yet been recorded in the database of the National Archives of Luxembourg. The archival law passed in 2018 has rendered access to folders more complicated – thus temporarily obstructing historical research. Though my research has not been considerably hampered – unlike that of other colleagues – two folders containing exchanges between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Cultural Affairs in 1972 and 1973, for example, have not been presented to me despite a formal request. Concerning the internal archives of the MNHA, I agreed not to disseminate personal information on donors and acquisitions after the 1970s. Furthermore, ethical issues arise when sharing private information about employees and possible internal affairs the more I advance to the present.

Despite the focus on a selected range of decades, neat periodisations are counterproductive in the field of history. Consequently, this study has to investigate long-term developments: The case study starts in the 19<sup>th</sup> century to explain the museum's state in the interwar period. The period after the 1970s will be discussed in a short epilogue as a bridge between the past and present. The cultural landscape of today is not comparable to the one of the early 1970s. The National History and Art Museum, like the National Natural History Museum, evolved within this context and have played a non-negligible part in those years. The epilogue can lay the

foundations of further research, but it also strikes a compromise between complete silence and an overly ambitious study.

I will look beyond national borders whenever possible to uncover potential transnational exchanges or influences. Furthermore, the present study develops a theoretical framework that identifies the main aspects to consider when analysing the history of cultural policy, thus offering a historiographical approach. Cultural policy history aims to grasp and analyse this complexity.

As with every study, some choices must be made and limitations imposed. The restriction to national cultural policy and one case study of a national cultural institution ensures a consistent account. The focus on national cultural policy does not mean that relations of the state with local authorities or supranational organisations will not be considered. Though it could be argued that one case study is not enough, my aim is not to produce a comparative analysis of several cultural institutions. The museum is an example of analysing a cultural institution through the lens of cultural policy history. However, this approach does not mean that other cultural institutions are entirely ignored when this broader consideration contributes to a better understanding of the general context and the museum's position within the cultural policy field. This is the case in the chapter about the German occupation, for instance.

The research presented in this study is based on sources in different languages, nearly entirely other than English. The choice of English for the current study is anchored in pragmatic reasons (an international readership). It also creates a certain distance to the sources. Thinking about translating or explaining the content in another language than the one used in the sources poses an additional challenge. Still, it forces the researcher to think harder and to look closer. Throughout the study, many quotes in French or German have been translated into English, with the original text in the footnotes. When specific concepts, proper nouns, or titles have been used in the sources and were difficult to translate or had no adequate English notion, the original term is used. This is especially true for the Second World War and the Nazi vocabulary, such as *Gau*, *Altreich*, *volkstum*, etc.

In the concluding remarks of his paper on culture and research infrastructures in Luxembourg, Morgan Meyer observed that “there is a need in Luxembourg to write a more *relational* history [...], a more *comparative* history [...], a more *contextual* history [...], and a more *analytical* history [...].”<sup>3</sup> I hope that my study will at least partly satisfy this need. My

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<sup>3</sup> Emphasises in the original text (Morgan Meyer, ‘Creativity and Its Contexts: The Emergence, Institutionalisation and Professionalisation of Science and Culture in Luxembourg’, *European Review*

research interest is threefold: filling a gap in Luxembourgish historiography, reflecting on and developing a methodology for a history of cultural policy, and analysing a cultural institution from a new perspective by embedding it in the cultural policy context and uncovering its political dimension. I will mostly exclude natural sciences from my account, though they will be considered when necessary for the general context. To the possible disappointment of some readers, I will not discuss the situation of artists, except if it becomes a cultural policy issue dealt with by the state.

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*of History: Revue Européenne d'histoire* 16, no. 4 [2009]: 468–469,  
doi:10.1080/13507480903063605).

## A Review of Cultural Policy Literature and Historiography in Luxembourg

Academic literature on cultural policy in Luxembourg is limited. Internationally, cultural policy has mostly been left to sociologists, cultural studies scholars and political scientists. Of course, these scholars have not ignored historical dimensions, and historians have tackled subjects at least related to cultural policy. However, barely any accounts exist that take a resolutely historiographical approach to cultural policy. In Luxembourgish historiography, the field of cultural policy history is a “hidden” agenda: somehow present, but rarely explicit, and even less systematically analysed.

In contrast, literature about art and culture in Luxembourg is relatively abundant, encompassing newspaper articles, journal papers, exhibition catalogues, dissertation theses or books. Whether state cultural policy is conceded some space in these works depends on the perspective endorsed by their authors. Researchers have analysed aspects concerning, for instance, cultural production in Luxembourg, its development, and the evolution of structures and institutions framing it.<sup>4</sup>

In the general literature on the history of Luxembourg, such as in Michel Pauly’s *Geschichte Luxemburgs*<sup>5</sup> or Gilbert Trausch’s *Histoire du Luxembourg*<sup>6</sup>, cultural policy is nearly entirely ignored. Pauly dedicates some lines to the development of Luxembourg’s cultural landscape in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century. The journalist Rosch Krieps has written two books dedicated to cultural policy, *Kultur im Kleinstaat*<sup>7</sup> and *Des Kleinstaats kulturelle Affairen*<sup>8</sup>, but they convey a more personal and episodic account, and, even if providing exciting insights, they are written in a journalistic style without a historiographic ambition. Frank Wilhelm’s contribution to the anthology *Le Luxembourg au tournant du siècle et du millénaire* (1999), edited by Gilbert Trausch, provides an overview of cultural life and production in Luxembourg since the 19<sup>th</sup> century concerning literature and language, media, and art (painting).<sup>9</sup> Though it helps

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<sup>4</sup> We might mention, as an example, the study by Fabienne Gilbertz on the professionalisation and evolution of the literary production and theatrical landscape in Luxembourg in the 1960s and 1970s (Fabienne Gilbertz, *Wortproduzenten: Literarische und ökonomische Professionalisierung im Luxemburger Literatursystem der 1960er und 1970er Jahre* [Heidelberg: Universitätsverlag Winter, 2019]).

<sup>5</sup> Michel Pauly, *Geschichte Luxemburgs* (Munich: C.H. Beck, 2011).

<sup>6</sup> Gilbert Trausch et al., *Histoire du Luxembourg: le destin européen d’un ‘petit pays’*, 2nd ed. (Toulouse: Ed. Privat, 2003).

<sup>7</sup> Rosch Krieps, *Kultur im Kleinstaat 1879-1989: Ein kritischer Rückblick auf 110 Jahre* (Esch-sur-Alzette: Editions Schortgen, 2006).

<sup>8</sup> Rosch Krieps, *Des Kleinstaats kulturelle Affairen: 1990-2000* (Ehlerange, 2014).

<sup>9</sup> Frank Wilhelm, ‘La culture au coeur de la réalité luxembourgeoise’, in *Le Luxembourg au tournant du siècle et du millénaire*, ed. Gilbert Trausch (Esch/Alzette: Editions Schortgen, 1999), 157–203.

understand the general cultural and artistic context, cultural policy as such is only present to a limited extent. In her thesis entitled *The Making of a National Audio-Visual Archive* (2014), Françoise Poos dedicates a chapter to the cultural policy at the time of the minister of cultural affairs Robert Krieps as a background to the creation of the *Centre National de l'Audiovisuel* (CNA).<sup>10</sup> The volume on Robert Krieps, his life and political career, edited by Franz Fayot and Marc Limpach, provides information on the politician's ideas and his time as minister for cultural affairs but covers a short period of the history of cultural policy in Luxembourg.<sup>11</sup>

Paul Spang, former director of the National Archives, deals with the cultural policy of the governments in Luxembourg in a contribution to a *festschrift* dedicated to the historian Paul Margue.<sup>12</sup> His piece covers an extensive period from the 19<sup>th</sup> to the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. However, the decades after the Second World War are much less examined compared to the period up until the 1930s. Furthermore, Spang embeds his analysis in a more extensive history of the state administration and offers an overview of archives and funds related to cultural policy due to his professional background. In a paper published in 2009, Morgan Meyer investigates the development of science and culture in Luxembourg. He examines their emergence, institutionalisation and professionalisation, providing useful information on the development of the scientific and cultural fields from a policy perspective.<sup>13</sup> His merit resides in combining the history of scientific research with that of cultural policy and in focusing on the museums, thus offering a more general but essential account of their evolution. In 2012, Catherine Lorent published her study on the arts and cultural policy in Luxembourg from 1934 to 1944, focusing on the years of the German occupation. However, she considered mainly the arts policy of the National Socialists and analysed how they used artistic creation (in the domain of fine arts) for propaganda.<sup>14</sup> The historian Guy Thewes, in *Les Gouvernements du Grand-Duché de Luxembourg depuis 1848* (2011), has produced a valuable overview of the governments in Luxembourg, their composition and the policies they pursued.<sup>15</sup> Even then,

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<sup>10</sup> Françoise Poos, 'The Making of a National Audio-Visual Archive: The CNA and the Hidden Images Exhibition' (Dissertation, De Montfort University, 2016).

<sup>11</sup> Franz Fayot and Marc Limpach, *Robert Krieps (1922 - 1990) : démocratie, justice, culture, éducation* (Esch/Alzette: Le Phare, 2009).

<sup>12</sup> Paul Spang, 'La politique culturelle des Gouvernements luxembourgeois de 1848 à nos jours', in *Le Luxembourg en Lotharingie - Luxemburg im Lotharingischen Raum: Mélanges Paul Margue - Festschrift Paul Margue*, ed. Paul Dostert et al. (Luxembourg: Saint-Paul, 1993), 585–606.

<sup>13</sup> Meyer, 'Creativity and Its Contexts'.

<sup>14</sup> Catherine Lorent, *Die nationalsozialistische Kunst- und Kulturpolitik im Großherzogtum Luxemburg 1934-1944* (Trier: Kliomedia, 2012).

<sup>15</sup> Guy Thewes, *Les gouvernements du Grand-Duché de Luxembourg depuis 1848*, ed. Service information et presse du gouvernement luxembourgeois (Luxembourg, 2011).

cultural policy is only mentioned for the first time when Thewes writes about the Juncker/Poos II government (1995-1999). In his contribution on the history of Luxembourg to *L'art au Luxembourg* edited by Alex Langini, Paul Feltes includes some information on cultural policy.<sup>16</sup> Though he goes back to the interwar period, he does not offer a coherent narrative, as he focuses on specific moments (such as the Centenary Celebration in 1939). The balance between the different periods is also unequal. He dedicates much more space to Pierre Grégoire's initiatives, while the changes in the 1970s and 1980s are wholly ignored. For the period since the 1990s, he mentions the European Capital of Culture in 1995 and depicts a positive evolution for Luxembourgian art but omits other developments.<sup>17</sup>

Thus, considering the state of research in Luxembourg, cultural policy has not been completely ignored, but many gaps still need to be filled. The present work will tread a very narrow path crossing the vast field of cultural policy. Though I have analysed the history of cultural policy and the cultural discourses in my Master's thesis, a systematic approach was lacking.<sup>18</sup> The transnational aspect appeared in some parts but was not paid close attention to. Furthermore, the starting point of my Master's thesis was 1945; hence there was no possibility to compare the post-war period to the interwar years. In the theoretical part, I considered cultural policy as a field, drawing on the sociology of Pierre Bourdieu, but it remained vague, and I barely referred to it throughout my work. Nevertheless, I was able to provide some groundwork for further studies.

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<sup>16</sup> Paul Feltes, 'Une histoire mouvementée d'un petit pays au coeur de l'Europe', in *L'art au Luxembourg de la Renaissance au début du XXIe siècle*, ed. Alex Langini (Bruxelles: Fonds Mercator, 2006), 9–45.

<sup>17</sup> Feltes, 42–43.

<sup>18</sup> Fabio Spirinelli, 'De l'enfant pauvre à une image de marque. Une histoire de la politique culturelle au Grand-Duché de Luxembourg de 1945 à 2015' (Université du Luxembourg, 2016).

## Presentation of the Case Study: the Musée National d'Histoire et d'Art

Literature on museums is abundant, whether in museology, museum studies, sociology, or history. However, historians do not seem to have analysed how museums, as cultural institutions evolve within a cultural policy context. Texts about their history might focus on their evolution (for instance, from private collections to public museums). However, they do not explicitly include reflections on how the cultural policy context has shaped these museums. Furthermore, the history of museums in the 20<sup>th</sup> century has attracted limited interest and much less than that of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. As the 19<sup>th</sup> century has been considered the “age of museums”<sup>19</sup>, most studies have focused on that period. In *Une histoire des musées de France*, the French historian Dominique Poulot, for instance, dedicates the major part of his book to the 17<sup>th</sup>, 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. The 20<sup>th</sup> century is unequally covered, much less than the other periods.<sup>20</sup> Another book by the same researcher, *Patrimoine et musées*, dedicates relatively more space to the 20<sup>th</sup> century and provides even general overviews of the evolution in countries other than France, such as Germany or the US. Yet, it does not intend to provide a detailed analysis.<sup>21</sup> Philippe Poirrier has contextualized the history of museums (mainly in France) within the larger history of heritage (*patrimoine*) and related policies from the 18<sup>th</sup> century to the 20<sup>th</sup> century with its “liberal turn” (*tournant libéral*).<sup>22</sup> Though approaching museums with a significant area of cultural policy, Poirrier’s text does not equal a detailed analysis, nor does it focus on a museum as a case study. *Strategies of Display* by Julia Noordegraaf (2004) is probably one of the rare studies that cover more extensively the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Noordegraaf analyses the evolution of the “museum script” – the display of the objects and the interactions between exhibits, designers, room disposition, and visitors – while focusing on two art museums in The Hague.<sup>23</sup> Sharon Macdonald’s edited volume *The Politics of Display* (1998) also covers the 20<sup>th</sup> century but focuses on science and technology museums and exhibitions.<sup>24</sup> In general, historians have not ignored the subject, but they have usually not

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<sup>19</sup> Cf. Jean-Claude Caron and Michel Vernus, *L'Europe au XIXe siècle: Des nations aux nationalismes 1815-1914* (Paris: Armand Colin, 2008), 287.

<sup>20</sup> Dominique Poulot, *Une histoire des musées de France: XVIIIe - XXe siècle* (Paris: La Découverte, 2008).

<sup>21</sup> Dominique Poulot, *Patrimoine et musées: L'institution de la culture* (Vanves: Hachette, 2014).

<sup>22</sup> Philippe Poirrier, ‘Patrimoine et musées’, in *Aux confins des arts et de la culture: Approches thématiques et transversales XVIe-XXIe siècle*, ed. Philippe Poirrier and Bertrand Tillier (Rennes: Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2016), 139–149.

<sup>23</sup> Julia Noordegraaf, *Strategies of Display: Museum Presentation in Nineteenth- and Twentieth-Century Visual Culture* (Rotterdam: NAi Publishers, 2004).

<sup>24</sup> Sharon Macdonald, *The Politics of Display: Museums, Science, Culture* (London: Routledge, 1998).

reflected on the place of museums in cultural policy and their relationship with public authorities.<sup>25</sup> My case study aims at making such reflections and analysing a specific museum through the lens of cultural policy.

As indicated above, the MNHA, or its predecessor, the history and art section in the State Museum, serves as a case study. As will be shown, its history was marked by failed projects, many years of construction, and postponements of its official opening. Eventually, it was inaugurated only after the Second World War. Museums have been central to cultural policies, regardless of the existing discourses on culture. In Luxembourg and other countries, their existence pre-dated any cultural policy as understood since the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The MNHA is one of the oldest public museums in Luxembourg. Over time, it has experienced many transformations. Until 1988, it was part of the Musées de l’État (State Museums), alongside the Musée d’histoire naturelle (Natural History Museum). In 1988, both institutions were separated *de jure* (but only physically in the 1990s), and the history museum acquired its current name. In this context, Luxembourg is a more particular case than other countries where public museums have existed since the 19<sup>th</sup> century. However, as we will see, the idea of a national museum has been around for much longer than the museum’s construction.

The MNHA is not only dedicated to the history of Luxembourg but also to art and art history. Therefore, it could be considered hybrid according to Mark W. Rectanus’ definition.<sup>26</sup> The MNHA is divided into sections, from archaeology over fine arts to arts and crafts (*arts décoratifs et populaires*). Its temporary exhibitions cover various topics and fit within the broad scope of the museum. In the title of an interview with the museum’s director Michel Polfer, the MNHA is labelled as an “allround-museum”.<sup>27</sup> One might regard this term as a modern synonym for the encyclopaedic museum. The notion of “allround” might even conjure a negative image: the museum covers a broad area, but it is not specialised in any of them. If we consider Olaf Hartung’s overview of museum types, the MNHA combines art, trade and industry (*Gewerbemuseum*), (cultural) history, and folklore.<sup>28</sup> Of course, these categories are

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<sup>25</sup> Possible exceptions being historical studies about museums and colonial heritage or postcolonial processes, such as Sarah van Beurden’s study of the Institut des Musées Nationaux du Zaïre/du Congo (See: Sarah Van Beurden, *Authentically African: Arts and the Transnational Politics of Congolese Culture* [Athens: Ohio University Press, 2015]).

<sup>26</sup> Mark W. Rectanus, ‘Globalization: Incorporating the Museum’, in *A Companion to Museum Studies*, ed. Sharon Macdonald (Malden: Blackwell Publishing, 2006), 381–397.

<sup>27</sup> Christiane Walerich, ‘Musée national d’histoire et d’art: das Allround-Museum’, *Ons Stad*, no. 93 (2010).

<sup>28</sup> Olaf Hartung, *Kleine deutsche Museumsgeschichte: Von der Aufklärung bis zum frühen 20. Jahrhundert* (Köln: Böhlau, 2010).

not always clearly discernible. Exhibiting art also means exhibiting cultural history, while folklore can overlap with trade and industry. Indeed, Hartung's discussion of museum types is anchored in their historical development rather than in observation of today's museum landscape. As he acknowledges in his introduction, the variety of museums has increased. Typologies are constantly evolving. He warns that the typology used in his book is merely an "ideal type of reduction of a much more complex reality".<sup>29</sup>

The MNHA being a national public museum is another reason for its choice. Indeed, a national cultural institution is the most logical choice for studying national cultural policy. Furthermore, it enables an examination of the most prevalent perspective on national culture and its evolution. Like national monuments, the museum "also acted as an agency and site for identifying worthy heritage, in effect, creating three-dimensional identity-stories for the public."<sup>30</sup> Hence, the case study in the present context will consider the relations between the museum and public authorities, the exchanges and the potential tensions, the kind of culture the museum exhibited, and how this perception fits within the cultural policy context.

As a museum, the MNHA is not only in touch with public authorities and the ministry it depends on but also with economic actors (private sponsorship)<sup>31</sup> and the cultural society (exhibitions, relations with the association Amis des Musée d'Art et d'Histoire). The museum as a public cultural institution is an example of the implementation of cultural policy. Structures, discourses and actors can influence how it works and fulfils its missions. Additionally, transnational exchanges constantly occur via international organisations (ICOM), temporary exhibitions, loans, or discourse on cultural management.<sup>32</sup>

The present study is not anchored in the vast field of museology, which has produced a plethora of literature,<sup>33</sup> but it will consider the museum through the lens of cultural policy history as a politically shaped cultural institution. A similar position has been defended by the

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<sup>29</sup> Own translation. "[...] eine idealtypische Reduktion einer in Wirklichkeit viel komplexeren Realität." (Hartung, 8).

<sup>30</sup> Sharon Macdonald, *Memorylands: Heritage and Identity in Europe Today* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2013), 166.

<sup>31</sup> An example is the acquisition of a painting by Barend Cornelis Koekkoek, for which the MNHA collected funds by relying on private sponsorship.

<sup>32</sup> Some studies have adopted a transnational approach to a history of museums. See for instance: Andrea Meyer and Bénédicte Savoy, eds., *The Museum Is Open: Towards a Transnational History of Museums 1750-1940* (Berlin/Boston: De Gruyter, 2014).

<sup>33</sup> According to Gob and Drouget, museology is "l'étude du musée dans son sens le plus général ; elle englobe tous les types et toutes les formes de musées et tous les aspects sous lesquels le musée peut être perçu." (André Gob and Noémie Drouquet, *La muséologie: histoire, développements, enjeux actuels* [Paris: Armand Colin, 2010], 15).

scholar Clive Gray, who argued that museums have an “inescapably political nature”.<sup>34</sup> Albeit taking a specific perspective, the analysis of the case study can be considered as a history of the museum, which “can refer to research about the particular history of a museal institution, or to studies that embrace the development of museums collectively as part of a branch of cultural history.”<sup>35</sup>

Concerning the state of research, the MNHA has published some texts on its history and added a section to the permanent exhibition on its history. Some articles published in its magazine (*Museomag*) or catalogues<sup>36</sup> have been dedicated to the museum’s past as well as the origins of its collection. Indeed, it was primarily the MNHA that was interested in its history. Concerning the pre-history of the museum – dating back to the creation of the *Société archéologique* in 1845 – Joseph Goedert published the monography *De la Société archéologique à la Section historique de l’Institut grand-ducal* in 1987, edited by the Historical Section of the Grand-Ducal Institute. Though it provides essential information on the genesis of the archaeological society and its collection, as well as on the actors evolved, it remains a primarily factual account.<sup>37</sup>

Another important matter in the current section concerns the literature on the museum during the occupation period (1940-1944), which is very limited. In her book, Catherine Lorent dedicates a small interlude to the museum, its situation and its integration into the German administrative structures.<sup>38</sup> In an exhibition catalogue edited by the Musée d’Histoire de la Ville de Luxembourg (MHVL, now Lëtzebuerg City Museum) in 2002, François Reinert contributed an article on the history department of the state museum<sup>39</sup>, while Foni Le Brun wrote a text on the natural history museum and Heuertz’ chronicle.<sup>40</sup> François Reinert is a

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<sup>34</sup> Clive Gray, *The Politics of Museums* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015).

<sup>35</sup> Cintia Velázquez Marroni, ‘Understanding the Past in the History Museum. Visitor Research in Two Mexican Museums’ (University of Leicester, 2015), 90.

<sup>36</sup> Jacques Santer et al., *Trésors du Musée national d’histoire et d’art Luxembourg* (Luxembourg: Musée national d’histoire et d’art, 1989); Jean Luc Koltz et al., *Musée national d’histoire et d’art Luxembourg* (Bruxelles/Luxembourg: Crédit communal/Cregem International Bank, 1990).

<sup>37</sup> Joseph Goedert, *De la Société archéologique à la Section historique de l’Institut Grand-Ducal: tendances, méthodes et résultats du travail historique de 1845 à 1985*, Collections de la Section historique de l’Institut greand-ducal de Luxemborug 101 (Luxembourg: Section historique de l’Institut grand-ducal, 1987).

<sup>38</sup> Lorent, *Die nationalsozialistische Kunst- und Kulturpolitik im Großherzogtum Luxemburg 1934-1944*, 131–134.

<sup>39</sup> François Reinert, “‘Inter arma silent Musae’. Les musées d’Etat pendant la guerre’, in .....et wor alles net esou einfach. *Questions sur le Luxembourg et la Deuxième Guerre mondiale. Fragen an die Geschichte Luxemburgs im Zweiten Weltkrieg*, ed. Musée d’histoire de la Ville de Luxembourg (Luxembourg: Musée d’histoire de la Ville de Luxembourg, 2002), 64–77.

<sup>40</sup> Foni Le Brun-Ricalens, ‘Le Musée d’Histoire naturelle de Luxembourg sous l’occupation allemande (1940-1945). Un témoignage: le livre-chronique de Marcel Heuertz’, in .....et wor alles net

curator at the Musée Dräi Eechelen, attached to the MNHA. Foni Le Brun is head of the Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique. Both authors have been working directly or indirectly for the institutions they examined in their texts, but these need to be considered carefully, as highlighted in the section on the Landesmuseum during the German occupation. The most critical and recent account of the museum during the Second World War to date was penned by historian and museologist Marie-Paule Jungblut. In her contribution to a volume edited by André Gob, *Des musées au-dessus de tout soupçon* (2007), she critically examines the museum's acquisition policy during the Second World War and the question of spoliation. Instead of limiting her research to the texts produced by the curators, she takes into account a larger variety of sources that contribute to a more nuanced image of the situation, an observation that she makes herself when touching on the issue of the sources:

[...] il existe quelques rapports et correspondances adressés à divers supérieurs de l'administration d'occupation que Meyers et son principal collaborateur, Georges Schmitt, ont rédigés entre 1940 et 1943. Ceux-ci n'ont à ce jour fait l'objet d'aucune analyse scientifique. Bien sûr, ils ne restituent pas toutes les facettes des activités du musée ; ils livrent toutefois des informations importantes sur la politique d'acquisition du musée et sur ses relations au commerce luxembourgeois de l'art. Le registre des entrés du musée complète ces documents. Combinées, ces sources nuancent le rapport d'activité sommaire de Meyers publié en 1949.<sup>41</sup>

In the same year that Jungblut's text was published, the Commission spéciale pour l'étude des spoliations des biens juifs au Luxembourg pendant les années de guerre 1940-1945 presented an intermediate report. The final report was published in 2009.<sup>42</sup> The commission first met in January 2002 after the government had created it. It was mainly composed of historians, representatives of public institutions and administrations, and lawyers. The special commission's mission involved analysing the conditions under which the spoliation of mobile and immobile goods belonging to Jewish people in Luxembourg was carried out. Another goal was to study the compensations and restitutions in the post-war period.<sup>43</sup> Despite the report

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*esou einfach. Questions sur le Luxembourg et la Deuxième Guerre mondiale. Fragen an die Geschichte Luxemburgs im Zweiten Weltkrieg*, ed. Musée d'histoire de la Ville de Luxembourg (Luxembourg: Musée d'histoire de la Ville de Luxembourg, 2002), 78–84.

<sup>41</sup> Marie-Paule Jungblut, 'La spoliation des biens culturels au Luxembourg: le Landesmuseum Luxembourg pendant la Seconde Guerre mondiale', in *Des musées au-dessus de tout soupçon*, ed. André Gob (Paris: Armand Colin, 2007), 207–208.

<sup>42</sup> Commission spéciale pour l'étude des spoliations des biens juifs au Luxembourg pendant les années de guerre 1940-1945, 'La spoliation des biens juifs au Luxembourg 1940-1945: Rapport final' (Luxembourg, 2009), [https://gouvernement.lu/dam-assets/fr/actualites/communiques/2009/07-juillet/06-biens-juifs/rapport\\_final.pdf](https://gouvernement.lu/dam-assets/fr/actualites/communiques/2009/07-juillet/06-biens-juifs/rapport_final.pdf).

<sup>43</sup> 'La commission, à laquelle appartiennent tant des représentants du consistoire israélite que des historiens et des personnalités de la vie publique, ainsi que des représentants de différentes administrations susceptibles de la recherche de documents et d'informations relatifs à la spoliation

shedding some light on the general situation concerning the spoliation of Jewish possessions and liquidation of companies owned by Jews, the MNHA is mentioned only once. The report merely observes that the museum did not acquire objects from the Abteilung IV A, which was responsible for the spoliation and the supervision of related activities during the occupation.<sup>44</sup> Though this conclusion might be correct, it does not consider the complexity of the matter as it does not question whether the museum acquired Jewish possessions through other intermediaries. The acquisition books of the museum are the only source used in this context. The authors seemed to have no knowledge of or ignore Jungblut's work. Though Jungblut draws the same conclusion, she raises additional questions. In 2011, Michel Polfer, director of the MNHA, wrote a contribution on the acquisitions of the museums during the war, focusing on the Reiffers collection.<sup>45</sup> Hence, most literature about the museum during the Second World War has been produced due to related debates.

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d'avoirs juifs, a pour mission d'étudier les conditions dans lesquelles les spoliations des biens mobiliers et immobiliers appartenant à des personnes juives résidant au Luxembourg ont été perpétrées par l'occupant nazi. La commission étudiera encore les conditions et l'ampleur des restitutions et/ou dédommgements accordés aux victimes des spoliations ou à leurs héritiers après la Deuxième guerre mondiale. Si elle le juge nécessaire, la commission formulera dans son rapport final des recommandations au Gouvernement." ("Réunion de la commission spéciale pour l'étude des spoliations des biens juifs au Luxembourg", June 2002,  
[https://gouvernement.lu/fr/actualites/toutes\\_actualites/articles/2002/01/29commspoli.html](https://gouvernement.lu/fr/actualites/toutes_actualites/articles/2002/01/29commspoli.html)).

<sup>44</sup> "Réunion de la commission spéciale pour l'étude des spoliations des biens juifs au Luxembourg", 83.

<sup>45</sup> Michel Polfer, "Nationalsozialistische Kulturpolitik oder Herrschaftsstabilisierung? Zum Ankauf der Kunstsammlung des Luxemburger Notars Edmond Reiffers durch die deutsche Zivilverwaltung", in *Du Luxembourg à l'Europe : hommages à Gilbert Trausch à l'occasion de son 80e anniversaire* (Luxembourg: Ed. Saint-Paul, 2011), 327–359.

## Structure of the Study

The first chapter of the study is dedicated to the framework and methodology. Apart from an overview and an analysis of existing literature on cultural policy and subject-specific approaches, I develop a method for examining the history of cultural policy in Luxembourg. First by identifying the advantages and shortcomings of existing approaches, then by explaining my own. Additionally, chapter I includes a section dedicated to the main concepts of the present study.

Chapter II provides a general overview of the history of Luxembourg since the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Readers who are well acquainted with the most important developments might want to skip it, as it offers a general overview to ensure that every reader knows the historical backdrop of the subsequent chapters.

Chapters III to V are devised chronologically, whereby their contents are not necessarily presented in chronological order, as many evolutions treated in separate sections or sub-sections overlap. Furthermore, each chapter first focuses on the general cultural policy, then on the case study, and finally closes with an interlude summarizing the most important results and developments of the related chapter. In my opinion, it was more fruitful to analyse the case study on the background of a particular period than to dedicate a separate chapter to it.

In chapter III, I will examine cultural policy in the interwar period and the increasing public intervention by looking at this development from different perspectives (laws, budget, initiatives, etc.) and using the political performance concept. A more extensive section will be dedicated to the Centenary of Independence in 1939, a moment of crystallisation of interwar cultural policy. The case study will begin with the origins of the State Museum in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

In chapter IV, I will focus on Nazi cultural policy in Luxembourg, the structure of the German administration created during the occupation, the ideology underpinning cultural policy, and the impact on the cultural society. A section on cultural institutions during the occupation period will precede the case study to provide more contextual information. Finally, in the last section dedicated to the case study, I will not only examine the evolution of the museum, its position in the cultural field, and the Nazi plans to use it for their political goals. I will also stress the ambiguities of the museum and its custodians, the human dimension eluding precise categorisations of resistance and collaboration, and the issues concerning sources and narratives.

The post-war period will be treated in Chapter V. The consequences of the war, the return of the national idea, the development of cultural policy in the context of the expanding welfare state and the new cultural diplomacy constitute the themes of this chapter. I will investigate the changes in the cultural society. In the case study, I will examine the new roles of the State Museum after the war, its approach to culture and the concept of culture it disseminated, and internal developments regarding professionalisation.

The concluding chapter will summarize the most important, general developments concerning the main concepts and the research questions presented in the introduction. It will also include a short outlook on the developments in cultural policy from the 1970s onwards, which is not to be regarded as a thorough study, but more as an invitation for further research and new prospects.

## The Self-Reflecting Historian

Study the historian before you begin to study the facts.<sup>46</sup>

Edward H. Carr, historian (1892-1982)

This self-reflective chapter was not initially envisioned. Through the recommendation of a colleague, I discovered a doctoral thesis studying visitor's experiences in two Mexican history museums by the researcher Cintia Velazquez Marroni. Marroni included a short section in which she reflected on her background and influences on her research.<sup>47</sup> I think that this is a legitimate approach, also in historical research. Historians think so much about the past that they tend not to reflect on themselves. Hence my decision to include a short, personal section. What is my background? In what context has this thesis been written? Why am I researching the topic treated in this thesis?

I have a background in history and spent most of my academic career at the University of Luxembourg. In between, I studied *arts du spectacle* (cinema and theatre studies) in Liège, Belgium. My experience in Belgium certainly broadened my cultural horizon. I attended a class on the politics and economy of culture, which was the first time I became acquainted with cultural policy. In hindsight, my experience in Liège was some sort of an intermezzo but a precious one from a personal and cultural perspective. Back in Luxembourg, I enrolled in the Master in European and Contemporary History at the University of Luxembourg. For my Master's thesis, I chose cultural policy as a topic. I think it would never have crossed my mind without my Belgian experience. The present study is the product of a work in progress and fortuitous decisions.

When I started researching cultural policy for my Master's thesis in 2015, I did not expect that shortly after that, cultural policy would gain momentum in public debates in Luxembourg with the elaboration of a cultural development plan, with Esch-sur-Alzette nominated as European Capital of Culture in 2022, or with debates on preserving the *Hall des Soufflantes* in Esch-Belval, an industrial building next to the university campus.

Having lived most of my life in a small country, I have been exposed to different cultures and languages in everyday life, some more, some less, and, as a European male, not necessarily in a dialogue of equals, often unconscious of my biases. If the potential of this cultural diversity were really tapped into, it would be an excellent opportunity. I believe in the importance of culture to societies. Culture can promote empathy and nourish a critical reflection on our

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<sup>46</sup> Edward H. Carr, *What Is History?* (London: Penguin Books, 1990), 23.

<sup>47</sup> Marroni, 'Understanding the Past in the History Museum'.

environment. Culture can contribute to finding comfort, building bridges, broadening the horizon, and promoting social justice. Culture can lead to emancipation.

If emancipation is the goal, cultural education is the tool. Cultural education teaches us to look closer, observe, think, and be surprised. It broadens our cognitive horizon; it helps us acquire new interests, decode our environment, and fight our biases and prejudices. My travels and exchanges with people from different countries during my research have contributed to reducing my own biases. Still, it is certainly not a process with an end. I am also aware that such travels have been a privilege not everyone can have.

During my years as a doctoral researcher, I have been more than once troubled by the uncertainties in our world, but I also had the privilege to work in a protected environment. Thinking about what has happened since I started in November 2016, I feel like an eternity has passed. On top of that, SARS-CoV-2 has been spreading around the world. It has elicited an eerie feeling in me. Slowly, I got somewhat used to the situation, and we adapted and responded (for better or worse) as a society to the pandemic. Thinking about my behaviour, I moved from a naïve attitude before lockdown (“Is it really that bad?”), to an emotional state of constant worries in the early phase of lockdown, to a rather pragmatic and – maybe – more or less “balanced” attitude. I was lucky enough to have had concluded my visits to the archives, so the lockdown did not too much impede my work.

The past years’ events and personal experiences have changed my view of what it means to conduct research and be a historian. As a student, I did not know what historical research could contribute to society besides satisfying our curiosity about our past. The picture, I think, has become more apparent to me. While writing an academic study, I cannot judge the past by looking at it from the present. Yet, I consider the simple act of doing and sharing research as a peaceful confrontation. We should teach future generations to critically assess our environment and past by questioning information and checking its veracity and authenticity. We should promote empathy and raise awareness about the complexities of human behaviour, the stories that have not been told, and the power structures that led to some people being silenced.

Of course, I am describing a perfect picture from my perspective. Whenever possible, though, I think that historians should at least strive for ideals. The stories of the silenced have not nourished my research; my sources were produced by the privileged and the elites. However, I tried to include at least some reflections about related issues. I think some parts of my dissertation would read differently without my experiences over the last few years. Without these, I might not have included, for example, some reflections about gender aspects, for as short and incomplete as these reflections are.

Yet, beyond being a historian, I am also a citizen. I have learnt – and experienced – that both identities influence each other. Deepening historical knowledge, strengthening awareness of historical complexities, and teaching empathy nourish our actions and opinions as citizens in the present. As a citizen, I can criticise what is happening during my lifetime. Yet, despite the worries and fears, I am convinced that many problems and challenges of our time can be overcome. Culture and education play an essential role in this process.

# **CHAPTER I. THEORY AND METHODOLOGY**

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Historical research about cultural policy has rarely been based on frameworks or methodologies for tackling their subject. Yet, a meaningful analysis of cultural policy history in Luxembourg needs to address these issues. The present chapter is divided into three parts. The first section is dedicated to a selection of keywords central to the study: culture, policy, cultural policy, cultural institutions and museums. The second part explores existing cultural policy narratives and approaches in different academic fields that are not always neatly separable. It provides an overview of how researchers have dealt with the subject. The third part develops and presents the framework that highlights the constituting elements we need to pay attention to in cultural policy history and explains the methodology applied in the study. Hence, this chapter's structure reflects two deeply intertwined issues. The ontological question focuses on what main aspects constitute cultural policy from a historiographic point of view. The epistemological question relates to the methodology for making sense of a history of cultural policy. Of course, the methodology developed in this chapter does not claim universal application. It merely constitutes one possible way of dealing with cultural policy history.

## ***I.1. Keywords of the Study***

This section discusses three concepts indispensable for the study: cultural policy, cultural institutions and museums. While a more detailed definition of the two latter concepts will be provided in the case study, it will be refrained from suggesting a definition of cultural policy. Instead, the chapter will discuss some characteristics on which most scholars agree. A historiographic study cannot provide a definition of cultural policy – which would also entail a definition of the concept of culture – as it is a concept that changes over time and is strongly dependent on the context. I adopt a pragmatic approach that acknowledges the various meanings that it had or still has, as well as its protean nature. The meaning of culture, and culture policy, at a specific time and place should be extracted from the sources at hand. Though museums, for instance, have also evolved, they are easier to define and possess a certain continuity in their objectives and nature. Additionally, the definition developed for the present case does not aim to acquire a universally accepted meaning.

### **I.1.1. Culture, policy, and cultural policy**

The meaning of the word “culture” varies according to context and time and across disciplines: in biology, it is used as a specialised term (a culture of bacteria, for instance) and

can also refer to farming. In this case, culture is part of the semantic field of “labour and agriculture, crops and cultivation”<sup>48</sup>. In the present context, I apply “culture” from the humanities viewpoint. However, this does not mean that even within the humanities, “culture” would be well defined; it is a polysemic concept. The meanings of “culture” have evolved: from Matthew Arnold’s concept in the 19<sup>th</sup> century (and still widely accepted in the better part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century<sup>49</sup>), considering culture as “the best which has been thought and said in the world”<sup>50</sup>, to an anthropological sense appearing in the 1970s and promoted by the UNESCO since the 1980s with the *Mexico City Declaration on Cultural Policies* (1982). According to this document,

culture may now be said to be the whole complex of distinctive spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional features that characterize a society or social group. It includes not only the arts and letters, but also modes of life, the fundamental rights of the human being, value systems, traditions and beliefs.<sup>51</sup>

More than a century before, the English anthropologist Edward Burnett Tylor, a contemporary of Arnold, had already suggested a broader definition of culture as “that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, arts, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society”.<sup>52</sup> All these definitions have in common that they consider culture as constructed, antithetical to natural phenomena or manifestations, and none is universally accepted. Terry Eagleton criticized the Arnoldian concept as much as the anthropological sense of culture. According to him, “we are trapped at the moment between dismally wide and uncomfortably rigid notions of culture”<sup>53</sup>.

In cultural policy, the understanding of “culture” results from a deliberate choice, not necessarily transparent but permanently embedded in a specific context. These choices entail consequences on policies to be implemented. Unsurprisingly, culture has had many other definitions. Those presented above make up only a tiny fraction. In 1952, the American cultural anthropologists Alfred L. Kroeber and Clyde Kluckhohn claimed to have discovered more than

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<sup>48</sup> Eagleton, *The Idea of Culture*, 7.

<sup>49</sup> One might refer to F.R. Leavis, for instance, who shared Arnold’s view of literature and the arts possessing a moral function (Martyn Hammersley, *The Concept of Culture: A History and Reappraisal* [Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2019], 18).

<sup>50</sup> Matthew Arnold, *Culture and Anarchy*, ed. Jane Garnett (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 5.

<sup>51</sup> United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, ‘Mexico City Declaration on Cultural Policies Adopted by the World Conference on Cultural Policies’ (UNESCO, August 1982), 1, <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0005/000546/054668mb.pdf>.

<sup>52</sup> Edward Burnett Tylor, *Primitive Culture: Research into the Development of Mythology, Philosophy, Religion, Art, and Custom*, vol. 1 (London: John Murray, 1871), 1.

<sup>53</sup> Eagleton, *The Idea of Culture*, 35.

150 different meanings and definitions of ‘culture’. Beyond reviewing existing definitions, they also created their own:

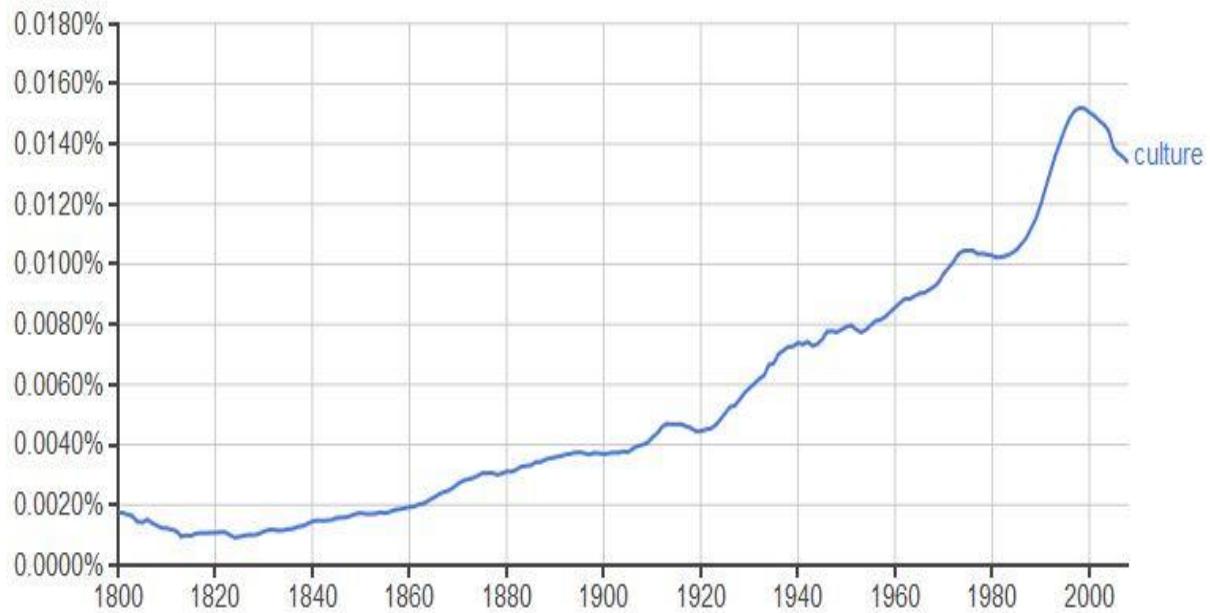
Culture consists of patterns, explicit and implicit, of and for behaviour acquired and transmitted by symbols, constituting the distinctive achievement of human groups, including their embodiment in artefacts; the essential core of culture consists of traditional (i.e., historically derived and selected) ideas and especially their attached values; culture systems may, on the one hand, be considered as products of action, on the other, as conditioning elements of future action.<sup>54</sup>

Despite the abstract wording, Kroeber and Kluckhohn’s definition does not differ much from UNESCO’s anthropological concept of culture. They recognise that culture refers to human interaction and shapes how societies function. Indeed, “modes of life” (UNESCO) are nothing else than “patterns [...] of and for behaviour” (Kluckhohn and Kroeber). In addition, they recognise the existence of material and immaterial culture. The only difference concerns the implicitness and explicitness of culture, but only because UNESCO’s definition does not provide a clear stance.

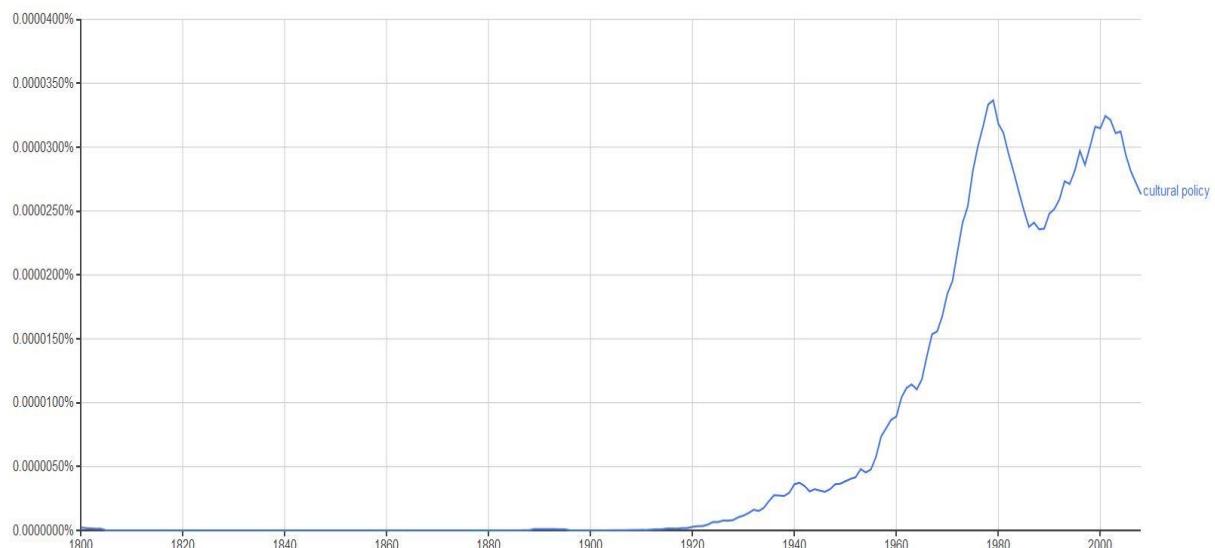
Instead of reviewing the various definitions of culture, we might also look at the frequency with which the term “culture” has been used, illustrated by the Google Ngram graph below, based on the English corpus available in Google’s database, from 1800 to 2000. The result is not necessarily representative and should be considered with reservations, as it depends on the kind of books scanned and the number of scanned books published over the years (the size of the overall corpus might decrease the further it goes back in time). The graph shows that the occurrence of the term “culture” increased in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, with a sharp rise in the 1980s and 1990s. Yet, it remains unclear in what contexts the term has been used. As for “cultural policy”, a sharp rise in the 1970s and 1980s can be noted, with more marked ups-and-downs: a decrease in the early 1980s, followed by an increase starting in the second half of the 1980s, and, as in the case of “culture”, a new decline since around 2000.

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<sup>54</sup> Alfred Kroeber and Clyde Kluckhohn, *Culture: A Critical Review of Concepts and Definitions* (Cambridge, Mass.: Peabody Museum, 1952), 181.



*Fig. 1: "Culture", Google Ngram Viewer, generated on 3 August 2017, not case-sensitive, using the English corpus with a soothng of 3.*



*Fig. 2: "Cultural policy", Google Ngram Viewer, generated on 3 August 2017, not case-sensitive, using the English corpus with a soothng of 3.*

Such graphs are not exempt from criticism. They are not necessarily representative of the actual evolution, nor do they provide contextual information. However, we might advance a general insight gained from these graphs. The notions of “culture” and “cultural policy” seem to be phenomena of the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries, confirming conclusions that researchers draw.<sup>55</sup> According to Munira Mirza, culture and cultural policy nowadays seem much more challenging to grasp and define than in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The situation has changed, among other reasons due to the influence of anthropology. As Mirza argues:

In the late nineteenth century it was relatively easy to speak with confidence about the word ‘culture’, referring to a canon of literature, fine art, and poetry – what the arch Victorian Matthew Arnold described in *Culture and Anarchy* [1869] as ‘the best that has been thought and said in the world’. A century later, the influence of postmodern thought and theories of anthropology have undermined such a neat definition of culture, setting forth the view that culture is relative to particular societies. Culture today is an essentially contested concept.<sup>56</sup>

This evolution causes issues for cultural policymakers and (cultural policy) researchers. While the former might still play on the concept's vagueness, neither group can refer to a universally accepted meaning of culture. However, this issue makes a historiographic analysis of the topic even more compelling: if culture can have different meanings that change over time, how does it influence cultural policy? Any study on cultural policy needs to include discourse on culture within the field of cultural policy, both aspects sustaining a mutual relationship. Cultural policy targets a specific definition of culture, and the definition of culture (as seen by public authorities) informs cultural policy.

Some scholars argue that the principles underlying cultural policy as we know it today were developed after the Second World War, when, at least in Europe, the welfare state was on the rise.<sup>57</sup> However, considering that cultural policy is the central concept of the present study, how can it be approached, especially when it was not used in public discourse or as an administrative

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<sup>55</sup> The statements by Munira Mirza might serve as an illustration. On culture, he notes in 2012 that “in the past two decades in advanced industrial societies, the word ‘culture’ has become more prominent in political discourse. This reflects the increased politicisation of the arts and culture, but also the ‘culturalisation’ of other policy areas, such as education, economy, urban regeneration, health, and community relations.” (Munira Mirza, *The Politics of the Culture: The Case for Universalism* [Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012], 4). Concerning cultural policy, Mirza writes: “In both the United Kingdom, but also internationally, the sphere of cultural policy has boomed.” (Mirza, 11).

<sup>56</sup> Mirza, *The Politics of the Culture: The Case for Universalism*, 11.

<sup>57</sup> See for instance: David Looseley, ‘Notions of Popular Culture in Cultural Policy: A Comparative History of France and Britain’, *International Journal of Cultural Policy* 17, no. 4 (2011): 365–379; Eleonora Belfiore, ‘Auditing Culture: The Subsidised Cultural Sector in the New Public Management’, *International Journal of Cultural Policy* 10, no. 2 (2004): 183–202, doi:10.1080/10286630042000255808; Peter Duelund, ‘Nordic Cultural Policies: A Critical Review’, *International Journal of Cultural Policy* 14, no. 1 (2008): 7–24.

category? What aspects might be helpful to research on cultural policy in Luxembourg? Some scholars adopt an approach by discussing first culture and policy separately.<sup>58</sup> As the complexity of culture was discussed above, it will not be repeated here. However, the question of policy in cultural policy will be addressed.

Indeed, cultural policy could refer to the activity of a public administration pursuing objectives related to culture, whatever its definition. At least in democratic countries, specifically Luxembourg, the government creates legal frameworks and invests money in culture through a budget voted by the parliament. As the researchers David Bell and Kate Oakley explain:

Cultural policy is a form of public policy, [...] and it is subject to the same political changes, financial challenges and global tensions as any other form of public policy (and arguably more than some).<sup>59</sup>

In the same book, Bell and Oakley argue that “cultural policy is what governments at various scales choose to do or not to do in relation to culture”<sup>60</sup>. This definition, as vague as it might be, includes a series of important points. It also recognises that cultural policy is a public policy and can be shaped by authorities at different levels. It acknowledges the agency in cultural policy and that “not doing something” is as conscious a choice as “doing something”. In this sense, it is one of the most applicable definitions for a historiographic perspective, suggested by two non-historians.

Since 2009, the International Journal of Cultural Policy (IJCP) has defined cultural policy as “the promotion or prohibition of cultural practices and values by governments, corporations, other institutions and individuals”. Furthermore, the IJCP distinguishes between explicit and implicit policies: “explicit in that their objectives are openly described as cultural, or implicit, in that their cultural objectives are concealed or described in other terms.”<sup>61</sup> However, I cannot wholly endorse this definition. In my opinion, and as has been highlighted by many researchers, a public policy is carried out by authorities, not corporations.

The fact that cultural policy only exists as a public policy and, as such, not outside of the field of government derives from the definition of the concept of policy. As Dean Mitchell

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<sup>58</sup> Max Fuchs, *Kulturpolitik* (Wiesbaden: VS Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften, 2007); Armin Klein, *Kulturpolitik: Eine Einführung*, 3rd ed. (Wiesbaden: VS Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften, 2009); David Bell and Kate Oakley, *Cultural Policy* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2015).

<sup>59</sup> Bell and Oakley, *Cultural Policy*, 6.

<sup>60</sup> Bell and Oakley, 47.

<sup>61</sup> Jeremy Ahearn and Oliver Bennett, ‘Introduction’, *International Journal of Cultural Policy* 15, no. 2 (2009): 139.

notes, “one cannot imagine government without policy”.<sup>62</sup> It should be pointed out, though, that the English language distinguishes between policy (content), politics (processes), and polity (institutions and structures).<sup>63</sup> In contrast, the French and German languages only know *politique (politique culturelle)* and *Politik (Kulturpolitik)*, respectively. Hence, subtleties risk getting lost in translation. The specificity of “policy” motivates Andy C. Pratt’s approach to use “governance” instead of “policy”: “I prefer the term ‘governance’ rather than ‘policy’ as it encompasses policy, the definition of artefacts and their production, as well as the legitimisation and implementation of policy.”<sup>64</sup> In practice, however, English literature on the subject uses the term cultural policy in a broad sense, not limited to the content, but also interested in its implementation, its evaluation, and the implication of actors. In my study, I will use cultural policy because, strictly speaking, Pratt’s idea would exclude any possibility of seeing cultural policy as a top-down process.<sup>65</sup> In my opinion, it suffices to hint at the issues surrounding cultural policy and the term “policy”. Replacing policy with governance does not necessarily solve the problem.

For the French sociologist Philippe Urfalino, cultural policy in France was “invented” in 1959 when the Ministry of Cultural Affairs headed by André Malraux was created.<sup>66</sup> Urfalino’s account links the existence of cultural policy to a specific administration. Hence, it supports the idea of cultural policy as a state policy. It is, however, too restrictive as it considers its existence only when a ministry is dedicated to questions of culture and ignores the local and regional levels. Furthermore, it adopts a French perspective. Not every country has a dedicated Ministry of Culture, but cultural policy can still exist. In his work on cultural policy,<sup>67</sup> French sociologist Vincent Dubois begins with the 19<sup>th</sup> century and shows that before 1959, elements of cultural policy had existed, also confirmed by Pierre Moulinier.<sup>68</sup> At the same time, Dubois highlights the vagueness and uncertainties of state intervention in the field of culture by retracing the evolution of the administrative structures and the discourses on state intervention.

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<sup>62</sup> Mitchell Dean, ‘Policy’, ed. Tony Bennett, Lawrence Grossberg, and Meaghan Morris, *New Keywords: A Revised Vocabulary of Culture and Society* (Malden: Blackwell Publishing, 2005), 258.

<sup>63</sup> Fuchs, *Kulturpolitik*, 9.

<sup>64</sup> Andy Pratt, ‘Cultural Industries and Public Policy: An Oxymoron?’, *International Journal of Cultural Policy* 11, no. 1 (2005): 39.

<sup>65</sup> According to Dave O’Brien, a difference exists between government and governance. Whereas the former is based on a top-down approach, the latter entails sharing resources and decision-making with several actors (Dave O’Brien, *Cultural Policy: Management, Value and Modernity in the Creative Industries* [Abingdon: Routledge, 2014], 27).

<sup>66</sup> Philippe Urfalino, *L’invention de la politique culturelle* (Paris: Fayard, 2010).

<sup>67</sup> Vincent Dubois, *La politique culturelle* (Paris: Belin, 1999).

<sup>68</sup> Pierre Moulinier, *Les politiques publiques de la culture en France*, 7th ed. (Paris: PUF, 1999), 3.

According to David Looseley, the idea for a culture ministry had already existed long before André Malraux.

Furthermore, as Bell and Oakley have pointed out, cultural policy is not a sole matter of national governments; it can be carried out by supranational (UNESCO, Council of Europe, EU), regional, and local authorities. The experiences of the left-wing Greater London Council of the 1980s represent one example of local policy cited in British literature.<sup>69</sup> Despite the importance of stressing the existence of different policymaking levels, my study will focus on national cultural policy. The anthology *Pour une histoire des politiques culturelles dans le monde*, edited by Philippe Poirrier in 2011, illustrates that cultural policy is a matter of public authorities. However, the contributors were not only asked to consider administrative structures (“architectures administratives”) but also decisional processes.<sup>70</sup>

At least in democratic societies, there is no clear definition of cultural policy.<sup>71</sup> On top of that, what a government labels as cultural policy does not necessarily encompass every potential policy related to culture. For example, aspects such as tourism, media or education might not be listed among the missions of a cultural ministry, but they can very well include elements of cultural policy or be interrelated. This depends furthermore on whether cultural policy is considered to be an economic policy or/and a social policy.<sup>72</sup> Jeremy Ahearne has already distinguished “explicit cultural policy” and “implicit cultural policy”.<sup>73</sup>

In a historiographic account, cultural policy cannot have a clear definition. “As an object of historical enquiry”, the British scholar David Looseley argues, “cultural policy is always

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<sup>69</sup> Bell and Oakley, *Cultural Policy*; Jim McGuigan, *Culture and the Public Sphere* (London: Routledge, 1996); Jim McGuigan, *Rethinking Cultural Policy* (Maidenhead: Open University, 2004); Susan Galloway and Stewart Dunlop, ‘A Critique of Definitions of the Cultural and Creative Industries in Public Policy’, *International Journal of Cultural Policy* 13, no. 1 (2007): 17–31; David Hesmondhalgh and Andy C. Pratt, ‘Cultural Industries and Cultural Policy’, *International Journal of Cultural Policy* 11, no. 1 (2005): 1–13; Looseley, ‘Notions of Popular Culture in Cultural Policy: A Comparative History of France and Britain’.

<sup>70</sup> Philippe Poirrier, ‘Introduction’, in *Pour une histoire des politiques culturelles dans le monde: 1945-2011*, ed. Philippe Poirrier, Travaux et documents 28 (Paris: La Documentation française, 2011), 15.

<sup>71</sup> Olaf Schwencke, ‘Kulturpolitik’, ed. Olaf Schwencke, Joachim Bühler, and Maria Katharina Wagner, *Kulturpolitik von A-Z: Ein Handbuch für Anfänger und Fortgeschrittene* (Berlin: Siebenhaar Verlag, 2009), 109.

<sup>72</sup> Dave O’Brien, in the British context, examines three types of cultural policy: cultural policy and the concept of excellence, cultural policy as a form of social policy (under New Labour), cultural policy as economic policy (since the 1980s) (O’Brien, *Cultural Policy: Management, Value and Modernity in the Creative Industries*, 28–41).

<sup>73</sup> Jeremy Ahearne, ‘Cultural Policy Explicit and Implicit: A Distinction and Some Uses’, *International Journal of Cultural Policy* 15, no. 2 (2009): 143–144, doi:10.1080/10286630902746245.

polysemic”<sup>74</sup>. In his book *Public Culture, Cultural Identity, Cultural Policy* (2017), Kevin V. Mulcahy writes: “a nation’s public policies reflect the historical experiences and value systems that have characterized its social development.”<sup>75</sup> Public policies can only be understood when considering the larger context of a country’s evolution and its specificities. This concerns cultural policies, too, as they

need to be understood not simply as administrative matters, but as reflections of what is called a *Weltanschauung*, that is, a worldview that defines the character of a society and how its citizenry define themselves.<sup>76</sup>

Though Mulcahy does not discuss the concept of *Weltanschauung* any further, he provides several examples illustrating the strong link between the state of mind and the historical specificities of a society and the implemented cultural policy: culture states (France, Austria or Italy), Canada’s cultural protectionism, Norway’s social-democratic culture or the United States’ *laissez-faire*. For instance, cultural identity is strongly associated with political sovereignty in Canada. The dominance of the US in the entertainment industry has provoked fears of “cultural annexation”.<sup>77</sup> Mulcahy’s definition of cultural policy converges with some aspects pointed out by other authors who approached the concept. The Austrian cultural researcher Heimo Konrad suggests that society and cultural policy are subjugated to constant change: “Wie der Begriff Kultur entzieht sich auch die Kulturpolitik einer endgültigen und präzisen Definition, da sie wie die Gesellschaft einem ständigen Veränderungsprozess unterworfen ist.”<sup>78</sup> In a similar logic, the German researcher Armin Klein, in his book *Kulturpolitik: Eine Einführung*, highlights the contextual nature of cultural policy: “Kulturpolitik geschieht also weder raumlos noch zeitlos, sondern konkretisiert sich in ganz bestimmten Konstellationen, die sich von Ort zu Ort, von Zeit zu Zeit unterschiedlich darstellen können.”<sup>79</sup> Cultural policy is strongly embedded in spatial and temporal dimensions. However, Klein also discusses its dependence on long-term structural influences, as well as on short-term changes happening in society:

Die konkrete Ausgestaltung der Kulturpolitik ist einerseits von recht konstanten und langfristig wirkenden Konditionierungen abhängig (z. B. die typisch föderale, dezentrale Struktur der Kulturpolitik in Deutschland, der [...] spezifisch deutsche Kulturbegriff, das Selbstverständnis

<sup>74</sup> Looseley, ‘Notions of Popular Culture in Cultural Policy: A Comparative History of France and Britain’, 367.

<sup>75</sup> Kevin V. Mulcahy, *Public Culture, Cultural Identity, Cultural Policy: Comparative Perspectives* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017), vii.

<sup>76</sup> Mulcahy, viii.

<sup>77</sup> Mulcahy, x.

<sup>78</sup> Heimo Konrad, *Kulturpolitik: Eine interdisziplinäre Einführung* (Wien: Facultas, 2011), 13.

<sup>79</sup> Klein, *Kulturpolitik*, 68.

eines Kulturstaates usw.), unterliegt andererseits aber auch einem relativ kurzfristig wirkenden Wandel der Rahmenbedingungen (z. B. die Verschlechterung der Finanzierungsgrundlagen, die Veränderungen des kulturpolitischen Diskurses, der Wandel der Rechtslage durch EU-Beschlüsse, der Wechsel der politischen Mehrheiten in den relevanten Beschlussgremien oder oftmals auch bloße personelle Veränderungen usw.).<sup>80</sup>

Mulcahy and Klein advocate examining the larger context when researching cultural policy, its discourses and the social structures.<sup>81</sup> These reflections include a historiographic perspective, as they acknowledge that cultural policy and its environment can change and transform over time. This view is also shared by other scholars, such as David Bell and Kate Oakley who argue that “[...] the rationales which drive cultural policy vary according to time, place and political context.”<sup>82</sup> These are indispensable elements, but such definitions ignore the transnational and supranational dimensions. Cultural policy is not enclosed in a spatial bubble: Armin Klein, in the quote further above, cites the legislative changes on the EU level as a factor for shifting frames in which cultural policy evolves. Yet, he misses highlighting that it is only one example of how supranational organisations, institutions or frameworks might influence national cultural policies.

Furthermore, the type of cultural policy depends on the understanding of culture: is culture considered in a restrictive way, such as the limitation to “high culture”, to the “affirmative” concept of culture (*affirmativer Kulturbegriff*), where art and culture are neatly separated from society and politics<sup>83</sup>; or does culture acquire an anthropological dimension, taking into account traditions, popular culture, and the ways of life?<sup>84</sup> In *Die Erlebnisgesellschaft: Kulturosoziologie der Gegenwart*, the sociologist Gerhard Schulze offers a periodization of the concepts of

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<sup>80</sup> Klein, 68.

<sup>81</sup> The Kulturpolitische Gesellschaft, a non-governmental actor in Germany engaged in the field of cultural policy, writes in its policy statements (*Grundsatzprogramm*) that “Kulturpolitik ist Gesellschaftspolitik” (“Cultural policy is societal policy”) (Kulturpolitische Gesellschaft, ‘Grundsatzprogramm der Kulturpolitischen Gesellschaft’, sec. II, accessed 9 July 2017, [http://www.kupoge.de/dok/programm\\_kupoge.pdf](http://www.kupoge.de/dok/programm_kupoge.pdf)).

<sup>82</sup> Bell and Oakley, *Cultural Policy*, 5.

<sup>83</sup> This discourse was, for instance, very dominant in the immediate post-war period in Germany (Klein, *Kulturpolitik*, 175–177). Such an understanding of culture is close to what Terry Eagleton called the “Arnoldian sense of culture as perfection, sweetness and light, the best that has been thought and said [...]”. (Eagleton, *The Idea of Culture*, 35).

<sup>84</sup> Such an anthropological definition has been adopted, for instance, by the UNESCO in 1982 at the world conference in Mexico City: “culture gives man the ability to reflect upon himself. It is through culture that man expresses himself, becomes aware of himself, recognises his incompleteness, questions his own achievements, seeks untiringly for new meanings and creates works through which he transcends his limitations.” (Justin Lewis and Toby Miller, ‘Introduction’, in *Critical Cultural Policy Studies*, ed. Justin Lewis and Toby Miller [Malden: Blackwell Publishing, 2003], 2; see also: UNESCO, ‘1982-2000: From Mondiacult to Our Creative Diversity’, accessed 7 September 2017, <https://ich.unesco.org/en/1982-2000-00309>).

culture in the German context: the “high culture” trend after 1945, the subsequent democratization motive, the socio-cultural trend since the end of the 1960s, and the economic orientation from the 1980s onwards. Schulze’s model acknowledges a possible overlap of these periods.<sup>85</sup> For Geir Vestheim, cultural policy “emerges when agents of the political system intervene with the production, distribution and consumption of cultural products, services and experiences”<sup>86</sup>. According to him, cultural policy in a democracy consists of four dimensions: aims, norms and ideologies; institutional structures, agents and interests; access and participation; distribution of economic resources.<sup>87</sup> These elements only confirm and summarize the aspects of cultural policy identified by other scholars and stress the idea of process.

Until now, we have been able to identify several aspects of cultural policy, recurrent in the reflections: cultural policy is a contextual field; it depends not only on spatial and temporal factors but also on the broader evolutions taking place in society, the worldview, and on the concept of culture used in public discourse. Additionally, a difference might exist between cultural policy as the sum of actions taken by a state to influence the cultural life of its citizens and what the government labels as cultural policy.<sup>88</sup> This raises the question of whether there has been a cultural policy before the “invention of cultural policy” by the state.<sup>89</sup>

A history of cultural policy needs to consider these aspects, as well as the fact that there can be transnational exchanges and supranational influences. However, this explanation remains quite vague regarding the practical development and implementation of cultural policy. Indeed, if discourses, ideas and historically developed structures prevalent in a society at a specific time can influence cultural policy, a plethora of individual and collective actors are involved, carrying these discourses and acting in the structural frameworks with all the ensuing constraints. We can retain from the above review that cultural policy has no clear definition, as

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<sup>85</sup> Gerhard Schulze, *Die Erlebnisgesellschaft: Kultursoziologie der Gegenwart*, 2nd ed. (Frankfurt am Main: Campus, 2005), 499–501; see also: Max Fuchs, *Kultur Macht Sinn* (VS Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften, 2008), 144–146.

<sup>86</sup> Geir Vestheim, ‘Cultural Policy and Democracy: An Introduction’, *International Journal of Cultural Policy* 18, no. 5 (2012): 497.

<sup>87</sup> Vestheim, 497.

<sup>88</sup> Clive Gray, ‘Analysing Cultural Policy: Incorrigibly Plural or Ontologically Incompatible?’, *International Journal of Cultural Policy* 16, no. 2 (2010): 223. Jeremy Ahearn drew a similar distinction between explicit (labelled as such) and implicit cultural policy (embedded in other policy areas, but generally “aims to shape cultural attitudes”) (Ahearn, ‘Cultural Policy Explicit and Implicit’, 141).

<sup>89</sup> According to Philippe Urfalino, it was “invented” in 1959 with the creation of the Ministry of Cultural Affairs (Urfalino, *L’invention de la politique culturelle*). Yet, as Dubois highlighted, there had already been some elements of a cultural policy before 1959 (Dubois, *La politique culturelle*).

it changes over time. It is, however, a public policy. It is as well a process as the result of this process. It relies on and promotes notions of culture exposed to constant change and evolution. Cultural policies are strongly linked to the historical development of a country.

### I.1.2. Cultural institutions

In academic literature, the answer to what an institution is often remains unclear or might differ depending on the authors. Indeed, some scholars create a distinction between institutions and organizations. The former are not always defined in a way that corresponds to the definitions commonly used when cultural institutions are discussed in public space. In studies on cultural policies, such reflections are frequently excluded, as the meaning seems to be taken for granted.<sup>90</sup> In historical institutionalism, Thelen and Steinmo explain that “historical institutionalists work with a definition of institutions that includes both formal organizations and informal rules and procedures that structure conduct” while noting that “just where to draw the line on what counts as an institution is a matter of some controversy in the literature”.<sup>91</sup> Anita Kangas and Geir Vestheim distinguish between “cultural policy making as ‘institution’ [...] and traditional organisations working and functioning as ‘institutions’”<sup>92</sup>. For them, institutions are situated between less organised societal formations such as marriage and more comprehensive phenomena such as cultures or societies. The comparison with the notion of an organisation is “an issue of the opposites between the general, the abstract and the complete on one hand (institution) and the specific and the concrete on the other (organisation)”<sup>93</sup>. Furthermore, the authors define three characteristics of institutions: they are relatively permanent, they want to secure their survival, and the power in institutions is executed formally and informally.<sup>94</sup>

Another scholar, Håkon Larsen, prefers “cultural organisations” to “cultural institutions” as a specific body part of an institution. For instance, in his analysis of the legitimization work of Norwegian cultural institutions, he defines the Norwegian National Opera and Ballet (NNOB) and the Oslo Philharmonic Orchestra (OPO) as “organizations subsumed under the institution

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<sup>90</sup> In Poirrier’s anthology, for instance, nearly all contributions do not include ontological reflections on cultural institutions, except for the article on Sweden.

<sup>91</sup> Kathleen Thelen and Sven Steinmo, ‘Historical Institutionalism in Comparative Politics’, in *Structuring Politics: Historical Institutionalism in Comparative Analysis*, ed. Sven Steinmo, Kathleen Thelen, and Frank Longstreth (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 2.

<sup>92</sup> Anita Kangas and Geir Vestheim, ‘Institutionalism, Cultural Institutions and Cultural Policy in the Nordic Countries’, *Nordisk Kulturpolitisk Tidskrift* 13, no. 2 (2010): 270.

<sup>93</sup> Kangas and Vestheim, 271.

<sup>94</sup> Kangas and Vestheim, 272. These characteristics are very close to the historical institutionalism’s understanding of institutions.

of art in general, and music, the dramatic arts and dance in particular".<sup>95</sup> Subsequently, Larsen systematically uses the expression "cultural organisations", even though the documents and sources he quotes and refers to speak of cultural institutions. His definitions of organisation and institution mirror Kangas and Vestheim's distinction: organisation as the concrete, institution as the general.

Confronted with various definitions of "institution", Ruth Schuyler House and Eduardo Araral Jr observe that it is "one among many challenges of institutional research"<sup>96</sup>. However, they focus on institutions only as rules or constraints, implying that "institutions are invisible and are thus very difficult to describe, define, and measure"<sup>97</sup>. Joel E. Oestreich, in his analysis of international organizations, offers an overview of different definitions of institution, such as understood in sociology, where they are "not necessarily specific organizations"<sup>98</sup>, but a set of habits or practices. John Duffield, another scholar cited by Oestreich, identifies three different meanings of institution: formal international organizations, rules that states follow out of self-interest, or norms that they follow for more reasons than just self-interest (such as shaping state identities). Oestreich's work mainly focuses on the first meaning.<sup>99</sup>

The present overview sheds light on scholars' challenges when dealing with apparently innocuous concepts such as institutions or organisations. Indeed, in our everyday life, we use these terms so often that most people rarely think about what they mean or how many different connotations they might bear. A confrontation with this challenge becomes even more urgent in an analysis of cultural policies and, more specifically, of cultural institutions. Keith Wijkander is one of the few scholars who include the idea of architectural representation in their reflections. He points out that when institutions are mentioned, it is usually not clarified whether the expression refers to the building in which an institution operates or to the activities of an institution. In his article, Wijkander notes that this distinction is not made consciously,

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<sup>95</sup> Håkon Larsen, 'Legitimation Work in State Cultural Organizations: The Case of Norway', *International Journal of Cultural Policy* 20, no. 4 (2014): 458.

<sup>96</sup> Ruth Schuyler House and Eduardo Araral Jr., 'The Institutional Analysis and Development Framework', in *Routledge Handbook of Public Policy*, ed. Eduardo Araral Jr. et al. (Abingdon: Routledge, 2015), 116.

<sup>97</sup> House and Araral Jr., 116–117.

<sup>98</sup> In sociology, Emile Durkheim defined institutions as "toutes les croyances et tous les modes de conduite institués par la collectivité; la sociologie peut alors être définie: la science des institutions, de leur genèse et de leur fonctionnement." (Émile Durkheim, *Les règles de la méthode sociologique* [Paris: PUF, 2013], XX).

<sup>99</sup> Joel E. Oestreich, *International Organizations as Self-Directed Actors. A Framework for Analysis* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2012), 3–4.

as the building of the public institution aims to underline the institutional character of the activity.<sup>100</sup>

Cultural institutions have a specific status; they cannot be defined in a way that historical institutionalists, political scientists or sociologists often do. In our case, it would be inadequate to describe cultural institutions as a set of rules, formal or informal. These rules, however, are not negligible. On the contrary, institutions need regulations, such as laws or internal codes of conduct, to work correctly and carry out their missions. However, cultural institutions are visible in the sense that they are located in specific buildings. These buildings might even be conceived to highlight their importance, visually represent their activities<sup>101</sup>, embellish the urban landscape, or promote a country as a showcase of architectural masterpieces<sup>102</sup>. These purposes can be subsumed under what Jim McGuigan calls “cultural policy as display”<sup>103</sup>, as, for instance, a form of national aggrandizement.

Some scholars have analysed the “hybridity” of cultural institutions and museums in particular. In 1998, J. Mark Schuster wrote an article about the “hybridization” of museums, in which he argued against a simple binary opposition between public and private: these institutions cannot be reduced to being either public or private but often merge aspects from both “extremes”.<sup>104</sup> Though Schuster’s article is related to museums in the US, Rius-Ulldemolins reuses his insights and applies them to an analysis of museums in Barcelona and

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<sup>100</sup> “En principe, nous ne faisons aucune distinction réfléchie, pour la simple et unique raison que le bâtiment de l’institution publique vise à marquer le caractère institutionnel de l’activité.” ((Keith Wijkander, ‘La politique culturelle de la Suède’, in Pour une histoire des politiques culturelles dans le monde: 1945-2011, ed. Philippe Poirrier, Travaux et documents 28 [Paris: La Documentation française, 2011], 417).

<sup>101</sup> One example is the *Bibliothèque nationale de France* (BnF) in Paris, which was one of the *grands projets* in cultural policy and announced by President Mitterrand in a television discourse in 1988 ('De la Librairie royale à la BnF', Bibliothèque nationale de France, accessed 27 March 2017, [http://www.bnf.fr/fr/la\\_bnf/histoire\\_de\\_la\\_bnf/a.sept\\_siecles.html](http://www.bnf.fr/fr/la_bnf/histoire_de_la_bnf/a.sept_siecles.html)). The shape of the four towers alludes to open books. The project was contested and criticized, for instance by Marc Fumaroli who, in *L'Etat culturel*, wrote: “La superposition de deux Bibliothèques, par nature incompatibles, dans un même site architectural, lui-même conçu au demeurant pour attirer le touriste-robot, était un acte de sourde violence attentatoire à la liberté des lecteurs réels de la Bibliothèque nationale.” (Marc Fumaroli, *L'État culturel: une religion moderne* [Paris: Éd. de Fallois, 1991], 240).

<sup>102</sup> The MUDAM (Musée d’art moderne Grand-Duc Jean) on Kirchberg, a district of Luxembourg City and home to some European institutions, is an appropriate example as an “architectural masterpiece”. It was designed by I.M. Pei, the same architect who conceived the glass pyramid of the Louvre in Paris.

<sup>103</sup> McGuigan, *Rethinking Cultural Policy*, 62–63.

<sup>104</sup> J. Schuster, ‘Neither Public Nor Private: The Hybridization of Museums’, *Journal of Cultural Economics* 22, no. 2 (1998): 127–150.

creates a classification of the degree of hybridisation.<sup>105</sup> Mark W. Rectanus uses the concept of hybrid in a twofold meaning: in addition to the funding of a museum, it also refers to the blending of different types of museums when museums “fuse the functions of multiple museum models (art, science, technology) as well as laboratory spaces within one complex.”<sup>106</sup> Jean-Michel Tobelem schematically visualises the different logics at work in the “complex system of the cultural institutions”: scientific or artistic logic, political and administrative logic, commercial logic, as well as civil and societal logic (“logique associative et citoyenne”).<sup>107</sup>

Though, as we have seen, some scholars create a distinction between institution and organisation, I will continue using the former. In my study, such a distinction is not necessary and would elicit unnecessary uncertainties. Even public authorities and the media use the term “cultural institution”.<sup>108</sup> The cultural development plan for Luxembourg published by the Ministry of Culture in 2018 tends to the question of cultural institutions. It recognises an “absence of nomenclature”, leading to a multitude of definitions.<sup>109</sup> The Luxembourg National Cultural Fund (Fonds culturel national, Focuna) developed its definition of cultural institutions in its 2017 glossary. It recognises the possibility of a cultural institution being associated with a place, but endorses a more technical and organisational viewpoint:

Une institution culturelle est un organisme, public ou privé, commercial ou sans but lucratif, reconnu pour son rôle dans un contexte culturel. Le lieu y associé n'est pas une condition sine qua non pour que l'on puisse parler d'institution, bien qu'il soit souvent indissociable de l'institution. En revanche, pour qu'un organisme dont le but est artistique ou plus généralement culturel soit reconnu en tant qu'institution, sa structure doit être composée, au moins, d'un poste de direction garanti et d'un personnel professionnel spécialisé. Il doit par ailleurs être doté d'une programmation ou activité culturelle régulière placée sous la responsabilité de la direction de l'institution.<sup>110</sup>

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<sup>105</sup> Joaquim Rius-Ulldemolins, ‘The Rise of the Hybrid Model of Art Museums and Cultural Institutions: The Case of Barcelona’, *Museum Management and Curatorship* 31, no. 2 (2016): 178–192.

<sup>106</sup> Rectanus, ‘Globalization: Incorporating the Museum’.

<sup>107</sup> Jean-Michel Tobelem, *La gestion des institutions culturelles: Musées, patrimoine, centres d'art* (Paris: Armand Colin, 2017), 33.

<sup>108</sup> In French, the expression “institutions culturelles” is also used, for instance, by Jean-Michel Tobelem to refer to an entity as it is understood in the present study (cf. Tobelem, *La gestion des institutions culturelles*).

<sup>109</sup> Jo Kox et al., eds., *Kulturentwicklungsplan 2018-2028* (Luxembourg: Ministère de la Culture, 2018), 22.

<sup>110</sup> Jo Kox and Marc Rettel, eds., *Glossaire et guide des opportunités de financement pour artistes et professionnels de la culture* (Luxembourg: Fonds culturel national, 2017), 27.

I define cultural institutions from a less technical perspective and focus on the possibility of change and its missions and roles.<sup>111</sup> This definition might not apply to other research contexts or fields, certainly not in a glossary of an organism like the Focuna that distributes grants, but it should be suitable for the current analysis and at least partly explain the choice for the case study. In the present context, a cultural institution is a body whose main missions involve the collection, protection, conservation, dissemination, creation, presentation and/or exhibition of material or immaterial culture, according to the general understanding of these concepts in a given society at a given time. Cultural institutions can be public, private or mixed. They carry out their activities in a specific framework, such as laws, conventions or internal house rules, but also evolve in the larger social, political and economic context. Albeit their missions are primarily cultural, they might link them to educational purposes and need to negotiate, collect funds and attract enough visitors/spectators/consumers to ensure their survival and consolidate their position. Though tensions might arise in a cultural institution due to diverging interests, economic (privatisation, fundraising, sponsorship, tourism, etc.), political (such as policies and discourses about culture) and socio-cultural (conservation of cultural objects, support of artists, etc.), institutions need to strike a balance, aim to reconcile them or create a symbiotic relationship. They would otherwise be unable to carry out their missions as they risk crumbling under the tensions or being paralyzed by them. Furthermore, and I concur with Wijkander's assessment, cultural institutions are linked to one or more buildings or delimited geographical spaces that accommodate them and in which they carry out their activities. A public cultural institution is defined as a body created and organised, even *ex-post*, by law and attached to the responsibilities of a ministry or governmental department.<sup>112</sup>

### I.1.3. Museums

As the subject of museums is addressed in a section dedicated to the case study, the museum as a concept will not be discussed in detail here. However, a concise section on its definitions

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<sup>111</sup> I would like to observe that some scholars, when writing about cultural institutions, refer to a more general concept, by using the sociological definition of “institution”. Jean Leclant’s analysis of national celebrations as a cultural institution is only one example of many others (cf. Jean Leclant, ‘Les célébrations nationales: Une institution culturelle’, *Le Débat* 3, no. 105 [1999]: 185–187).

<sup>112</sup> As Rius-Ulldemolins noted, the percentage of public funding is sometimes used as a criteria to distinguish between private and public institutions. In the case of the EU public accounting rules, if the public funding exceeds 50% of the total budget of an institution, it is considered as being public. Though this might be a useful criteria in some cases, it is not necessarily sufficient (cf. Rius-Ulldemolins, ‘The Rise of the Hybrid Model of Art Museums and Cultural Institutions: The Case of Barcelona’, 178).

and roles proves to be indispensable at this stage before moving on to the methodological considerations and the development of the framework.

It can be argued that museums are a sub-category of cultural institutions, but it is by far not a homogeneous group. The areas museums cover or specialise in can reach from the most general (national history, natural history, history of technology, etc.) to the very specific. In Luxembourg, the National History and Art Museum and the National Natural History Museum have, as their attributes reveal, a national (and transnational) vocation. In contrast, other museums, such as the Wine Museum in Ehn, focus on specific topics. A public state-financed museum tends to cover broader areas and has a national scope, while museums financed or subsidised by local authorities cover much narrower areas (but in more detail) and might have a local focus. However, museums can be private establishments, too.

Literature on museums is very abundant, and so are the existing definitions. Many authors quote the definition of museums according to the International Council of Museums (ICOM). Since 2007, the ICOM has defined a museum as follows:

A museum is a non-profit, permanent institution in the service of society and its development, open to the public, which acquires, conserves, researches, communicates and exhibits the tangible and intangible heritage of humanity and its environment for the purposes of education, study and enjoyment. (art. 3 of the ICOM Statutes)

However, since its foundation in 1946, the ICOM has reworked its definition several times to adapt it to societal changes. The very first definition did not include any missions but merely focused on the concept of collections (open to the public, “permanent exhibition rooms”). The current definition (as of 2019) is not necessarily complete. As Lücke and Zündorf remind us, not all institutions that call themselves museums carry out the ascribed missions, and not all museums are non-profit, as more and more private museums appear.<sup>113</sup> The museum as a concept does not have a universally accepted definition. For the German scholar Olaf Hartung, this is not a disadvantage. The openness of the concept allows museums to adapt to changes in cultural needs and evaluations.<sup>114</sup> In 2019, a proposed updated definition of the ICOM, which would include “human dignity and social justice, global equality and planetary wellbeing”, caused debates concerning the pertinence of the definition, being too political, too vague, or

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<sup>113</sup> Martin Lücke and Irmgard Zündorf, *Einführung in die Public History* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2018), 112.

<sup>114</sup> Hartung, *Kleine deutsche Museumsgeschichte*, 4.

missing the aspect of education.<sup>115</sup> Though a vote on the new suggestion was planned for September 2019, it was postponed.

Approaching the concept from a historian's perspective, Lücke and Zündorf stress that museums are central public history institutions.<sup>116</sup> As such, museums do not only collect but also exhibit and convey knowledge to the public. This knowledge can be created by other institutions or organisms and simply reassembled or reproduced, but the museum can also produce it through research carried out in-house. Moreover, museums have an important responsibility to society as they construct narratives. In the context of national museums and master narratives, Cristina Lleras writes that "museums play a critical role in the construction of discourses and narratives about the past – which objects from the material past are employed and how shapes [sic] our understanding of the past."<sup>117</sup>

As the role of museums and their place in societies have changed over time, it is difficult to suggest a definition that might be accurate for any historical period. Desvallées and Mairesse, based on a model devised by the Reinwardt Academie in Amsterdam at the end of the 1980s, distinguish three main functions of museums: preservation, research, and communication; whereby communication includes education and exhibition, "the most visible functions of museums", to which they add mediation.<sup>118</sup> One might note that these functions have not always been present with the same importance if they have been present at all times. One function, however, has been endorsed by museums since the beginning: preservation. Nowadays, public museums need to ensure enough public financing to carry out their missions; they have to actively uphold their legitimization and adapt to their visitors' needs. They are institutions that do not only disseminate, exhibit and mediate knowledge, either within or outside their premises, but also construct and produce it.

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<sup>115</sup> Zachary Small, 'A New Definition of "Museum" Sparks International Debate', Hyperallergic, August 2019, <https://hyperallergic.com/513858/icom-museum-definition/>.

<sup>116</sup> Lücke and Zündorf, *Einführung in die Public History*, 111.

<sup>117</sup> Cristina Lleras, 'National Museums, National Narratives, and Identity Politics', in *The Oxford Handbook of Public History*, ed. James B. Gardner and Paula Hamilton (New York: Oxford University Press, 2017), 349.

<sup>118</sup> André Desvallées and François Mairesse, eds., *Key Concepts of Museology*, trans. Suzanne Nash (Paris: Armand Colin, 2010), 20.

## I.2. Cultural Policy Research: an Overview

Due to its heterogeneous nature, there are many different ways in which cultural policy can be dealt with, and each discipline might shed a different light on it.<sup>119</sup> The present chapter reviews various approaches to cultural policy without limiting itself to the purely historiographical ones. This synthesis is far from exhaustive and complete since too much has been written about cultural policy to take every nuance and every method into account. Thus, specific examples should illustrate some basic ideas and ways of dealing with cultural policy. Three approaches will be presented and summarized, even though they are not always clearly separated.

### **I.2.1. The sociological viewpoint**

The French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu is probably one of the most quoted sociologists who reflected on some aspects of cultural policy. A short discussion about his work is inevitable. He has influenced many cultural policy researchers after him, of which one particular example will be discussed in the following sub-section. Indeed, a review of analytical approaches to cultural policy needs to include a discussion of his work, even a short one.

Pierre Bourdieu coined the concept of field (*champ*) and applied it, for example, in his analysis of literary production.<sup>120</sup> In *Le marché des biens symboliques* (1971), he distinguished two fields, one of “limited production” (“production restreinte”), whose artistic products are destined to a public of peers, i.e. other artists and intellectuals, and one of “large symbolic production” or “mass production” (“grande production symbolique”).<sup>121</sup> However, his article did not describe a detailed theory of the field, and Bourdieu presented some general characteristics in *Questions de sociologie* as late as 1980. According to his understanding of the concept, fields are “structured spaces of positions” (“espaces structurés de positions”).<sup>122</sup> Every agent in a field is not only defined by their position, but also in relation to the positions held by other agents of the same field. Bourdieu adds a dynamic aspect to this structure: the struggle between the dominant agents and the contenders or newcomers, though they all accept the rules of a field and the issues at stake. Yet, the dominating position is not set in stone, as a field evolves precisely because of the struggles between agents.<sup>123</sup> Furthermore and regardless

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<sup>119</sup> Gray, ‘Analysing Cultural Policy’, 217.

<sup>120</sup> Pierre Bourdieu, *Les règles de l’art: genèse et structure du champ littéraire* (Paris: Seuil, 1998).

<sup>121</sup> Pierre Bourdieu, ‘Le marché des biens symboliques’, *L’Année sociologique* 22 (1971): 54–55.

<sup>122</sup> Pierre Bourdieu, *Questions de sociologie* (Paris: Les Éditions de Minuit, 2004), 113.

<sup>123</sup> Pierre Mounier, *Pierre Bourdieu: une introduction* (Paris: La Découverte, 2001), 24.

of their position, actors engaged in the same field share the same fundamental interests, i.e. everything on which the very existence of the field depends.<sup>124</sup>

Questions about the limits of fields have been inevitably raised, and Bourdieu himself responded by referring to the field dynamics. Indeed, these limits do not manifest as lines inscribed in reality, but they are part of the struggles. Bourdieu argued that thinking in terms of boundaries or borders is not the right approach but that we should “think in dynamic terms” instead.<sup>125</sup> Though fields might be conceived as more or less autonomous social spaces, this does not exclude the possibility of exchange between different fields. One example is Bourdieu’s visualisation in his article about the market of symbolic goods. In the secondary literature about Bourdieu’s sociology of fields, the limit of a field is characterized by the fact that the effects of a field do not work beyond its limits because both the investments of the agents and their interests become ineffective, and the rules change. However, an agent can take part in different fields.<sup>126</sup> For the present study, Bourdieu’s approach can only serve as an inspiration. It focuses too much on the position of actors in a field and the struggles between them. Though a museum might struggle for economic capital, it is certainly not interested in dominating a field. A more recent initiative launched by the Luxembourg Ministry of Culture and a series of cultural institutions, the *Steichen Collections*, shows that different actors can collaborate.<sup>127</sup>

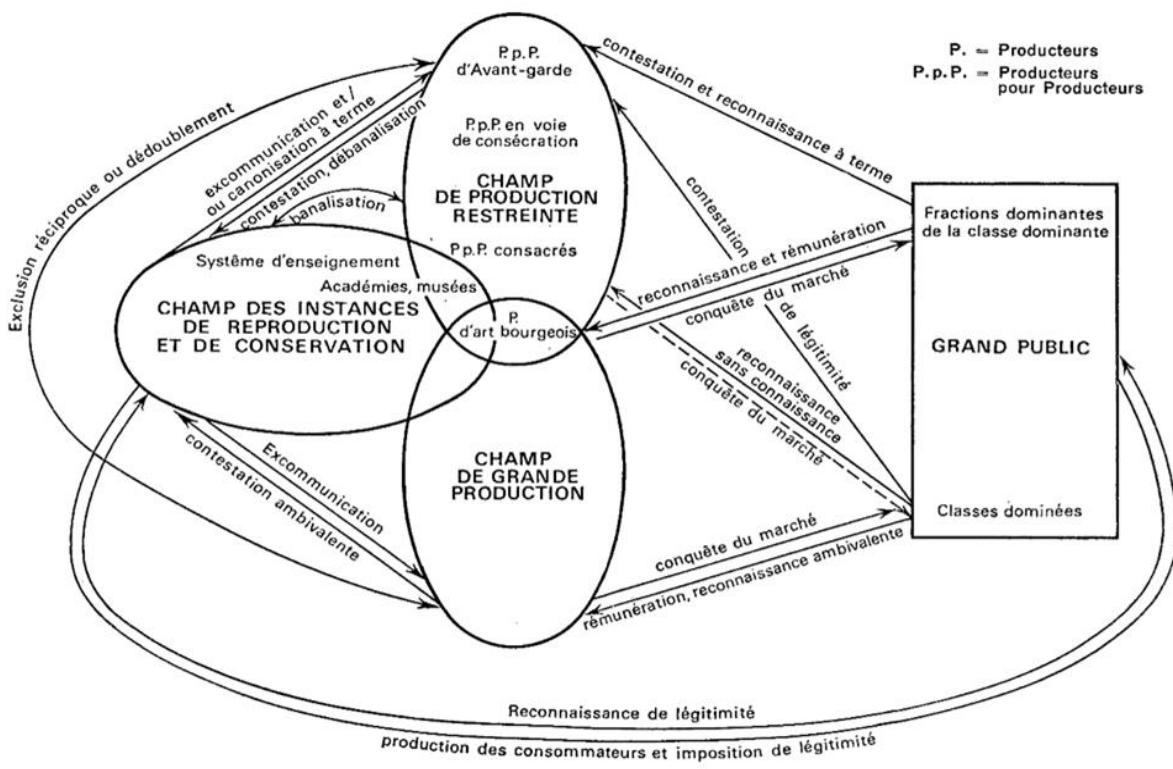
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<sup>124</sup> Bourdieu, *Questions de sociologie*, 115.

<sup>125</sup> Pierre Bourdieu, ‘Séminaires sur le concept de champ, 1972-1975’, *Actes de la recherche en sciences sociales* 5, no. 200 (2013): 15.

<sup>126</sup> Boike Rehbein, *Die Soziologie Pierre Bourdieus* (Konstanz: UVK Verlagsgesellschaft, 2011), 108.

<sup>127</sup> ‘Steichen Collections’, accessed 11 July 2017, <http://www.steichencollections.lu/>.



*Fig. 3: Bourdieu's illustration of three fields and the relationships between them (in: Bourdieu, 'Le marché des biens symboliques', 114).*

In *L'amour de l'art: les musées d'art européens et leur public* (1966), co-authored with Alain Darbel, Bourdieu published the result of a study conducted in a series of European countries, primarily in France and to a lesser extent in Poland, the Netherlands and Greece (for comparative purposes). The book focuses on a sociological examination of art museum visitors. Bourdieu and Darbel uncover the strong correlation between the habit of visiting museums, the socio-professional background, and the level of education. Though Bourdieu and Darbel remind that a diploma is not a reliable criterion, excluding autodidacts and people with some incomplete university education, they state that “the cultural affinity intensifies with the rise in the level of education”<sup>128</sup>. The authors also offer sociological explanations. Indeed, the artwork, as a “symbolic good” (*bien symbolique*), can only be deciphered and understood by people with the required skills.<sup>129</sup> Visitors who are able to grasp the meaning of art can fully benefit from a museum. In this context, Bourdieu and Darbel distinguish between the *possibilité pure* and the *possibilité réelle* to take advantage of such cultural institutions.<sup>130</sup> Indeed, less “cultivated” individuals are more inclined to consider a museum a “sacral” place.

<sup>128</sup> “[...] la pratique culturelle s’intensifie à mesure que le niveau d’instruction s’élève.” (Pierre Bourdieu and Alain Darbel, *L’amour de l’art: les musées d’art européens et leur public* [Paris: Éditions de Minuit, 1969], 46).

<sup>129</sup> Bourdieu and Darbel, 71.

<sup>130</sup> Bourdieu and Darbel, 89.

Furthermore, the level of education and knowledge influence the cultural taste: less educated people prefer what Bourdieu and Darbel label “minor” art.<sup>131</sup> The authors call for the education system to be changed as it contributes to perpetuating inequalities. Indeed, it neglects students who cannot acquire cultural knowledge (or cultural capital) in their domestic environment. *L'amour de l'art* is a statement to make museums more comprehensible to the audience and of the need for new concepts. It can also be read as a critique of Malraux’s *maisons de la culture*, a cornerstone of the French minister of culture’s policy when the book was published. The following quotation fittingly summarizes the authors’ assessment of Malraux’s policy:

La plupart des entreprises d'éducation populaire et, tout particulièrement, les Maisons de la culture, s'inspirent d'une idéologie qui, par-delà les variantes et les variations, s'organise autour d'un corps commun d'idées reçues et qui apparaît le plus souvent comme l'expression systématique d'un certain type de situation sociale. Comme s'ils croyaient que la seule inaccessibilité physique des œuvres empêche la grande majorité de les aborder, de les contempler et de les savourer, les responsables et les animateurs semblent penser qu'il suffit de faire aller les œuvres au peuple faute de pouvoir faire venir le peuple aux œuvres.<sup>132</sup>

This conclusion has been contested by other scholars, such as Laurent Fleury. In *Sociology of Culture and Cultural Practices. The Transformative Power of Institutions* (2011), Fleury questions the assumption that the democratisation of culture has failed. He further argues that “insofar as culture is concerned, there are no simple and unequivocal links between childhood attitudes and the choices, preferences, and practices of adulthood”.<sup>133</sup> The Théâtre National Populaire and the Beaubourg/Pompidou Centre figure as case studies, “deviant cases”<sup>134</sup>, that contradict theories formulated by Bourdieu or Jean-Claude Passeron, a French sociologist who collaborated with the former on *Les héritiers*. According to Fleury, the sociological observations of the failure of democratisation were followed by an ideological discourse and the “disappearance of many institutional innovations associated with cultural democratization”<sup>135</sup>. When reflecting on the comparatively longer history of educational democratisation, the fact that the democratisation of culture has not yet been attained should not necessarily be an argument for its impossibility.<sup>136</sup>

Fleury is not the only one who takes a different stance on cultural habits and the public of cultural institutions. He has been joined by researchers such as Paul DiMaggio, Michèle

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<sup>131</sup> Bourdieu and Darbel, 92. In the original text, the French word “mineur” is in quotation marks.

<sup>132</sup> Bourdieu and Darbel, 152.

<sup>133</sup> Laurent Fleury, *Sociology of Culture and Cultural Practices: The Transformative Power of Institutions* (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2014), xvi.

<sup>134</sup> Fleury, xvii.

<sup>135</sup> Fleury, xx.

<sup>136</sup> Fleury, 63.

Lamont and Richard Peterson, who have challenged Bourdieu's sociology and especially his assessment of cultural capital with its "reductionist and determinist overtones"<sup>137</sup>. Lamont and Peterson argued, for instance, that cultural differences are not as striking in the United States as Bourdieu concludes in the French context.<sup>138</sup> Already in 1996, the American sociologists Richard Peterson and Roger Kern analysed the shift from the "snob" (who considers only "high culture" as being worthy) to the "omnivore", who is characterized by an openness to popular or "low" culture.<sup>139</sup> Paul DiMaggio and Toqir Mukhtar examined the cultural practices and their evolution and concluded that their results were consistent with Peterson's omnivore thesis.<sup>140</sup> However, following Andrew Miles and Alice Sullivan<sup>141</sup>, David Bell and Kate Oakley have relativized the cultural omnivore thesis. According to them, it may be "that the distinction between omnivores and univores is still an expression of social inequality – knowledge of popular culture is now widespread, but knowledge of, or participation in some cultural forms remains very limited"<sup>142</sup>.

The sociological approach to cultural policy focuses on debates about the accessibility of culture and institutions. It analyses the relationship between the tastes and the social background of the public. In this context, Bourdieu may be one significant figure, but numerous scholars have successively contested his conclusions and theories. Nevertheless, a study such as *L'amour de l'art* is an appropriate example of how sociologists can deal with cultural policy or a small portion of it. What I call the "sociological branch" of cultural policy research – for lack of a better description to summarize this approach – has influenced, to some extent, cultural policy studies. As we will see, the latter are quite institutionalized without being a homogeneous field.

### I.2.2. Cultural (policy) studies

Cultural policy studies have been a growing interdisciplinary field since the 1990s, a "global phenomenon"<sup>143</sup> strongly inspired by research in cultural studies. Thus, it is not unusual that cultural policy researchers quote scholars such as Raymond Williams or Stuart Hall, important

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<sup>137</sup> Tony Bennett et al., *Culture, Class, Distinction* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2009), 18.

<sup>138</sup> Bennett et al., 18.

<sup>139</sup> Richard Peterson and Roger Kern, 'Changing Highbrow Taste: From Snob to Omnivore', *American Sociological Review* 61, no. 5 (1996): 900–907.

<sup>140</sup> Paul DiMaggio and Toqir Mukhtar, 'Arts Participation as Cultural Capital in the United States, 1982–2002: Signs of Decline?', *Poetics* 32, no. 2 (2004): 169–194.

<sup>141</sup> Andrew Miles and Alice Sullivan, 'Understanding the Relationship Between Taste and Value in Culture and Sport' (London: DCMS, 2010).

<sup>142</sup> Bell and Oakley, *Cultural Policy*, 36.

<sup>143</sup> O'Brien, *Cultural Policy: Management, Value and Modernity in the Creative Industries*, 36.

figures in cultural studies. Academic institutes, notably the Birmingham Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies, where Stuart Hall became director in 1968, played an important role in consolidating cultural studies.<sup>144</sup> Especially in English-speaking countries (UK, USA and Australia) and, to some extent, in Nordic countries, universities and authorities have created centres solely dedicated to cultural policy research, for instance, the Warwick Centre for Cultural Policy Studies, established in 1995. Furthermore, the *International Conference on Cultural Policy Research* (ICCP) takes place every two years, and the *International Journal of Cultural Policy* publishes articles explicitly dedicated to the subject. Hence, cultural policy studies are a recognized academic and interdisciplinary field, and it is impossible to do justice to all theories, ideas and discourses articulated. Various commentators have grappled with the different tendencies in cultural policy studies, and their evaluations mostly confirm each other, though with slight nuances.

The concept of culture generally used in cultural policy studies is broader, extending to “ways of life”<sup>145</sup> and borrowed from cultural studies. According to Justin Lewis and Toby Miller, this anthropological definition reveals “how a series of policies or guidelines operate to define what takes place and which visions of the social they privilege”<sup>146</sup>. The “magic triangle”<sup>147</sup> of cultural studies – culture, power and identity – is also recurrent in cultural policy studies. Unsurprisingly, scholars like Miller also write about cultural studies and cultural policy studies, thus illustrating the fluid boundaries between both fields.<sup>148</sup> Though this explains at least the basic foundations of cultural policy studies, or rather their origins, Clive Gray rightly emphasizes that in cultural studies

an attempt to develop a coherent overall picture of the subject would require the ignoring of the substantial differences between the Foucaultian, Habermasian and Gramscian approaches and the British and North American versions of it.<sup>149</sup>

The situation is no different in cultural policy studies. Jim McGuigan, for instance, uses a broader definition, arguing that “cultural policy is about the politics of culture in the most general sense: it is about the clash of ideas, institutional struggles and power relations in the

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<sup>144</sup> Toby Miller, ed., *A Companion to Cultural Studies* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2001), 3.

<sup>145</sup> Jim McGuigan, ‘Cultural Policy Studies’, in *Critical Cultural Policy Studies: A Reader*, ed. Justin Lewis and Toby Miller (Malden: Blackwell Publishing, 2003), 23.

<sup>146</sup> Lewis and Miller, ‘Introduction’. For Clive Gray, considering this definition as anthropological is misleading, as cultural anthropology does not use it anymore (Gray, ‘Analysing Cultural Policy’, 219). However, I consider it as anthropological in the sense that the definition refers to what is an important part of being human.

<sup>147</sup> Oliver Marchart, *Cultural Studies* (Konstanz: UVK Verlagsgesellschaft, 2008), 33.

<sup>148</sup> Miller, *A Companion to Cultural Studies*.

<sup>149</sup> Gray, ‘Analysing Cultural Policy’, 217.

production and circulation of symbolic meanings”<sup>150</sup>. Yet, many academics have been involved in debates about the nature of research in this field, and the theories applied. On both levels, research aims and approaches, significant distinctions become apparent.

The first one concerns the aims of cultural policy research. According to Scullion and García, cultural policy research uses social sciences and arts and humanities methods. From the latter, it draws on history and historiography “to understand policy making in the past and influence its future development and implementation”, and on cultural studies, “from which come a concern with sign, representation and identity and, indeed, definitions and experiences of culture and its role in society”<sup>151</sup>. In a review of two volumes, *Critical Cultural Policy Studies* by Justin Lewis and Toby Miller, and *Informing Cultural Policy* by J. Mark Schuster, Oliver Bennett speaks of the “torn halves of cultural policy research”<sup>152</sup>. Both volumes have also been examined by Scullion and García, who draw a similar conclusion to O. Bennett: on the one hand, there is a tradition in cultural policy studies related to “cultural theory and critical concerns” without being “necessarily reactive” to policymaking. But on the other hand, they identify a strand that is more concerned with and engaged in the implementation and formulation of cultural policy, aiming to be “useful”.<sup>153</sup>

Similarly, Dave O’Brien distinguishes two poles, even though he acknowledges that there has been work transcending this divide.<sup>154</sup> This distinction can be schematized by the debates between Tony Bennett and Jim McGuigan. However, Jonathan Sterne offers another account of “two main strands”, locating their differences in the logic of considering culture as an object of administration. Though one would be a “broadly historical and genealogical” strand<sup>155</sup>, illustrated by Tony Bennett’s work on museums, the other represents a “more directly interventionist approach”<sup>156</sup>. The combination of both strands was the “initial mission of cultural policy studies”<sup>157</sup>. As numerous scholars do not want to renounce an oppositional stance, cultural policy studies thus ‘has to walk a fine line. It wants to reserve for itself a position of dissidence while at the same time entering into dialogue with powerful cultural

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<sup>150</sup> McGuigan, *Culture and the Public Sphere*, 1.

<sup>151</sup> Adrienne Scullion and Beatriz García, ‘What Is Cultural Policy Research?’, *International Journal of Cultural Policy* 11, no. 2 (2005): 122.

<sup>152</sup> Oliver Bennett, ‘The Torn Halves of Cultural Policy Research’, *International Journal of Cultural Policy* 10, no. 2 (2004): 237–248.

<sup>153</sup> Scullion and García, ‘What Is Cultural Policy Research?’, 118.

<sup>154</sup> O’Brien, *Cultural Policy: Management, Value and Modernity in the Creative Industries*, 36.

<sup>155</sup> Jonathan Sterne, ‘Cultural Policy Studies and the Problem of Political Representation’, *The Communication Review* 5, no. 1 (2002): 70.

<sup>156</sup> Sterne, 71–72.

<sup>157</sup> Sterne, 71.

institutions”<sup>158</sup>. Yet, Sterne does not separate research aim from methodology and thus oversimplifies the divisions existing in cultural policy studies.

Regardless of the accounts and descriptions of cultural policy studies, Tony Bennett’s work is attributed to a more “practical” tradition, whereas the “critical” strand is defended by the British scholar Jim McGuigan. This does not mean that Bennett is not critical, but he additionally assumes that cultural policy studies should provoke change in cultural policymaking. In fact, for Bennett, who uses Foucault’s governmentality in his work, cultural policy studies should even transform institutional logics.<sup>159</sup> Bennett was not the only scholar to assert a practical stance. In *Cultural Policy*, Toby Miller and George Yúdice, agreeing with Stuart Cunningham’s call for a “political vocation”, openly “support this preparedness to engage actually existing politics”<sup>160</sup>. However, Miller and Yúdice are also critical of the “academic participation in so-called democratic government”, calling it a “sordid history”.<sup>161</sup> McGuigan thinks cultural policy studies should focus exclusively on critical research instead of claiming to transform policies. In other words, it is the “task of research into cultural policy to critique, not advance, the agendas of government”<sup>162</sup>.

Though all the researchers cited above recognize the existence of roughly two different branches of cultural policy studies, Oliver Bennett draws in his account the most striking opposition, which he deplores at the same time. Indeed,

it may be that the different worlds of cultural policy research represented by these two books [*Critical Cultural Policy Studies* and *Informing Cultural Policy*] are, to adapt Adorno, the torn halves that never add up to a whole; that research can be practical, or it can be critical, but it can never be both at the same time.<sup>163</sup>

In his concluding remarks, O. Bennett reminds us that “we should nevertheless expect that the one will at least acknowledge the existence of the other”<sup>164</sup>. Hence, though O. Bennett sees a strong division, he also hopes this could be bridged, especially as both strands are committed to “investigating the conditions under which culture is produced, reproduced and experienced”<sup>165</sup>.

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<sup>158</sup> Sterne, 72.

<sup>159</sup> Sterne, 69.

<sup>160</sup> Toby Miller and George Yúdice, *Cultural Policy* (London: Sage, 2002), 30.

<sup>161</sup> Miller and Yúdice, 30.

<sup>162</sup> O’Brien, *Cultural Policy: Management, Value and Modernity in the Creative Industries*, 36.

<sup>163</sup> Bennett, ‘The Torn Halves of Cultural Policy Research’, 246.

<sup>164</sup> Bennett, 246.

<sup>165</sup> Bennett, 246.

In “Cultural studies from the viewpoint of cultural policy” (1993), Stuart Cunningham distinguishes between a leftist, rightist and centrist position.<sup>166</sup> The leftist position, originating in the humanities, “seeks to question the orthodoxies of academic cultural studies in the name of a more authentic critical and political practice, or in the name of a more thoroughgoing deconstruction or postmodernism”<sup>167</sup>. In this case, the academic discourse is considered to be too narrow. The rightist position from the social sciences questions the very foundation of cultural studies, their “neo-Marxist ‘motor’”, which does not appropriately explain new issues appearing in the context of internationalisation.<sup>168</sup> The centrist stance, defended by Cunningham, intends to move beyond academic discourse and “seeks to position the perspectives of cultural policies within the fields of public policy”, but does not question the very basis of cultural studies as long as it concentrates on “central Enlightenment values of liberty, equality and solidarity”<sup>169</sup>. Cunningham’s stance is not opposed to a more practical engagement, albeit not in the sense as Bennett advances. Indeed, the work should be placed in a social-democratic framework of reformism, guided by the principle of citizenship, and thus connected “to the wellsprings of engagement with policy”<sup>170</sup>. He also clarifies that a policy orientation of cultural studies does not mean less critical thinking, but “what would count as the critical vocation, however, would change”<sup>171</sup>.

The second “fracture” in cultural policy studies evolves around the theoretical frameworks used. There are roughly three sources of inspiration that can be distinguished: Foucault, Habermas and Gramsci. Though the Foucauldian and Habermasian perspectives are, by most authors, clearly attributed to specific scholars, the Gramscian perspective is recognised as an inspiration in cultural policy studies, yet without being linked to any particular cultural policy researcher.<sup>172</sup> In a review of how various disciplines (sociology, political science, cultural studies, and economy) define cultural policy and methodologies, Clive Gray considers two variants in cultural policy studies, derived from Gramsci (ideology and hegemony) and Foucault (governmentality), while ignoring the Habermasian one.<sup>173</sup> Whereas the “Gramscian

<sup>166</sup> Stuart Cunningham, ‘Cultural Studies from the Viewpoint of Cultural Policy’, in *Nation, Culture, Text: Australian Cultural and Media Studies*, ed. Graeme Turner (London: Routledge, 1993), 126–139.

<sup>167</sup> Cunningham, 126.

<sup>168</sup> Cunningham, 126.

<sup>169</sup> Cunningham, 127.

<sup>170</sup> Cunningham, 134.

<sup>171</sup> Cunningham, 137.

<sup>172</sup> Sterne, ‘Cultural Policy Studies and the Problem of Political Representation’; Scullion and García, ‘What Is Cultural Policy Research?'; Bennett, ‘The Torn Halves of Cultural Policy Research’.

<sup>173</sup> Gray, ‘Analysing Cultural Policy’, 222.

wing” concentrates “on the meanings that are attached to particular forms of behaviour and expression by the participants within them”<sup>174</sup>, the Foucauldian branch is interested in “the imputation of meaning to behaviours and expressions undertaken by others”<sup>175</sup>. The difference, then, stems from the role reserved for the agents and the opposition between bottom-up (resisting) and top-down (governing).

In the Foucauldian branch or the “Birmingham School-Tony Bennett line of development”<sup>176</sup> in the words of Scullion and García, Tony Bennett belongs among the most influential researchers. He adheres in his work to Foucault’s concept of governmentality.<sup>177</sup> This concept, which Foucault also called the “art of government”<sup>178</sup> or “governmental rationality”<sup>179</sup>, theorizes the way a government (or a governmental body) shapes and influences the behaviour of its population via instruments or institutions. Bennett’s extensive use of Foucault’s governmentality also explains his interest in institutions and their logics.<sup>180</sup> Governmentality is not limited to what one generally understands under government. It goes beyond government intervention, such as family, for instance. Using the latter as an example, Foucault explains what governmentality implies; it is

essentially concerned with answering the question of how to introduce economy, that is to say, the correct manner of managing individuals, goods and wealth within the family (which a good father is expected to do in relation to his wife, children and servants) and of making the family fortunes prosper – how to introduce this meticulous attention of the father towards his family into the management of the state.<sup>181</sup>

The case study of the creation of the *Centre for Cultural Policy Research* at the University of Glasgow, explored by Adrienne Scullion and Beatriz García, is quite revealing in this context, as it was founded in the year following the Scottish devolution of 1999. The new political competencies called for establishing a research centre whose insights would be useful

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<sup>174</sup> Gray, 222.

<sup>175</sup> Gray, 222.

<sup>176</sup> Scullion and García, ‘What Is Cultural Policy Research?’, 119.

<sup>177</sup> Sterne, ‘Cultural Policy Studies and the Problem of Political Representation’, 65.

<sup>178</sup> Michel Foucault, ‘Governmentality’, in *The Foucault Effect: Studies in Governmentality*, ed. Graham Burchell, Colin Gordon, and Peter Miller (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1991), 92.

<sup>179</sup> Colin Gordon, ‘Governmental Rationality’, in *The Foucault Effect: Studies in Governmentality* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1991), 1.

<sup>180</sup> In *The Birth of the Museum*, Bennett acknowledges Gramsci’s influence in his work. However, he writes that “the tendency of my work in this area has inclined more towards the Foucaultian than the Gramscian paradigm” (Tony Bennett, *The Birth of the Museum: History, Theory, Politics* [Abingdon: Routledge, 1995], 11).

<sup>181</sup> Foucault, ‘Governmentality’, 92.

for public policymaking.<sup>182</sup> The Glasgow Centre could serve as an example of governmentality, as Foucault posits that power strategies need to produce knowledge to succeed.<sup>183</sup>

Bennett believes that the Gramscian notion of hegemony, adopted by numerous scholars as it allows for overcoming the domination-resistance model, is insufficient.<sup>184</sup> Thus, his use of the governmentality concept privileges the state by completely ignoring the corporation.<sup>185</sup> The Gramscian perspective sees “bottom-up cultural creation” as resistance to dominant versions of culture. It focuses more on “the meanings that are attached to particular forms of behaviour and expression by the participants within them”.<sup>186</sup>

Another way of looking at cultural policy has been proposed by McGuigan, though his Habermasian perspective is described by Gray as a “variant” rather than a third option to Foucault and Gramsci.<sup>187</sup> McGuigan wrote, not without an underlying criticism, that the Australian school rejected the “critical responsibilities of cultural studies” by substituting them with “an instrumental orientation to managerial usefulness”<sup>188</sup>. He does not only define the aims of cultural policy studies differently than Bennett, but he also anchors his work in a theoretical foundation that he explicitly opposes to the Foucauldian perspective. He draws from the ideas of Habermas, who dedicated much of his career to the question of how, in liberal democracies, people negotiate to find common ground or consensus when their viewpoints differ.<sup>189</sup> Adapted to cultural policy, it means that

in a democratic society, “the public will,” however that is understood and constructed, should decisively influence the conditions of culture, their persistence and their potential for change. This is where a Habermasian view parts company most sharply from an exclusively Foucauldian view.<sup>190</sup>

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<sup>182</sup> Scullion and García, ‘What Is Cultural Policy Research?’, 119.

<sup>183</sup> Christian Lavagno, ‘Michel Foucault: Ethnologie der eigenen Kultur’, in *Kultur: Theorien der Gegenwart*, ed. Stefan Moebius and Dirk Quadflieg (Wiesbaden: VS Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften, 2011), 50.

<sup>184</sup> Sterne, ‘Cultural Policy Studies and the Problem of Political Representation’, 66; Tony Bennett, ‘Putting Policy into Cultural Studies’, in *Cultural Studies*, ed. Lawrence Grossberg, Cary Nelson, and Pauly Treichler (Abingdon: Routledge, 1992), 29.

<sup>185</sup> Sterne, ‘Cultural Policy Studies and the Problem of Political Representation’, 69. In his book *The Birth of the Museum*, Bennett adopts a position where culture is embedded in administrative practices. The term “policy”, then, is embedded in a restricted understanding, a top-down process. This does not prevent him, though, from referring to Habermas as a source of inspiration in the context of the public sphere (Bennett, *The Birth of the Museum*, 25–28).

<sup>186</sup> Gray, ‘Analysing Cultural Policy’, 217.

<sup>187</sup> Gray, 222.

<sup>188</sup> Jim McGuigan, ‘Richard Hoggart: Public Intellectual’, *International Journal of Cultural Policy* 12, no. 2 (2006): 203.

<sup>189</sup> Tim König, *In guter Gesellschaft? Einführung in die politische Soziologie von Jürgen Habermas und Niklas Luhmann* (Wiesbaden: VS Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften, 2012).

<sup>190</sup> McGuigan, ‘Cultural Policy Studies’, 34.

In *Culture and Public Sphere* (1996), Jim McGuigan precisely defends this agenda as an “alternative” but also “in some ways complementary” approach.<sup>191</sup> Despite the contradiction – an alternative is meant to replace an existing model and not to co-exist – McGuigan wishes to go beyond the pure consideration of culture as a “technical problem of administration”, putting it at the core of public debates.<sup>192</sup> This stance includes the market as an actor, though McGuigan admits that Habermas lacks an analysis of the market “as an idea” and “as a material representation of profitable interests”.<sup>193</sup> In this context, McGuigan uses the example of the BBC to illustrate this characterization and the policies aiming to implement the “new public management”.<sup>194</sup>

It is striking that, as mentioned above, a Gramscian influence is acknowledged but seldom attributed to a scholar. Paola Merli is one of the rare authors who thoroughly examine the Gramscian influence in cultural policy studies and question how scholars such as Bennett have understood the concept of hegemony. As she notes,

cultural policy studies were in fact theorised as an anti-Gramscian project between the late 1980s and the early 1990s, when a group of scholars based in Australia advocated a major political and theoretical re-orientation of cultural studies away from hegemony theory and radical politicisation, and towards reformist-technocratic engagement with the policy concerns of contemporary government and business.<sup>195</sup>

Ironically, Tony Bennett, who strongly influenced cultural policy studies in Australia at a time when a Labour government ruled the country,<sup>196</sup> was, in the 1980s, among those scholars who advocated a Gramscian paradigm<sup>197</sup>, which is noticeable in some of his writings.<sup>198</sup> Stuart Hall used a Gramscian perspective in his essay *Popular Culture and the State* with the concept of hegemony, but it did not get much attention due to the rejection of this variant by the Australian school.<sup>199</sup> Raymond Williams, one of the influential figures of cultural studies, used

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<sup>191</sup> McGuigan, *Culture and the Public Sphere*, 1–2.

<sup>192</sup> McGuigan, 1–2.

<sup>193</sup> McGuigan, 52.

<sup>194</sup> McGuigan, 53–67.

<sup>195</sup> Paola Merli, ‘Creating the Cultures of the Future: Cultural Strategy, Policy and Institutions in Gramsci: Part I: Gramsci and Cultural Policy Studies: Some Methodological Reflections’, *International Journal of Cultural Policy* 19, no. 4 (2012): 400.

<sup>196</sup> Sterne, ‘Cultural Policy Studies and the Problem of Political Representation’, 63.

<sup>197</sup> Merli, ‘Creating the Cultures of the Future’, 407.

<sup>198</sup> Merli analyses some of Bennett’s articles that show his commitment to a Gramscian theoretical framework (Merli, 408–409). Two of them are also published in *The Birth of the Museum*: Tony Bennett, ‘The Exhibitionary Complex’, *New Formations* 4 (1988); Tony Bennett, ‘Museums and “the People”’, in *The Museum Time-Machine: Putting Cultures on Display*, ed. Robert Lumley (London: Routledge, 1988).

<sup>199</sup> Merli, ‘Creating the Cultures of the Future’, 408.

the same concept for his reflections on culture (though not explicitly cultural policy).<sup>200</sup> In the early 1990s, Bennett turned away from the Gramscian stance and developed his Foucauldian framework. Merli suspects that Bennett's change of mind might have been based on a mistake in the English translation of Gramsci's text in relation to folklore.<sup>201</sup> If this was the case, or at least one reason among others, Bennett has not referred to it. For him, the turn to Foucault ran parallel to the turn to Gramsci rather than succeeding the latter.<sup>202</sup> In *The Birth of the Museum*, Bennett emphasizes that the tendency of his work "has inclined more towards the Foucaultian than the Gramscian paradigm".<sup>203</sup>

Additionally, the concept of hegemony, how Bennett and Raymond Williams understood it, was different from what Gramsci initially developed. Indeed, Williams applied the principle of hegemony to explain opposition to the dominant culture. But Gramsci's understanding of it went beyond this dualistic view; it "referred precisely to the opposite of domination".<sup>204</sup> In Gramsci's writings, hegemony is based on mutual exchange: "A successful hegemonic group has to thoroughly recreate itself".<sup>205</sup> To establish a hegemony, elements of the worldview of the subaltern groups have to be integrated, resulting in a transformation of the leading group itself, "since its narrow factionalism (what Gramsci calls 'corporatism') has been translated into a much broader, even universal, appeal".<sup>206</sup> Moreover, Bennett limited Gramsci's concept of hegemony to culture and ideology even though it referred "to the complex interrelation of the political and the cultural, that is, cultural processes that should be seen as 'political activities'".<sup>207</sup> Bennett's understanding of hegemony is illustrated in an interview in 2008, in which he reduces Gramsci's account to "the essentially cultural and ideological processes".<sup>208</sup> However, hegemony is far more than this, as it concerns society, culture and economy, as well as the constant exchange between them, as a "circulating and shifting network of influence".<sup>209</sup> The Italian theorist devises hegemony as the process of winning consent; it is "understood as

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<sup>200</sup> Miller and Yúdice, *Cultural Policy*, 7.

<sup>201</sup> Merli, 'Creating the Cultures of the Future', 410–411.

<sup>202</sup> Huimin Jin, 'The Intellectual Genealogies and Possible Futures of Cultural Studies: An Interview with Tony Bennett', *Cultural Politics* 4, no. 2 (2008): 171.

<sup>203</sup> Bennett, *The Birth of the Museum*, 11.

<sup>204</sup> Merli, 'Creating the Cultures of the Future', 405.

<sup>205</sup> Steve Jones, *Antonio Gramsci* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2006), 45.

<sup>206</sup> Jones, 45.

<sup>207</sup> Merli, 'Creating the Cultures of the Future', 413.

<sup>208</sup> Jin, 'The Intellectual Genealogies and Possible Futures of Cultural Studies', 165.

<sup>209</sup> Jones, *Antonio Gramsci*, 5.

a fluid and temporary series of alliances” and thus “needs to be constantly reconquered and renegotiated”.<sup>210</sup>

In a chapter in *Cultural Studies. Theory and Practice* (2013), Chris Barker deals with debates on cultural policies from a cultural studies point of view, examining, among others, the works and theories of Gramsci, Foucault (governmentality), Tony Bennett and Stuart Hall (construction of identities). In his volume, Barker is not interested in the history of cultural policies, the policymaking and the implementation of laws, or even the creation of institutions, but precisely in questions of identities or power. As Barker summarizes, “cultural politics” is about the power “to name”, “to represent common sense”, “to create ‘official versions’” and “to represent the legitimate social world”.<sup>211</sup> Barker does not draw a clear distinction between cultural politics and cultural policy, though both notions implore different connotations. Furthermore, his power-centred definition excludes many aspects (the concrete implementation of cultural policy) and implies a top-down perspective, though he briefly presents the Habermasian idea of the public sphere, without mentioning McGuigan in this context.<sup>212</sup>

The tables below summarize both levels of distinction (or fractures) discussed above. They are not exhaustive and hide variations that might exist. Scholars adopting a practical stance are also critical: the former is not contradictory to the latter. Furthermore, I have not explained the degree or nature of the practical stance: Stuart Cunningham sees himself in a social-democratic vein, whereas Bennett appears much more committed to “governmental usefulness”.<sup>213</sup>

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<sup>210</sup> Chris Barker, *Cultural Studies: Theory and Practice*, 3rd ed. (London: Sage, 2013), 463–465.

<sup>211</sup> Barker, 462.

<sup>212</sup> Barker, 476.

<sup>213</sup> McGuigan, ‘Cultural Policy Studies’, 32. McGuigan considers that Cunningham’s “Centrist position” has the virtue “of situating itself explicitly and unambiguously within a “real world” ideological and political context, that of Australian social democracy”. Cunningham defends a reformist view, based on citizenship and replacing the “shop-worn revolutionary rhetoric” (Cunningham, ‘Cultural Studies from the Viewpoint of Cultural Policy’, 134).

Perspective/Approach	Scholar
<i>Gramscian</i>	Stuart Hall; Raymond Williams; Tony Bennett (before 1992)
<i>Foucauldian</i>	Tony Bennett (after 1992)
<i>Habermasian</i>	Jim McGuigan

Research aim	Scholar
<i>Critical</i>	Stuart Hall; Jim McGuigan; Raymond Williams
<i>Practical</i>	Tony Bennett; Angela McRobbie <sup>214</sup> ; Stuart Cunningham; Toby Miller

Of course, cultural policy studies cannot be reduced to the abovementioned debates. Many other scholars engage in this area of research without explicitly referring to Gramsci, Foucault or Habermas. For example, David Bell and Kate Oakley adopt a spatial approach and analyse cultural policy at the international level, as well as at the national and urban levels in the UK. For this purpose, they discuss cases such as the Greater London Council in the 1980s (a recurrent subject in many works on British cultural policy), or the creative industries and the association of culture and economy.<sup>215</sup>

Another example of how cultural policy can be analysed, and strongly inspired by Bourdieu's research as presented in the previous sub-section, is Geir Vestheim's framework. In *Cultural policy and democracy: an introduction* (2012), Vestheim, while referring to the context of a liberal democracy, noted that cultural policy "emerges when agents of the political system intervene with the production, distribution and consumption of cultural products, services and experiences."<sup>216</sup> Though this is a basic and vague definition of cultural policy, it contains an essential aspect: interactions between different agents. In another article, Vestheim conceptualized the idea of cultural policy as an "overlapping zone".<sup>217</sup> Drawing from Bourdieu's work, Vestheim defined this zone as

a socially constructed arena or 'space' where agents from different social fields meet, discuss and decide about matters in which they are all interested. The different agents of the field are bearers of ideas, values, interests and arguments about the matter they negotiate. In our case, the matter at stake is culture and cultural policies.<sup>218</sup>

<sup>214</sup> Jim McGuigan, *Cultural Populism* (London: Routledge, 1992), 42.

<sup>215</sup> Bell and Oakley, *Cultural Policy*.

<sup>216</sup> Vestheim, 'Cultural Policy and Democracy', 497.

<sup>217</sup> Geir Vestheim, 'Cultural Policy-Making: Negotiations in an Overlapping Zone between Culture, Politics and Money', *International Journal of Cultural Policy* 18, no. 5 (2012): 530–544.

<sup>218</sup> Vestheim, 530.

Bourdieu had already visualised the existence of such “overlapping zones” without discussing them in detail. Vestheim distinguished two fields: the field of culture and the arts, and the field of politics, administration and economy. When agents from both fields come together to discuss culture and the arts, they defend their interests and rationalities prevalent in their fields of origin. As a result of these negotiations, in Vestheim’s terms, a “hybridisation process takes place in the overlapping zone”<sup>219</sup> emerges. Yet, the different interests challenged in this process are not necessarily reconcilable, which might create tensions. Negotiations also depend on the positions held by the participating agents in a field.<sup>220</sup>

Though his model bears the advantage of considering cultural policy as a process of interaction and constant negotiation, Vestheim, who explicitly referred to Western European and Nordic democracies after the Second World War, only conceived two fields.<sup>221</sup> In addition, he merged politics and administration with the economy, which is not entirely accurate as it implores that these spheres share common interests and logics. If both were part of the same field, debates about the nature of state intervention, public funding, private sponsorships or the creative industries would not take place, or not in the way they did or still do.<sup>222</sup> Though the economic and political/administrative fields might differ, the latter can embrace limited economic rationales and adapt them to its purposes and environment. This is particularly the case with the “new public management” (NPM). After 1997, New Labour implemented NPM instruments to improve the accountability and efficiency of the public sector, expressing a lack of trust in the latter.<sup>223</sup> These examples confirm Bourdieu’s illustration that there can be exchanges between different fields, in this case a transfer of ideas and approaches, which,

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<sup>219</sup> Vestheim, 535.

<sup>220</sup> Vestheim, 531.

<sup>221</sup> Bourdieu, *Les règles de l’art*, 207.

<sup>222</sup> Mauricio Bustamante examined countries where private initiatives are more important, for example in Great Britain with the “arm’s length” principle (cf. Mauricio Bustamante, ‘Les politiques culturelles dans le monde: Comparaisons et circulations de modèles nationaux d’action culturelle dans les années 1980’, *Actes de la recherche en sciences sociales* 1, no. 206–207 [2015]: 171). To cite another example, Hesmondhalgh et al. investigated whether New Labour’s cultural policies were neo-liberal, discussing, among other aspects, privatisations (cf. David Hesmondhalgh et al., ‘Were New Labour’s Cultural Policies Neo-Liberal?’, *International Journal of Cultural Policy* 21, no. 1 [2015]: 97–114).

<sup>223</sup> Hesmondhalgh et al., ‘Were New Labour’s Cultural Policies Neo-Liberal?’, 104–105.

however, must also be seen in a broader context of neo-liberal reforms,<sup>224</sup> cultural industries and “commodification”<sup>225</sup> of culture.

Vestheim was not the only scholar developing a framework. According to the “Swiss Model” or “Three-Sectors-Model” (*Drei-Sektoren-Modell*) developed by the Swiss cultural researchers Christoph Weckerle and Michael Söndermann, the cultural sector consists of three fields: public (state), private (economy) and intermediate (civil society).<sup>226</sup> Artists and artistic production are at the centre and thus in a field of tension between these three sectors. This model has been criticized for implying, for instance, a neat separation between the three fields and ignoring the exchanges between them. According to Claudia Burkhard, despite the different schematisations, the fundamental distinction between the three areas above is not contested.<sup>227</sup> Burkhard reuses this distinction as she analyses the three sectors in separate chapters while emphasising exchanges.<sup>228</sup>

### I.2.3. The historiographical approach

The third approach is developed from a historical perspective but shares some aspects with the two presented above. However, a “purely” historiographical approach can be applied, too, without using theoretical frameworks common in cultural studies. This approach is mainly adopted in the anthology *Pour une histoire des politiques culturelles dans le monde* (2011), edited by the French historian Philippe Poirrier.<sup>229</sup> It collects narratives of cultural policy histories in one single volume, even though out of the nineteen countries analysed, fourteen are European. The Global South is very much underrepresented, with only two countries (one in

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<sup>224</sup> Though it is certainly debatable what neo-liberalism even means, the aspects cited in the context of the NPM and used by McGuigan sum up neo-liberal policies. Hesmondhalgh et alii also draw from McGuigan’s account when it comes to identifying “what *might* be characterized as neo-liberal” in cultural policy: “increasing corporate sponsorship of culture”, “running public sector cultural institutions as though they were private businesses”, and a shift away from cultural towards economic and social goals (cf. Hesmondhalgh et al., 99). Such tendencies are not only limited to the UK, but observable in other countries, like in Norway or Australia.

<sup>225</sup> McGuigan, *Culture and the Public Sphere*, 81. In this context, McGuigan includes a model of French media theorist Bernard Miège, who distinguished three types of cultural products: type one with only indirect involvement of cultural workers; type two refers to “cultural commodities proper”, “infinitely reproducible”; type three products are semi-reproducible, such as theatre performances.

<sup>226</sup> Christoph Weckerle and Michael Söndermann, *Kreativwirtschaft Zürich*, ed. Hochschule für Gestaltung und Kunst Zürich, 2005.

<sup>227</sup> Claudia Burkhard, *Kulturpolitik als Strukturpolitik? Konzepte und Strategien deutscher und italienischer Kulturpolitik im Vergleich*, Studien zur Kulturpolitik 17 (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2015), 168.

<sup>228</sup> Burkhard, 221.

<sup>229</sup> Philippe Poirrier, ed., *Pour une histoire des politiques culturelles dans le monde: 1945-2011*, Travaux et documents 28 (Paris: La Documentation française, 2011).

Asia and one in Latin America). The contributions analyse the history of cultural policies through the lens of the nation-state, even if most authors consider the impact of international developments (cultural industries, EU policy, UNESCO, etc.) on national policies and cultures, or insist on the role of regional and local authorities (such as in Canada and the particular status of Quebec)<sup>230</sup>. Eurocentric bias aside, it becomes clear that cultural policies are strongly influenced by national traditions and frameworks, such as in Germany's federal state model and the weight of the *Länder*,<sup>231</sup> as well as the philanthropic approach and importance of local communities in the US,<sup>232</sup> or the strong social-democratic and welfare state traditions in the Nordic countries (Denmark<sup>233</sup>, Finland<sup>234</sup>, Norway<sup>235</sup> and Sweden<sup>236</sup>). Many articles create links between the evolution of cultural policies and governmental changes, as is most visibly the case in the contribution on Australia,<sup>237</sup> where the periodization follows government changes, or, to a lesser extent, in the United Kingdom (with the conservative government of Margaret Thatcher, for instance).<sup>238</sup> Only in the afterword by Pierre-Michel Menger is the history of cultural policies approached from an overarching perspective. Common

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<sup>230</sup> Diane Saint-Pierre, 'Les politiques culturelles au Canada et au Québec: identités nationales et dynamiques croisées', in *Pour une histoire des politiques culturelles dans le monde: 1945-2011*, ed. Philippe Poirrier, Travaux et documents 28 (Paris: La Documentation française, 2011), 113–131. Canada is a federal state and a mostly decentralised country. This has also an impact on the cultural policy, which lies in the area of competencies of different authorities (government and provinces). This situation has created some tensions, especially between the federal government (promoting Canadian culture) and the government of Quebec (defending French language).

<sup>231</sup> Thomas Höpel, 'La politique culturelle en Allemagne au XXe siècle', in *Pour une histoire des politiques culturelles dans le monde: 1945-2011*, ed. Philippe Poirrier, Travaux et documents 28 (Paris: La Documentation française, 2011), 17–47.

<sup>232</sup> Jean-Michel Tobelem, 'Les Etats-Unis d'Amérique', in *Pour une histoire des politiques culturelles dans le monde: 1945-2011*, ed. Philippe Poirrier, Travaux et documents 28 (Paris: La Documentation française, 2011), 197–213.

<sup>233</sup> Jens Engberg, 'La politique culturelle au Danemark: 1945-2007', in *Pour une histoire des politiques culturelles dans le monde: 1945-2011*, ed. Philippe Poirrier, Travaux et documents 28 (Paris: La Documentation française, 2011), 155–178.

<sup>234</sup> Anita Kangas and Sakarias Sokka, 'L'impératif de la politique culturelle finlandaise: renforcer la nation en cultivant la population', in *Pour une histoire des politiques culturelles dans le monde: 1945-2011*, ed. Philippe Poirrier, Travaux et documents 28 (Paris: La Documentation française, 2011), 215–240.

<sup>235</sup> Per Mangset, 'La politique culturelle en Norvège', in *Pour une histoire des politiques culturelles dans le monde: 1945-2011*, ed. Philippe Poirrier, Travaux et documents 28 (Paris: La Documentation française, 2011), 371–388.

<sup>236</sup> Wijkander, 'La politique culturelle de la Suède'.

<sup>237</sup> Katya Johanson, 'La politique culturelle australienne: 1945-2009', in *Pour une histoire des politiques culturelles dans le monde: 1945-2011*, ed. Philippe Poirrier, Travaux et documents 28 (Paris: La Documentation française, 2011), 49–74.

<sup>238</sup> David Looseley, 'Le Royaume-Uni', in *Pour une histoire des politiques culturelles dans le monde: 1945-2011*, ed. Philippe Poirrier, Travaux et documents 28 (Paris: La Documentation française, 2011), 389–410.

developments are distinguished in phases beginning with a very restricted definition of culture in terms of excellence and aesthetic values in a first period, the transformations in the post-war period in the context of the welfare state, decentralisation and regionalisation of culture, and the rise of the creative industries and a more robust economic orientation. Depending on the countries, these evolutions manifested with different impacts and intensities. Yet, the influence of supranational organisations, such as the European Union, the Council of Europe or the UNESCO, are left out, though it would have made sense, especially as many contributors did not ignore them in their articles.<sup>239</sup> Thus, *Pour une histoire des politiques culturelles dans le monde* privileges national cultural policies and merely invites the reader to pursue a comparative approach.

The volume mostly lacks theoretical reflections, except for three cases where the authors refer to concepts borrowed from historical institutionalism. In the article about Spain, the idea of path dependence is criticized, as it places the evolution of a national cultural policy in a well-defined trajectory when comparing it to other countries and concludes that if several countries had a shared influence, they must follow a similar path.<sup>240</sup> In this context, Bonet and Négrier show that Spain's development cannot be considered from the perspective of path dependence, for example, when it comes to the question of a supposed Napoleonic influence, which should be visible in all the countries that were under Napoleonic rule. The authors distance themselves from the "hypothesis of a particularity of the cultural policy histories in countries with a Napoleonic tradition, as the same processes are easily observable in most European countries, among them those who do not share this tradition"<sup>241</sup>.

The second article discussing historical institutionalism analyses the cultural policy in Finland.<sup>242</sup> In their concluding remarks, Kangas and Sokka acknowledge that a large part of the debate on path dependence is precisely about implementing the same programmes year after year. However, this reproduction process is never perfect, thus enabling minimal changes

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<sup>239</sup> Pierre-Michel Menger, 'Les politiques culturelles. Modèles et évolutions', in *Pour une histoire des politiques culturelles dans le monde: 1945-2011*, ed. Philippe Poirrier, Travaux et documents 28 (Paris: La Documentation française, 2011), 465–477.

<sup>240</sup> Lluís Bonet and Emmanuel Négrier, 'Un modèle espagnol de politique culturelle?', in *Pour une histoire des politiques culturelles dans le monde: 1945-2011*, ed. Philippe Poirrier, Travaux et documents 28 (Paris: La Documentation française, 2011), 179–196.

<sup>241</sup> Bonet and Négrier, 183. Own translation. "[...] nous nous écartons de l'hypothèse d'une spécificité de l'histoire des politiques culturelles dans les pays de tradition napoléonienne, puisque ce sont des processus que l'on peut assez facilement repérer dans la plupart des pays européens, et donc dans des pays qui n'appartiennent pas à cette tradition."

<sup>242</sup> Kangas and Sokka, 'L'impératif de la politique culturelle finlandaise: renforcer la nation en cultivant la population'.

and creating the impression of stability over a long time. In Finland, according to Kangas and Sokka, despite critical junctures (*points de jonction*)<sup>243</sup> and breaking points (*points de rupture*), which were part of the general evolution in Finland, many instruments applied by contemporary cultural policy originated in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>244</sup>

In his article examining cultural policy in Sweden, Keith Wijkander reflects on the notion of an institution. This concept is often used without any critical engagement, also in Poirrier's anthology. According to Wijkander, institutions are linked to norms and values, and the process of modernisation in the West since the second half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century "can be considered as a feedback process of the relationship between the values and the norms on the one hand, and the transformation of living conditions, on the other hand"<sup>245</sup>. Here again, a reference to historical institutionalism appears, even if it is only a subtle one, with the concept of (positive) feedback. According to Kathleen Thelen, the latter means that "once a set of institutions is in place, actors adapt their strategies in ways that reflect but also reinforce the "logic" of the system"<sup>246</sup>. Thus, a positive feedback effect refers to a self-reinforcing process, a definition similar to Pierson's.<sup>247</sup>

Histories of cultural policies through the lens of the nation-state are certainly quite common. Like Poirrier's anthology, many studies have adopted similar approaches, sometimes underlining the same issues, as in the example of Germany.<sup>248</sup> Furthermore, studies based on a national scope can also be anchored in a comparative framework. David Looseley, for instance, compared the cultural policies between France and the UK with a particular focus on discourses related to popular culture. He retraced how both countries treated popular culture and how the concept had changed over time. In the same context, Looseley highlighted the different institutional frameworks (Arts Council in the UK, Ministry for Culture in France).

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<sup>243</sup> According to Thelen, critical junctures are "crucial founding moments of institutional formation" (Kathleen Thelen, 'Historical Institutionalism in Comparative Politics', *Annual Review of Political Science* 2, no. 1 [1999]: 387).

<sup>244</sup> Kangas and Sokka, 'L'impératif de la politique culturelle finlandaise: renforcer la nation en cultivant la population', 237.

<sup>245</sup> Wijkander, 'La politique culturelle de la Suède', 416.

<sup>246</sup> Own translation: "Le processus de modernisation en Occident, à partir de la seconde moitié du XVIIIe siècle, peut être considéré comme un processus de feedback dans la relation entre, d'une part, les valeurs et les normes et, d'autre part, les changements de conditions de vie." (Thelen, 'Historical Institutionalism in Comparative Politics', 392).

<sup>247</sup> Paul Pierson, 'Increasing Returns, Path Dependence, and the Study of Politics', *The American Political Science Review* 94, no. 2 (2000): 252. For Pierson, a positive feedback creates power asymmetries, which become simultaneously less visible (Pierson, 259).

<sup>248</sup> Rob Burns and Wilfried Van der Will, 'German Cultural Policy: An Overview', *International Journal of Cultural Policy* 9, no. 2 (2003): 133–152.

Furthermore, France looks back at a long tradition of centralisation and royal patronage, whereas in the UK, a protestant tradition prevailed, thus explaining the reluctance for direct state intervention.<sup>249</sup>

In Mauricio Bustamante's study, the geographical scope is extended to the international level but mainly limited to the 1980s. Based on the surveys that UNESCO carried out on national cultural policies, he elaborates a typology: communist regimes; countries where the state intervenes when the market cannot fulfil its goals; countries where the government is reluctant to intervene directly; and a fourth tendency in "developing countries" (where public intervention is favoured to create a national identity).<sup>250</sup> Such comparative approaches based on types of cultural policies are not new. Already in 1989, Hillman Chartrand and McCaughey developed a model which defined four types and attributed a model country to each type: the "facilitator" state (USA), the "patron" state (UK), the "architect" state (France) and the "engineer" state (Soviet Union). Different funding models and policy objectives characterize these types.<sup>251</sup> Such categorizations represent, of course, a simplified version of an otherwise complex matter. Indeed, boundaries between these types are not always as clear. Many other works follow an international comparative approach, but without adopting a purely historical perspective, such as Stuart Cunningham's analysis of discourses about creative and cultural industries and their implementation in different regions or countries (USA, Europe, China, Asia, Australasia and the "global south").<sup>252</sup> Some scholars, such as Peter Duelund<sup>253</sup> or Anita Kangas and Geir Vestheim<sup>254</sup>, were interested in the question of a Nordic cultural policy and commonalities between Nordic countries.

Another way of tackling cultural policy history is applied by the sociologist Vincent Dubois in the French context. His approach is infused with a sociological method. Though he does not cite Bourdieu as a direct source of inspiration, some of his ideas can be found in Dubois' volume, as the description of struggles and opposite poles in the artistic field implies. Dubois

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<sup>249</sup> Looseley, 'Notions of Popular Culture in Cultural Policy: A Comparative History of France and Britain', 368.

<sup>250</sup> Bustamante, 'Les politiques culturelles dans le monde: Comparaisons et circulations de modèles nationaux d'action culturelle dans les années 1980'.

<sup>251</sup> Harry Hillman Chartrand and Claire McCaughey, 'The Arm's Length Principle and the Arts: An International Perspective', in *Who's to Pay for the Arts? The International Search for Models of Support*, ed. M.C. Cummings and J. Mark Davidson Schuster (New York, NY: American Council for the Arts, 1989).

<sup>252</sup> Stuart Cunningham, 'Trojan Horse or Rorschach Blot? Creative Industries Discourse around the World', *International Journal of Cultural Policy* 15, no. 4 (2009): 375–386.

<sup>253</sup> Duelund, 'Nordic Cultural Policies: A Critical Review'.

<sup>254</sup> Kangas and Vestheim, 'Institutionalism, Cultural Institutions and Cultural Policy in the Nordic Countries'.

relates how, for example, art was constructed in opposition to public intervention in the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries.<sup>255</sup> Furthermore, Dubois argues that the area of state intervention in culture was blurred and ridden with uncertainties, even after 1959, when the Ministry of Cultural Affairs was created.<sup>256</sup> This administration did not acquire new competencies, but old ones were transferred to it, with continuing issues of attribution. However, this new ministry tried differentiating itself from the Ministry of Education. Dubois is also interested in the status of agents, such as artists or the state functionaries and employees in the ministry.<sup>257</sup> This is an aspect seldom considered in historiographies of cultural policies. On the other hand, Dubois tends to neglect the historical context, such as the impact of 1968 on cultural policy and the questioning of Malraux's *maisons de la Culture*.<sup>258</sup>

Cultural policy history has attracted limited interest from cultural historians. Emmanuelle Loyer addressed cultural policy history in a distinct chapter in *Une brève histoire culturelle de l'Europe*. It is, however, a general overview and mainly considers the development in France.<sup>259</sup> In *Les enjeux de l'histoire culturelle* (2004), Philippe Poirrier synthesizes the works on cultural policy and institutions in a French context in a separate chapter.<sup>260</sup> Until the 1980s, French historians had barely written about this topic, with some exceptions such as Maurice Crubellier or Paul Gerbod, though cultural policies were not their primary object of analysis.<sup>261</sup> From the 1980s onwards, historians like Pascal Ory, Jean-Pierre Rioux and Jean-François Sirinelli have been interested in cultural policies and cultural institutions in France, for instance, by organizing seminars and lectures at universities and institutes.<sup>262</sup> Since the 1990s, more and more historians have investigated this subject, which became more diversified, leading to research on the history of cultural institutions (museums, libraries), local cultural policies, specific thematic aspects (performing arts or heritage) and culture in international relations.<sup>263</sup>

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<sup>255</sup> Dubois, *La politique culturelle*, 34–40.

<sup>256</sup> Dubois, 424.

<sup>257</sup> Dubois, 332. Dubois describes, for instance, the professionalisation of the ministry employees during the 1980s, at a time when the budget of culture was doubled.

<sup>258</sup> Urfalino, *L'invention de la politique culturelle*, 240.

<sup>259</sup> Emmanuel Loyer, *Une brève histoire culturelle de l'Europe* (Paris: Flammarion, 2017).

<sup>260</sup> Philippe Poirrier, *Les enjeux de l'histoire culturelle. L'histoire en débats* (Paris: Seuil, 2004), 131–144.

<sup>261</sup> Indeed, Crubellier's *Histoire culturelle de la France* (1974) and Gerbod's *L'Europe culturelle et religieuse de 1815 à nos jours* (1977) indicate already by their title that cultural policy is not systematically examined.

<sup>262</sup> Poirrier, *Les enjeux de l'histoire culturelle*, 138–139.

<sup>263</sup> Poirrier, 140–141.

### ***I.3. Framework and Methodology***

The frameworks presented in the previous sub-section (particularly Pierre Bourdieu and Geir Vestheim) have two decisive disadvantages when applied to a historical perspective: they ignore long-term developments, and they do not convey social, political and cultural contexts. Hence the importance and necessity to devise an approach specific to a cultural policy history for the present study. The first part of this section will be dedicated to the framework containing the elements that shape cultural policy and its implementation. These elements are mutually related. In the second part, I will explain the central analytical concept used in the study. The third and last part will tend to the sources and source criticism.

#### **I.3.1. Actors, discourses, structures, and their contexts**

Our objective is to create a framework that explicitly includes the main aspects of cultural policy based on existing literature and commonalities identified herein. The framework used in the study results from several reflections; the frameworks mentioned above were deemed unsuitable because they caused too many uncertainties or did not apply to a long-term study of cultural policy. The first version, for instance, was strongly inspired by Bourdieu and Vestheim, including overlapping zones, but it lacked clarity and could not account for discourses, their contexts and influences, or the interrelationship between actors, discourses and structures.

The framework used in the present study resulted from identified shortcomings of models such as Vestheim's overlapping zone for a historical perspective and the issues encountered in previous versions. In my analysis, I will sometimes refer to a cultural policy field, including policies, implicated actors, discourses and processes. The term "field" might be reminiscent of Bourdieu's sociology, but its use will be straightforward and pragmatic. Its limits are not discernible, nor are they impervious to external influences. The aspects related to Bourdieu's concept of field (habitus, capital, etc.) will not be considered, though. Cultural policy cannot be studied as an isolated object. It is generated, planned, and debated in larger national and international contexts. This is not only correct for aspects related to cultural policy (for instance, the influence of UNESCO initiatives on national cultural policy), but also for other areas that might eventually impact cultural policy (economic recessions).

Cultural policy is an abstract concept and difficult to grasp. To turn it into an analytical object, we need to identify the elements that shape and change it, i.e. structures, discourses and actors. They are implicitly present in many works on cultural policy but are usually not explicitly identified as those elements that need to be considered when analysing cultural policy, including their interrelationship and dependence on the general context. Indeed, actors,

discourses, and structures are highly intertwined. A minister of culture is part of and bound by structures. The speeches by a minister might be as much shaped by their personal views and experiences as by the structures they participate in. These structures (legislative, administrative and political) can provoke resistance, acceptance, or the wish to reinforce them. Structures are characterised by their slow evolution. They do not change dramatically within a short period, except in the case of exceptional and far-reaching events, such as revolutions or occupations following invasions.<sup>264</sup> As for the actors, I distinguish between three types: socio-cultural, political and economic. “Political” is defined in this context in a larger sense, extending to everyone implicated in political processes (such as civil servants and government officials). This typological division should, however, not lead to the conclusion that they are separate categories. As will be shown in subsequent chapters, collaborations and, in some cases, overlaps have existed. A minister who was at the same time member of a cultural association can be taken as an example of such an overlap. Actors might comfortably play different roles and pursue various activities.

The question of what actors implement cultural policy is also linked to the ontological dimension of cultural policy as a “distinct form of public policy”<sup>265</sup>. This is as much illustrated by the different contributions on national cultural policies included in Poirrier’s anthology as by Poirrier’s introduction, in which he declared that:

The emphasis on administrative architectures, at the scale of states and local authorities, is important but does not constitute the entirety of perspectives covered by the different contributions [to the anthology]. It is indeed necessary to overcome the sole administrative history to grasp the implemented decision-making process.<sup>266</sup>

Poirrier highlights two aspects of cultural policy as public policy: the administrative structure and the process of decisions. Though he explains in the subsequent sentence that the contributions to the book in question pay particular attention to the relationship between public intervention and private initiatives, it becomes clear that the latter cannot be part of public policy, even if the government can promote private sponsorship and shape legal frameworks. According to Mulcahy,

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<sup>264</sup> Even then we might question whether some structures would not survive.

<sup>265</sup> Hesmondhalgh et al., *Culture, Economy and Politics: The Case of New Labour*, 5.

<sup>266</sup> Own translation. “La mise en évidence des architectures administratives, à l’échelle des États et des collectivités locales, est importante, mais ne constitue pas à elle seule la totalité des perspectives couvertes par les différentes contributions. Il est en effet nécessaire de dépasser la seule histoire administrative afin de permettre de rendre compte des processus de décision mis en œuvre.” (Poirrier, ‘Introduction’, 15).

Cultural policy can be most usefully considered as the totality of a government's activities "with respect to the arts (including the for-profit cultural industries), the humanities, and the heritage". Cultural policy, then, involves governmental strategies and activities that promote "the production, dissemination, marketing, and consumption of the arts."<sup>267</sup>

This definition puts the government at the centre, though limiting its action to the "arts" does not do justice to the complexity of cultural policy. Nevertheless, the missions Mulcahy cites barely diverge from those named by Hesmondhalgh et al.: promotion; protection of heritage and historical artefacts; support for cultural production; distribution and cultural consumption; control, censorship and regulation.<sup>268</sup> David Bell and Kate Oakley provide a concise and vague but still accurate description: "cultural policy is what governments at various scales choose to do or not to do in relation to culture"<sup>269</sup>. Though one might criticise the vagueness of this definition, it includes several valid points. Besides the aspect of agency stressed by this definition, the absence of policy is as relevant as the presence of policy. Furthermore, Bell and Oakley's definition emphasises the idea of "governments at various scales". The competencies can be attributed to or shared by different levels (national, regional and local), even if the very nature of this distribution varies according to the structures in place in specific countries. In Luxembourg, a regional administrative apparatus such as in France, Belgium or Germany does not exist.

The question of "who" leads us to "this messy world of actors acting (or not) within specific contexts, with particular outcomes in mind, and whose actions product effects (some intended, some not)." <sup>270</sup> Yet, a history of cultural policy, which acknowledges the influence of actors and the fact that cultural policy, as a public policy, is carried out by public authorities in general, should not be tarnished by such questions. The analysis of sources will reveal the actors involved and, if possible, their role and the ideas they spread. However, it is essential to remember that collective actors are as legitimate as individual actors. An institution or organisation needs to be considered as a fully capable actor. In this respect, Bruno Latour has already discussed the problem of "figuration" and the theory of action: one should not analyse the types of actors but rather look at what they do or how they act. In other words, only because an actor can be a person or an institution does not indicate anything about the agency.<sup>271</sup>

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<sup>267</sup> Mulcahy quotes from J. Mark Schuster and Ruth Rentschler (Mulcahy, *Public Culture, Cultural Identity, Cultural Policy*, xiii).

<sup>268</sup> Hesmondhalgh et al., *Culture, Economy and Politics: The Case of New Labour*, 7–10.

<sup>269</sup> Bell and Oakley, *Cultural Policy*, 47.

<sup>270</sup> Bell and Oakley, 48.

<sup>271</sup> Bruno Latour, *Reassembling the Social : An Introduction to Actor-Network-Theory* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 57–58.

Furthermore, Latour distinguishes intermediaries and mediators: whereas in the case of the former, the output remains the same as the input, i.e. there is no transformation taking place, the latter “transform, translate, distort, and modify the meaning or the elements they are supposed to carry”.<sup>272</sup> Mediators should be the focus of analysis, as action “should remain a surprise, a mediation, an event”.<sup>273</sup> Action is therefore unpredictable and highly complex, as it is always “dislocated” and carried over. It is not an isolated event but part of a long chain: an actor is part of a network.<sup>274</sup> Latour’s theory helps analyse agency, especially his suggestion to “follow the actors themselves”.<sup>275</sup> At the same time, the framework developed in our context diverges from Latour’s ideas in that it includes discourses and structures. Actors do not evolve in a neutral environment; they shape it as much as it shapes them. Cultural policy, as we have seen, is highly contextual. The influences on it can be manifold, and it is the aim of a history of cultural policy to reveal these influences.

Identifying the three main elements – structures, actors and discourses – contributes to a more focused analysis of the long-term changes in cultural policy instead of describing cultural policy at a specific moment. These elements contribute to anchoring cultural policy in the “real” world, turn it into an object of analysis for historians, and make it less abstract and vague. From a historical perspective, cultural policy cannot be understood without these interlinked central elements. Of course, for other (non-)historical analyses, the framework developed in the present study might be inapplicable. It does not claim a universal application. However, it is for the current study and its research questions the most helpful framework for cultural policy history, while recognising the interconnectedness and the problem of imposing clear limits.

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<sup>272</sup> Latour, 39.

<sup>273</sup> Latour, 45.

<sup>274</sup> It should be noted Latour introduced the notion of “actant”, to replace “actor” and break with what he called “figurative sociology” (Latour, 54).

<sup>275</sup> Latour, 12.

## International context

### National context

#### Cultural policy (public policy)

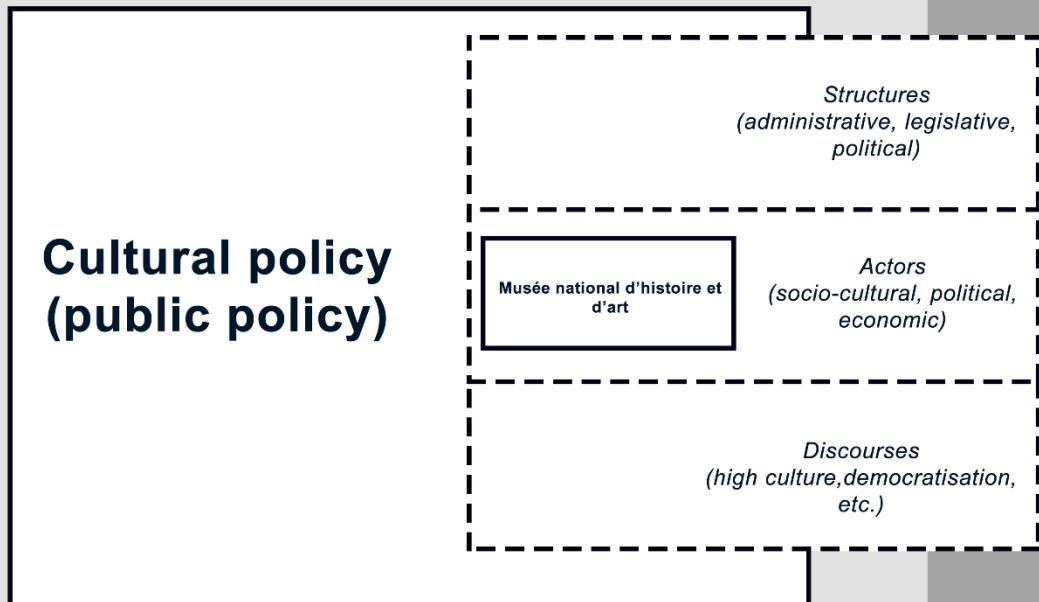


Fig. 4: The model for cultural policy history as used in this study. Cultural policy is shaped by actors, structures and discourses; these are, in turn, part of the national and international context. The case study, the MNHA, is an example of an actor in the cultural policy field. But at the same time, it acts within certain structures and can be shaped or participate in certain discourses. This interaction is represented by the dotted lines.

We can invoke a historical example to illustrate the framework. In France, the Ministry of Cultural Affairs was created in 1959, as Vincent Dubois states, “by and for André Malraux”<sup>276</sup>. However, new competencies were not introduced, but existing ones were transferred to the new ministry.<sup>277</sup> In the following years, the administration devised a policy of cultural democratization, codified in the founding decree of the ministry.<sup>278</sup> Malraux’s lighthouse project, the *Maisons de la Culture*, was an integral part of the Ministry’s policy of cultural action (*action culturelle*), a concept that emerged in the 1930s.<sup>279</sup> However, the policy of

<sup>276</sup> Dubois, *La politique culturelle*, 218.

<sup>277</sup> Dubois, 227.

<sup>278</sup> The first article of the 1959 decree proclaimed that “Le ministère chargé des affaires culturelles a pour mission de rendre accessibles les œuvres capitales de l’humanité, et d’abord de la France, au plus grand nombre possible de Français [...].” (‘Ministère d’Etat chargé des affaires culturelles: Décret n° 59-889 du 24 juillet 1959 portant organisation du ministère chargé des affaires culturelles’, in *Journal officiel de la République française* [Paris, 1959], 7413).

<sup>279</sup> Dubois, *La politique culturelle*, 239.

democratization was increasingly criticized, especially after the events of May 1968 in France. The *Declaration of Villeurbanne*, penned in 1968 precisely by those who managed decentralized cultural institutions, questioned the foundations of the state's policy.<sup>280</sup> The introduction of the notion of "cultural development" (*développement culturel*) in the 1970s was a response to these critiques. Yet, it did not abandon Malraux's policy but integrated it into a more ambitious programme of transforming society through culture.<sup>281</sup> This example illustrates that actors, historical developments and discourses are strongly linked. Cultural policy history needs to consider the evolution of structures to become truly meaningful. The actors involved are part of these structures. They spread discourses on culture, which reflect a particular "worldview" and need to be contextualized. Besides the structural dimension inherent to the French example, from a comparative viewpoint, the debates outlined above in the French context would have been inconceivable, for instance, in Germany, where the federal government's cultural policy has been limited by the cultural sovereignty (*Kulturhoheit*) of the states (*Länder*): it cannot, for instance, create its ministry of culture.<sup>282</sup> However, structures can evolve over a long period or be exposed to smaller changes. In France, for example, the law of 22 July 1983 transferred some limited compulsory competencies to regional or local authorities, such as public archives.<sup>283</sup> However, this is an "incremental change" (to borrow a term from historical institutionalism<sup>284</sup>) rather than a profound transformation.

A last yet important observation concludes the current section. The avid reader will notice the occasional use of the concept of *société culturelle*, or cultural society, coined by Pascal Ory, in the subsequent chapters. The cultural society encompasses all actors and activities related to the production and mediation of cultural goods.<sup>285</sup> This cultural society fulfils three functions: production (not limited to authors *sensu stricto*, but includes interpreters/performers), cultural mediation (education, information, dissemination), and reception. Ory explicitly prefers reception to consumption (too much linked to an economic rationale), and production to creation, as the latter is surrounded by an aura of ennoblement

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<sup>280</sup> Urfalino, *L'invention de la politique culturelle*, 240.

<sup>281</sup> Olivier Donnat, 'La question de la démocratisation dans la politique culturelle française', *Modern & Contemporary France* 11, no. 1 (2003): 12.

<sup>282</sup> Burns and Van der Will, 'German Cultural Policy: An Overview', 134.

<sup>283</sup> Xavier Greffe and Sylvie Pflieger, *La politique culturelle en France* (Paris: La Documentation française, 2015), 57.

<sup>284</sup> B. Guy Peters, Jon Pierre, and Desmond S. King, 'The Politics of Path Dependency: Political Conflict in Historical Institutionalism', *The Journal of Politics* 67, no. 4 (2005): 1275–1300.

<sup>285</sup> Pascal Ory, *L'histoire culturelle*, 4th ed., Que sais-je ? (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 2015), 73.

(“aura d’ennoblissement”).<sup>286</sup> In other terms, creation is a normative concept related to questions of value. Ory’s concept has the advantage of being clear enough to identify potential actors of the cultural society (disregarding their socio-economic characteristics), but still broad enough to include a large variety of activities not limited to artistic production. As we will see, the cultural society either participated in cultural policy initiatives or tried to influence cultural policy through various associations and lobbies. Whenever I use the concept of cultural society in my study, it is to clearly distinguish it from other notions such as cultural policy field that relates to actors explicitly involved in formulating, implementing, and evaluating cultural policy.

### I.3.2. Luxembourg as a nationalised intermediate space

The Grand Duchy of Luxembourg, with its 2,586 km<sup>2</sup>, shares its borders with Belgium, France and Germany. In the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the country’s political, cultural and economic elites were trained at universities abroad, mainly in neighbouring countries. They had no other choice, as Luxembourg did not have a university before 2003. In this context, the evolution of research and related infrastructures in Luxembourg has been analysed in more detail by Morgan Meyer.<sup>287</sup> The economic development has strongly relied on a foreign workforce, which has led not only to a more substantial presence of a non-Luxembourgish population throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries, but also to an increase in the number of cross-border commuters. Unsurprisingly, immigration history is not characterised by a continuous development. In 1900, the total population of Luxembourg included around 12,30% of non-Luxembourgish citizens.<sup>288</sup> In 2018, nearly half of the population (ca. 48%) did not possess Luxembourgish citizenship and was thus deprived of voting right in the legislative elections.<sup>289</sup> Yet, simply comparing both moments in history would be misleading, implying that the increase has been steady throughout the whole period. This has not been the case; for instance, the number of foreigners decreased during the First World War and again in the 1930s due to the larger political context.

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<sup>286</sup> Ory, 73–74.

<sup>287</sup> Meyer, ‘Creativity and Its Contexts’.

<sup>288</sup> STATEC, ‘Population par nationalité 1875-2011’ (STATEC, September 2017), [https://statistiques.public.lu/stat/TableViewer/tableView.aspx?ReportId=12797&IF\\_Language=fra&MainTheme=2&FldrName=1&RFPath=16340%2c16341](https://statistiques.public.lu/stat/TableViewer/tableView.aspx?ReportId=12797&IF_Language=fra&MainTheme=2&FldrName=1&RFPath=16340%2c16341).

<sup>289</sup> STATEC, ‘Population par sexe et par nationalité au 1er janvier (x 1 000) 1981, 1991, 2001 - 2020’ (STATEC, April 2020), [https://statistiques.public.lu/stat/TableViewer/tableView.aspx?ReportId=12853&IF\\_Language=fra&MainTheme=2&FldrName=1](https://statistiques.public.lu/stat/TableViewer/tableView.aspx?ReportId=12853&IF_Language=fra&MainTheme=2&FldrName=1).

I have stressed that cultural policy is not separated from the national and international contexts. Therefore, a cultural policy history is also, at least for specific aspects, a transnational history. As I have not chosen a comparative approach, my study focuses on one country. Neither do I pursue the objective of writing a systematic transnational history. Nevertheless, limiting myself to Luxembourg's national borders, as powerful as they might be in the political imagination, would not do justice to the complex reality. The following chapters will reveal exchanges and influences transgressing borders. Here, I will shortly tend to the field of transnational history and, more importantly, to the transnational aspects of my study.

Transnational history is a potentially vast area of research that has given birth to different perspectives such as connected history, entangled history or *histoire croisée*. According to Margrit Pernau, transnational history has two main objectives. Firstly, it aspires to write a history that cannot be limited to national borders. Secondly, transnational history allows historians to question the very category of the “nation”. Researchers have highlighted the risk that transnational history could reintroduce, through a backdoor, the *modus operandi* based on the concept of “nation” kicked out from the front door.<sup>290</sup> Yet, I argue that the use of the concept of “nation”, or its analysis, does not have to be considered a fallacy in transnational history and does not outright exclude any transnational perspective. Above all, historians need to be aware of the protean essence of “nation”, which is not a natural phenomenon. Its construction is based on a particular set of criteria or ideas imposed by society, or at least a certain (influential) social group, in a specific context. Also, historians should not be blind to the fact that they constantly work with artificial concepts, as I will do in my work (culture, elite, class, etc.). Criticising the notion of “nation” while accepting given other concepts is a naïve view at best. Furthermore, despite being a construction, the nation has proven to be a compelling idea in contemporary history, for which symbols have been created, people mobilised, and battles fought. Even the nation has been a transnational idea itself.<sup>291</sup>

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<sup>290</sup> Margrit Pernau, *Transnationale Geschichte* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2011), 18.

<sup>291</sup> I refer to Blaise Wilfert-Portal's contribution to the volume *Les mises en guerre de l'Etat* (2018), in which the author analysed the internationalism and globalisation in the decades preceding the First World War and stressed that the nation appeared in a transnational context, referring to Anne-Marie Thiesse's *La création des identités nationales*, who has coined the expression of “cosmopolitanism of the national” (“cosmopolitisme du national”) (Blaise Wilfert-Portal, ‘Première mondialisation, internationalisme gouvernemental et champ du pouvoir transnational’, in *Les mises en guerre de l'Etat: 1914-1918 en perspective*, ed. Sylvain Bertschy and Philippe Salson [Lyon: ENS Editions, 2018], 310). As Wilfert-Portal wrote: “[...] bien loin d'être contradictoires avec l'augmentation des flux, l'intensification des mobilités, la transnationalisation des sociétés et l'internationalisation des luttes politiques, la croissance des Etats et leur montée en puissance s'y trouvaient étroitement corrélées.” (Wilfert-Portal, 313). As Thiesse put it right at the beginning of her book: “Rien de plus

Whenever my study includes a transnational perspective, it can be identified by either one of the following approaches: an analysis of the European and international contexts to explain developments in Luxembourg; a comparison of Luxembourg with other European countries to discover commonalities or differences; or the emphasis on transnational exchanges and transfers. This *modus operandi* will provide a richer and more complex account of Luxembourg's cultural policy history, acknowledging the symbolic power of "nation" but highlighting the permeability of borders. It is not the ambition of the current study to offer a systematic and thorough transnational history of Luxembourgian cultural policy. However, I argue that it is possible, even necessary, to include transnational micro-studies to extend the analysis to developments beyond the nation-state, while focusing on Luxembourg as a small country situated between or at the crossroads of different cultures.

This proposed perspective explains why I will draw inspiration from a concept in transnational history for the case of Luxembourg. The concept in question is that of *Zwischenraum*, coined by the historian Philip Ther, and which might be best translated into "intermediate space". Ther's introduction of the *Zwischenraum* was motivated by a critique of the predominantly national focus in European historiography, favouring larger nation-states and pushing border regions and small countries aside.<sup>292</sup> Ther has not been the only scholar criticising the national focus in history. In the introduction to his book *Intercultural Transfers and the Making of the Modern World* (2012), Thomas Adam formulated a similar critique:

The history of the modern era has often been portrayed as centered on the nation and the state. Since the inception of history as an academic discipline at the beginning of the nineteenth century, history has been taught and written as national history. Most of the Western societies quickly claimed a national history that in spite of the modern nature of nation states presumed an ancient history, often stretching back several thousand years, that gave modern nation states a glorious but imagined past.<sup>293</sup>

Ther's concept reduces the risk of falling into the trap of a history contained within national borders. In our case, it forces us to think of Luxembourg differently, to examine the origin and circulation of ideas that arrived in Luxembourg and were picked up by policymakers, for instance. According to Ther, the *Zwischenraum* designates all those regions at the periphery of

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international que la formation des identités nationales." (Anne-Marie Thiesse, *La création des identités nationales: Europe XVIIIe-XIXe siècle* [Paris: Editions du Seuil, 2001], 11).

<sup>292</sup> Philipp Ther, 'Einleitung: Sprachliche, kulturelle und ethnische "Zwischenräume" als Zugang zu einer transnationalen Geschichte Europas', in *Regionale Bewegungen und Regionalismen in europäischen Zwischenräumen seit der Mitte des 19. Jahrhunderts*, ed. Philipp Ther and Holm Sundhaussen, Tagungen zur Ostmitteleuropa-Forschung 18 (Marburg: Herder-Institut, 2003), IX–X.

<sup>293</sup> Thomas Adam, *Intercultural Transfers and the Making of the Modern World: Sources and Contexts* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), 1.

nation-states, in which different cultural, linguistic and ethnic influences overlapped and mixed. As Ther explains in the introduction to an edited volume dedicated to those *Zwischenräume*:

Dieses “zwischen” ist nicht nur im geographischen Sinne als eine Lage zwischen den Kerngebieten, also am Rande der jeweiligen Nationen und Staaten zu verstehen. Sämtliche hier näher untersuchten Regionen sind sprachliche, kulturelle und ethnische Übergangsgebiete, in denen sich verschiedene Einflüsse überkreuzten, häufig auch vermischt haben.<sup>294</sup>

The *Zwischenraum* was initially not meant to be applied to a nation-state. Yet, as will be shown, Luxembourg was, at least at cultural and linguistic levels, a border region between three countries. At the same time, Luxembourg has come to see itself as a nation-state at a political level. The mobilisation of symbols, the implementation of a national *dispositif*, the dissemination of historical narratives, and the construction of a legislative and institutional framework represent and express this self-perception. The specificity of Luxembourg indeed lies in the fact that even during a nationalist period like the 1930s, the elite did not abandon French or German culture for the sake of nationalism. Luxembourgish was not even an official (national) language until 1984. While the German occupation period put a provisional end to the idea of an independent nation-state, Luxembourg was considered a (strategically important) border region of the Third Reich (*Grenzland*). The history of Luxembourg allows for a fruitful application of Ther’s *Zwischenraum*.

I will slightly adapt Ther’s concept to fit the current research scope, though. Luxembourg is a specific kind of *Zwischenraum*. One might even argue that at least some public discourses and policies in the 20<sup>th</sup> century have indirectly acknowledged this fact (multilingualism, the concept of *Mischkultur*, etc.). Among the cultural elite in Luxembourg, such a self-perception was widely shared. In 1919, the Luxembourgish writer and journalist Gust van Werveke titled an article ‘Wir Zwischenländer’, published in the journal *Der Strom*.<sup>295</sup> Werveke’s text is only one of many examples of the self-perception of a *Zwischenraum*, as we will see in the following chapters. In addition to this self-perception, research on the history of Luxembourg, particularly its cultural production, has stressed the multi-layered influences or the search for models and their adaptation to the Luxembourgish context. The anthology of short prose titled *Zwischenland! Ausguckland!*, edited by Germaine Goetzinger and Gast Mannes, illustrates how two cultures – French and German – have influenced cultural actors in Luxembourg.

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<sup>294</sup> Ther, ‘Einleitung’, XI.

<sup>295</sup> Mentioned and quoted in: Germaine Goetzinger and Gast Mannes, ‘Nachwort’, in *Zwischenland! Ausguckland!: literarische Kurzprosa aus Luxemburg* (St. Ingbert: Röhrig Universitätsverlag, 2009), 365.

Goetzinger and Mannes have pointed out the specific language situation of the country, “characterised by a complex coexistence, cooperation and conflict of at least three languages – German, French and Luxembourgish.”<sup>296</sup> From a different perspective, the historian Rainer Hudemann highlighted the various transnational influences in the urban landscape of Luxembourg City.<sup>297</sup>

While being such a *Zwischenraum* in which different cultural influences meet, Luxembourg is a nation-state and defines itself as such. This situation creates a constant dialectic between the two “identities” of border region and nation-state. In this sense, the grand duchy is a nationalised intermediate space, a *verstaatlichter Zwischenraum*. This concept represents a necessary tool to comprehend Luxembourg’s situation. Of course, this does not exclude efforts by certain groups to search for a pure Luxembourgish culture by excluding foreign influences, revising the past or providing nationalist narratives. But even such efforts were a reaction to a larger context that surpassed the national borders. The Centenary of Independence in 1939, analysed in a distinct section, is a fitting example of how the government aimed at conveying a national culture and history (stretching back, to refer to Thomas Adam, “several thousand years”). Even in a national era as represented by the interwar period, the transnational exchanges become apparent in the government’s sources and initiatives. Following Thomas Adam, “the nation state is no black box and its borders are certainly not impenetrable”.<sup>298</sup>

I will focus on how the idea of the nation was legitimised and represented in the cultural policy of a nationalised *Zwischenraum*, while taking into account transnational exchanges and their influences on cultural policy in Luxembourg. The Grand Duchy of Luxembourg serves as a case study for the methodology developed in this chapter. The museum constitutes a case study of a national cultural institution that has never been disconnected from the political context. As we will see, cultural policy has never been an innocuous political field, specifically in times of political tension, nationalism, and societal changes. The inexistence of a ministry of culture does not contradict or annul this observation, even though the administrative consolidation is also one, but not the sole important factor in measuring the importance conceded to cultural policy. Through the actors, the context, and the dissemination of

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<sup>296</sup> Goetzinger and Mannes, 367.

<sup>297</sup> Rainer Hudemann, ‘Am Schnittpunkt der Kulturen: Stadtentwicklung und Nationalstaatsbildung in Luxemburg im 19. und frühen 20. Jahrhundert’, in *Grenzen erkennen - Begrenzungen überwinden* (Sigmaringen: Jan Thorbecke, 1999), 385–397.

<sup>298</sup> Adam, *Intercultural Transfers and the Making of the Modern World*, 1.

discourses, the analysis of national cultural policy will reveal transnational and supranational influences. National cultural policy either reacts to a context or pursues a goal.

Governments rely on power to develop and implement cultural policy, just like any policy. As Craig L. Carr has pointed out in a very concise formula: “Governments cannot govern without power”.<sup>299</sup> The source and legitimization might vary according to the type of regime. The period covered in the study witnessed two kinds of regimes: a parliamentary monarchy and a dictatorship. In those two regimes, the representations of the essence of Luxembourg constituted an antithesis. While the interwar governments promoted the idea of an independent nation, the Nazi regime pursued its complete negation. The Centenary in 1939 or the project of a national museum were both initiatives of a state intent on consolidating the nation-state and eliciting patriotic feelings. The German occupiers turned this idea into its opposite.

However, it will also be necessary to add complexity to the question of power whenever appropriate. Power can be concentrated within a few hands, but it can also be decentralised and distributed among several nodes in the administrative apparatus. As a result, power struggles might flare up, for instance, when actors feel that their competencies are curtailed. Such struggles are not necessarily visible when they happen, but they can be very well explicit in the sources. Hence, it is important to remember throughout the study that power relations can shift and change, and these relations are not necessarily unchallenged.

### I.3.3. Sources and source criticism

The present study relies on various sources, some digitized (such as newspaper articles on *eLuxemburgensia*), but others are more difficult to access. The sources are conserved at multiple institutions. At the Archives nationales du Luxembourg (ANLux), I consulted written sources (letters, documents, etc.), plans, and posters. For audiovisual sources, I relied on the Centre national de l’audiovisuel (CNA). In addition, I consulted a series of folders at the Luxembourg City Archives, especially concerning the Centenary of Independence in 1939 and the Millenary of Luxembourg City in 1963. For the period of the German occupation, I visited the Landeshauptarchiv in Koblenz and the Bundesarchiv in Berlin-Lichterfelde. The documents in these archives complemented those conserved at the ANLux. Besides these physical archives, I also used some digital archives, notably *eLuxemburgensia* (for digitized Luxembourgish newspapers), Legilux (the official repository for Luxembourgish laws), and

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<sup>299</sup> Craig L. Carr, *Polity: Political Culture and the Nature of Politics* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2007), 24, <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/unilu-ebooks/detail.action?docID=1420610>.

the digital archives of the Chambre des Députés. In general, the corpus of sources encompasses parliamentary debates, statistics, legal texts, articles in newspapers, audiovisual recordings, letters, official documents, and publications. Some sources have already been used in other works, but many have been left untouched.

The analysis of the case study strongly depended on the internal archives of the MNHA, which I could access with the kind approval of the institution. Their inclusion was invaluable for the analysis, as the National Archives in Luxembourg only preserve some documents related to the museum, dating from the time before WWII (such as letters from donors to the government), or from the years of the German occupation. I have also consulted the photographic archives of the MNHA, with the kind approval and help of the employees. In the case of documents related to donations and prices paid to donors, their consultation is much more sensible, as their names and the amount of money should be kept secret for legal and deontological reasons. In the case of private companies, such as banks, this might be less problematic when they publicly announce their donations.

As many historians do today, I took pictures of the documents at the archives with my cell phone. As I was not specifically interested in the materiality of the sources, taking photos did not pose any difficulties to my research. What was important was the quality of the pictures and the organisation on my computer. In a second step, I analysed the sources and took notes. These notes allowed me to become familiar with the content and acquire an overview. Then, I reflected on how to combine the sources and confront them against each other. My work was sometimes a constant back and forth between the existing secondary literature and the sources – either to deepen the contextualisation, or to verify whether both confirm each other. In some instances, it was the sources that helped me to structure my study or to add some parts or topics. For instance, the sub-section on the folklore museum was not on my mind before the analysis of the archival funds.

As a historian, I was dependent on the sources I could find. These sources shape my narrative. There were sometimes frustrating moments – shared by every historian – when I found letters mentioning some documents attached to them, but these documents were not included in the folders. It was not always clear if letters were sent to their recipients or only drafts, or if documents were the originals or copies of the originals (sometimes this was indicated, for instance, in Nazi documents with the indication “Abschrift”). In case I had any doubts, I voiced these doubts either in the main text or in the footnotes. In most cases, though, this did not necessarily pose an essential problem, especially as it would not change much because even unsent draft letters still reveal what their authors were thinking.

## CHAPTER II. A SHORT HISTORY OF LUXEMBOURG SINCE THE 19TH CENTURY

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As a result of the deliberations of the great European powers at the Congress of Vienna of 1815, the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg was created as an independent state but linked in personal union to William I, King of the Netherlands and, consequently, Grand Duke of Luxembourg. The territories east of the rivers Moselle, Sauer and Our were ceded to the Prussian Rhineland. The new Grand Duchy joined the German Confederation. The political elites were not optimistic about the longevity of the country's independence. In 1830, many Luxembourgers joined the Belgian revolution due to broad dissatisfaction with the fiscal policy of William I. Luxembourgish citizens were excluded from serving in the public administration. Only the bourgeoisie in the capital, a confederate fortress, supported the Grand Duke.<sup>300</sup> The Treaty of XVIII articles of 26 June 1831 created the Kingdom of Belgium, separated from the Netherlands. The question of Luxembourg remained contentious. Belgium considered Luxembourg part of its kingdom, whereas William I claimed that Luxembourg was an independent state.<sup>301</sup> Between 1830 and 1838, Belgium administrated the country, except for the capital, which remained under Orangist control. The situation was resolved with the Treaty of London of 1839 (the Treaty of XXIV articles). Belgium received the western, mostly francophone part of Luxembourg, while the independence of the Grand Duchy was reaffirmed.

In 1830, the "Luxembourgish nation" was composed of only a fraction of the population, namely those social groups participating in the power structures, such as high-ranking state officials and government members, landowners, people exercising liberal professions (doctors and lawyers), business people and industrial bourgeoisie. Throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> century, these classes dominated the Chamber of Deputies. In fact, from 1842 to 1889, families of the industrial bourgeoisie, such as Metz, Pescatore, Servais, Collart, Wurth, Tornaco and Brasseur, made up a fifth of the seats in the parliament.<sup>302</sup>

In 1841, William II succeeded to the throne. The new grand duke visited Luxembourg and promised to create a government composed of Luxembourgers. The royal grand-ducal ordinance of 12 October 1841 gave Luxembourg its first charter to "establish in Our Grand

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<sup>300</sup> Pauly, *Geschichte Luxemburgs*, 67–68.

<sup>301</sup> Gilbert Trausch, 'Comment faire d'un Etat de convention une nation?', in *Histoire du Luxembourg: Le destin européen d'un 'petit pays'*, ed. Gilbert Trausch (Toulouse: Editions Privat, 2003), 211.

<sup>302</sup> Denis Scuto, *La nationalité luxembourgeoise (XIXe - XXIe siècles)* (Bruxelles: Ed. de l'Université de Bruxelles, 2012), 25.

Duchy a stable administration and in accordance with its situation and needs".<sup>303</sup> This text included, with restrictions, some basic structures and principles that were to be found in the 1848 constitution and its subsequent versions. The Luxembourgish nationality was one of the necessary conditions to be elected or to participate in elections. The state reformed the school system, created an administrative apparatus, improved road infrastructures and developed a railroad network. French, the language of the bourgeoisie, became the administrative and judicial language, while the Catholic Church used German. To ensure the survival and continuity of the young state, the civil servants were sensible to promoting national consciousness.<sup>304</sup> Those years were marked by a *Gesetzgebungsfeuerwerk*, "legislative firework", as Pol Schock described it.<sup>305</sup>

The new situation created by the treaty of 1839 elicited controversial debates about the future economic orientation of Luxembourg. Among industrials and liberals, opinions diverged, often due to different business interests and anti-German sentiments. Boch, who directed the Villeroy & Boch manufacture and produced wares adapted to the Belgian bourgeois taste, was opposed to the Zollverein. He feared that the additional competition could ruin his company. When Luxembourg joined the Zollverein in 1842, Boch's manufacture indeed experienced troubles for some years. For the Grand Duke, who took the decision, a customs union with Belgium was unfathomable after what happened in 1830.

Luxembourg was not left untouched by the revolutions of 1848. The regime of 1841 became unpopular; bad harvests, taxes and high bread prices fuelled dissatisfaction among the population.<sup>306</sup> Petitions called for political and fiscal reforms. William II yielded to the demands: censorship was abolished; shortly later, he accepted a constitutional revision of the constitution. The revised constitution installed a parliamentary monarchy and transferred full powers to the Government, which was accountable to the Chamber of Deputies. After 1848,

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<sup>303</sup> "Voulant établir dans Notre Grand-Duché une administration stable et conforme à sa situation et à ses besoins, et désirant donner à Nos sujet du Luxembourg un gage de notre affection [...]" ("Ordonnance royale grand-ducale du 12 octobre 1841, N° 20, portant Constitution d'Etats pour le Grand-Duché de Luxembourg", in *Mémorial A*, vol. 51 [Luxembourg, 1841], 425, <http://data.legilux.public.lu/file/eli-etat-leg-memorial-1841-51-fr-pdf.pdf>).

<sup>304</sup> Pauly, *Geschichte Luxemburgs*, 70.

<sup>305</sup> Pol Schock, 'Imagining Luxembourg oder: Die Kunst, Beliebiges zu verewigen: Konstitution nationaler Identität in Luxemburg in der Mitte des 19. Jahrhundert (Teil I)', *Hémecht : Zeitschrift für Luxemburger Geschichte = revue d'histoire luxembourgeoise* 67, no. 4 (2015): 430.

<sup>306</sup> Pauly, *Geschichte Luxemburgs*, 72.

three large political groups appeared: the Catholics, the liberal-progressists and the liberal-doctrinaires.<sup>307</sup>

The liberal doctrinaires, *libéraux doctrinaires*, were mainly composed of Orangists (faithful to the grand duke). As high-ranking civil servants who William II entrusted with political power, they preferred an authoritarian regime and pleaded for a strong executive branch. They endorsed an anticlerical position, defended a socially and politically conservative stance and were pro-German. Their leader, the governor Gaspard-Théodore-Ignace de la Fontaine, became the president of the Council, the executive body introduced by the 1848 Constitution. However, de la Fontaine resigned in December 1848 due to the erosion of support from the Chamber of Deputies following the elections of 28 September. The successor, Jean-Jacques-Madelaine Willmar, formed a new government in which, for the first time, a representative of the industrial bourgeoisie participated: Norbert Metz.<sup>308</sup> Metz, like his brothers, counted among the liberal progressists (*libéraux progressistes*). Though the liberal doctrinaires succeeded in occupying key government positions until the 1860s – with politicians like Mathias Simons, Emmanuel Servais and François-Xavier Wurth-Paquet – the ideas of the liberal progressists eventually prevailed in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>309</sup> The third group participating in the political landscape of the 19<sup>th</sup> century were the Catholics, gathered around the vicar Jean-Théodore Laurent and the German-language newspaper *Luxemburger Wort*. They drew their support from the rural classes.

When William II died in 1849, his son William III took over. The latter returned to a more authoritarian ruling style and, in a coup d'état, dissolved the Chamber of Deputies in 1856. By decree, William III imposed a new constitution, remodelling the power relations and strengthening his prerogatives. The text introduced a new institution and the Conseil d'Etat, which remained in future constitutions. The revised constitution of 1868, in the aftermath of the Treaty of London, ended the censorship and established a more liberal regime.

In 1867, a new crisis shook the Grand Duchy. Napoleon III demanded control over the fortress in Luxembourg in exchange for his neutrality in the Prussian-Austrian War. William III did not object to selling Luxembourg to France, but the Prussian minister-president Otto von Bismarck opposed it. Luxembourg was part of the German Confederation and too critical

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<sup>307</sup> Denis Scuto, ‘Paul Eyschen entre État libéral et État-nation’, in *Du Luxembourg à l’Europe : hommages à Gilbert Trausch à l’occasion de son 80e anniversaire*, ed. Association luxembourgeoise des enseignants d’histoire (Luxembourg: Ed. Saint-Paul, 2011), 28.

<sup>308</sup> Thewes, *Les gouvernements du Grand-Duché de Luxembourg depuis 1848*, 16.

<sup>309</sup> Scuto, *La nationalité luxembourgeoise*, 29.

from a military, political and economic perspective.<sup>310</sup> The European powers met in London to ease tensions and declared Luxembourg perpetually neutral in the Treaty of London of 11 May 1867. As a result, the fortress was dismantled, and the Prussian garrison left the capital. The treaty was a further step toward ensuring Luxembourg's independence. The City Council of Luxembourg and local merchants and business people opposed the treaty, fearing that losing the Prussian garrison would hurt their business. However, the removal of the fortifications contributed to the capital's economic development and its growth beyond the walls.<sup>311</sup>

Yet, in 1870 Luxembourg's neutrality was questioned by Bismarck, for whom the inhabitants showed too much support for France during the Franco-Prussian war of 1870/71. A press campaign was launched in Germany to support the idea of annexing Luxembourg. This episode fuelled anti-Prussian feelings in Luxembourg. Though a large part of the urban bourgeoisie rallied around "its" nation-state, this nation did not encompass all the inhabitants.<sup>312</sup> Over time, it was extended to other groups, as the historian Denis Scuto described:

Au cours des décennies suivantes, des facteurs économiques et sociaux faciliteront cette extension: chemins de fer, liaisons à distance en matière de télécommunications avec le télégraphe et puis le téléphone, développement de l'industrie sidérurgique et minière, diffusion de la culture écrite grâce à la généralisation de l'éducation, développement de la fonction publique, du secteur des services et de la distribution, réformes dans le domaine de la législation sociale.<sup>313</sup>

According to the historian Michel Pauly, the petitions and patriotic manifestations of 1870 hinted at the development of a "national consciousness" (*Nationalgefühl*).<sup>314</sup> In 1890, after William III's death, who did not have successors in the direct line, the crown of the Grand Duchy passed on to the house of Nassau-Weilburg. Adolphe I became the grand duke of Luxembourg, and the country has been ruled by its own dynasty since then.

Against the backdrop of the political evolution in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, a steel industry was developing in Luxembourg. In the 1870s, the first steel factories and blast furnaces were constructed in the Minette region, closer to mining facilities and natural resources. The ore-containing soil was declared state property and companies had to buy concessions to extract and process it. The economy was further boosted in the 1880s when Lothringia adhered to the

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<sup>310</sup> Pauly, *Geschichte Luxemburgs*, 75.

<sup>311</sup> Pauly, 75.

<sup>312</sup> Scuto, *La nationalité luxembourgeoise*, 32.

<sup>313</sup> Scuto, 32.

<sup>314</sup> Pauly, *Geschichte Luxemburgs*, 75.

Zollverein.<sup>315</sup> After that, however, Luxembourg became increasingly dependent on the Zollverein and the German economy: technologically (German machinery), financially (German capital), labour-wise (German engineers) and transportation-wise.<sup>316</sup> One consequence of the Franco-Prussian war was the Luxembourgish railroad company falling under the control of the German railroad administration.<sup>317</sup> This situation did not change until the First World War.

In 1911, the companies Metz and Tesch merged and the steel company Aciéries réunies de Burbach, Eich et Dudelange (ARBED), predecessor of Arcelor and Arcelor-Mittal, was founded. On the eve of the First World War, steel production in the Grand Duchy was in the hands of five companies: ARBED, Deutsch-Luxemburger Bergwerks- und Hütten-AG, Gelsenkirchner Bergwerks-AG, Felten & Guillaume in Steinfort, and Ougrée-Marihaye in Rodange.<sup>318</sup>

Meanwhile, the state expanded administrations and services in tune with the country's economic development. The government pursued a liberal laissez-faire policy. It did not intervene in the rescue of smaller industrial companies that could not compete with the higher wages paid by the big companies.<sup>319</sup> The development of the steel industry in Luxembourg, its impact on the lives of the inhabitants, the environment and the society at large ultimately impacted how Luxembourg has dealt with its past and industrial heritage, constructed narratives about the past, and shaped collective memory.

The liberal economic policy of the state was paralleled with liberal social and immigration policies. The 19<sup>th</sup> century was characterised by liberal naturalisation laws, as illustrated by the law of 12 November 1848. These laws were inspired by foreign legislation. They were also exploited by the liberal bourgeoisie and the middle classes (such as the Metz brothers). The aims were threefold: to foster an economic elite, increase the power of the parliament and reinforce the country's openness.<sup>320</sup>

As in other European countries,<sup>321</sup> public education became an important policy area. In 1843, primary schools were made accessible to the lower and working classes. Primary education was declared a compulsory policy area for municipalities, though the changes only

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<sup>315</sup> Pauly, 79.

<sup>316</sup> Scuto, *La nationalité luxembourgeoise*, 36–37.

<sup>317</sup> Thewes, *Les gouvernements du Grand-Duché de Luxembourg depuis 1848*, 37.

<sup>318</sup> Pauly, *Geschichte Luxemburgs*, 80.

<sup>319</sup> Pauly, 81.

<sup>320</sup> Scuto, *La nationalité luxembourgeoise*, 114–115.

<sup>321</sup> Countries such as Prussia, France or Austria developed legal frameworks organising elementary school. For a short overview, see for instance: Caron and Vernus, *L'Europe au XIXe siècle*, 266–267.

affected pupils from the age of six to twelve. Higher primary school classes were introduced much later. The *école normale*, a vocational school to train teachers, opened in 1845.<sup>322</sup> French entered the curricula as a second compulsory language besides German.<sup>323</sup> This happened in a country that, since 1839, was comprised of a German-speaking population; Lëtzebuergesch was a Moselle Franconian German dialect spoken by the population in everyday life. Including French in the school programme was a political and administrative choice. Public officials in the higher administration preferred French. Laws were published in French and German, but only the French version was binding in case of litigations.<sup>324</sup> In 1881, the school system was reformed with the Kirpach law, named after Henri Kirpach, director general of the interior. Primary education became compulsory for all children between 6 and 12 years.<sup>325</sup> Until the 1890s, the Athenaeum in Luxembourg City was the only high school to offer complete curricula in the humanities. In 1892, its director claimed that “la garde des intérêts intellectuels du pays est confiée, en grande partie, à l’Athenée.”<sup>326</sup> In 1908, it would lose its exclusive status as the only high school in the capital when the industrial and commercial school, founded in 1892 in the Athenaeum, moved to Limpertsberg and became the Lycée des Garçons (a secondary school for boys).<sup>327</sup> In 1891, the *progymnases* in Diekirch and Echternach extended their offer and became complete high schools.<sup>328</sup> The school law of 1912 extended compulsory school attendance. Public schools became free of charge, and the influence of the Church was further restricted. Luxembourgish was introduced to teach pupils “the works of national poets” and to elicit a *sentiment national* (national consciousness), as the rapporteur and liberal Marcel Pescatore explained to his colleagues in the parliament.<sup>329</sup>

Under Paul Eyschen, prime minister from 1888 to 1915, Luxembourg experienced a period of modernisation. Eyschen was born on 9 September 1841 in Diekirch as the son of Charles-Gérard Eyschen, the Catholic leader who participated in the coup d'état of 1856. Paul Eyschen received catholic instruction at home, attended the Athenaeum, and studied law in Paris and

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<sup>322</sup> Scuto, *La nationalité luxembourgeoise*, 27.

<sup>323</sup> Vic Diederich, ‘Notre enseignement primaire: Essai historique’, in *Memorial 1989: La société luxembourgeoise de 1839 à 1989*, ed. Martin Gerges (Luxembourg: Publications mosellanes, 1989), 339.

<sup>324</sup> Trausch, ‘Comment faire d’un Etat de convention une nation?’, 216.

<sup>325</sup> Diederich, ‘Notre enseignement primaire: Essai historique’, 341–342.

<sup>326</sup> Quoted in: Gilbert Trausch, ‘Comment devenir une véritable capitale’, in *La ville de Luxembourg*, ed. Gilbert Trausch (Anvers: Fonds Mercator, 1994), 174.

<sup>327</sup> Jul Christophory, ‘La ville de Luxembourg, un carrefour de cultures’, in *La Ville de Luxembourg*, ed. Gérard Trausch (Anvers: Fonds Mercator, 1994), 336.

<sup>328</sup> Scuto, *La nationalité luxembourgeoise*, 53.

<sup>329</sup> Cited in: Régis Moes, ‘La réforme scolaire de 1912: “L’éducation de la jeunesse n’étant plus, comme autrefois, une simple question d’A.B.C.”’, *Forum*, no. 325 (January 2013): 35–38.

Bonn. In 1866 he was elected to the Chamber of Deputies. According to the biographer Jules Mersch, Eyschen was one of those who “did not lose confidence and upheld faith in the independence of the country” during the crisis of 1867.<sup>330</sup> In 1868, then a rightist deputy, he was rapporteur of the revised Constitution. On 7 July 1876, Eyschen entered the Blochausen government as director general of public works and justice. Though the Left first considered him like his father Gérard Eyschen, it became clear that this was not the case. Eyschen promoted liberalism and individual freedom and proved his viewpoint, for instance, by revising the *Code pénal*. Eyschen was a pragmatic politician and built alliances whenever he needed a majority. This approach made him a target for criticism from every side. The Socialists depicted him as representing the interests of industrials, an accusation he heavily refuted. The conservative Emile Prüm deplored Eyschen’s “eternal see-saw game alternately leaning towards the right and left”.<sup>331</sup> In 1908, the liberal journalist and writer Batty Weber, who fostered a close friendship with Eyschen, provided a similar description of the prime minister and his contradictory character:

He is slick, likes to let the opponent shoot past him with his skull against the wall and then hides his gloating under unctuous appeal to work for the fatherland. On the whole, he is one of the most peculiar mixtures of idealist and realist, of nonchalance and energy, of big talk and practicality. Through his mistakes, he seduces his opponents to attack him and gives them a whipping, thanks to his talents.<sup>332</sup>

The state apparatus expanded during Eyschen’s time. With the royal grand-ducal decree of 9 July 1857, the composition of the government could not exceed three director generals, in addition to the prime minister. They were assisted by three councillors at most.<sup>333</sup> In 1876, the cabinet comprised one prime minister and three directors general, supported by one councillor, three chief clerks, five subordinated chief clerks and fourteen assistants, the secretary of the

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<sup>330</sup> “Pendant l’époque troublée de 1867, où tant de Luxembourgeois étaient persuadés qu’il était inutile de résister aux annexionistes français, Eyschen fut un de ceux qui ne perdit pas confiance et garda la foi en l’indépendance du pays.” (Jules Mersch, ‘Paul Eyschen’, in *Biographie nationale du pays de Luxembourg depuis ses origines jusqu’à nos jours*, ed. Jules Mersch, vol. 5 [Luxembourg, 1953], 88, [http://www.luxemburgensia.bnll.lu/cgi/luxonline1\\_2.pl?action=fv&sid=luxbio&vol=05&page=71&zom=3](http://www.luxemburgensia.bnll.lu/cgi/luxonline1_2.pl?action=fv&sid=luxbio&vol=05&page=71&zom=3)).

<sup>331</sup> Own translation. “perpétuel jeu de bascule qui oscille tantôt à droite tantôt à gauche” (Mersch, 99).

<sup>332</sup> Own translation. “Er ist aalglatt, lässt den Gegner gerne an sich vorbei mit dem Schädel an die Wand schiessen und verbirgt dann seine Schadenfreude unter salbungsvoller Mahnung zur Arbeit fürs Vaterland. Im ganzen ist er eine der merkwürdigsten Mischungen von Idealist und Wirklichkeitsmensch, von Lässigkeit und Energie, von Schaumschlägerei und Sachlichkeit. Er verführt durch seine Fehler die Gegner zum Angriff und haut sie dank seiner Talente in die Pfanne.” (Cited in: Mersch, 99).

<sup>333</sup> ‘Arrêté royal grand-ducal du 9 juillet 1857 portant organisation du Gouvernement grand-ducal’, in *Mémorial A*, vol. 25 (Luxembourg, 1857), 285–289, <http://data.legilux.public.lu/file/eli-etat-leg-memorial-1857-25-fr-pdf.pdf>.

grand duke and two archivists.<sup>334</sup> The executive body and the number of state employees grew progressively. The judiciary system showed a similar evolution. On the background of economic development and industrialization, the state apparatus expanded with the addition of many new public administrations: from the *Administration des contribution directes et accises*, over the *Administration des postes et télégraphes* to the *Inspection du travail*.<sup>335</sup> The state created a whole system of public services to regulate, supervise, control and support social and economic policies. According to Gilbert Trausch, the number of people working for the central state administration increased from 957 in 1889 to 1.402 in 1936.<sup>336</sup>

The first cornerstones of a social system inspired by the German model appeared. Respective laws were voted between 1901 and 1913. Both Left and Right supported these social measures. Public education was another domain reformed by Eyschen's government. The law of 1912, mentioned above, illustrates Eyschen's adaptation to shifting majorities, as it reverted the changes implemented by the school law in 1898 that had favoured the Catholics.<sup>337</sup>

When the First World War broke out, Luxembourg found itself in the crossfire of two European powers. In August 1914, Germany invaded Luxembourg and violated its neutrality. The government protested formally, unable to take any concrete actions. Its decision to stay neutral was not well received by France. However, neutrality was not easy to implement. Due to Luxembourg's participation in the Zollverein, manufacturers had to adapt their production to wartime demands. Between closing their companies and laying off their workers or producing for the German war efforts, they tended to choose the second option. Moreover, the grand duchess Marie-Adélaïde, accused of her pro-German stance, had German family ties and received the German Kaiser during the war. In 1915, she dissolved the Chamber of Deputies, composed of a liberal-left majority. Belgium wished to incorporate the Grand Duchy, just as Germany planned to annex it once it would be victorious.<sup>338</sup> In the case of white peace, the Anglo-Saxon allies of France considered using Luxembourg as a pawn: in return for ceding Lorraine to France, Germany would receive Luxembourg.<sup>339</sup>

During the First World War, Luxembourg's political institutions remained intact. However, the situation was much more complex, and everyday life was deeply affected by the war and

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<sup>334</sup> Scuto, *La nationalité luxembourgeoise*, 44.

<sup>335</sup> Scuto, 52.

<sup>336</sup> Trausch, 'Comment devenir une véritable capitale', 173.

<sup>337</sup> Chambre des Députés du Grand-Duché de Luxembourg, *La Chambre des Députés: Histoire et Lieux de Travail* (Luxembourg: Editions Guy Binsfeld, 1994), IV.

<sup>338</sup> Trausch, 'Comment faire d'un Etat de convention une nation?', 239–240.

<sup>339</sup> Jacques Maas, 'Lëtzebuerg um seidene Fuedem', *ZäithistorikerIn* (Luxembourg: 100komma7, March 2019), <https://www.100komma7.lu/article/wessen/letzebuerg-um-seidene-fuedem>.

the German military occupation.<sup>340</sup> Censorship was introduced; the visit of the German Kaiser to Luxembourg, a violation of Luxembourg's neutrality status, was not allowed to be reported in the press.<sup>341</sup> Journalists and publishers were arrested, such as Paul Schroell and Frantz Clément of the *Escher Tageblatt*.<sup>342</sup> In addition, Luxembourg was partly subjected to German military jurisdiction, which entailed the surveillance of infrastructures, borders and supposedly suspicious individuals, arresting prisoners of war and deserters, and preventing strikes.<sup>343</sup> The population's attitudes towards the Germans could vary according to the time and the war's progress. As the war was waging, anti-German feelings grew, many distanced themselves from the Germans, and some endorsed pro-French positions. Opinions among writers differed; they satirically depicted the German presence, legitimised the German occupation, or criticised each other for their respective attitudes.<sup>344</sup>

The interwar period following the end of the Great War was marked by a series of crises and tensions in Europe. Luxembourg was not spared. Political debates about social policies, conflicts between trade unions and public authorities, and political tensions between the Left and the Right overshadowed these years.<sup>345</sup> The government left the Zollverein in 1918, but it had to compensate for losing an economic partner. France and Belgium refused to re-establish diplomatic relations with the Luxembourg government. The Allies criticised Luxembourg's participation in the Zollverein and, thus, in the German war efforts. Socialists called out for a Republic. The right-wing and conservative circles wanted to preserve the monarchy and the dynasty. In contrast, however, to what was claimed at the time by conservative circles and media and to what historians such as Gilbert Trausch and Michel Pauly restated in their works, the defenders of a republican state form were not aiming at an annexation of Luxembourg by

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<sup>340</sup> The impact of the war on the population has been shown, for instance, in the case of Dudelange in an exhibition organised at the Centre de documentation sur les migrations humaines (CDMH) in 2018. The war impeded mobility and transportation; migrants fled the war, the population was exposed to Allied bombings targeting industrial sites, and food supplies ran short (For more information, see the exhibition catalogue: Antoinette Reuter, Denis Scuto, and Sandra Camarda, *Être d'ailleurs en temps de guerre (14-18): Etrangers à Dudelange / Dudelangeois à l'étranger*, ed. Centre de documentation sur les migrations humaines and Luxembourg Centre for Contemporary and Digital History [Dudelange: Centre de documentation sur les migrations humaines, 2018]).

<sup>341</sup> Daniela Lieb, Pierre Marson, and Josiane Weber, *Luxemburg und der Erste Weltkrieg: Literaturgeschichte(n)*, 2nd ed. (Mersch: Centre national de littérature, 2014), 40.

<sup>342</sup> Lieb, Marson, and Weber, 83.

<sup>343</sup> Lieb, Marson, and Weber, 61–63.

<sup>344</sup> Lieb, Marson, and Weber, 52–57.

<sup>345</sup> For a short overview, see for instance: Claude Wey, 'De l'émergence du soi-disant modèle social luxembourgeois 1880-1940: La mise en place d'un régime social dans un pays de petite dimension', in *L'histoire, le présent et l'avenir du modèle luxembourgeois*, ed. Serge Allegrezza, Mario Hirsch, and Norbert von Kunitzki (Luxembourg: Institut d'études européennes et internationales du Luxembourg, 2003), 3–18.

France.<sup>346</sup> Considering the plans of the Entente powers and Germany, the regime type would not have mattered much. After the war, the winning powers did not recognise the grand duchess.<sup>347</sup>

In January 1919, Marie-Adélaïde abdicated in favour of her younger sister, Charlotte. In April 1919, a referendum about the future state form and the economic orientation was organised. A majority voted to keep the monarchy with Charlotte (77,8%) and for an economic union with France (73%). As it turned out, France was not interested. Eventually, Luxembourg turned to Belgium, culminating in the creation of the Belgo-Luxembourgish Economic Union (Union économique belgo-luxembourgeoise, UEBL) in June 1921.<sup>348</sup> German interests and investments were replaced with Belgian, French and Luxembourgish ones.<sup>349</sup>

In general, between 1907 and 1935, the service sector expanded in terms of workforce, from less than 20% to 34% of the total workforce in 1935, whereas the industrial sector remained stable. Since 1871, employment in the agricultural sector had been declining. Thus, within three to four decades, Luxembourg evolved from an agricultural to an industrial country. In 1935, this was still true, though to a lesser extent in comparison with the service sector.<sup>350</sup> During the economic crisis of the 1930s, the country's industrial production collapsed and many workers lost their jobs.<sup>351</sup> The unemployment rate increased, but less dramatically than in other countries, as most job losses concerned migrants who returned to their home countries. Thus, between 1931 and 1944, the net migration rate for Luxembourg was negative.<sup>352</sup>

On the political stage, three parties dominated the sphere: the Socialist Party (inspired by the German Social Democracy), the Party of the Right (Parti de la droite), and the Liberal League (Ligue libérale). In 1919, voting rights were extended through universal suffrage, which primarily benefitted the Right. The Liberals suffered most from the changes in the interwar period. The First World War and its consequences (poverty and loss of spending

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<sup>346</sup> For more information, see: Denis Scuto, ‘Une double légende fête ses cent ans’, *Tageblatt*, February 2019.

<sup>347</sup> Cf. Maas, ‘Lëtzebuerg um seidene Fuedem’.

<sup>348</sup> Trausch, ‘Comment faire d’un Etat de convention une nation?’, 240–241.

<sup>349</sup> Thewes, *Les gouvernements du Grand-Duché de Luxembourg depuis 1848*, 84.

<sup>350</sup> Georges Als, *Population et Économie Du Luxembourg 1839-1989*, Réalités et Perspectives 1985/5 (Luxembourg: Banque Générale du Luxembourg, 1989), 42.

<sup>351</sup> Gilbert Trausch, ‘Un passé long et mouvementé pour un petit pays’, in *Luxembourg au tournant du siècle et du millénaire* (Esch/Alzette: Editions Schortgen, 1999), 43. According to Michel Pauly, as the dismissed workers did not get any unemployment benefits and often returned to their home country, the social and budgetary consequences remained “less dramatic” than in other countries (Pauly, *Geschichte Luxemburgs*, 91).

<sup>352</sup> Als, *Population et Économie Du Luxembourg 1839-1989*, 17.

power) pushed the working class to organise itself in trade unions.<sup>353</sup> Social achievements also characterised the interwar period.<sup>354</sup> The evolution contributed to integrating the workers into the society and the “nation”. At the same time, as Scuto has noted, this integration was accompanied by excluding at least a part of the non-Luxembourgish workers.<sup>355</sup>

From 1918 to 1925, Emile Reuter was minister of state and director general<sup>356</sup> of foreign affairs. Pierre Prüm (1925-1926), Joseph Bech (1926-1937), and Pierre Dupong (1937-1940) succeeded him as state ministers. Some of these changes were provoked by crises. In 1925, Luxembourg and Belgium signed a convention that envisaged the unification of the railroad network. As it planned the institution of a directorate under the Belgian majority, the parliament rejected the text, and the government resigned.<sup>357</sup> In the anticipated elections in 1925, the Right lost its absolute majority, and the political landscape became fragmented, with nine parties represented in the Chamber of Deputies. A government under Pierre Prüm (Parti national indépendant) came to power without the participation of the Parti de la droite, but it unravelled in July 1926, after a draft law on worker’s holidays divided socialists and liberals. This led to the formation of a new government coalition, headed by Joseph Bech (Parti de la droite), with the Liberals.

Historians consider the 1920s and 1930s as a conservative period, preceded by the liberal era of Paul Eyschen, who died in 1915 after 27 years in office. On the background of debates and fears concerning the danger of foreign infiltration (*Überfremdungsgefahr*) and a loss of the essence of the Luxembourgish nation, the nationality laws and conditions for entering and living in Luxembourg were tightened.<sup>358</sup> Joseph Bech dreamt of a corporatist, authoritarian and catholic state based on the Austrian model.<sup>359</sup> He headed the government for eleven years until he resigned in 1937 after the controversial referendum on what was commonly called “muzzle law” (*loi muselière*). It was inspired by an Austrian decree of July 1933, which led to the

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<sup>353</sup> Scuto, *La nationalité luxembourgeoise*, 57.

<sup>354</sup> Scuto, 65.

<sup>355</sup> Scuto, 65.

<sup>356</sup> The title “director general” was abolished in 1936 and replaced with that of “minister”. According to Paul Spang, the title of director general was not suitable anymore to the diplomatic reality, when the director generals represented the president of the government abroad. The latter was, before 1936, the only one to have the title of minister (as Minister of State) and be granted the rank of Excellency. (Spang, ‘La politique culturelle des Gouvernements luxembourgeois de 1848 à nos jours’, 585).

<sup>357</sup> Thewes, *Les gouvernements du Grand-Duché de Luxembourg depuis 1848*, 85.

<sup>358</sup> Scuto, *La nationalité luxembourgeoise*, 211.

<sup>359</sup> Scuto, 65.

installation of an authoritarian regime under chancellor Dollfuss.<sup>360</sup> If passed, the muzzle law would have conceded the government the power to ban associations whose “activities tend to abolish or change the constitution by using violence or any other illicit means”.<sup>361</sup> Due to the vague formulation (specifically targeting the Communist Party), it encountered vivid opposition. In the referendum of June 1937, taking place on the same day as the general elections in two voting districts (North and Centre), a fragile majority of 50.67% voted against the law.<sup>362</sup> Though the Right was able to defend all its seats in parliament, the difficult negotiations following the elections resulted in a government of national union (Gouvernement d’union nationale) led by Pierre Dupong (Parti de la droite), though Bech stayed in office as minister of foreign affairs.<sup>363</sup> In this government, socialists (Pierre Krier and René Blum), liberals (Pierre Dupong) and three tendencies within the Parti de la droite were represented, i.e. the social wing with Dupong, the conservative wing with Bech and the catholic wing with Nicolas Margue.<sup>364</sup> After the death of Etienne Schmit in December 1937 and the Liberal Party unable to find a successor who might suit the coalition partners, the Liberals left the government.

The construction of a nation-state and the establishment of a dichotomy between nationals and foreigners were paralleled by increasing nationalist tendencies in the cultural society. Voices warned of a loss of identity and *Überfremdung*, even emanating from liberal circles.<sup>365</sup> They became more prevalent in the 1930s after the Nazis had taken power in Germany. As early as 1933, emigrants, among them cultural actors, left Germany and fled to Luxembourg with the hopes of avoiding persecution. These migratory movements also entailed a stronger presence of the *Überfremdung* discourse.<sup>366</sup>

The concept of the *Luxemburgertum* was used in political debates – as much by the Left as by the Right – in opposition to the *Deutschtum*. In its essence, however, the former was inspired by the ethnocultural principles of the latter.<sup>367</sup> Catholic and conservative historians such as

<sup>360</sup> Vincent Artuso, ‘La “Question juive” au Luxembourg (1933-1941): L’Etat luxembourgeois face aux persécutions antisémites nazies’ (Luxembourg: Université du Luxembourg, 2015), 65.

<sup>361</sup> Thewes, *Les gouvernements du Grand-Duché de Luxembourg depuis 1848*, 98.

<sup>362</sup> Thewes, 99.

<sup>363</sup> Thewes, 104–105.

<sup>364</sup> Scuto, *La nationalité luxembourgeoise*, 199.

<sup>365</sup> Artuso, ‘La “Question juive” au Luxembourg (1933-1941)’, 39–40.

<sup>366</sup> For more information on cultural actors – writers, journalists, artists – living in exile in Luxembourg after 1933 and individual fates, see for instance: Gast Mannes, Germaine Goetzinger, and Pierre Marson, *Exilland Luxemburg, 1933 - 1947: Schreiben - Aufreten - Musizieren - Agitieren - Überleben* (Mersch: Centre national de littérature, 2007).

<sup>367</sup> Denis Scuto, ‘Qu’est-ce qu’un Luxembourgeois? Histoire de la nationalité luxembourgeoise du Code Napoléon à nos jours’, *Forum*, no. 244 (March 2005): 42.

Arthur Herchen, Joseph Meyers and Nicolas Margue, but also liberal intellectuals such as Nicolas Ries, Batty Weber and Frantz Clément, disseminated ideas promoting Luxembourg's cultural specificity.<sup>368</sup> As historians, writers, journalists and politicians, they strongly influenced Luxembourg's cultural sphere and participated in or commented on cultural policy. Some of them reflected on the essence of the Luxembourgish nation and the people living in the Grand Duchy, such as Nicolas Ries. Like many of his contemporary colleagues, he studied in Germany and France. In the context of cultural nationalism, he developed the concept of "historical race" ("race historique") and stereotypes of a typical Luxembourger. Ries wrote that Luxembourg is a trilingual country; the mother tongue of its inhabitants was Luxembourgish.<sup>369</sup>

Cultural nationalism was promoted by the founders of the Letzeburger Nationalunion in 1910, i.e. Alphonse Bervard, Pol Besch and especially Lucien Koenig, inspired by French nationalists. In the aftermath of the Great War, the nationalist movement experienced a boost.<sup>370</sup> In 1918, Koenig (also known under his sobriquet Suggy vu Lëtzebuerg) looked back at the foundation of the movement and presented the main ideas defended by these nationalists; among them, the view that "we are the product of the soil we were born on, the soil of our ancestors. Between them and us exists a strong and mystical link which influences us in a deterministic way."<sup>371</sup> The trope of soil, peasantry and landscapes was not limited to this nationalist group. Industrialisation, urbanisation and rural exodus strengthened these discourses and provoked defensive reactions. In this context, associations such as Landwûol were founded to promote and preserve rural life. Joseph Bech claimed in a letter on 29 July 1924 that the rural exodus could only be stopped by teaching children to love their native soil; it was one of the urgent tasks to accomplish: "[...] inspirer à l'enfant des campagnes l'amour du sol natal et de la glèbe nourricière, de contribuer pour sa part à endiguer l'exode vers les centres urbains".<sup>372</sup>

Meanwhile, cultural production was expanding. A national literary production developed in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century and was closely linked to the construction of the nation-state. Luxembourg had only encompassed the German-speaking territory from 1839 onwards, but the literature was trilingual: French, German and Luxembourgish. However, only from the late 19<sup>th</sup> century

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<sup>368</sup> Scuto, *La nationalité luxembourgeoise*, 158.

<sup>369</sup> Scuto, 161.

<sup>370</sup> See also: Lieb, Marson, and Weber, *Luxemburg und der Erste Weltkrieg: Literaturgeschichte(n)*, 239.

<sup>371</sup> Lucien Blau, *Histoire de l'extrême-droite au Grand-Duché de Luxembourg au XXe siècle*, 2e éd. (Esch-sur-Alzette: Le Phare, 2005), 203–204.

<sup>372</sup> Cited in: Scuto, *La nationalité luxembourgeoise*, 274.

onwards is it possible to speak of a national literary production by Luxembourgish writers or writers living in Luxembourg and for a Luxembourgish readership. Among the German-writing authors were the teacher, poet and literary critic Nikolaus Welter (1871-1951), the journalist and feuilletonist Batty Weber (1860-1940), the teacher Jean-Pierre Erpelding (1884-1977), Josef Tockert (1875-1950), and Nikolaus Hein (1889-1969). Félix Thyes (1830-1855), the co-founder of the short-lived journal *Floréal* Marcel Noppeney (1877-1966), the engineer Paul Palgen (1883-1966) or the founder of the *Cahiers Luxembourgeois* Nicolas Ries (1876-1941) produced literature in French. As for Luxembourgish, the first literary work in the Mosel-Franconian dialect was written by the mathematics teacher Antoine Meyer (1801-1857) and titled *Schrék op de Letzeburger Parnassus* (1829). Michel Lentz (1820-1893) wanted to valorise the vernacular and show its capability of reaching higher literary prestige. The lawyer Edmond de la Fontaine (1823-1891) is considered the “father” of Luxembourgish theatre. Michel Rodange (1827-1876) is the author of the *Renert*, an adaptation of Goethe’s *Reineke Fuchs*, which comprises a critique of the Luxembourgish society at the time. In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, writers such as Auguste Liesch (1874-1949), Poutty Stein (1888-1955) or Marcel Reuland (1905-1956) wrote in Luxembourgish.

Though it is not the aim to provide a detailed overview of the literature in Luxembourg until the 1930s<sup>373</sup>, it should be noted that these authors were part of the educated classes and studied or lived for some time abroad. Most of the writers had their secondary education at the Athenaeum. Individual biographies played an important role in the choice of the language and subjects. Marcel Noppeney, for instance, was an admirer of France, and French was the vernacular language in his family. The engineer and poet Paul Palgen (1883-1966) included in his works themes related to the iron and steel industry (*La Pourpre sur les Crassiers*, 1931) or the exotic landscape he experienced in Brazil (*Guanabará*, 1933). Palgen worked for ARBED, was secretary general of COLUMETA, spent many years in Liège and Rio de Janeiro, and was raised in the industrial south of Luxembourg.<sup>374</sup> His interest in the production processes and

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<sup>373</sup> For an overview, see for instance: Fernand Hoffmann, ‘Die drei Literaturen Luxemburgs: Ihre Geschichte und ihre Problematik’, in *Memorial 1989: La société luxembourgeoise de 1839 à 1989*, ed. Martin Gerges (Luxembourg: Les publications mosellanes, 1989), 467–517.

<sup>374</sup> Frank Wilhelm, ‘Paul Palgen’, Luxemburger Autorenlexikon, 2014, <http://www.autorenlexikon.lu/page/author/221/2214/DEU/index.html>. See also: Frank Wilhelm, ‘L’industrie sidérurgique vue par l’ingénieur Paul Palgen (1883-1966)’, *Mutations. Mémoires et perspectives du bassin minier*, no. 1 (2010): 51–64.

the heavy industry was shared by Nikolaus Welter (*Hochofen*, 1913). On the opposite end, Erpelding, a farmer's son, focused on the rural world in many of his writings.<sup>375</sup>

Another domain strongly linked to literature was the theatrical landscape. Before the 1960s, only one municipal theatre existed in the capital, which was publicly subsidized and showed plays by the *Lëtzebuerger Vollekstheater* (directed by Venant Pauké), among others.<sup>376</sup> Theatrical ensembles had already existed in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The first theatre play in Luxembourgish, Dick's *Scholtschein*, was staged in February 1855. In the following decades, Luxembourgish plays became more and more common, besides those in French and German. Aendréi Duchscher (1840-1911) was another important playwright who wrote not only pieces in Luxembourgish but included a social critique in his works, too.<sup>377</sup>

In painting, the impressionist movement influenced many Luxembourgian artists, such as Pierre Blanc (1872-1946), Eugène Mousset (1877-1941) or Jean-Pierre Beckius (1899-1946). According to Jean-Luc Koltz, the only true impressionist painter was Dominique Lang (1874-1919).<sup>378</sup> After the First World War, several Luxembourgish painters who studied in Munich broke with the traditionalists and academists of the Cercle artistique (CAL), a Luxembourgish art society. Jean Schaack (1895-1959), Harry Rabinger (1895-1966), Nico Klopp (1894-1930) and Joseph Kutter (1894-1941) participated in this secession opposed to impressionism. These painters discovered Cézanne and Van Gogh abroad and introduced expressionist art in Luxembourg upon their return in the 1920s.

Sculptors were less present than painters in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. With the demolition of the fortifications after 1867, new spaces became available for the erection of monuments, but French sculptors executed the first works. To the small group of Luxembourgish sculptors in the 19<sup>th</sup> century belonged Pierre Federspiel (1864-1924), who studied in Munich and Paris. The first exhibition organised by the CAL in 1894 featured a bust of the Grand Duke Adolphe by Federspiel. The same artist created the monument of 1903, honouring Dicks and Lentz. Besides Federspiel, Jean-Baptiste Wercollier (1868-1938) and Jean Mich (1871-around 1919) were also notable sculptors. During the interwar period, Claus Cito, the sculptor of the *Gëlle Fra*,

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<sup>375</sup> Roger Muller, 'Jean-Pierre Erpelding', Luxemburger Autorenlexikon, accessed 6 April 2018, <http://www.autorenlexikon.lu/page/author/887/887/DEU/index.html>.

<sup>376</sup> ANLux, IP-1863, Letter from the committee of the Lëtzebuerger Vollekstheater to Joseph Bech, 07/05/1935.

<sup>377</sup> For an overview, see for instance: Leon Blasen, 'Theater in Luxemburg', in *Memorial 1989: La société luxembourgeoise de 1839 à 1989*, ed. Martin Gerges (Luxembourg: Les publications mosellanes, 1989), 558–563.

<sup>378</sup> Jean-Luc Koltz, 'Peinture et sculpture', in *Memorial 1989: La société luxembourgeoise de 1839 à 1989*, ed. Martin Gerges (Luxembourg: Les publications mosellanes, 1989), 459–460.

and Auguste Trémont participated in the secessionist movement, though rather because of their friendships with painters like Kutter than because of the artistic style they represented.<sup>379</sup>

However, Luxembourg's cultural landscape was not limited to traditional arts. The first movie was projected in 1896. At the annual Schobermesse, a traditional fun fair, movies became a popular attraction. The first cinemas in Luxembourg opened around 1910. However, Luxembourg's cinematographic production was somewhat limited compared to its neighbours. A film industry did not exist, and many movies were recordings of specific events or produced for touristic purposes. The 1930s were more productive, especially with the two filmmakers Evy Friedrich and René Leclère.<sup>380</sup> Some movies were directly commissioned by the governments.

A much more critical and, for Luxembourg, far-reaching development was occurring elsewhere. In the 1920s, a group of amateurs, the Amis de la Transmission sans fil, experimented with radio transmission and produced the first programmes. In the late 1920s, the government took the first legislative step towards a commercial radio station, despite many associations voicing the need for a radio to cultivate the population. In 1929, the Chamber of Deputies passed a law allowing commercial stations to transmit from Luxembourg, but only with a state concession. In 1931, the Compagnie luxembourgeoise de radiodiffusion (CLR) was founded and received the exclusive license. Thus, the government created a situation in which a commercial radio station was holding a monopoly. Radio Luxembourg started transmitting in 1933. Thanks to the powerful transmitters, its programme addressing an international public was received in many parts of Europe.<sup>381</sup>

At the end of the 1930s, rising tensions and failed policies of democracies towards authoritarian and fascist countries plunged Europe into a new war when Germany invaded Poland in September 1939. It was not the only country. When Germany invaded Luxembourg on 10 May 1940, the Luxembourgish authorities were taken by surprise. The government and the grand-ducal family were hastily evacuated and left the country. Germany promised to respect Luxembourg's neutrality and guarantee its independence.<sup>382</sup> The invasion plunged the country into a chaotic situation, especially in the southern industrial region of Luxembourg

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<sup>379</sup> For an overview, see for instance: Koltz, 'Peinture et sculpture'.

<sup>380</sup> Paul Lesch, 'Le cinéma luxembourgeois existe', in *Memorial 1989: La société luxembourgeoise de 1839 à 1989*, ed. Martin Gerges (Luxembourg: Les publications mosellanes, 1989), 564.

<sup>381</sup> For an overview, see for instance: Hirsch, Mario, 'Das Zeitalter der audiovisuellen Medien', in *Memorial 1989: La société luxembourgeoise de 1839 à 1989*, ed. Martin Gerges (Luxembourg: Les publications mosellanes, 1989), 929–937.

<sup>382</sup> Vincent Artuso, *La collaboration au Luxembourg durant la Seconde Guerre mondiale (1940–1945): Accommodation, Adaptation, Assimilation* (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2013), 53–54.

(Minette). French troops had to retreat but continued with artillery bombardments on enemy positions, causing material and civilian casualties.<sup>383</sup> On 11 May, the Chamber of Deputies voted a law instituting a Government Commission presided by Albert Wehrer, renamed two weeks later Administrative Commission to appease the Germans.

The departure of the government and the Grand Duchess elicited a negative attitude towards the ministers. The rejection did not merely concern the ruling political elite, but the regime as a whole; after all, the government was a coalition of two large democratic parties.<sup>384</sup> On 21 July, Gustav Simon (1900-1945), Gauleiter of the Koblenz-Trier district, was nominated Chef der Zivilverwaltung (CdZ, Head of Civil Administration) of Luxembourg and had the task of annexing Luxembourg to the *Reich*. Simon remained subordinated to the military administration until 2 August, when he was directly subordinated to the *Führer*.<sup>385</sup> On 18 October 1940, Hitler replaced his former decree and defined the powers of the Gauleiter, who had complete freedom to create a new order in Luxembourg and publish decrees as he deemed necessary.<sup>386</sup>

Until December 1940, the institutions and administrations were progressively abolished or absorbed. The members of the administrative commission considered themselves as a new government and hoped to avoid the worst. Yet, they failed with this impossible task and were forced to act against their duties as state officials by allowing the Gauleiter to dismantle the state structures slowly.<sup>387</sup> Over several months, the German civil administration progressively tightened its grip and eliminated the remaining traces of an independent state. The Gauleiter declared the Constitution to be ineffective. Symbols such as the coat of arms were forbidden; a new judicial system was created to punish crimes against the Reich. The Nazi salute became compulsory in the administration. Political parties were dissolved, and the Nuremberg racial laws were introduced. On 22 October, a special court was created for “untrustworthy” state officials. The following day, the Chamber of Deputies and the State Council were abolished. On 24 October, Albert Wehrer, the other members of the Commission and Emile Reuter were arrested. State officials who did not join the collaborationist movement Volksdeutsche Bewegung (VdB) – whose membership had dramatically increased in the meantime – lost their jobs. At the end of October, the Luxembourgish state and its institutions as they were crumbled

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<sup>383</sup> Artuso, 59.

<sup>384</sup> Artuso, 63.

<sup>385</sup> Artuso, 85.

<sup>386</sup> Artuso, 165.

<sup>387</sup> Artuso, 119.

under the pressure of the occupiers. In December 1940, the Administrative Commission was abolished.

Though Luxembourg was never officially annexed, many regulations and decisions of the civil administration clearly illustrated a de facto annexation. Besides the introduction of Reich laws, Luxembourg was incorporated into the Gau Koblenz-Trier, renamed Gau Moselland, on 7 February 1941.<sup>388</sup> Attitudes towards the new regime could vary; most chose to accommodate not to put their own lives at risk. Besides the appearance of resistance movements, a significant minority of the population adopted a pro-German stance. In early October 1940, the Volksdeutsche Bewegung counted around 9,500 members. Until October 1940, these adhesions were voluntary.<sup>389</sup>

For the regime, the Germanisation of a previously independent country that did not express a wish to become part of a large German nation proved difficult. In October 1941, the German administration planned a population census. Three questions concerning language, ethnic belonging and nationality were expected to be answered with “German”. However, when the test batch of the census showed that a large majority responded three times with “Luxembourgish” (*Lötzebuergesch*), the Chef der Zivilverwaltung decided to cancel the census. While it certainly marked a moral defeat for the administration and its germanisation policy, the census was heightened to a national myth and an act of collective resistance of the population after the war. Attitudes, however, were much more complex and paired with the fear of retaliation, material loss, and the risk of one’s own life.

In May 1941, the service in the Reichsarbeitsdienst (RAD) became compulsory. On 30 August 1942, the CdZ introduced compulsory military service simultaneously to Alsace and Lorraine. Local strikes broke out in the country in the following days, but they were far from expressing a unified and general movement, as presented in the master narrative. Consequently, the forced recruitment was not extended to older cohorts, but the regime hardened its stance.

The winter of 1942/1943 marked a turning point in the war in Europe. In February 1943, the Sixth German Army capitulated in Stalingrad. The battle of Kursk in July-August 1943 sealed the fate of Germany’s war efforts, as it lost the initiative on the Eastern front. In the meantime, the US Americans and the British landed in Sicily and opened a second front in Europe after defeating Germany in Northern Africa. The repercussions were also visible in Luxembourg: in Spring 1943, the number of desertions of Luxembourgers in the Wehrmacht spiked.<sup>390</sup> In

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<sup>388</sup> Artuso, 180.

<sup>389</sup> Artuso, 151–152.

<sup>390</sup> Artuso, 247.

September 1944, Luxembourg was liberated by the Allied forces, though the Rundstedt-Offensive in December ravaged the northern and eastern parts of the country and temporarily pushed Allied troops back. The grand duchess returned to Luxembourg on 14 April. On 8 May 1945, Germany surrendered.

In Western Europe, the war was over, but the difficult phase of reconstruction and political and economic stabilisation began. The destructions and human sufferings were enormous. In Luxembourg, out of a population of 290,000 in 1939, 2,048 civilians died due to combat operations. 10,211 men were forcibly recruited. 1,289 Jews were deported, of whom 1,208 were killed. More than 4,000 people were forcibly displaced in the context of the *Umsiedlungsaktion*. The legitimacy of the government that returned from exile was questioned by the Unio'n, which regrouped resistance fighters, whereas those who stayed in Luxembourg were considered suspicious.

Immediately after the liberation, the Luxembourgish authorities launched a procedure of administrative and judicial purge (*épuration*). Collaborators were sentenced to imprisonment or death. Damian Kratzenberg, the leader of the VdB, received the death penalty in 1946. The Unio'n arrested collaborators and claimed to be placed above the traditional parties. The months following its return in September 1944 proved difficult for the government, not only put under pressure by important groups in the society, but also curtailed by the Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Force (SHAEF), which was the military and civil authority in Luxembourg as long as the war in Europe was waging on.

The government based its executive decisions on laws voted in 1938 and 1939, which extended its powers. The Chamber of Deputies convened for the first time in December 1944, but only 25 out of 55 deputies were present. A consultative assembly was created to improve its democratic legitimacy, including former deputies and representatives of the resistance. The government was reorganised. The ministers who returned from London, Pierre Dupong (State Minister), Joseph Bech, Pierre Krier and Victor Bodson, formed the core of the government. The cabinet was extended, including men who lived in Luxembourg during the occupation.

In May, Dupong announced legislative elections for 21 October 1945, which eased political tensions. The result of the elections marked a moral defeat for the critics of the government. Dupong, Bech, Krier and Bodson remained in their functions; the Unio'n's plan to form a movement beyond the traditional parties failed. The Parti de la Droite became the Chrëschtlech-Sozial Vollékspartei (Christian Social People's Party, CSV), the former Labour Party was renamed into Lëtzebuerger Sozialistesch Aarbechter Partei (Luxembourgish Socialist Labour Party, LSAP). The Groupement démocratique (since 1951 Demokratesch

Partei, DP), founded by resistant fighters, was joined by the Liberals. Though the Right-Left coalition enjoyed a comfortable majority, Dupong decided to create a government of national union by including all parties. Due to internal disagreements, the lack of formal opposition and discontent among the population, and the death of Pierre Krier on 20 January 1947, the government resigned. A new coalition was formed between the CSV and the Groupement démocratique, which remained until 1951. From 1947 until 1974, a similar pattern was followed in the constitution of governments: the CSV remained in government and merely changed its coalition partners. In the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, only the period of 1974 to 1979 marked an exception, with a coalition between the Democratic Party and the LSAP. After the 1970s, the political landscape diversified, and new parties were created. Some managed to consolidate their presence, such as déi Gréng (founded in 1979 after the Belgian and German examples and in the context of an environmental discourse).

During and after the Second World War, the Luxembourg government implemented a new diplomacy and actively participated in the international system that was being shaped. Besides the Benelux, Luxembourg was a founding member of the UNO (1945), the OEEC (Organisation for European Economic Co-operation, 1948), the Western Union (or Brussels Pact, 1948), the Council of Europe (1949) and NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organisation, 1949). When Europe was divided into two blocs, Luxembourg became part of the Western hemisphere. In 1948, Luxembourg removed the neutrality status from the Constitution.

While the new multilateral organisations and the (Western) European cooperation created the foundations for the European integration process, the development of the European communities into the European Union was far from being the result of a preconceived plan. In the beginning, nothing hinted at the fact that the European Communities would acquire the importance as they did later. Nevertheless, the European integration process was essential to Luxembourg. In 1952, and first suggested by French Foreign Affairs Minister Robert Schuman as a means of Franco-German reconciliation, the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) was established in 1951 and concerned two strategic industrial areas. Luxembourg was not only the founding member but also the seat of the High Authority of the ECSC.

Yet, Luxembourgish politicians were not always openly endorsing all aspects of the process. For example, when Jean Monnet suggested turning Luxembourg into a European district, similar to Washington DC, it was not well received. In addition, Bech was against positioning all EEC institutions in Luxembourg. He was also sceptical about ceding too many sovereignty

rights to a supranational entity. He feared that Luxembourg could be overwhelmed by Italian guest workers once too much freedom of movement was allowed.<sup>391</sup>

The integration process, marked by crises and decelerations such as the Empty Chair crisis in 1965, the rejection of the European Constitution in 2005, and the long Brexit process after 2016, moved beyond the two sectors managed by the ECSC. In 1957, France, Germany, Italy and the Benelux states signed the Treaty of Rome instituting the European Economic Community. Over the years, the European Communities were restructured, new institutions were added, and others reformed. In 1992, the Treaty of Maastricht instituted the European Union, replacing the European Communities. In 2019, the European Union counted 28 member states, including Eastern European countries. Brussels, Luxembourg, and Strasbourg host the most important institutions of the EU: the European Parliament, the Council of the European Union, the European Council, and the European Court of Justice. The European integration has also brought other changes: the urbanisation of the Kirchberg plateau in Luxembourg City with its European institutions, the appearance of European civil servants as a new social group, and the development of Luxembourg's economy in the EU context.

Immediately after the war, the reconstruction of buildings and infrastructures and the supplies to the population were the most pressing matters. This reconstruction was financed by a special tax and by the help received in the context of the Marshall Plan. The steel production in Luxembourg reached its pre-war level in 1948. From 1949 onwards, the state aimed to diversify its economic activities and a stronger regionalisation of its investments. In 1962, the government passed a law providing advantageous tax frameworks for new industries, from which US companies profited. In the meantime, technological innovations and higher productivity accompanied an expansion of the steel industry. In 1974, the Luxembourgish steel industry employed 25,000 people, nearly 17% of the total workforce. A third of the GDP originated from the steel sector.<sup>392</sup> Yet, the steel crisis of 1975 caused considerable problems in Luxembourg. In 1983, only 13,400 people were employed in the steel industry. As an answer to the crisis, the government created special employment measures. The steel company ARBED was restructured, financed by the state through the acquisition of shares. In 2002, ARBED merged with other companies and became ARCELOR. After the acquisition by Mittal Steel in 2006, Arcelor-Mittal has become the largest steel producer in the world.

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<sup>391</sup> Pauly, *Geschichte Luxemburgs*, 115–116.

<sup>392</sup> Pauly, 107.

In the meantime, the development of the steel industry and the decline after the steel crisis were undergirded by the development of other economic branches. The most notable example is the financial sector, which has come to replace the steel sector as the most important economic branch. The foundation of this development was laid by a holdings law of the 1920s. Lax supervision and less regulation attracted banks to Luxembourg. Tax advantages and banking secrecy have played a role only since the 1980s. As Luxembourg was quick to implement related EU directives, investment funds developed. The monolithic structure of the economy could not be avoided but only changed its nature. Yet, while the financial sector has been developing, the governments have been investing efforts in telecommunications, such as RTL and the satellite company SES.

The post-war transformations did not only affect the political and economic landscape. Society changed, too. After the war, the state followed a restrictive immigration policy. The government only allowed individual men to enter Luxembourg, preferably not married, and for a limited time, fearing a too high financial burden. Despite these restrictions, the number of Italians increased from 8,000 in 1947 to nearly 25,000 in 1966.<sup>393</sup> From 1961 onwards, the restrictive immigration policy was dismantled by the freedom of movement principle in the EEC. In the 1950s, with the economic boom in northern Italy, many Italians left Luxembourg and returned to their home country. The migration pattern changed in the 1960s. Previously dominated by single men, the government promoted family reunification. Italians were replaced by Portuguese immigrants, who took advantage of the family reunification policies. The government developed an active recruitment policy and signed two treaties with Portugal and Yugoslavia. Both were ratified in 1972. The government's choice fell on a white, catholic immigration (the Yugoslavian treaty did not allow family reunification).<sup>394</sup>

In the 1960s and 1970s, the net migration rate of Portuguese nationals was positive (1,257 in 1970).<sup>395</sup> The demographic structure changed. In 1947, around 10% of the residents were foreigners. In 1970, their share increased to 18% of a total of 339,841 inhabitants.<sup>396</sup> In 1981,

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<sup>393</sup> Scuto, *La nationalité luxembourgeoise*, 284–285.

<sup>394</sup> Scuto, 297.

<sup>395</sup> STATEC, ‘Arrivées, départs et excédents des arrivées sur les départs 1967 - 2019’ (STATEC, April 2020),

[https://statistiques.public.lu/stat/TableViewer/tableViewHTML.aspx?ReportId=12892&IF\\_Language=fra&MainTheme=2&FldrName=2&RFPath=98](https://statistiques.public.lu/stat/TableViewer/tableViewHTML.aspx?ReportId=12892&IF_Language=fra&MainTheme=2&FldrName=2&RFPath=98).

<sup>396</sup> STATEC, ‘Population totale, luxembourgeoise et étrangère, de résidence habituelle au Luxembourg selon le sexe 1821 - 2019’ (STATEC, April 2020),  
[https://statistiques.public.lu/stat/TableViewer/tableView.aspx?ReportId=12856&IF\\_Language=fra&MainTheme=2&FldrName=1](https://statistiques.public.lu/stat/TableViewer/tableView.aspx?ReportId=12856&IF_Language=fra&MainTheme=2&FldrName=1).

26% were non-Luxembourgish residents. In 2018, the percentage increased to 48% of a total population of 614,000.<sup>397</sup> Since the 1980s, the total net migration rate has been positive.

Naturalisations were approved for the first time after 15 years in 1950 but became more regular and numerous than before the war. The nationality law of 22 February 1968 retained most of the dispositions of the 1940 law but reintroduced the possibility of acquisition by option while reinforcing the conditions related to residence.<sup>398</sup> In 1975, the parliament voted for a more liberal nationality law, improving the situation of women. Yet, some political groups and parties defended a nationalist and anti-immigration stance. Such was the case of the Sozialdemokratesch Partei (SdP), which reused a trope first encountered in the interwar period, the *Iwwerfriemung* or *Überfremdung*. In addition, public and media debates were marked by discourses about a lack of Luxembourgish birth rates, a loss of a Luxembourgish identity, and an ageing of the Luxembourgish population. In 1977, the French demographer Gérard Calot was commissioned by the government to draft a report on the development of Luxembourg's demography. The French expert suggested a pro-natalist policy, as was also promoted by the director of the Luxembourgish statistics institute, Georges Als. Gaston Thorn, liberal Prime Minister from 1974 to 1979, spoke of a "collective suicide". The scenarios drawn by Calot have never unfolded.<sup>399</sup> Yet, even at the height of the economic crisis, the political decision-makers knew immigration was an economic necessity. With the end of the crisis and during the economic boom (1984-2002), the official discourse of the government became rather xenophile.<sup>400</sup> However, the question of national identity has not disappeared in political debates or public discourse.

In the post-war period, the life and working conditions of the population overall improved. The average wage for workers increased. The population experienced a rise in life expectancy. The education boom and the upwards social mobility nourished optimism about the future. Changes in consumption and lifestyle marked the decades following the war. Commodities such as television and domestic appliances became increasingly common. The US entertainment industry dominated Western Europe, though it never supplanted European music and film. Events such as the Eurovision song contest, which has occurred every year since 1956 and was won five times by Luxembourg, have been watched by millions of spectators.

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<sup>397</sup> STATEC, 'Population par sexe et par nationalité au 1er janvier (x 1 000) 1981, 1991, 2001 - 2020'.

<sup>398</sup> Scuto, *La nationalité luxembourgeoise*, 287.

<sup>399</sup> Scuto, 300–301.

<sup>400</sup> Scuto, 308.

The 1960s were shaped by the rise of a new environmental discourse about the limits of natural resources, disseminated by the Club of Rome and in the wake of the oil crisis in 1973. The late 1960s and the 1970s were a period of contestation and protest, as demonstrated by the student protests of May 1968 challenging the lifestyle, manifestations against the Vietnam war, or the demonstrations against the invasion of Prague by Soviet troops. Societal transformations and new movements were also present in Luxembourg, from anti-nuclear protests, over feminism, to movements fighting for the rights of non-Luxembourgers.<sup>401</sup> The student protests of 1971 led to a reform of the recognition of foreign university diplomas. In secondary schools, gender separation was abolished, and a secular alternative to religious instruction was introduced. The liberal-left coalition government of 1974, which undertook a series of reforms, such as the abolition of the death penalty, came to power in this context of protest. On 9 October 1973, the leftist trade unions organised a strike against the right-liberal government and advanced socio-political demands. However, the advent of a new government did not put an end to contestation. In 1977, a citizens' initiative prevented the construction of a nuclear reactor in Remerschen.

In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, Luxembourg faces many challenges, some of them global such as climate change, and others specific to its situation. The presence of a large non-Luxembourgish resident population has elicited debates about voting rights for foreigners. The integration of non-Luxembourgish communities has proven a significant challenge, as it does not only concern linguistic aspects but also the dialogue between cultures and the most suitable model for the public school system. The pressure on the real estate market has caused prices to rise steadily, eliciting a lack of affordable housing. The rise of the internet has allowed instantaneous communication over large distances and made enormous amounts of information readily available. It has also elicited questions concerning data protection, quality of information and fake news. The uncertainties caused by a multipolar world, the problems faced by the EU, nationalism, climate change, or the global pandemic are putting many question marks on the future.

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<sup>401</sup> For an analysis of these changes and questions surrounding political participation, see: Tobias Vetterle, ‘Die Teilhabe am Politischen: Eine Diskursgeschichte der “politischen Partizipation” in Luxemburg, 1960-1990’ (Dissertation, Université du Luxembourg / Universität Trier, 2018).

## **CHAPTER III. BUILDING THE NATION: CULTURAL POLICY UNTIL 1940**

The present chapter focuses on the cultural policy of the interwar period (until 1940) while including some references to the 19<sup>th</sup> century to provide a more complex picture. The first part is dedicated to the appearance and consolidation of state cultural policy in Luxembourg and includes an examination of initiatives reflecting the political context. Two concepts are used to analyse these initiatives: political performance and national aggrandizement. The second part is dedicated to the (pre-)history of the State Museum.

### ***III.1. From Non-Intervention to Consolidation***

In his analysis of French cultural policy until 1959, published in 2004, Pascal Ory chose to start with the French Revolution.<sup>402</sup> He identified three traditions that have shaped French cultural policy since 1789: a monarchical approach, a liberal approach, and a democratic approach. These approaches were structured by the Revolution and, as Ory noted, have often coexisted within an institution. While the monarchical policy has not disappeared with the Revolution and has generally dwelled in a patrimonial and ostentatious policy by a patron state, the liberal vein encompasses a policy that puts the creators and their works at the centre. The democratic vein focuses on the relationship with society.

In Luxembourg, the birth of the modern state is less easy to identify as there was no break comparable to the French Revolution. An alternative might consist in seeing its development as a process in several stages (1815, 1839-1841, 1868). However, culture had barely any place in the considerations of the political elite at that time. If Ory's scheme is applied to Luxembourg, notwithstanding the different contexts, the monarchical line was present in the institutions that Luxembourg inherited from the era of French rule (1795-1815): the State Library, assembled with books that the French had confiscated from aristocrats and monasteries and not directly supervised by the state until the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, and the Archives du Département des Forêts, the predecessor of the State Archives and later National Archives. Yet, apart from these two institutions, the state did not create new ones, and the monarchical vein only reappeared at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century with the plans for a national museum. In the

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<sup>402</sup> Pascal Ory, 'L'Etat et la culture de la Révolution à 1959', in *Institutions et vie culturelles*, ed. Guy Saez (Paris: La documentation française, 2004), 9–13.

meantime, the national political authorities pursued a non-interventionist or *laissez-faire* policy.<sup>403</sup>

### **III.1.1. A liberal policy in the 19<sup>th</sup> century**

The liberal approach was predominantly present in what might be labelled “negative policy”, i.e., removing obstacles to cultural creation, such as the abolition of censorship in 1868. The other dimension of the liberal policy, as mentioned above, was expressed in the non-interventionist stance of the state. Though the elite generally drew on French models to construct the state apparatus, cultural policy was somewhat an exception. In France, the position of *inspecteur des monuments historiques* was created in 1837, but a similar initiative did not exist in Luxembourg. This does not necessarily mean Luxembourg was a latecomer compared to its neighbours, especially France. Only the context, traditions and approaches were different. The state was not actively pursuing a policy of protecting monuments, yet it allowed the creation of the Archaeological Society in 1845. To a certain extent, the activities of the society replaced a state policy toward monument conservation. Of course, this led to constraints, such as the dependence on state subsidies. Even the creation of the Archaeological Society cannot be regarded as an example of copying French initiatives. The protection of monuments was a concern shared by many emerging or yet-to-emerge nation-states in the 19<sup>th</sup> century since their aim to construct an image of cultural and national coherence was generally a common goal.

Another example illustrates the liberal structures and traditions in Luxembourg. The 19<sup>th</sup> century marked a rise in local cultural activities and societies, especially in the field of music. Instead of an interventionist policy, the government of the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries pursued a policy of devolution of responsibilities, not only to actors such as the Archaeological Society, but also to local authorities. A case in point is the distribution of subsidies to local music societies as part of government policies since the 1840s. The national authorities requested activity reports about musical and choral societies from the district commissioners (*commissaires de district*) and mayors. Additionally, they obtained advice from a special

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<sup>403</sup> Similarly to Ory, Kim Eling summarised the monarchic tradition in French cultural policy “as centred on two complementary roles for the state: first, that of patron, offering direct support of individual artists and institutions; and second, that of censor, concomitantly imposing tight controls on the production and distribution of works of art.” (Kim Eling, *The Politics of Cultural Policy in France* [London: Palgrave Macmillan, 1999], 1).

commission.<sup>404</sup> While considering the reports and preferring not to intervene in local affairs, the state allocated a global subsidy to each municipality.<sup>405</sup>

Despite possible modifications, this system was still in place in the interwar period. In a communiqué sent to the district commissioners and the executive council of Luxembourg City in January 1921, the director general of public instruction requested proposals for subsidies to local music and choral associations, as well as detailed information about the societies such as membership strength and the use of previously received subsidies. Towns with at least two societies should be communicated to him, too.<sup>406</sup> The commissioners drew district lists of the societies based on the information they received from the municipalities. These lists were sent to the director general. In one case, the commissioner of the district of Luxembourg<sup>407</sup> suggested not granting any subsidy to the music society of Esch-sur-Alzette, as it had not participated in the celebration of the anniversary of the grand duchess, while intensifying its participation in “non-official” pageants such as the Rosa Luxemburg and Liebknecht manifestation.<sup>408</sup> Though he did not voice it directly, it seems that the district commissioner was not in favour of supporting a society with apparently leftist tendencies and a lack of interest in the monarchy. It was not possible to determine if the director general followed his advice.

While not constituting a direct intervention by the state, the allocation and distribution of subsidies is a positive policy within the liberal vein, as it actively supports artistic and cultural creation and activities. The first time any subsidies were allocated to a purpose directly linked to culture or arts was in the state budget for 1845, with the article “Encouragements aux beaux arts et conservation des anciens monuments” in French, or “Aufmunterungen zu den schönen Künsten und Erhaltung der alten Monumente” in German. Its appearance was probably due to the foundation of the Archaeological Society. With an amount of 2,400 florins, it represented

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<sup>404</sup> A long-standing member of this commission was Jean Antoine Zinnen (1827-1898), composer of today’s national anthem and director of the music school in Luxembourg City.

<sup>405</sup> Spang, ‘La politique culturelle des Gouvernements luxembourgeois de 1848 à nos jours’, 596–597.

<sup>406</sup> ANLux, IP-1843, Circular of the Director general of Public Instruction to the district commissioners and the executive council of Luxembourg City, 17/01/1921.

<sup>407</sup> Luxembourg was divided in three administrative districts: Luxembourg, Grevenmacher and Diekirch. In 2015, the districts were abolished. Their subdivisions, the cantons, still exist.

<sup>408</sup> “Je propose d’exclure la société de musique d’Esch.s.Alz. de la répartition des subsides pour l’année 1920 pour le motif que contre les usages établis, malgré les subsides de l’Etat régulièrement touchés jusqu’alors et au mépris des convenances les plus élémentaires, cette société a cru devoir s’abstenir de prendre part cette année-ci aux solennités officielles de l’anniversaire de la naissance de S.A.R. Madame la Grande-Duchesse, alors qu’au contraire elle a ostensiblement rehaussé de sa présence des cortèges non officiels tels que la manifestation Rosa Luxemburg et Liebknecht.”

(ANLux, IP-1843, Letter from the Luxembourg District Commissioner to the Director general of Interior and of Public Instruction, 31/05/1921).

around 9% of the budget section to which it belonged (various subsidies “dans l’intérêt de la morale, du culte, de l’instruction, de l’industrie, de la sûreté et de la salubrité publiques”); compared to the total state expenses of 1,509,509.66 florins, it was insignificant.<sup>409</sup> It should also be noted that the *beaux-arts*, unlike in France<sup>410</sup>, have never been an official policy category and disappeared in the state budgets over time. However, it expressed the restricted concept of culture dominating cultural policy thinking until the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

In Luxembourg, a non-interventionist cultural policy appeared first, followed by a strengthened interventionist policy without entirely supplanting the liberal vein. The monarchical vein mostly inspired this interventionist policy. In the following sub-sections, I will focus on several aspects: the appearance of culture as an explicit political and administrative category, the structure of the state budgets, and the cultural diplomacy and propaganda shaped by the geographical and cultural situation. These intertwined approaches are fundamental to be addressed for a period during which the concept of cultural policy did not exist as it came to be used in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The emergence of a concept or a meaning attributed to it is difficult to date. To minimise the risk of a teleological narrative or an analysis biased by a preconceived idea of cultural policy/*Kulturpolitik/politique culturelle*, the following sub-section examines how these concepts were understood in the interwar period.

### **III.1.2. An anatomy of two concepts: *Kulturpolitik* and *arts et sciences***

From the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century until the 1960s, the expression *arts et sciences* was used in Luxembourg as an administrative and budget category. However, when the Germans occupied Luxembourg in 1940-1944, it disappeared from official records, as French was banned. Instead, *Kulturpflege* or *Kulturpolitik* (cultural policy) were used, adorned with ideological connotations.

*Kulturpolitik* had already existed as a concept before the Second World War and was rather polysemic. In Germany, the term appeared for the first time in the records of the Reichstag around the turn of the century.<sup>411</sup> In Luxembourg, it regularly surfaced in newspapers. The

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<sup>409</sup> ‘Loi du 30 juin 1844, concernant le Budget de l’Etat pour l’année 1845’, in *Mémorial A*, vol. 39 (Luxembourg, 1844), 393–429.

<sup>410</sup> In France, the expression *beaux-arts* appeared for the first time in the title of a government position in 1860. In the following decades, the hierarchy attributed to the *beaux-arts* changed, from a state secretary over an under-secretary to a ministry. With the Popular Front government (1936-1938), a *ministère de l’Education Nationale et des Beaux Arts* was created and existed until September 1939.

<sup>411</sup> Manfred Abelein, *Deutsche Kulturpolitik: Dokumente* (Düsseldorf: Bertelsmann, 1970), 11.

frequency of the French expression *politique culturelle* was much lower.<sup>412</sup> An analysis of the use of *Kulturpolitik* in the newspapers reveals that it referred to a set of actions not primarily of the state but first and foremost of other actors such as the Catholic Church. A first idea of the extensive area covered by *Kulturpolitik* can be obtained by considering two articles published in the *Tageblatt* during WWI, criticising the government's sole priority on basic food provision (*Brotpolitik*) and highlighting the importance of *Kulturpolitik*, in the sense of education and knowledge. In October 1917, the *Tageblatt* wrote:

Here too, the “Brotpolitik” has been second to none for three years, but the “Kulturpolitik” should not be forgotten because public education, which is strongly prospering here, would be built on sand if we don't provide the people with the opportunity to renew and deepen the knowledge acquired at school.<sup>413</sup>

Note the choice to put *Kulturpolitik* between quotation marks, as if to highlight its constructed nature or its uncommon use in this context. Also, it is not dissociated from public education. Five weeks later, the *Tageblatt* addressed the question of *Kulturpolitik* again:

It is truly saddening that since the outbreak of the war, the best forces of the nation are concentrating on questions related to food policy. [...] Therefore, Chamber and Government, municipalities and press need to focus on [culture] [...].<sup>414</sup>

*Kulturpolitik* was subjected to numerous confrontations between the catholic newspaper *Luxemburger Wort* and the leftist newspaper *Tageblatt*. Such was the case, though not exclusively limited to the area of *Kulturpolitik*, of a work programme of the Party of the Right published in the *Wort* on 7 November 1936. The section dedicated to *Kulturpolitik* included proposals related to education, media, libraries, arts, sports, and morality. “The Party of the Right pursues a Christian cultural policy”, the programme stated.<sup>415</sup> This policy included the fight against immorality. The *Tageblatt* reacted several days later in an article titled *Klerikale*

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<sup>412</sup> The term *politique culturelle* might have been used more often in French articles, but the search engine of the digital newspapers archive *eLuxemburgensia*, which I used for my research, might not be able find all mentions due to a flawed OCR (optical character recognition). Moreover, German was much more prevalent in the Luxembourgian press. Only a few newspapers, such as the Francophile *Indépendance luxembourgeoise* (1871-1934), exclusively published in French.

<sup>413</sup> Own translation. “Auch bei uns steht seit drei Jahren die ‘Brotpolitik’ an erster Stelle, doch darf dabei die ‘Kulturpolitik’ nicht vergessen werden, denn die ganze Volksschulbildung, die bei uns so kräftig blüht, wäre auf den Sand gebaut, wenn wir dem Volke keine Gelegenheit geben würden, um die in der Schule erworbenen Kenntnisse zu erfrischen und zu vertiefen.” (‘Lokalneuigkeiten’, *Tageblatt*, October 1917).

<sup>414</sup> Own translation. “Es ist wirklich traurig, daß seit Ausbruch des Krieges die besten Kräfte der Nation von den Fragen der Lebensmittelpolitik absorbiert werden. [...] Deshalb müssen Kammer und Regierung, Gemeinde und Presse dieser Frage [Kultur] ihre Haupttätigkeit zuwenden [...].” (‘Wochen-Revue’, *Tageblatt*, December 1917).

<sup>415</sup> Own translation. “Die Rechtspartei erstrebt eine christliche Kulturpolitik” (‘Arbeitsprogramm der Rechtspartei’, *Luxemburger Wort*, November 1936).

*Phrasen – sozialistische Arbeit!* (*Clerical rhetoric – socialist labour!*), attacking the programme for its vague content.<sup>416</sup>

An article published in the *Wort* in May 1937 conveys a better idea of what was considered immoral by the Right. It condemned the opponents of Catholicism and especially the “libertines” (*Freidenker*) and “materialists”, which it repeatedly did in a similar fashion throughout the interwar period. For instance, it stated that “they stole [the human being’s] best weapons to protect the spirit against matter, passion and drives.”<sup>417</sup> According to the article, the “non-culture”, or *Unkultur*, included bad or unsubstantial movies, pornographic texts, “stupid” theatre pieces, dubious radio shows, and the wrong and shameless physical culture.<sup>418</sup>

The Labour Party’s concept of *Kulturpolitik* was opposed to that of the Right, but the topics it covered were broad, too. A collective piece signed by the candidates of the Labour Party for the partial national election and published in the *Tageblatt* on 19 May 1934 illustrates this broader use: *Kulturpolitik* included cultural progress and promotion of people’s health, arts and sciences, free public schools, and physical activities.<sup>419</sup> Though not explicitly mentioned in the text, it would not be surprising had the Labour Party been inspired by the Section Française de l’Internationale Ouvrière (French Section of the Workers’ International, SFIO), which included similar elements in its demands that were later integrated into the policies of the Front populaire government (1936-1938).<sup>420</sup>

The agency of *Kulturpolitik* was not limited to the state, which progressively became the main actor in this sphere. *Kulturpolitik* included everything related to the human mind and body: arts, education, sports, or spiritual/religious values. It was not used, however, in political debates related to arts and sciences. Also, *Kulturpolitik*, as it was understood at the time in Luxembourg, went far beyond what the administrative category *arts et sciences* covered. Luxembourg seemed to be a different case than France, for instance. Indeed, the “modern” sense of *politique culturelle* appeared during the period of the Front populaire in France at the end of the 1930s,<sup>421</sup> but it did not have a notable impact on the political discourse in Luxembourg.

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<sup>416</sup> ‘Klerikale Phrasen - sozialistische Arbeit!’, *Tageblatt*, November 1936.

<sup>417</sup> Own translation. “[...] sie rauben ihm [dem Menschen] die besten Waffen, den Geist gegen Materie, Leidenschaft und Triebe zu schützen.”

<sup>418</sup> ‘Gegner der Kultur’, *Luxemburger Wort*, May 1937.

<sup>419</sup> ‘Wohnungswesen und Kulturpolitik’, *Tageblatt*, May 1934.

<sup>420</sup> Pascal Ory, *La belle illusion: Culture et politique sous le signe du Front populaire 1935-1938* (Paris: Plon, 1994).

<sup>421</sup> Ory, ‘L’Etat et la culture de la Révolution à 1959’, 12. Following the French historian Françoise Taliano-des Garets, despite its brevity, “la période du Front populaire est décisive dans l’histoire des

Unlike cultural policy, *arts et sciences* have been a political category since the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The earliest appearance of arts and sciences in the administration can be traced back to the grand-ducal decree of 26 December 1874 on the constitution of the public services. The *arts et sciences* ranged among the responsibilities of the Directorate-General of Justice (*direction générale de la Justice*), besides others such as “Instruction supérieure et moyenne” (middle and higher education).<sup>422</sup> This decree coincided with the arrival of a new government, presided by the liberal baron Félix de Blochhausen, succeeding Emmanuel Servais. Until his death in 1876, Alphonse Funck headed the Justice Department. His Directorate-General was taken over by Paul Eyschen in July 1876, who became state minister in 1888. Yet, there was even an earlier occurrence of the expression than at the administrative level. In the state budgets, the expression *arts et sciences* had already appeared in the 1850s with a dedicated section.<sup>423</sup>

In the interwar period, Luxembourg did not have a ministry explicitly tending to cultural policy. The expression *arts et sciences* was not a Luxembourgish specificity, as it existed in a similar version in Belgium with a Ministry of Sciences and Arts (*Ministère des Sciences et des Arts*) from 1907 to 1932. Afterwards, arts became a responsibility of the Ministry of Public Education (*Ministère de l'Instruction publique*).<sup>424</sup> In Germany, some *Länder* such as Prussia and Saxony established a Ministry of Sciences, Art and Popular Education.<sup>425</sup> At the international level, the intellectual cooperation within the League of Nations merged arts, sciences and humanities. In Luxembourg, *arts et sciences* were the responsibility of either the Ministry for Public Education (*Direction Générale/Ministère de l'Instruction publique*) or the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. As the departments were organised and split up between the ministers at the beginning of each newly elected government, arts and sciences were not a stable policy category. Thus, the changes were not necessarily limited to the person heading them. In 1937, the *arts et sciences* shifted from Public Education to Foreign Affairs, but with the same minister (Joseph Bech).

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politiques culturelles et des politiques sportives.” It provided incentives to the post-war cultural policy in France (Françoise Taliano-des Garets, *Un siècle d'histoire culturelle en France: de 1914 à nos jours* [Malakoff: Armand Colin, 2019], 59).

<sup>422</sup> ‘Arrêté royal grand-ducal du 26 décembre 1874, portant répartition des services publics’, in *Mémorial A*, vol. 37 (Luxembourg, 1874), 353, <http://data.legilux.public.lu/file/eli-etat-leg-memorial-1874-37-fr-pdf.pdf>.

<sup>423</sup> ‘Loi du 15 janvier 1858, concernant le budget des recettes et des dépenses non permanentes pour 1858’, in *Mémorial A*, vol. 2 (Luxembourg, 1858), 26–49.

<sup>424</sup> Christophe Pirenne, ‘Les politiques culturelles en Belgique depuis 1945’, in *Pour une histoire des politiques culturelles dans le monde: 1945-2011*, ed. Philippe Poirier, Travaux et documents 28 (La Documentation française, 2011), 75.

<sup>425</sup> Höpel, ‘La politique culturelle en Allemagne au XXe siècle’, 19.

Therefore, while *arts et sciences* had been progressively consolidated as a political category, the term *Kulturpolitik/politique culturelle* began to acquire the meaning it would eventually carry in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Conceptual aspects and categorisations are only one approach, though. Their translation into policies depends on the larger political context and the actors who shape them.

### **III.1.3. From Paul Eyschen's liberal era to Joseph Bech's nationalist policies**

Paul Eyschen and Joseph Bech were both state ministers and headed Foreign Affairs. As their portfolios differed (arts and sciences were not part of Eyschen's responsibilities), it is difficult to compare their actions in relation to cultural policy. Yet, their thinking and approach to cultural policy partly reflected the era in which they governed. Paul Eyschen's years as head of government were marked by a liberal policy, even though a monarchical vein, as stated above, made its first tentative appearance at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. While pushing for the modernisation of the state, Eyschen was concerned about the conservation of the past, too. When he invested the office of director general of public works in 1878, the demolition of the fortifications was ongoing. He opposed a complete removal and advocated for some parts to be conserved, such as the Spanish towers and the Vauban gates in Pfaffenthal. Meanwhile, he promoted the construction of monumental buildings. The Adolphe Bridge and the Bourbon Plateau with the building of the State Bank (Banque et Caisse d'Epargne de l'Etat, BCEE) are remnants of this policy.<sup>426</sup> Cultural institutions did not enjoy this privilege, as they were usually housed in older, existing buildings. As a result, monumental cultural projects such as the national museum at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century or a new building for the National Library in 1913 were not implemented.<sup>427</sup> The only state-funded cultural institutions were the Government Archives and the National Library, created in 1796 and 1798, respectively. The National Library operated as a municipal library until 1899.<sup>428</sup> The importance granted to arts and sciences faded compared to the economic primacy.<sup>429</sup>

If the liberal period before the Great War was shaped by people such as Paul Eyschen, the cultural policy of the interwar years could not be separated from Joseph Bech, responsible for *arts et sciences* from 1921 to 1925 and from 1926 to 1944. Even after 1937 and his resignation as prime minister, he continued to head this department as minister of foreign affairs. The historian Gilbert Trausch described him as the “inventor of the Luxembourgish foreign affairs

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<sup>426</sup> Mersch, ‘Paul Eyschen’, 114–115.

<sup>427</sup> Trausch, ‘Comment devenir une véritable capitale’, 178.

<sup>428</sup> Christophory, ‘La ville de Luxembourg, un carrefour de cultures’, 338.

<sup>429</sup> Scuto, *La nationalité luxembourgeoise*, 44.

policy”, without further corroborating this statement.<sup>430</sup> As a conservative politician with a strong anti-communist stance, Bech ended the liberal policy of the Eyschen era. The paradigm shift was most visibly reflected in the nationality laws and migration policies. The conditions for foreigners who wanted to settle in Luxembourg were strengthened. Furthermore, Bech opined that the criteria for acquiring the Luxembourgish nationality were too lax.<sup>431</sup> During the 1930s, the number of non-Luxembourgish citizens decreased, reversing the tendency of the 1920s. In 1922, 33,436 foreigners lived in Luxembourg; in 1930 this number increased to 55,831 (18.61%). But then, in 1935, the number of non-Luxembourgers dropped to 36,212 (13%).<sup>432</sup>

In this context of rising nationalism, the use of cultural policy to construct and consolidate the nation-state was reinforced. Cultural policy was embedded in a conservative vision, in the double sense of the word: politically (nationalist) and culturally (protection of the past). Bech launched several initiatives in favour of Luxembourg's history and culture. The 700<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Countess Ermesinde of Luxembourg's first charter of enfranchisement constructed a continuity from medieval times to the contemporary period.<sup>433</sup> 24 July 1924 was proclaimed the official day of the commemoration of Dicks, celebrated in every school.<sup>434</sup> Bech was both a political and a socio-cultural actor, and the boundaries of these two spheres were not always clear: he was the first president of the Société des Amis des Musées, created in 1926, while his department was responsible for acquiring objects for the future museum. Bech submitted a draft law on the employment of two custodians in the national museum, but it was never voted. Though he was heading the arts and sciences department, it would be wrong to pin the conservative vision only on him. He acted in a national and conservative context, influencing many stakeholders. It could go as far as the Commission of National Sites and Monuments suggesting a circular to be sent to local administrations urging them to maintain or re-establish traditional street names.<sup>435</sup>

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<sup>430</sup> Trausch, ‘Comment faire d'un Etat de convention une nation?’, 246. Trausch's statement should be nuanced, as illustrated by the efforts of Emile Reuter and the League of Nations before Bech became Minister of Foreign Affairs.

<sup>431</sup> Scuto, *La nationalité luxembourgeoise*, 195.

<sup>432</sup> STATEC, ‘Population par nationalité 1875-2011’.

<sup>433</sup> Pit Péporté et al., *Inventing Luxembourg: Representations of the Past, Space and Language from the Nineteenth to the Twenty-First Century*, National Cultivation of Culture 1 (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 93.

<sup>434</sup> Péporté et al., 254.

<sup>435</sup> “[...] la Commission des Sites et des Monuments propose d'adresser une circulaire aux administrations communales pour les engager à maintenir ou à rétablir, dans la dénomination des rues,

### **III.1.4. Government spending as a reflection of interwar cultural policy**

Another dimension of historical cultural policy research is the analysis of the state budgets from 1918 to 1940<sup>436</sup>, which included a section called *arts et sciences*. This section did not cover all spending on culture-related activities or those considered part of cultural policy today (which will be discussed later on), but it provides a first assessment of what was subsumed under “arts and sciences”. The graphs below visualise the yearly amount of money allocated to the arts and sciences.<sup>437</sup> In principle, the numbers include ordinary and extraordinary expenses, but the latter appeared only in 1922 with 14,000 Luxembourgish francs for the acquisition of cabinets for the museum.<sup>438</sup> A sharp rise from 1927 to 1930 was followed by a decrease from 1930 to 1933, and then a steady increase for cultural and geopolitical reasons (protection of national identity, conservation of national monuments, reaction to the political context in Europe).

Several factors might explain the rise in expenditure after 1927. A new government came to power in July 1926, with Bech both as prime minister and minister for public education. His position certainly endowed him with more decisional weight in allocating money during the elaboration of the state budgets. Arts and sciences possibly benefitted from this change, though not necessarily in 1927 (the first budget voted under the new government), but in 1928 with an increase of 229,215 francs or 0.04% when considering the evolution of the spending relative to the state budget (a low percentage due to an increase of the total state budget). Activities linked to national heritage and national culture seemed to profit most from this evolution.<sup>439</sup> Whereas stakeholders such as the Société des Sciences médicales or the Société des sciences naturelles, physiques et mathématiques did not see any change in their subsidies, this was different for the Historical Section of the Grand-Ducal Institute (Section historique de l’Institut Grand-Ducal, 5,000 francs increase), the Société luxembourgeoise d’études linguistiques et dialectologiques (4,000 francs increase), and grants for sciences, arts, and literary productions (25,000 francs increase). Furthermore, for the first time money was allocated to the acquisition

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les noms anciens consacrés par la tradition.” (ANLux, IP-1810, Note from Albert Nothumb, president of the Commission des sites et des monuments nationaux, to the State Minister, 25/10/1935).

<sup>436</sup> 1940 was the last year in which a budget was voted before the invasion of Luxembourg by German troops.

<sup>437</sup> The numbers can be found in the yearly budgetary laws, published in the *Mémorial A*, and downloadable on [legilux.lu](http://legilux.lu).

<sup>438</sup> ‘Loi du 23 mai 1922, concernant le budget des recettes et des dépenses de l’Etat pour l’exercice 1922.’, in *Mémorial A*, vol. 40 (Luxembourg, 1922), 574, <http://data.legilux.public.lu/file/eli-etat-leg-memorial-1922-40-fr-pdf.pdf>.

<sup>439</sup> The term “heritage” was not used at the time, neither in the budget laws, nor in the parliamentary debates.

of collections for the museum (60,000 francs) and the acquisition of historical, artistic and scientific collections (30,000 francs). Both articles were merged in 1929.

Such budget increases continued to some extent in 1929, even if subsidies for societies remained stable, except for the Société des sciences médicales (4,000 francs increase) and the Comité du Willibrordus-Bauverein pour la restauration de la basilique d'Echternach (19,000 francs increase).<sup>440</sup> The most notable change concerned the addition of a budgetary item, *Entretien des monuments historiques* (200,000 francs). It also accounts for the most significant part of the total increase from 1928 to 1929 of 266,735 francs. This addition is the consequence of a reallocation of a budget article: the budget for the conservation of historical monuments had been categorized under *Travaux Publics*, but it was then moved to the new section. The only impact that the law of 1927 on national monuments and sites<sup>441</sup> might have exerted was the reassignment of the respective article to *Arts et Sciences*, and the increase from 60,000 francs in 1927<sup>442</sup> to 100,000 francs in 1928<sup>443</sup>, then doubling in 1929<sup>444</sup>. The positive economic context might have played a role. 1929 was the peak year of steel production with 2,705,442 tons and finished products (“produits finis laminés et demi-produits”) with 2,127,282 tons.<sup>445</sup> These numbers would only be surpassed in the 1950s.

Concerning the budget for 1932, the tendency is reversed. Allocated money either decreased, as in the case of grants for artistic, literary and scientific production (minus 25,000 francs) and the conservation of historical monuments (minus 75,000 francs) or stagnated.<sup>446</sup> An article created in 1931 for subsidies destined to create regional museums (20,000 francs)

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<sup>440</sup> ‘Loi du 25 mars 1929, concernant le Budget des recettes et des dépenses de l’Etat pour l’exercice 1929’, in *Mémorial A*, vol. 13 (Luxembourg, 1929), 208, <http://data.legilux.public.lu/file/eli-etat-leg-memorial-1929-13-fr-pdf.pdf>.

<sup>441</sup> ‘Loi du 12 août 1927, concernant la conservation et la protection des sites et monuments nationaux’, in *Mémorial A*, vol. 48 (Luxembourg, 1927), 651–658, <http://data.legilux.public.lu/file/eli-etat-leg-memorial-1927-48-fr-pdf.pdf>.

<sup>442</sup> ‘Loi du 23 février 1927, concernant le Budget des recettes et des dépenses de l’Etat pour l’exercice 1927’, in *Mémorial A*, vol. 8 (Luxembourg, 1927), 107, <http://data.legilux.public.lu/file/eli-etat-leg-memorial-1927-8-fr-pdf.pdf>.

<sup>443</sup> ‘Loi du 16 avril 1928, concernant le Budget des recettes et des dépenses de l’Etat pour l’exercice 1928’, in *Mémorial A*, vol. 19 (Luxembourg, 1928), 461, <http://data.legilux.public.lu/file/eli-etat-leg-memorial-1928-19-fr-pdf.pdf>.

<sup>444</sup> ‘Loi du 25 mars 1929, concernant le Budget des recettes et des dépenses de l’Etat pour l’exercice 1929’, 208.

<sup>445</sup> Gérard Trausch, *Histoire économique du Grand-Duché de Luxembourg 1815-2015* (Luxembourg: Statec, 2017), 124.

<sup>446</sup> ‘Loi du 20 avril 1932, concernant le Budget des recettes et des dépenses de l’Etat pour l’exercice 1932’, in *Mémorial A*, vol. 22 (Luxembourg, 1932), 310–311, <http://data.legilux.public.lu/file/eli-etat-leg-memorial-1932-22-fr-pdf.pdf>.

disappeared in 1932.<sup>447</sup> The budget cuts were not only limited to arts and sciences but affected the state budget as a whole. The evolution of cultural expenses was part of a general trend, undoubtedly caused by the economic crisis of the 1930s. In December 1929, during the discussions for the budget for 1930, the looming economic recession was either ignored or unexpected. The Wall Street Crash of October 1929 remained unmentioned in the speeches.<sup>448</sup> By January 1932, the crisis had reached Luxembourg. At the Chamber of Deputies, Pierre Dupong (Parti de la Droite), director general of the treasury, insisted several times on the economic recession:

Des réductions de salaires ont mis une partie notable de nos populations dans la gêne et ont réduit leur pouvoir d'achat pour les produits de toutes sortes [...]. L'agriculture se plaint de la mévente de sa production, des prix qu'elle obtient pour sa production [...]. Le commerce, l'artisanat souffrent de la dépression générale et un nombre toujours croissant de leurs membres n'arrivent plus à faire honneur à leurs engagements. Les listes de faillites et des concordats s'allongent tous les mois, l'industrie exporte parfois ses marchandises en dessous de son prix de revient; la Bourse qu'un de nos illustres prédécesseurs a qualifiée de baromètre économique est tombée au courant de l'année à un niveau tel que les hommes d'affaires les plus avisés n'auraient jamais tenu pour possible.<sup>449</sup>

As a response to the situation, the government reorganised investments and prioritized employment measures, either by recruiting the unemployed for public construction projects, or by granting subsidies to municipalities for similar projects in their own area of competence.<sup>450</sup> It is not the aim of the present study to investigate the repercussions of the economic crisis in Luxembourg, but it illustrates that culture was not a priority.

The rise from 1938 to 1939 was mainly caused by expenses related to the museum. Two new budget articles appeared, “Aménagement et frais d'entretien et de conservation du Musée archéologique et du Musée folklorique” (150,000 francs) and “Publication d'un catalogue des collections du Musée et dépenses diverses relatives à l'inauguration du nouveau Musée”

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<sup>447</sup> Why it was created in 1931 remains unexplained in the parliamentary records (Chambre des députés, ‘37e séance (19 mars 1931)’, in *Compte-rendu de la session ordinaire de 1930-1931* [Luxembourg: Chambre des députés, 1931], 1186–1187). It is possible that it was somehow linked to the plan of an arts museum in Luxembourg City, as a budget article was created in 1931 specifically for this purpose.

<sup>448</sup> Chambre des députés, ‘6e séance (17 décembre 1929)’, in *Compte-rendu de la session ordinaire de 1929-1930* (Luxembourg: Chambre des députés, 1929), 143–158.

<sup>449</sup> Chambre des députés, ‘14e séance (26 janvier 1932)’, in *Compte-rendu de la session ordinaire de 1931-1932* (Luxembourg: Chambre des députés, 1932), 353.

<sup>450</sup> Chambre des députés, ‘15e séance (27 janvier 1932)’, in *Compte-rendu de la session ordinaire de 1931-1932* (Luxembourg: Chambre des députés, 1932), 361–362.

(40,000 francs).<sup>451</sup> The latter, related to the museum's opening, appeared in the budget for 1939 only. In 1940, a notable decline occurred, as the budget for arts and sciences plummeted from 0.29% to 0.15% of the total budget. This decline certainly needs to be interpreted with caution, as the events of 1939 caused additional, extraordinary expenses that were unnecessary in the next year. Yet, there were still severe budget cuts, especially concerning grants (48,000 francs cut), the *Musée archéologique* and the *Musée folklorique* (100,000 francs cut), and the preservation of historical monuments (80,000 francs cut). The budget cuts mainly impacted conservation, collections and artistic production. The reasons for these cuts remain unclear, though the difficult international situation serves as a plausible explanation: the budget was voted in March 1940, two months before the invasion of Luxembourg. In the parliamentary debates, the ongoing war was mentioned several times by the rapporteur of the budget law and by Pierre Dupong in their respective speeches. Dupong's statement was explicit in this context: "It is indeed a war budget," he declared, adding that it took into account the "potential repercussions of the war".<sup>452</sup> However, the negative tendency of the budget for arts and sciences did not coincide with the general evolution of the state budget, which increased.

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<sup>451</sup> 'Loi du 20 avril 1939, concernant le Budget des recettes et des dépenses de l'Etat pour l'exercice 1939', in *Mémorial A*, vol. 32 (Luxembourg, 1939), 334–335, <http://data.legilux.public.lu/file/eli-etat-leg-memorial-1938-32-fr-pdf.pdf>.

<sup>452</sup> Chambre des députés, '9e séance (11 janvier 1940)', in *Compte-rendu de la session ordinaire de 1939-1940* (Luxembourg: Chambre des députés, 1940), 287–289.

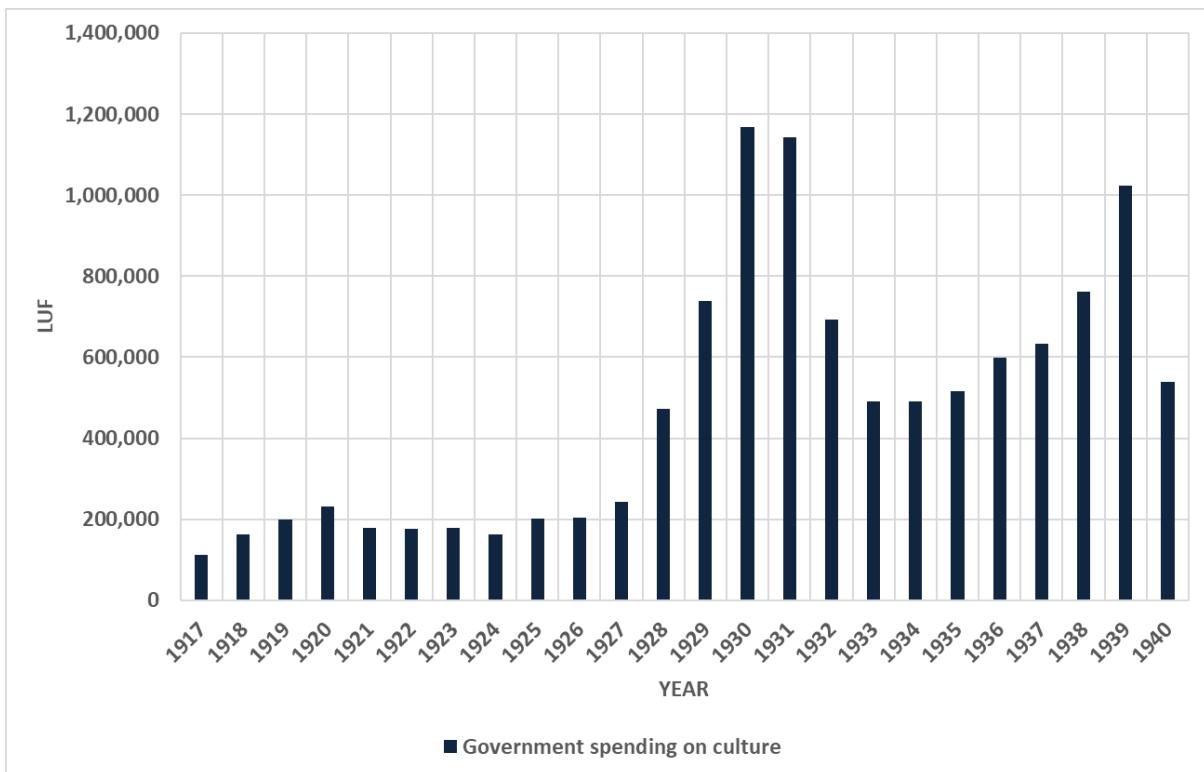


Fig. 5: The graph shows the total state spending on culture (ordinary + extraordinary spending), 1917-1940. In fact, only in 1922 existed an extraordinary spending of LUF 14,000 (LUF = Luxembourgish Francs).

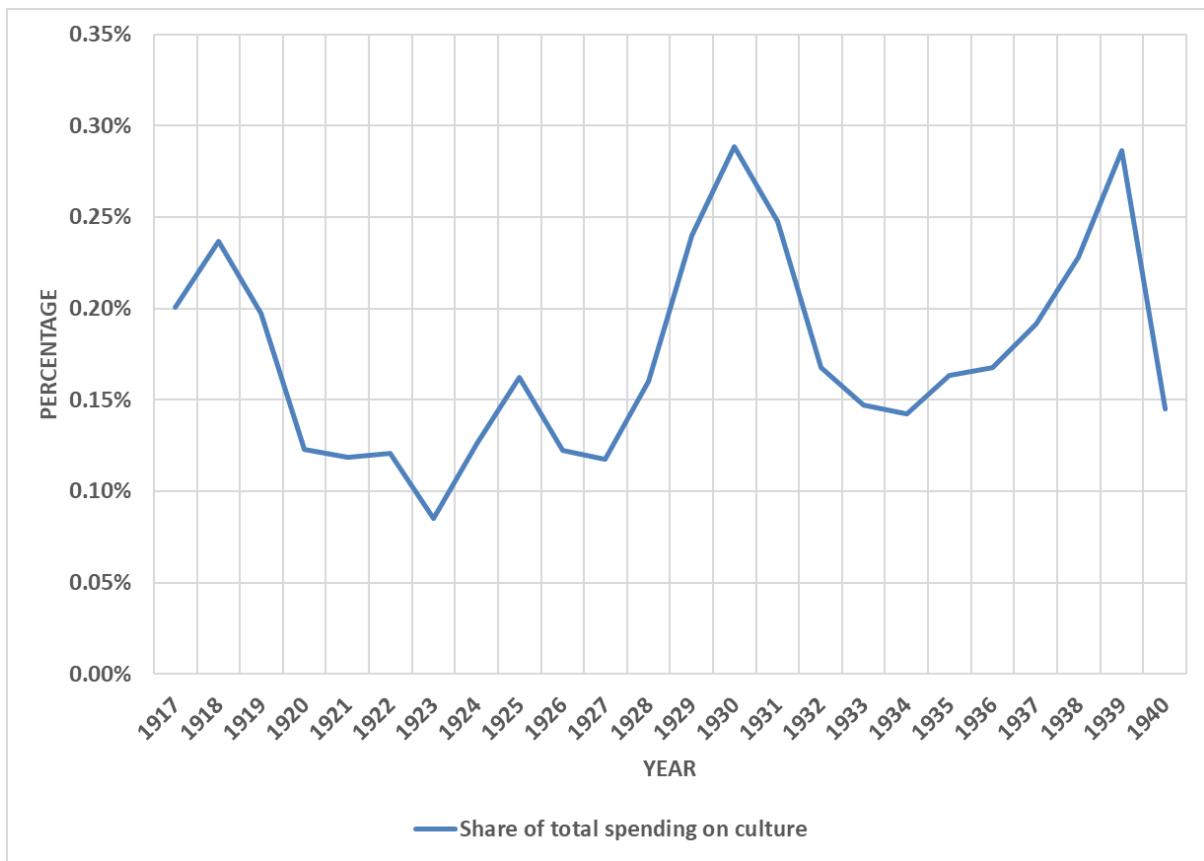


Fig. 6: Share of total spending on culture relative to the total government budget, 1917-1940.

For a further analysis of the budget, spending on arts and sciences might be categorized according to two approaches specifically conceived for the present study. The first approach considers the type of expenses or the nature of transactions. It distinguishes between direct investments and indirect expenses (subsidies). Direct investments include services, institutions, and events directly related to the responsibility and missions of the Arts and Sciences Department, whereas the second involve private or para-state intermediaries who use the money granted by the government according to their needs. Direct investments also encompass cases in which the state financed only part of a project, such as the construction costs of a municipal art museum in Luxembourg City in 1931. Indirect expenses represented an important part of the budget throughout the 1920s and 1930s. However, they remained stable. The fluctuations in the direct expenses were more significant. They were barely noticeable in the early 1920s but then visibly increased in the late 1920s and early 1930s. During the interwar period, and regardless of the evolution, the state progressively took responsibility for directly investing in culture and expanding its services due to the law of 1927 on monuments, the support of museums, and the acquisition of collections. In addition, the state created an excavation service (*service des fouilles*), which appeared for the first time in the budget of 1938<sup>453</sup>, a direct consequence of the law of 1937 on excavations.<sup>454</sup>

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<sup>453</sup> ‘Loi du 23 mai 1938, concernant le Budget des recettes et des dépenses de l’Etat pour l’exercice 1938’, in *Mémorial A*, vol. 32 (Luxembourg, 1938), 527, <http://data.legilux.public.lu/file/eli-etat-leg-memorial-1938-32-fr-pdf.pdf>.

<sup>454</sup> ‘Loi du 26 mars 1937, concernant les fouilles et la protection des objets d’intérêt historique, préhistorique et paléontologique’, in *Mémorial A*, vol. 26 (Luxembourg, 1937), 26, <http://data.legilux.public.lu/file/eli-etat-leg-memorial-1937-26-fr-pdf.pdf>.

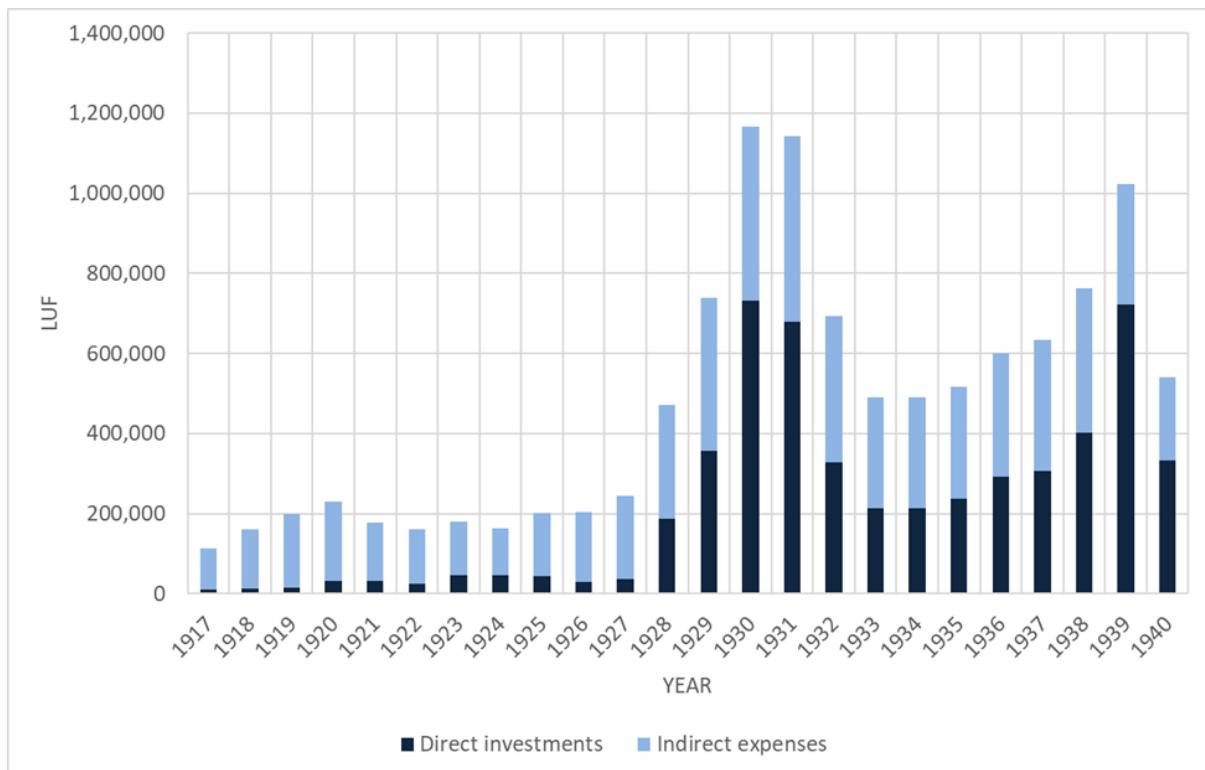


Fig. 7: Government spending on culture according to type, 1917-1940.

The second approach focuses on the destination or the receivers of state funds, divided into seven categories: institutions (national or local), specified societies, non-specific (mostly grants destined for artistic, scientific, or other cultural production and activities that are not further specified in the budget laws), mixed<sup>455</sup>, international relations<sup>456</sup>, specific events (events that happen once, though costs and expenses might be distributed over several years), and cultural heritage (or objectified destination, i.e. expenses for collections and monuments).

The subsidies for societies and individuals were not further defined in the budget laws (except for some specific actors), but internal documents of the ministry provide an overview of who received money and for what purposes. Among these individuals figured the historian Arthur Herchen. In 1923, he received a subsidy for a new edition of *Histoire ancienne*, a textbook used in secondary school. His letter to the prime minister stressed that “as long as we are an independent and neutral nation, we need our own history schoolbook, responding to our

<sup>455</sup> It includes only one budget article appearing every year and concerning the rents to pay for the accommodation of the collections of the state and of the societies.

<sup>456</sup> This category concerns only one article, “Part contributive du Grand-Duché dans les dépenses du bureau de l’Union internationale de Berne pour la protection des œuvres littéraires et artistiques (sans distinction d’exercice)”. It should be noted that international (cultural) relations were mostly organised by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, such as the League of Nations.

needs, to our national character and our political situation [...].”<sup>457</sup> Besides framing his plea in a nationalist perspective, he advised against the edition of a new book to replace his, as a professor would then have the troublesome task of writing it. Whether Herchen was honest about his motivations is difficult to say, but the use of his book in schools was in his interest. He suggested several changes, and Bech accepted the request under the conditions of revising the book and consulting the history teachers of the three secondary schools.<sup>458</sup>

Other socio-cultural actors receiving state grants were Nicolas Welter (for his *Oeuvres complètes*)<sup>459</sup> and Lucien Koenig (for his *Anthologie des Poètes Jeunes-Luxembourg*)<sup>460</sup>. In some cases, the government supported writers through acquisitions, such as Nicolas van Werveke’s *Kulturgeschichte des Luxemburger Landes* in 1923.<sup>461</sup> For the period between 1916 and 1920, we find among the beneficiaries a local music society (Société de Chant de Bastendorf), the Cercle artistique du Luxembourg, the Photo-Club Luxembourgeois and the Cercle sténographique luxembourgeois. Among individual beneficiaries figured many teachers, though the profession was not always indicated in the ministerial decrees or the letters. Nicolas Braunshausen, Mathias Tresch, Nicolas van Werveke and Paul Palgen were beneficiaries, too. The granted amounts could range between hundreds of francs and 1,500 francs (for the CAL). Usually, they were around 500 francs.<sup>462</sup> Other documents illustrate the weight of local singing and musical societies in the grants scheme.

From 1928 onwards, expenses related to heritage increased. In 1930, they represented more than half of the total budget for arts and sciences, as the state bought the Schmitz property<sup>463</sup> in Luxembourg City for 312,510 francs (art. 352ter).<sup>464</sup> The other categories show no noticeable changes, except for the institutions in 1931 and 1939. In 1931, the government prescribed a budget for constructing a municipal art museum in Luxembourg City. The article

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<sup>457</sup> Own translation. “[...] tant que nous sommes un peuple indépendant et neutre, il nous faut un manuel d’histoire à nous, répondant à nos besoins, à notre caractère national et à notre situation politique [...].” (ANLux, IP-1857, Letter from Arthur Herchen to Joseph Bech, 27/09/1923).

<sup>458</sup> ANLux, IP-1857, Letter from Joseph Bech to Arthur Herchen, 03/10/1923.

<sup>459</sup> ANLux, IP-1857, Ministerial Decree of 10 June 1925.

<sup>460</sup> ANLux, IP-1857, Ministerial Decree of 22 July 1927.

<sup>461</sup> ANLux, IP-1857, Letter from Joseph Bech to Gustave Soupert, 31/10/1923.

<sup>462</sup> For the detailed records, I refer to the folder *Encouragements sciences, arts, littérature 1916-1920* in: ANLux, IP-1856.

<sup>463</sup> The house was situated at the intersection between the rue Wiltheim and the rue du Palais de Justice. In 1921, the upper part of the house was bought by the state; the lower part, belonging to Antoine Schmitz, was acquired in 1922 and 1930 (Isabelle Yegles-Becker, *De Fëschmaart: Description* [Esch-sur-Alzette: Editions Le Phare, 2002], 105–106).

<sup>464</sup> ‘Loi du 22 février 1930, concernant le Budget des recettes et des dépenses de l’Etat pour l’exercice 1930’, in *Mémorial A*, vol. 9 (Luxembourg, 1930), 153, <http://data.legilux.public.lu/file/eli-etat-leg-memorial-1930-9-fr-pdf.pdf>.

remained in the following years as a placeholder (“pour mémoire”). An increase in 1939 was caused by the planned opening of the national museum. Budget increases related to specific events are also visible, for instance, in 1928 with the International Exposition of the Press in Cologne, or in 1939 with the Centenary of Independence.

In the administrative structures and budget laws, “culture” as a policy area did not exist during the interwar period. Cultural policy was not constructed as an explicit field of public intervention, much like in France in the 1930s.<sup>465</sup> Even if they were not clearly defined, the arts in *arts et sciences* certainly approximated the idea of high culture and national culture. They were also paired with research, which teachers and intellectuals mostly carried out. Cultural policy was limited to an arts policy, whereas “arts” encompassed high culture and traditional areas, such as theatre, opera, literature, or fine arts (*bildende Kunst*).<sup>466</sup> In the Luxembourgish context, the arts policy included monuments as witnesses from and of the national past, or as vectors of glorification of national cultural production.

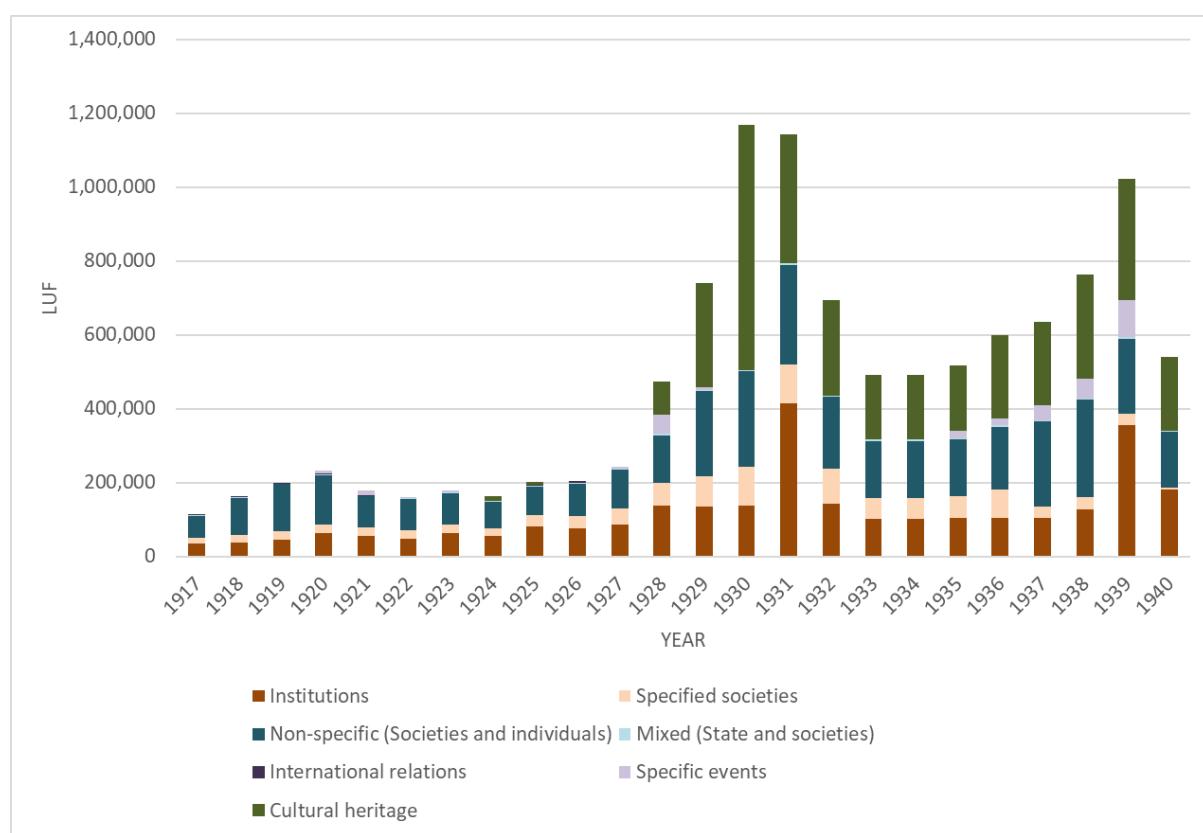


Fig. 8: Government spending on culture according to destination, 1917-1940.

<sup>465</sup> Dubois, *La politique culturelle*, 163.

<sup>466</sup> Klein, *Kulturpolitik*, 33.

Many expenses related to culture in a broader sense were not necessarily part of the arts budget. The National Library, for instance, appeared in the middle and higher education section of the state budget (*Enseignement supérieur et moyen*). Thus, the National Library was an educational institution from a normative perspective. The Ministry of Public Works supervised the conservation of historical monuments until 1928. Furthermore, not all grants to societies whose missions were essentially or partly cultural appeared in the arts section of the budget, such as the association Art à l'école (in the section on primary education). The money for the construction of the national museum in the Collart-de Scherff building acquired by the state in 1923<sup>467</sup> originated from the Public Works budget.<sup>468</sup> Once finished, the museum's administrative and maintenance costs were allotted to the arts section. Furthermore, according to what Clive Gray coined "policy attachment"<sup>469</sup>, arts as a field of public intervention was susceptible to be impacted by other policy areas, such as tourism. Hence the difficulty in determining the exact amount of money spent on culture.

Despite some evolutions, such as the growing direct investments or the administrative changes in 1937, dramatic shifts did not occur. Luxembourg was not the only country to focus on supporting fine arts. In France, the Ministry of Public Instruction and Fine Arts (Ministère de l'Instruction publique et des Beaux-Arts) was succeeded by the Ministry of National Education in 1932, which included an undersecretary of state for fine arts. According to Vincent Dubois, the *Beaux-Arts* did not represent a coherent policy. Instead, it was a collection of heterogeneous competencies.<sup>470</sup> This situation was not much different for the Luxembourgish *arts et sciences*. As in other European countries, Luxembourg's cultural policy was mostly limited to high or fine arts, without a clear separation from research, at least from a budget perspective.

The state budgets offer an overview of the collective socio-cultural actors deemed significant enough to receive subsidies listed in specific budget articles. Except for those dedicated to natural sciences (such as the Société des sciences médicales), the listed actors were

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<sup>467</sup> 'Loi du 5 janvier 1923, concernant l'acquisition par l'Etat de l'immeuble des héritiers Collart-de Scherff, situé à Luxembourg, Marché-aux-Poissons.', in *Mémorial du Grand-Duché de Luxembourg*, vol. 2 (Luxembourg, 1923), 5–6, <http://data.legilux.public.lu/file/eli-etat-leg-memorial-1923-2-fr-pdf.pdf>.

<sup>468</sup> See for instance: 'Loi du 27 mars 1935, concernant le Budget des recettes et des dépenses de l'Etat pour l'exercice 1935', in *Mémorial A*, vol. 18 (Luxembourg, 1935), 266, <http://data.legilux.public.lu/file/eli-etat-leg-memorial-1935-18-fr-pdf.pdf>.

<sup>469</sup> Clive Gray, 'Joining-Up or Tagging On? The Arts, Cultural Planning and the View From Below', *Public Policy and Administration* 19, no. 2 (2004): 42; See also: Bell and Oakley, *Cultural Policy*, 56.

<sup>470</sup> Dubois, *La politique culturelle*, 126.

involved in the collection, preservation and conservation of historical objects (Historical Section of the Grand-Ducal Institute) or promoted national culture (Verein für Luxemburger Geschichte, Literatur und Kunst). They were subsidised throughout the 1920s and 1930s. In addition, many grants were distributed to music and art associations, like the Cercle artistique de Luxembourg (CAL).<sup>471</sup> The CAL organised yearly exhibitions, the *Salon du Cercle artistique*, which displayed works by Luxembourgish painters or painters living in Luxembourg.

Yet, the state budgets do not provide a complete picture of the associations existing at the time. There were, for instance, the *Volksbildungvereine* or *associations d'éducation populaire*. In France, the *associations d'éducation populaire* were quite common after the First World War. They were semi-private initiatives without any official political affiliation, opened popular libraries (*bibliothèques populaires*) and were not directly part of a public policy.<sup>472</sup> The movement of the *universités populaires*<sup>473</sup> appeared, for instance, in French cities such as Lyon.<sup>474</sup>

In Luxembourg, many members of the *Volksbildungvereine* (VBVs) were part of the same highly educated classes who campaigned for the construction of the monuments discussed in the next section of this study, like Batty Weber, Frantz Clément, Alfons Nickels or Nicolas Ries. These VBVs existed in several towns, such as in Luxembourg City since 1908, or in the southern industrial city Esch-sur-Alzette, created in 1909. The first committee of the VBV in Luxembourg comprised people such as Mathias Adam, Robert Brasseur, Frantz Clément, Jean-Pierre Probst, Mathias Tresch and Nicolas van Werveke.<sup>475</sup> Many of them were politically engaged: Adam, a teacher from Pétange, had been a Labour candidate at the legislative elections. Brasseur was a liberal parliamentarian. Jean-Pierre Probst was a social-democratic parliamentarian. From a political perspective, the associations for popular education were an

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<sup>471</sup> See for instance: Chambre des députés, ‘25e séance (23 mars 1939)’, in *Compte-rendu de la session ordinaire de 1938-1939* (Luxembourg: Chambre des députés, 1939), 949–950. The CAL was founded in 1893 among others by Michel Engels (1851-1901) and François (Franz) Heldenstein (1820-1907), who were both disciples of the painter Jean-Baptiste Fresez (1800-1863) (Wilhelm, ‘La culture au cœur de la réalité luxembourgeoise’, 458).

<sup>472</sup> Dubois, *La politique culturelle*, 156–160. In fact, the *bibliothèques populaires* were indirectly linked to the state via the teacher’s union (*Ligue de l’enseignement*), an association with ties to the Ministry of Public Education.

<sup>473</sup> Thomas Höpel, *Kulturpolitik in Europa im 20. Jahrhundert: Metropolen als Akteure und Orte der Innovation* (Göttingen: Wallstein Verlag, 2017), 43–44.

<sup>474</sup> Höpel, 57–59.

<sup>475</sup> Krieps, *Kultur im Kleinstaat 1879-1989*, 28.

instrument of the Liberals and Social Democrats to reach the masses and to counter the influence of the Catholic Church.<sup>476</sup>

The VBV in Esch managed a public library and organised cultural events, such as concerts and lectures. In a book published in 1934 on the occasion of the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Escher Volksbildungsverein, the anonymous author of the foreword underlined the values defended by the association: “We are still advocating progress, freedom of thought, tolerance and humanity.”<sup>477</sup> The association did not want to be affiliated with any political party or religious community and aimed to reach a larger population, “especially the working classes”.<sup>478</sup> During the 25 years of its existence, the Volksbildungsverein had lobbied for the creation, among others, of a secondary school for girls, the predecessor of the present-day Lycée Hubert Clement in Esch-sur-Alzette<sup>479</sup>. The *Volksbildungvereine* were leftist associations that emerged from the teaching corps (primary and secondary schools) and trade unions. The VBVs became important educational centres in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>480</sup> The Genossenschaft für Mußearbeiten und Soziale Fürsorge (GEMUSO), closely linked to the trade unions, had objectives similar to those of the VBVs. The GEMUSO offered travelling libraries and promoted workers’ education. After the First World War, the VBV in Esch continued to offer French and German cultural events in times of general animosity towards Germany. This approach was typical for writers such as Frantz Clément, who wanted to mediate between both cultures.<sup>481</sup>

The reasons why the government did not grant any subsidies to the *Volksbildungvereine* are unknown. One possible explanation might be their strong, local focus, as illustrated by the goals and demands of the VBV in Esch. The majority of the societies that were granted

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<sup>476</sup> Ben Fayot, ‘Die Volksbildungsvereine’, in *Memorial 1989: La société luxembourgeoise de 1839 à 1989*, ed. Martin Gerges (Luxembourg: Les publications mosellanes, 1989), 451.

<sup>477</sup> Own translation. “Nach wie vor stehen wir ein für ein für [sic] Fortschritt, Gedankenfreiheit, Toleranz und Menschlichkeit.” (Escher Volksbildungsverein, *25 Jahre Escher Volksbildungsverein 1909-1934* [Esch-sur-Alzette: Escher Volksbildungsverein, 1934], 6).

<sup>478</sup> Escher Volksbildungsverein, 6.

<sup>479</sup> In Luxembourgish, it is still commonly called *Meedecherslycée* (girl’s high school) and Hubert Clement was a member of the Volksbildungsverein in Esch.

<sup>480</sup> Krieps, *Kultur im Kleinstaat 1879-1989*, 28.

<sup>481</sup> Clément also founded, together with Marcel Noppeney and Eugène Forman, the bilingual journal *Floréal*, which remained a short-lived project (Sandra Schmit, ‘Frantz Clément - Luxemburger Autorenlexikon’, accessed 22 September 2017, <http://www.autorenlexikon.lu/page/author/207/2079/DEU/index.html>).

subsidies had national aims or objectives related to heritage in common, from the Section historique de l’Institut to the Verein für Luxemburger Geschichte, Literatur und Kunst.<sup>482</sup>

### **III.1.5. Diplomacy, propaganda and espionage in the nationalised *Zwischenraum***

As a nationalised *Zwischenraum*, Luxembourg became a target for cultural propaganda and diplomacy. This sub-section will focus on diplomatic initiatives and propagandistic activities from France and Germany. Relations between Belgium and Luxembourg will not be discussed, though. Belgium has barely played a role in the sources. Beyond epistemological questions, other reasons can be advanced. With the failed war goal to annex Luxembourg and the creation of an economic union (UEBL), the neighbouring kingdom might have had no particular interest in pursuing (cultural) propaganda within the Grand Duchy. If any, cultural relationships were canalised through official diplomatic relations or unofficial relations between societies and individuals. Luxembourg signed intellectual agreements with France and Belgium during the interwar period<sup>483</sup>. These agreements reveal not only the Luxembourg government's cultural orientation in the aftermath of the war but also the international isolation of Germany in the fields of culture and research.<sup>484</sup> Nevertheless, several examples will show that informal and unofficial cultural exchanges between Luxembourg and Germany took place.<sup>485</sup>

The Chamber of Deputies approved the above-mentioned bilateral treaties with Belgium and France in 1923. The treaty with Belgium implemented article 25 of the Treaty establishing an economic union between Luxembourg and Belgium (the Union économique belgo-luxembourgeoise, UEBL). The treaties of 1923 aimed to strengthen scientific and scholarly exchanges (teachers and students) between the signatories. Prime minister Bech highlighted that these exchanges had already taken place before the signature of the treaties. After 1918,

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<sup>482</sup> Though the *Willibrordus-Bauverein* was following a local objective – the reconstruction of the basilica in Echternach – its activities were clearly linked to heritage.

<sup>483</sup> ‘Loi du 24 mars 1924, portant approbation des accords des 20 avril 1923 et 21 septembre 1923, concernant les relations scientifiques, littéraires et scolaires entre le Grand-Duché et la France, respectivement la Belgique, ainsi que de la déclaration additionnelle signée le 24 août 1923’, in *Mémorial A*, vol. 15 (Luxembourg, 1924), 213–218, <http://data.legilux.public.lu/file/eli-etat-leg-memorial-1924-15-fr-pdf.pdf>.

<sup>484</sup> Germany’s isolation is partly analysed in: Pamela Spence Richards, ‘Deutschlands wissenschaftliche Verbindungen mit dem Ausland 1933–1945’, in *Bibliotheken während des Nationalsozialismus*, ed. Peter Vodosek and Manfred Komorowski, vol. 2, Wolfenbütteler Schriften zur Geschichte des Buchwesens 16 (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1992), 111–132.

<sup>485</sup> According to Pierre Krier, negotiations for a cultural agreement between Luxembourg and Germany took place in 1931. Unfortunately, Krier abruptly ended his short section on these negotiations, without any explanations as to why such an agreement had not been signed (Cf. Emile Krier, ‘Deutsche Kultur- und Volkstumspolitik in Luxemburg’ [Rheinische Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universität Bonn, 1978], 363–364).

however, this tendency intensified. “Since 1918, this push towards the West and this need to participate in those two cultures have become even more imperative,” Bech noted.<sup>486</sup> Despite its small size, he did not miss the opportunity to praise Luxembourg’s rich intellectual, scholarly and artistic life.<sup>487</sup> Both treaties stipulated the creation of a permanent mixed commission. At the time of the parliamentary vote, France and Belgium had already chosen their representatives for the respective commissions. It remains unclear, however, who the Luxembourg government selected to be part of this commission.

On the international stage, Luxembourg had not developed a distinguishable foreign policy before the First World War, limited by its neutrality status and membership in the Zollverein. Luxembourg did not participate in the Paris Peace Conference. It was not among the founding members of the League of Nations (LN), created in 1919, though it joined the organisation in December 1920.<sup>488</sup> The LN promoted the collaboration of its member states in cultural and scientific matters in the context of the International Committee of Intellectual Cooperation, created in 1922. Though participating in international organisations, Luxembourg played a marginal role; either the Luxembourgian delegates did not attend the meetings or took a passive stance.<sup>489</sup> A national committee, the Commission nationale de coopération intellectuelle, was established in 1926. Its inception was actively promoted by the Association luxembourgeoise pour la Société des Nations. Simultaneously, the international organisation supported the establishment of such national commissions, as revealed in the report on the thirteenth plenary session of the International Committee of Intellectual Cooperation.<sup>490</sup> Though the composition might have changed over time, a document from July 1931 lists the members of the national committee. They were primarily teachers, politicians and civil servants: Joseph Bech (honorary president); Nicolas Braunshausen (president), a teacher at the Athenaeum<sup>491</sup> and échevin of Luxembourg City; Albert Wehrer (secretary), government councillor; Joseph Wagener,

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<sup>486</sup> Own translation. “Depuis 1918, cette poussée vers l’ouest, ce besoin de participer à ces deux cultures sont devenus plus impérieux encore.” (Chambre des députés, ‘49e séance (6 mai 1927)’, in *Compte-rendu de la session ordinaire de 1926-1927*, vol. 1 [Luxembourg: Chambre des députés, 1927], 1577).

<sup>487</sup> Chambre des députés, 1578.

<sup>488</sup> Thewes, *Les gouvernements du Grand-Duché de Luxembourg depuis 1848*, 80.

<sup>489</sup> For instance: ANLux, AE-SdN-246, *Dixième réunion des délégués des Etats auprès de l’Institut international de coopération intellectuelle: Procès-verbal provisoire*, undated, no. 39. Luxembourg was represented in the meetings by Eugène Bastin from the General Consulate of Luxembourg in Paris.

<sup>490</sup> ANLux, AE-SdN-248, *Rapport de la commission sur les travaux de sa treizième session plénière*, 05/08/1931, no. 347, p. 4.

<sup>491</sup> The Athénée de Luxembourg is a secondary school in Luxembourg City. It was founded in 1817 on the premises of the former jesuit college in the city centre, next to the cathedral.

government councillor; Forman, doctor; Nicolas Margue, a teacher at the Athenaeum and échevin of the city of Luxembourg; and Nicolas Wampach, teacher.<sup>492</sup>

In 1930, Luxembourg joined the Commission internationale des arts et traditions populaires, founded in 1928 as a sub-organisation of the International Committee of Intellectual Cooperation. It subsequently created a national committee of popular arts.<sup>493</sup> Three of its members were on the national committee for intellectual cooperation – Joseph Bech (president), Nicolas Braunshausen (vice-president), Albert Wehrer (secretary) – in addition to the architect Antoine Hirsch, Batty Weber, and the journalist and teacher Nicolas Ries.<sup>494</sup> The members of both commissions were part of the educated classes, either participating in the intellectual production at the time or employed as government officials. Some of them had already been acquaintances: Albert Wehrer was president of the above-mentioned Association luxembourgeoise, Nicolas Wampach its secretary general. Batty Weber and Wampach were both members of the Heemechtssprooch and the Luxemburgische Sprachgesellschaft. Ries and Weber were members of the Volksbildungsverein in Luxembourg City, and Ries and Braunshausen figure among the co-founders of the journal *Les Cahiers luxembourgeois* in 1923.

Another organisation joined by Luxembourg was the International Committee for Historical Sciences (ICHS), linked to the Committee of International Cooperation. In March 1932, the government, represented by Bech and at the request of the Historical Section of the Grand-Ducal Institute (Institut Grand-Ducal, IGD), expressed its wish to join the organisation.<sup>495</sup> The secretary general of the organisation, Michel Lhéritier, living in Paris, was himself an honorary member of the IGD.<sup>496</sup> Already in 1928, Joseph Bech had instituted a commission of three history teachers (Edouard Oster, Nicolas Margue, and Robert Kieffer) to ensure the exchange with the international committee and the communication of its activities to Luxembourg.<sup>497</sup> An

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<sup>492</sup> ANLux, AE-SdN-307, *Réponse au questionnaire pour les commissions nationales (Annexe à la lettre M.L.8.1931.IX.)*, 11/07/1931, no. 162.

<sup>493</sup> According to a note written in May 1934 by Albert Wehrer, this commission succeeded an older one created in 1927, partly with the same people (ANLux, AE-SdN-280, Letter from Albert Wehrer to A. Rossi, secretary of the International Commission on Intellectual Cooperation, 16/05/1934, no. 181).

<sup>494</sup> ANLux, AE-SdN-279, Letter from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to Ernest Leclère, 02/04/1930, no. 169.

<sup>495</sup> ANLux, IP-1802, Letter from President of the ICHS Waldo Leland to Joseph Bech, 18/03/1932.

<sup>496</sup> ANLux, IP-1802, Letter from Michel Lhéritier, Secretary General of the ICHS, to Joseph Bech, 10/04/1932.

<sup>497</sup> ANLux, IP-1802, Letter from Joseph Bech to Michel Lhéritier, 12/01/1928.

official representation of Luxembourg within the organisation with a delegate of the Historical Section of the IGD and the government's consent was only a further step.

Even though Luxembourg might not have endorsed an active role in these international organisations, they still created a context in which ideas were exchanged and could potentially influence Luxembourg's cultural policy. During the interwar period, some international conferences took place in Luxembourg. The International Conference on Bilingualism from 2-5 April 1928 is one notable example, especially as it was held in a country that considered itself bilingual. The organising committee counted thirteen members. Unsurprisingly, some names have already appeared in other contexts: Nicolas Braunshausen, Nicolas Ries and Batty Weber. The other members were teachers and directors of schools such as the Athenaeum, the Ecole industrielle et commerciale and the Ecole normale d'Instituteurs. Joseph Wagener was the only government official. Two members, Pierre Bovet (director of the International Office for Education) and John Hughes (University College of Wales) were foreign members.<sup>498</sup>

Luxembourg's participation in international exhibitions, notably in Brussels (1935) and Paris (1937), also figured among the country's foreign (cultural) policy initiatives. They enjoy a more significant presence in Luxembourgish historiography than membership in international intellectual or cultural organisations. In 1925, Luxembourg participated in an international art exhibition for the first time, namely the *Exposition internationale des Arts décoratifs et industriels modernes* in Paris. Luxembourg's limited production could not compare to what other countries showcased, but the Grand Duchy expected a moral and material advantage from participating in the exhibition.<sup>499</sup> In Brussels (1935), Luxembourg chose to highlight its industrial production in a pavilion designed by the architects Georges Traus (1865-1941) and Michel Wolff (1901-1971). The Luxembourg section in the Palais de l'Art Moderne featured artists and sculptors who played an important role in the artistic production at the time, such as Pierre Blanc, Joseph Kutter, Eugène Mousset, Auguste Tremont, Paul Wigreux, Michel Stoffel, Théo Kerg, or Lucien Wercollier.<sup>500</sup>

In 1937, Luxembourg participated in the International Exhibition of Arts and Techniques in Modern Life in Paris. In Munich, an exhibition depicting "degenerate art" was organised at the

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<sup>498</sup> ANLux, IP-0050, *Conférence internationale sur le bilinguisme – Programme*, undated.

<sup>499</sup> Jean-Luc Mousset et al., *Un petit parmi les grands. Le Luxembourg aux expositions universelles de Londres à Shanghai (1851 - 2010)*, ed. Musée national d'histoire et d'art (Luxembourg: Musée national d'histoire et d'art, 2010), 166.

<sup>500</sup> Mousset et al., 190–191.

same time.<sup>501</sup> Luxembourg's participation happened when fears of German annexationism had already been present in Luxembourg. As a result, the Luxembourg pavilion in Paris conveyed a Francophile message without taking a clear anti-German stance. An artwork depicting the siege of Luxembourg by the French king Louis XIV should allude to the ties between the small country and its western neighbour. An undated note by the government official Antoine Funck acknowledged that the pavilion wanted to express the "affectuous friendship with France" ("affectueuse amitié à la France"), combined with openly positive messages of "well-being" ("bien-être") and "joy of life" ("joie de vivre").<sup>502</sup> Even the artistic production and the design of the pavilion were an expression of the Franco-Luxembourgish bond, according to Funck. He stressed that most Luxembourgers who collaborated were trained in France. Beyond the insistence on the ties with France, the recurring trope of Luxembourg being located at the crossroads of two civilisations ("sur la lisière de deux grandes civilisations") does not miss in Funck's description of the pavilion. Funck concluded his note in a Francophile tone while highlighting the independence of Luxembourg and its link with the dynasty:

[The Luxembourgish pavilion] expressed a token of recognition towards France to which our country has given an expression through the tuning fork of feelings that it experiences for the great nation; it expressed the patriotism and the will for the independence of the Luxembourgish people under the sceptre of the national Dynasty; it marked, lastly, with modesty and dignity, Luxembourg's place among the nations that the genius of France managed to reunite, for a beautiful undertaking, fruitful and pacifist, on the edge of the Seine where History flows abundantly.<sup>503</sup>

Besides highlighting the Francophile trope, the organisers aimed to exhibit Luxembourg's economic and artistic activity. Among the involved or exhibited artists figured Henri Luja and Auguste Trémont. A bas-relief of Luxembourg City was shown, the result of a collective work based on Pierre Blanc's drawings. Generally, the artworks used industrial motives or depicted

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<sup>501</sup> Jean-Pierre Rioux and Jean-François Sirinelli, *Le Temps Des Masses. Le XXe Siècle*, Histoire Culturelle de La France 4 (Paris: Editions Points, 2005), 236.

<sup>502</sup> ANLux, CdZ-A-1441, *La participation luxembourgeoise à l'Exposition internationale de Paris 1937* by Antoine Funck, undated, no. 49-54. Unfortunately, it is not clear why Funck wrote this document and to whom it was addressed. It was maybe not a final version. Funck mixed present tense with past tense, and every time present tense was used, it was corrected by hand and replaced with past tense.

<sup>503</sup> Own translation. "[Le pavillon luxembourgeois] constituait envers la France une marque de reconnaissance à laquelle notre pays a donné une expression au diapason des sentiments qu'il éprouve à l'égard de la grande nation; il attestait le patriotisme et la volonté d'indépendance du peuple luxembourgeois sous le sceptre de la Dynastie nationale; il marquait, enfin, avec modestie et dignité, la place du Luxembourg parmi les nations que le génie de la France avait su réunir autour d'elle, pour une entreprise merveilleuse, féconde et pacifique, sur les bords de la Seine où l'Histoire coule à pleins flots." (ANLux, CdZ-A-1441, *La participation luxembourgeoise à l'Exposition internationale de Paris 1937* by Antoine Funck, undated, no. 49-54).

figures from Luxembourg (Grand-Duchess Charlotte) and its past (the count John the Blind and the countess Ermesinde). Combining touristic propaganda with art, the landscapes of the country and the medieval castles were prominently displayed.<sup>504</sup> Even more than the two exhibitions mentioned above, the pavilion in Paris aimed to promote Luxembourg as a touristic destination. The government commissioned the first Luxembourgian sound movie, *Il est un petit pays* (1937) by filmmaker René Leclère (1890-1955), to be shown during the international fair for promotional purposes. The movie takes the spectator on a sightseeing tour through Luxembourg, showing different regions, valleys, hills and urban areas. From castles in the North to the industry in the South, from vineyards in the East to the capital as both a “modern city” and a historical site. In between feature traditions such as the dancing procession in Echternach or the Schobermesse in Luxembourg City. The significance of the Paris exhibition and the related discourse resides in the combination of a series of tropes: the nationalised intermediate space, the promotion of tourism, and the Francophile tone in a specific political context.



Fig. 9: Exhibition hall of the Luxembourg pavilion in Paris in 1937 (Source: MNHA Archives, no. 88578).

<sup>504</sup> Mousset et al., *Un petit parmi les grands*, 208–209.

Two years after Paris, Luxembourg participated in the World's Fair in New York, during which the war broke out in Europe. The World's Fair took place in two periods, from April to October 1939 and May to October 1940. The second period coincided with the invasion of Luxembourg, but the pavilion was not closed. The exiled head of government Pierre Dupong visited it on 9 October 1940.<sup>505</sup> Though the government commissioned artworks to be exhibited in New York in 1938, the participation was soon on shaky grounds. Due to the complex political situation in Europe, the steel industry withdrew from its participation. This decision meant the loss of an important partner and led to a change of mind in government circles. In January 1939, Nicolas Margue informed the president of the CAL, Michel Stoffel, that Luxembourg would not participate. Stoffel, however, insisted on the importance of the event for the Luxembourgish artists and defended the participation during a government council meeting. He explained to the ministers that "the fatherland is in danger" ("que la Patrie était en danger"), and that "it was necessary to mobilise allied powers" ("qu'il était indispensable de mobiliser des amitiés puissantes").<sup>506</sup> Stoffel's perseverance paid off. The pavilion in New York focused on the promotion of Luxembourg's landscapes. "Even more than in Paris, the art was at the service of politics in New York," observed Jean-Luc Mousset and Ulrike Degen.<sup>507</sup> Castles were depicted, photographs of steel factories and American soldiers in Luxembourg after the First World War were shown, and paintings of landscapes were exhibited. Above the entrance, the organisers mounted stained glass representing the red lion with the inscription "Grand-Duchy of Luxembourg since 963", creating a continuity that implied the existence of contemporary Luxembourg since the early Middle Ages.

Cultural diplomacy was not simply a one-way track, especially in a nationalised *Zwischenraum*, and it was an expression of power politics. Luxembourg became the stage of France's and Germany's cultural initiatives, which were promoted and encouraged by the grand duchy's cultural society. This situation reflected the elite's two main orientations, with preferences for either German or French culture. Though difficult to assess, this choice was partly politicised, between a Republican, secular model or an autocratic, right-wing conservative model. As we have seen, the First World War left a considerable mark on the general attitudes of the population towards the Germans. Authors such as Marcel Noppeney

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<sup>505</sup> For more information, see: Mousset et al., 230–247.

<sup>506</sup> Quoted in: Mousset et al., 232.

<sup>507</sup> Own translation. "Plus encore qu'à Paris, l'art a été au service de la politique à New York [...]."

were arrested during the war for expressing their pro-French attitudes.<sup>508</sup> While anti-German feelings grew in the interwar period, this did not alter the self-perception of Luxembourg as a bilingual country. Initiatives such as the literature prize show that German was not abandoned simply because of wartime experiences. On the contrary, it was as much valued as French. Attitudes were more complex than a Manichean depiction of pro-French/anti-German versus pro-German/anti-French. These individual attitudes changed according to social groups, personal experiences, and the general context.

The role of France's and Germany's foreign policies in Luxembourg still needs to be explored. This question constitutes a considerable gap in Luxembourgish historiography. Focusing on the region of Saarland, Palatinate and the annexed Lorraine, the German historian Wolfgang Freund produced a study on science, politics, and scholars devoted to the *Deutschstum* ("Germandom") from 1925 to 1945. Though Luxembourg is not the main focus, the study is of particular interest due to the geographical scope and the numerous links. For instance, the Bund Deutscher Westen ("League of the German West") was entrusted with coordinating the *Volkstum* policies in Western Europe, explicitly including Luxembourg.<sup>509</sup> In Luxembourgish historiography, Bernard Thomas' volume on the German *Westforschung* and its interest in Luxembourg ranges among the few related studies.<sup>510</sup> I will tend to the activities of the *Westforscher* and their close ties to Luxembourgish historians in another section, though. In this section, only general information will be provided.

The Westdeutsche Forschungsgesellschaft (WFG) was founded in 1931 and based in Bonn. It was the first *Volksdeutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft* ("ethnic German research society", VFG) created in the 1930s.<sup>511</sup> Disseminating revisionist historiography based on *völkisch* ideology, the main objective of the *Westforschung* resided in proving, among other things, the belonging of Luxembourg and Alsace-Lorraine to the German *Volkstum*. The WFG was a parastatal and semi-clandestine structure, integrated from 1933 onwards into the annexionist plans of territories on the western border of the Third Reich. It was financed by the Reich

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<sup>508</sup> Noppene, member of the Alliance Française, was not the only one arrested. Even a member of Parliament, Emile Prüm, was imprisoned, despite parliamentarian immunity (Vic Diederich, *Alliance française, Amitiés françaises 1905-1945-1985* [Luxembourg: Editions des Amitiés françaises, 1987], 22).

<sup>509</sup> Wolfgang Freund, *Volk, Reich und Westgrenze: Deutschstumswissenschaften und Politik in der Pfalz, im Saarland und im annexierten Lothringen 1925-1945* (Saarbrücken: Kommission für Saarländische Landesgeschichte und Volksforschung, 2006), 65.

<sup>510</sup> Bernard Thomas, *Le Luxembourg dans la ligne de mire de la Westforschung: 1931 - 1940 : La 'Westforschung' et l'"identité nationale" luxembourgeoise* (Luxembourg: Fondation Robert Krieps, 2011).

<sup>511</sup> Freund, *Volk, Reich und Westgrenze*, 93.

Ministry for Foreign Affairs (Auswärtiges Amt) and the Reich Ministry of the Interior (Reichsministerium des Innern).<sup>512</sup> At the same time, it could successfully hide its political objectives from Luxembourgish historians and was careful in not promoting an openly racial and National Socialist narrative but instead adopted the façade of an independent structure. Most Luxembourgish historians who were in touch with the WFG were unaware of its integration into statal structures. The *Westforscher* were not considered politically or ideologically biased.<sup>513</sup>

The historians in the WFG were not openly endorsing National Socialism, at least not until 1940. They were of a nationalist-conservative background; still, they put themselves at the service of the new regime for several motivations (personal reasons, economic prospects, and a somewhat diffuse boundary between the *völkisch* ideology of the 1920s and Nazi ideology). Personal and institutional continuities marked the WFG before and after 1933.<sup>514</sup> In the case of Luxembourg, the WFG was aware of the delicate terrain it had to tread. Anti-German feelings were strongly present in Luxembourg, a situation that the *Westforscher* blamed entirely on the “French cultural propaganda”.<sup>515</sup> To build a network and disseminate the *Westforschung*, the WFG organised public conferences in Luxembourg<sup>516</sup> and invited Luxembourgish scholars to colloquia in Germany, of which two were exclusively dedicated to Luxembourg.<sup>517</sup> The *Westforscher* knew Luxembourg, regularly read Luxembourgish newspapers and had close contacts with Luxembourgers. The historians with whom they had the closest links were catholic-conservative scholars, such as Nicolas Margue and Joseph Meyers. The Catholic Right in Luxembourg was rather Germanophile.<sup>518</sup> Franz Steinbach (1895-1964), one of the leading figures of the *Westforschung*,<sup>519</sup> was invited to Luxembourg for conferences or quoted in Luxembourgish newspapers (mainly in the *Luxemburger Wort*). In October 1933, for instance, he held a lecture in Ettelbruck at the request of the Katholische Jungbauernverband (Catholic Young Peasant’s Union).<sup>520</sup> In July 1937, the Luxembourgish historian Camille Wampach was

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<sup>512</sup> Thomas, *Le Luxembourg dans la ligne de mire de la Westforschung*, 13–14.

<sup>513</sup> Thomas, 78–79.

<sup>514</sup> Thomas, 49–53.

<sup>515</sup> Thomas, 17.

<sup>516</sup> Thomas, 155.

<sup>517</sup> Thomas, 191–192.

<sup>518</sup> Thomas, 150–151.

<sup>519</sup> Wolfgang Freund described him as “einer der schärfsten wissenschaftlichen Wächter an der Westgrenze des Deutschtums.” Though Steinbach was never member of the NSDAP and was even accused of a certain distance to Nazi racial thinking, his activities and those of the WFG were undeniably inscribed in the context of Nazi expansionism (Freund, *Volk, Reich und Westgrenze*, 94).

<sup>520</sup> ‘Lose Blätter: Luxemburg, 27. Oktober 1933’, *Luxemburger Wort*, October 1933.

guest speaker at the annual meeting of the Verein für geschichtliche Landeskunde der Rheinlande, of which Steinbach was secretary.<sup>521</sup> In January 1938, Steinbach was invited to the Lycée des jeunes filles (today Lycée Robert Schuman in Limpertsberg).<sup>522</sup>

The *Westforschung* aimed to counteract the activities of the Alliance Française (founded in 1905) and to contain the danger of French expansionism.<sup>523</sup> The Germans perceived the Alliance Française as the main responsible for the *Verwelschung* (“romanisation”) of Luxembourg.<sup>524</sup> The foundation of the Gesellschaft für deutsche Literatur und Kunst (GEDELIT) in 1934 in Luxembourg was a reaction to French influences. After internal tensions mainly anchored in an opposition between two *modi operandi* (conserving the German *Volkstum* through cultural activities or overtly Nazi propaganda), the GEDELIT was revived by its new president Damian Kratzenberg in October 1935. This time, it wanted to appear as a respectable association. Germans did not have voting rights. The society became an important mediator for the *Westforscher*.<sup>525</sup> As a platform for German propaganda, the GEDELIT also stood under the surveillance of the German Sicherheitsdienst (SD). Reports were drafted on its internal organisation and members.<sup>526</sup> Kratzenberg was positively evaluated, though he was deemed not to possess leadership skills (“Führernatur”).<sup>527</sup> Another note by a certain Dr Peusch of 23 October 1939 described Kratzenberg as “the pillar of Germandom in Luxembourg.”<sup>528</sup>

In 1939, a list of its more than 200 members came into possession of the SD. This list reads like a who’s who of Luxembourg’s cultural, political and economic elite. The future ministers Pierre Frieden, Peter (Pierre) Grégoire and Madeleine Kinnen appear on it. Many representatives of the cultural society were members, such as Hanns Divo, René Deltgen (actor), J.P. Erpelding, Nik Hein, Norbert Jacques (novelist and author of *Dr Mabuse, der Spieler* (1921) adapted for the screen by the German filmmaker Fritz Lang), Joseph Meyers, Henri Pensis, Camille Wampach, Nik Welter, besides economic actors such as Aloyse Meyer

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<sup>521</sup> ‘Literarische Notizen’, *Luxemburger Wort*, July 1934.

<sup>522</sup> ‘Lokal-Chronik: Luxemburg’, *Luxemburger Wort*, January 1938.

<sup>523</sup> Thomas, *Le Luxembourg dans la ligne de mire de la Westforschung*, 59–60.

<sup>524</sup> Thomas, 133.

<sup>525</sup> Thomas, 158–159.

<sup>526</sup> Cf. ANLux, CdZ-A-6744.

<sup>527</sup> ANLux, CdZ-A-6744, SD report *Luxemburgische Gesellschaft für Deutsche Kunst und Literatur*, 29/10/1939, no. 3-10.

<sup>528</sup> Own translation. “[...] nach wie vor die Säule des Deutschtums in Luxemburg.” (ANLux, CdZ-A-6744, *Prof. Kratzenberg* by Dr Peusch, 23/10/1939, n° 151).

(director general of the ARBED) and Alphonse Nickels. Heinrich Diehl and Adolf Winandy are also listed.<sup>529</sup>

If the Catholic Right heeded German-friendly tendencies, parts of the Left were Francophile or turned towards France as a reaction to the increasingly threatening German neighbour. A study on the activities of the Alliance Française and the competition between Germany and France in Luxembourg still needs to be written. However, as Bernard Thomas observed, the 1930s were marked by a dispute for the political recovery of cultural symbols, such as the inauguration of the Victor Hugo museum in Vianden initiated by the Alliance Française in June 1935<sup>530</sup>, and the erection of a monument honouring Johann Wolfgang von Goethe by the GEDELIT in Luxembourg City only five months later.<sup>531</sup>

Like the *Westforscher* and their liaisons, the Alliance Française operated in Luxembourg and organised conferences. The Alliance Française was founded in Paris in 1883; the Luxembourgish committee was created in 1905, at a period when the leaders of the French association were building contacts abroad.<sup>532</sup> Before the creation of the Luxembourg branch, members of the cultural society, including the Francophile writer Marcel Noppeney and the first secretary of the Action Française in Luxembourg, contacted French authorities.<sup>533</sup> The Luxembourgish Alliance Française considered itself a propagandistic society. The first article of its statutes of 7 November 1925 assured that it wanted to keep Luxembourgish traditions, probably to defend itself against potential criticism and highlight the strong French influence on these traditions. It also stressed its aim to promote the French language among all social groups:

The Committee of Luxembourg, in conformity with the goal pursued by the Central Committee in Paris and guided by the wish to maintain the old Luxembourgish traditions, pursues the propagation of the French language in all classes of the population of the Grand Duchy. Hence, it is essentially a propaganda society, recommending to its members a continuous action in favour of the extension of the French language.<sup>534</sup>

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<sup>529</sup> ANLux, CdZ-A-6744, *Liste der Mitglieder der Luxemburger Gesellschaft für deutsche Literatur und Kunst*, 17/04/1939, no. 111-116.

<sup>530</sup> The creation of this museum coincided with the anniversary of Victor Hugo's death. An organising committee with representatives of around 30 associations was created to prepare festivities in this context ('Victor-Hugo-Museum in Vianden', *Jong-Hémecht*, 1935, 48).

<sup>531</sup> Thomas, *Le Luxembourg dans la ligne de mire de la Westforschung*, 137.

<sup>532</sup> Maurice Bruézière, *L'Alliance française 1883-1983: Histoire d'une institution* (Paris: Hachette, 1983), 50.

<sup>533</sup> Diederich, *Alliance française, Amitiés françaises 1905-1945-1985*, 15.

<sup>534</sup> Own translation. "Le Comité de Luxembourg, se conformant au but poursuivi par le Comité central de Paris, et guidé par le souci de maintenir les vieilles traditions luxembourgeoises, a pour objet la propagation de la langue française dans toutes les couches de la population du Grand-Duché. Elle est

Since its inception, the association had organised conferences to promote French culture and language. In December 1906, it addressed several requests to the Chamber of Deputies to improve the status of French in the Luxembourgish administration.<sup>535</sup> The newspaper *Indépendance luxembourgeoise*, “organe de promotion de la francophilie et de la protestation contre les pangermanistes”<sup>536</sup>, became an unofficial platform for the Alliance Française. One of its journalists, Nicolas Liez, was a committee member. The activities of the society were regularly announced and reported in the Francophile newspaper. Among these were French language courses<sup>537</sup> and conferences about topics pertaining to French culture<sup>538</sup>. Moreover, the society distributed grants, organised travels to France and participated at the Congrès international pour la culture et l’extension de la langue française.<sup>539</sup>

The activities of the Alliance Française were, unsurprisingly, critically observed by the Germans. A small book, *Die Alliance Française: Der Weltbund des französischen Kulturimperialismus* by Edmund Halm (1940), analysed the Alliance Française from a Nazi perspective.<sup>540</sup> The Alliance Française is described as a tool of French cultural imperialism, spanning the globe and hostile to Germany. While occasionally quoting from documents that are not referenced, Halm constructed a menacing image of the Alliance Française of conspiracist character. Conjuring a Jewish conspiracy, the author claimed that the service within the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs responsible for the Alliance Française was led by a Jew named Marx (“unter Leitung des Juden Marx”). Halm contradicted himself by presenting the society as a secret organisation and public service. The book does not include a bibliography or a list of sources, making it impossible to check his allegations. However, a scientific analysis was not the aim of this book anyway, as it aimed to conjure the danger of French culture.

Several chapters are dedicated to the activities of the Alliance Française in countries or regions, including Luxembourg. Like the *Westforscher*, Halm considered Luxembourgers to

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donc essentiellement une association de propagande, recommandant à ses membres une action constante en faveur de l’extension de la langue française.” (Diederich, 27).

<sup>535</sup> Diederich, 20.

<sup>536</sup> Lieb, Marson, and Weber, *Luxemburg und der Erste Weltkrieg: Literaturgeschichte(n)*, 87.

<sup>537</sup> ‘Petites nouvelles: Alliance Française’, *L’Indépendance luxembourgeoise*, November 1913.

<sup>538</sup> ‘Chronique locale: Alliance Française’, *L’Indépendance luxembourgeoise*, January 1924.

<sup>539</sup> Diederich, *Alliance française, Amitiés françaises 1905-1945-1985*, 24–25.

<sup>540</sup> Edmund Halm, *Die Alliance Française: der Weltbund des französischen Imperialismus : eine Untersuchung auf Grund authentischen Materials* (Berlin: Junker und Dünnhaupt, 1940).

be of German descent.<sup>541</sup> The author deplored that French was used at the expense of German:

Nevertheless, as a result of the development of Luxembourg's self-consciousness and a general tendency toward France, French is the official language of the country: it is the language of the government, of the Court, of the administration, of the courts (except for penal law procedures), of the members of parliament, of the middle schools and finally the language of the society. Today, German is only the second language of the country and the general literary language, while the people generally speak the German idiom.<sup>542</sup>

Halm offered a simplified presentation of the situation in Luxembourg. Not only were the laws published in both languages and was German widely used in the press, but the author completely excluded the consequences of the First World War on the attitudes of the Luxembourgers and the historical developments reaching back to the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Halm reused the trope of rural life, which was cherished by Nazi ideology and in conservative circles in Luxembourg and within movements such as the Landwûol. According to the author, the Alliance Française would attack the *Deutschtum* of the rural population.<sup>543</sup> Here, Halm's narrative contradicts his claim that the Alliance Française targets the elite and the educated.<sup>544</sup> Joseph Hansen, one of the leading figures of the Luxembourgish Alliance Française, was depicted as an "opponent and hater of German culture and art"<sup>545</sup>. Weaving the foundation of the Alliance Française into his conspirator narrative, Halm considered this event not a coincidence, as it happened at a time "when France began to devote itself increasingly to a policy of encirclement against the German Reich".<sup>546</sup>

Halm produced a narrative deeply imbued with National Socialist rhetoric, ignoring German initiatives in Luxembourg. They were propagandistically and culturally active, often obfuscating their goals. The lack of a cultural agreement did not enable the officialization of cultural exchanges with Germany. The German services were looking for alternatives while painstakingly trying to hide their propagandistic goals. The GEDELIT was not the only

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<sup>541</sup> Halm, 24.

<sup>542</sup> Own translation. "Dennoch ist heute infolge der Selbstständigkeitsentwicklung Luxemburgs und einer allgemeinen Tendenz nach Frankreich hin das Französische die offizielle Landessprache: es ist die Sprache der Regierung, des Hofes, der Verwaltung, der Gerichte (außer Strafrechtsverfahren), der Parlamentarier, der Mittelschulen und schließlich die Sprache der Gesellschaft. Das Hochdeutsche ist heute nur noch zweite Landessprache und allgemeine Schriftsprache, während das Volk im großen und ganzen die deutsche Mundart spricht." (Halm, 26).

<sup>543</sup> Halm, 26.

<sup>544</sup> Halm, 33–34.

<sup>545</sup> Own translation. "Gegner und Hasser deutscher Kultur und Art" (Halm, 26).

<sup>546</sup> Own translation. "Das "Comité de Luxembourg", die luxemburgische Landesgruppe der Alliance Française, wurde 1905 gegründet, zu einer Zeit, als Frankreich begann, sich verstärkt der Einkreisungspolitik gegen das Deutsche Reich zu widmen." (Halm, 23).

platform for German propaganda in this respect. The interest of the Germans in Luxembourg transpires through the numerous reports of the Sicherheitsdienst (SD)<sup>547</sup> in the years and months preceding the invasion in May 1940. These reports, based on accounts by informants in Luxembourg, were paying attention to French and communist activities, described the economic and political situation, the population's attitudes, the infrastructure, the situation of the press, and the composition of the government, and many other aspects.<sup>548</sup> When the Germans invaded Luxembourg, they already possessed information about pro-French circles and pro-German individuals and societies. Only half a year before the invasion, the Reich Main Security Office in Berlin received upon request a note in November 1939 on aspects such as police and military forces in Luxembourg. It listed pro-German organisations in the Grand Duchy, such as the GEDELIT, and pro-German Luxembourgers, for instance Hanns Divo (journalist), Nik Hein, Damian Kratzenberg, and Adolf Winandy.<sup>549</sup>

Some documents of the SD show dissatisfaction with the lack of German newspapers in Luxembourg and their limited dissemination, as they were more expensive than the Luxembourgish press. Secret attempts were taken to promote the distribution of German or Nazi press organs, such as *Das Schwarze Korps*, the official newspaper of the SS.<sup>550</sup> In general, the Luxembourgish press was accused of a lack of neutrality. However, this critique did not acknowledge that political neutrality was disconnected from freedom of speech. While the SD observed that the positive attitudes towards the Reich could vary, it remarked that the press was unanimous in its negative critique. Furthermore, the alleged “glorification” of the Luxembourgish language was considered with disdain, as it merely represented an

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<sup>547</sup> More precisely, the *SD Hauptaussensstelle* in Trier and the *SD Oberabschnitt Fulda-Werra*.

<sup>548</sup> It is not my aim to provide a detailed account of the innumerable reports written at the time ; most of them are not related to culture. Some reports described the anti-German feelings in Luxembourg or the sympathies for France (for instance: LHA Ko, 662,006-915, *Nachrichten aus Luxemburg*, 09/03/1940). Others provided details on the government, and on the political parties in Luxembourg (for instance: LHA Ko, 662,006-916, *Bericht über die Tätigkeit der Minister und Parteiführer in Luxemburg, sowie der wichtigsten luxemburgischen Zeitungen*, 26/03/1940). On Prime Minister Pierre Dupong, the SD wrote: “Dupong ist äussert klerikal eingestellt.” Joseph Bech was described as a freemason and as having Jewish ancestors, which, according to Nazi racial ideology, was also physically apparent: “Er gilt als Freimaurer und ist durch seine Grosseltern jüdisch versippt. Diese jüdische Versippung kommt auch für den aufmerksamen Betrachter seines Profils rein äusserlich zum Ausdruck.” Furthermore, Bech was presented as someone who was prone to nepotism: “Von Bech ist bekannt, dass er es liebt, Anhänger der Rechtspartei in jeder Hinsicht zu fördern und hierbei auch von einer ausgesprochenen Vetternwirtschaft nicht zurückzuschrecken”.

<sup>549</sup> LHA Ko, 662,006-916, *Eilanfrage über Luxemburg*, 13/11/1939.

<sup>550</sup> See, among others: LHA Ko, 662,006-916, Letter from the SD leader of the SS-Oberabschnitt Fulda-Werra, 06/05/1938.

“abominable mutilation of the Moselle-Franconian idiom elevated to a written language” (“grässliche Verstümmelung der zur Schriftsprache erhobenen moselfränkischen Mundart”).<sup>551</sup>

Some initiatives were taken in favour of German propaganda in Luxembourg. They were not openly carried out by the SD or any other German service, but Germans and pro-German Luxembourgers orchestrated them. Among these propagandistic attempts, one significant and well-documented case concerns the German effort to gain the Luxembourgish youth for the Nazi cause by organising travels to Germany as part of the *Jugendarbeit*.<sup>552</sup> It appears that the year 1938 marked a paradigmatic shift in this respect. Adolf Winandy, a collaborator of the SD and former head of the Luxemburger Volksjugend, was one of the main instigators. In January 1939, he explained that the main efforts before 1938 had focused on strengthening Nazi views among the youth within Luxembourg, which had failed for several reasons:

We had to highlight more the relations with the Reich. Without this, we would have had to disguise ourselves and pretend to be simply doing youth activities; but then the thing would have received a sectarian aspect, and our attempts at disguise failed anyway as we dealt with very young people. Or we would have had to create a political fighting unit; for this, however, we didn't have the support from the adults, which was a requirement; and also the Luxembourgers were not of a fighting nature [...].”<sup>553</sup>

In 1938, the approach changed; instead of working within Luxembourg, travels with young people to Germany were organised: in July a Rhineland excursion, on 1 and 2 November, a visit to Koblenz (not mentioned by Winandy in his 1939 report), and around the turn of the year 1938/1939 a ski camp. The programmes of these travels included social evenings and cultural activities. The reasoning behind this new approach was the expected broader acceptance for such activities than for an “inner-Luxembourgish National Socialism”.<sup>554</sup>

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<sup>551</sup> LHA Ko, 662,006-916, *Bericht über die Tätigkeit der Minister und Parteiführer in Luxemburg, sowie der wichtigsten luxemburgischen Zeitungen*, 26/03/1940.

<sup>552</sup> The travels were not the only aspect of the “Jugendarbeit”. The German security services were considering the creation of a youth organisation attached to the GEDELIT. According to the notes of a meeting of 28 January 1939, this would enable the official participation of the German authorities, as it happened in the case of the *Alliance Française* (LHA Ko, 662,006-882, Meeting notes attached to a letter from the SD leader of the SS-Oberabschnitt Fulda-Werra to the Reich Main Security Office, 08/02/1939).

<sup>553</sup> Own translation. “Wir mußten die Beziehungen zum Reich weiter in den Vordergrund stellen. Ohne das mußten wir uns entweder tarnen und tun, als seien wir bloß jugendbewegt – dann bekam die Sache einen sectiererischen Anstrich, und außerdem mißlangen die Tarnungsversuche, da es sich um sehr junge Menschen handelt, kläglich. Oder wir mußten eine politische Kampftruppe bilden – dazu aber hatten wir nicht den Rückhalt bei Erwachsenen, der dafür Voraussetzung ist, und außerdem sind die Luxemburger sowieso keine kämpferischen Naturen [...].” (LHA Ko, 662,006-882, *Die Jugendarbeit in Luxemburg* by Adolf Winandy, 10/01/1939).

<sup>554</sup> LHA Ko, 662,006-882, *Die Jugendarbeit in Luxemburg* by Adolf Winandy, 10/01/1939.

These travels, a collaboration between the SS Oberabschnitt Fulda-Werra, the SD, the field office of the German student organisation (Aussenstelle West der Deutschen Studentenschaft) and the Luxemburger Volksjugend (Adolf Winandy and Albert Colling), were used by the Germans for specific propagandistic purposes. The Reich Main Security Office in Berlin was regularly informed. In addition to the evaluation of the programmes, the SD drew profiles of the participants to assess who could be gained for the Nazi cause. These assessments could be negative, with opinions on individuals described as “ein Würstchen” (“a squirt”) or “hoffnungsloser Fall” (“hopeless case”).<sup>555</sup> In one case, it was implied that the participant could be a spy, as he was the neighbour of the son of Emile Reuter, the president of the Chamber of Deputies.<sup>556</sup> On the other hand, there were also somewhat explicit positive evaluations. One participant of the excursion to Koblenz, in particular, was depicted as having a good character and being ready to fight for the interests of the Reich. His “soldierly” (*soldatisch*) attitude would deviate “from the sluggish, lazy behaviour of most Luxembourgers”.<sup>557</sup> According to Winandy’s assessment of the travels, the event in summer was more successful than the ski camp, which suffered from an uneven composition of the group. He stressed that it was not enough to provoke a consciousness of belonging to the German nation. Above all, Winandy thought that the young Luxembourgers had to become convinced Nazis, which would strengthen the position of National Socialism in Luxembourg. Besides travels, Luxembourgers would need to be trained in Germany and then return to Luxembourg. As Winandy put it:

In the Reich, young Luxembourgers are only welcome for as long as necessary for their preparation, [ideological] consolidation and training; especially the useful ones should remain in Luxembourg. In the Reich, there were already enough Nazis anyway.<sup>558</sup>

While trying to hide the involvement of the German security services and the propagandistic purposes, these travels constitute a major case illustrating the Germans’ attention paid to Luxembourg years before the invasion. The youth was explicitly targeted. The Nazis

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<sup>555</sup> LHA Ko, 662,006-882, *Bericht über den Besuch von fünf Jugendlichen aus Luxemburg am 1. und 2. November 1938 in Koblenz*, 17/11/1938; LHA Ko, 662,006-882, *Kurze Charakterisierung der luxemburgischen Teilnehmer am Schilager in Winklmoos, Jahreswende 1938/39*, [Adolf Winandy], 10/01/1939.

<sup>556</sup> LHA Ko, 662,006-882, *Kurze Charakterisierung der luxemburgischen Teilnehmer am Schilager in Winklmoos, Jahreswende 1938/39*, [Adolf Winandy], 10/01/1939.

<sup>557</sup> Own translation. “[...] von der trägen, bequemen Art der meisten Luxemburger” (LHA Ko, 662,006-882, *Bericht über den Besuch von fünf Jugendlichen aus Luxemburg am 1. und 2. November 1938 in Koblenz*, 17/11/1938).

<sup>558</sup> Own translation. “Im Reich sind junge Luxemburger nur so lange erwünscht, als es zu ihrer Gewinnung, Festigung und Ausbildung erforderlich ist; gerade die Brauchbaren sollen in Luxemburg bleiben. Im Reich gibt es sowieso genug Nazis.” (LHA Ko, 662,006-882, *Die Jugendarbeit in Luxemburg* by Adolf Winandy, 10/01/1939).

understood that indoctrinating it would secure the future of their ideology and regime. At the same time, one cannot ignore the subtle contradiction between the general prejudices against Luxembourgers (a cosy and languid people) and the expectations linked to the activities.

Another example of German propaganda efforts is the theatre in Luxembourg, which involved actors who were going to play a major role in German cultural policy during the occupation period. It also illustrates that the experiences of WWI and the rise of National Socialism did not elicit a wholesale rejection of German culture. The German guest performances were framed in a propagandistic vision. In March 1935, the Volksbund für das Deutschtum im Ausland (VDA), an association for German cultural relations abroad and “the most important *Deutschtum* association”<sup>559</sup> in Nazi Germany, suggested the promotion of German theatre plays in Luxembourg, especially after negative experiences with French performances (referring to appended theatre critiques).<sup>560</sup> Indeed, German theatre ensembles performed in Luxembourg, such as the city theatre of Frankfurt on the Main. The German Embassy described its performance in December 1935 as a resounding success despite the “meagre equipment” (“dürftige Ausstattung”).<sup>561</sup> It was not the only occurrence. Internal documents of German authorities (such as the Reich Ministry of Public Enlightenment and Propaganda, the German Embassy, and different services of the Gau Koblenz-Trier) show that the city theatre of Trier occupied a privileged position. Besides the city theatre of Cologne, focusing on operas and operettas, the ensemble of Trier regularly played in Luxembourg City. In order to highlight its essential role in disseminating German cultural propaganda in Luxembourg, the Propaganda Ministry granted the institution in Trier the status of *Grenzland-Theater* (“border-region theatre”).<sup>562</sup>

The theatres also competed with each other. In 1937, the theatre of Saarbrücken wanted to offer guest performances in Luxembourg. The ambassador in Luxembourg, Radowitz, hoped to use his good contacts with the mayor of Luxembourg City, Gaston Diderich, to make the project happen. The ambassador stressed that competition should not emerge between Trier, Cologne, and Saarbrücken, but that the theatres should coordinate their guest performances.<sup>563</sup>

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<sup>559</sup> Freund, *Volk, Reich und Westgrenze*, 66.

<sup>560</sup> BArch Berlin, R 55/20535, Letter from the Volksbund für das Deutschtum im Ausland to the Reich Ministry for Public Enlightenment and Propaganda, 11/03/1935, no. 32.

<sup>561</sup> BArch Berlin, R 55/20536, Letter from the German Embassy in Luxembourg to the Reich Ministry of Public Enlightenment and Propaganda, 15/12/1935, no. 18.

<sup>562</sup> BArch Berlin, R 55/20536, Letter from Albert Urmes, Gaupropagandaleiter, to the President of the Reichskulturkammer, 06/07/1937, no. 63.

<sup>563</sup> BArch Berlin, R 55/20536, Letter from the German Embassy in Luxembourg to the Reich Ministry of Public Enlightenment and Propaganda, 25/06/1937, no. 50-51.

In the following months, Saarbrücken's initiative was confronted with rejections by the theatre in Trier, the mayor of Trier, Albert Urmes (head of propaganda of the Gau Koblenz-Trier), and Gauleiter Gustav Simon. Trier feared for its status, as appears in a letter from the mayor to Radowitz:

For the development of the Trier Theatre, it would mean a serious setback if the Saarbrücken City Theatre were to play in Luxembourg City in the future. I also believe that there is no need for this considering the situation, since the desire of the Luxembourg audience for German performances can be fulfilled by the Cologne Opera and the Trier Theatre, which have also been established for years. It seems to me that the theatre of Saarbrücken is not as dependent on the requested performances as the Grenzlandtheater in Trier.<sup>564</sup>

The exchanges between regional authorities (Urmes, Simon), the embassy in Luxembourg, local authorities (the mayors of Trier and Saarbrücken), theatres, the Reichskulturkammer and the Reich Ministry were dragging on for months. The letters do not explain why people such as Simon were vividly opposed to Saarbrücken's plans. Yet, from a political perspective, Simon might have sided with a city in his Gau (Saarbrücken belonging to another), expressing the power struggles between *Gauleiter* within a polycratic power system. Similar potential motivations can be applied to Urmes. The latter opined that Saarbrücken should instead direct its focus on neighbouring Lothringia. In addition, Urmes discussed the problem of administrative interferences. He stressed the mission of cultural and political "assistance" ("Beutreuung") entrusted to the Gau leadership (*Gauleitung*) and his service. He preferred this mission to be carried out by one *Gauleitung*.<sup>565</sup> Radowitz, though attempting to mediate, expressed his embarrassment about the situation, as he was only in favour of Saarbrücken's performances in case of a consensus between the institutions.<sup>566</sup> Saarbrücken, not having

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<sup>564</sup> Own translation. "Für die Entwicklung des Trierer Theater würde es einen empfindlichen Rückschlag bedeuten, wenn in Zukunft in der Stadt Luxemburg auch das Saarbrücker Stadttheater spielen würde. Ich glaube auch, dass die Bedürfnisfrage hierfür zu verneinen ist, da der Wunsch des Luxemburger Publikums nach deutschen Aufführungen durch die ebenfalls seit Jahren eingeführte Kölner Oper und das Trierer Theater erfüllt werden kann. Mir scheint es, dass das Saarbrücker Theater [sic] auf die gewünschte Bespielung nicht so angewiesen ist, wie das Grenzlandtheater Trier." (BArch Berlin, R 55/20536, Copy of a letter from the mayor of Trier to the German Embassy in Luxembourg (von Radowitz), 29/06/1937, no. 65-66).

<sup>565</sup> "Da der Gauleitung der NSDAP und auch meiner Dienststelle Sonderaufträge zur politischen und kulturellen Betreuung von Luxemburg erteilt worden sind, würde ich es für sehr schädlich halten, wenn dieser Auftrag nicht einheitlich von einer Gauleitung durchgeführt würde. Ich bitte aus diesem Grunde entsprechende Anweisungen zu erteilen, die diese Einheitlichkeit der politischen und kulturellen Propaganda gewährleisten und damit den Enderfolg unserer Arbeit in Luxemburg sicherstellen." (BArch Berlin, R 55/20536, Letter from Albert Urmes, Gaupropagandaleiter, to the President of the Reichskulturkammer, 06/07/1937, no. 63).

<sup>566</sup> BArch Berlin, R 55/20536, Letter from the German Embassy to the Reich Ministry of Public Enlightenment and Propaganda, 23/07/1937, no. 74.

received the authorization, abandoned its plans. Yet, the local authorities of Luxembourg City, and particularly the mayor, contacted Saarbrücken and expressed their explicit interest in a guest performance. In November 1937, the authorities of Saarbrücken informed the Reich Ministry of this.<sup>567</sup> A month later, they raised the issue again and saw themselves in a situation where they could not further decline Diderich's request.<sup>568</sup> While they might genuinely have felt under pressure, this might also have been a political manoeuvre to put pressure on the Reich Ministry and other services. Finally, in January 1938, the efforts paid off. A compromise was struck, according to which the theatre of Saarbrücken could perform once or twice per season in Luxembourg, but was limited to musical performances.<sup>569</sup>

This example of cultural propaganda and diplomacy is insightful for several reasons. Firstly, it involved a series of actors at different levels. Some of these actors – Urmes and Simon and their respective administrations – were going to play a significant role during the occupation period in Luxembourg. Secondly, the fact that guest performances in Luxembourg led to an internal struggle highlights the interest in Luxembourg as a propaganda stage. Such struggles are also typical for the Nazi regime, where competencies overlapped, and actors were protective of their competence boundaries. Thirdly, the case highlights the unofficial character of German cultural diplomacy and propaganda. While Diderich's involvement illustrates the transnational contacts, the Germans could not base their actions on official agreements between the national authorities of Luxembourg and Germany.

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<sup>567</sup> BArch Berlin, R 55/20536, Letter from the mayor's office of Saarbrücken to the Reich Ministry of Public Enlightenment and Propaganda, 10/11/1937, no. 87.

<sup>568</sup> BArch Berlin, R 55/20536, Letter from the mayor's office of Saarbrücken to the Reich Ministry of Public Enlightenment and Propaganda, 23/12/1937, no. 89.

<sup>569</sup> BArch Berlin, R 55/20536, Letter from the Reich Ministry of Public Enlightenment and Propaganda to the mayor's office of Saarbrücken, 27/01/1938, no. 91.

### III.2. The Political Performance of Cultural Policy in a National Era

This section provides several case studies of cultural policy as political performance against the backdrop of nation-building and nationalist discourse. The concept of political performance, or *politische Inszenierung*, is explained by Sabine Arnold et alii in their introduction to the book *Politische Inszenierung im 20. Jahrhundert: Zur Sinnlichkeit der Macht* (1998)<sup>570</sup>, with reference to Reinhart Koselleck's reflections about the *politische Sinnlichkeit* (political sensibility), i.e. the senses activated during political performances, in the same volume.<sup>571</sup> Following Arnold et al., power is expressed through performances; such performances can make political processes visible or obscure them. Political performances can exist in both democracies and autocratic regimes. Only the expectations and objectives might vary. Whereas autocracies demand uncritical acclamation, the performances in representative democracies mainly aim to construct consensus and legitimization.<sup>572</sup> In short, Arnold et alii define *politische Inszenierung* as “complex, ritualised processes carrying symbols and myths” (“komplexe symbol- und mythenbeladene ritualisierte Handlungsabläufe”)<sup>573</sup>. Though the present study does not reject the idea of rituals as such, procedures do not need to be ritualised to become political performances. The *Encyclopaedia Britannica* defines a ritual as “the performance of ceremonial acts prescribed by tradition or by sacerdotal decree”<sup>574</sup>. A ritualization, though referring to the idea of the use of symbols and acts that aim to create a quasi-religious meaning, supposes a certain invariability and repetition throughout time and space. When Arnold et al. discuss political iconography as an approach to understanding and analysing political performances, they quote potentially ephemeral phenomena (ceremonies, parades, festivals) in addition to what they call “traditional” genres of visual manifestations (architecture, urban planning, sculpture, painting, monuments).<sup>575</sup> While they are not explicit enough on how to reconcile ephemeral phenomena with ritualization, if we consider that the

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<sup>570</sup> Sabine R. Arnold, Christian Fuhrmeister, and Dietmar Schiller, ‘Hüllen und Masken der Politik: Ein Aufriß’, in *Politische Inszenierung im 20. Jahrhundert: Zur Sinnlichkeit der Macht*, ed. Sabine R. Arnold, Christian Fuhrmeister, and Dietmar Schiller (Wien: Böhlau, 1998), 7–24.

<sup>571</sup> Reinhart Koselleck, ‘Politische Sinnlichkeit und mancherlei Künste’, in *Politische Inszenierung im 20. Jahrhundert: Zur Sinnlichkeit der Macht*, ed. Sabine R. Arnold, Christian Fuhrmeister, and Dietmar Schiller (Wien: Böhlau, 1998), 25–34.

<sup>572</sup> Arnold, Fuhrmeister, and Schiller, ‘Hüllen und Masken der Politik: Ein Aufriß’, 10–11. Though it could be argued that legitimization is also an objective of autocracies, even if differently expressed and manufactured than in democracies.

<sup>573</sup> Arnold, Fuhrmeister, and Schiller, 19.

<sup>574</sup> Hans H. Penner, ‘Ritual’, *Encyclopædia Britannica Academic Edition*, 2019.

<sup>575</sup> Arnold, Fuhrmeister, and Schiller, ‘Hüllen und Masken der Politik: Ein Aufriß’, 19.

former can appear in similar forms in different places at different times, independently or as the result of transfers, it can be understood as a diachronic and delocalised ritualization.

Nevertheless, the concept of political performance (though Arnold et al. describe it as a field of research) can be helpful, as it is linked to power, the representation of ideas, the creation of meaning and legitimisation. The advantage of the concept lies in its versatility, while not being too vague to become useless as an analytical tool. For example, Stefan Schweizer used the concept of political performance in his study on the historical processions organised in Munich between 1937 and 1939 on the *Tag der deutschen Kunst* under the Nazi regime.<sup>576</sup> Cultural policy is saturated with examples of political performance, as it includes a plethora of instances shaped by symbols, discourses, and processes: from the erection of monuments, over the representation of the past, to the most fundamental processes in a democracy, such as political debates. The examples discussed in the current section will cover a range of cases of political performance: the legislative framework created in the interwar period, the literature prize, and monuments. At the same time, they are embedded in the larger nation-building context and oftentimes linked to Luxembourg's situation as a nationalised intermediate space.

### **III.2.1. The legal framework and the protection of the past**

Among the most basic yet indispensable approaches to cultural policy history is the study of the legal framework and the political debates, particularly at the Chamber of Deputies and especially on yearly state budgets. The legislative process is fundamental in analysing cultural policy, as it reflects the dominant view on culture among the political elite and the type of cultural policy implemented most candidly. In the interwar period, certain topics and debates regularly flared up: tourism, monuments and castles, music, theatres and libraries. These debates were not necessarily addressed in the context of the *arts et sciences* section in the state budget, not least because the National Library and the conservation of monuments (until 1929) were not part of this section. National cultural institutions were regularly discussed or at least shortly mentioned in the parliamentary debates. In 1927, the National Library's desolate state and the lack of financial means were criticised by the leftist parliamentarian René Blum, who insisted that in "our bilingual country, it is essential that the National Library possesses the best works in French and German".<sup>577</sup>

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<sup>576</sup> Stefan Schweizer, 'Unserer Weltanschauung sichtbaren Ausdruck geben'. *Nationalsozialistische Geschichtsbilder in historischen Festzügen* (Göttingen: Wallstein, 2007).

<sup>577</sup> Chambre des députés, '29e et 30e séances (4 février et 5 février 1927)', in *Compte-rendu de la session ordinaire de 1926-1927*, vol. 1 (Luxembourg: Chambre des députés, 1927), 1227.

As a large share of public spending was reserved for distributing grants and subsidies to local initiatives and associations, the deputies also paid attention to these matters. They repeatedly requested an increase in the financial support of professional and local libraries.<sup>578</sup> Similar demands were formulated in favour of the theatre in the capital, which was not a state institution, but considered by some politicians as having a national scope nonetheless.<sup>579</sup> In the area of music, debates often concerned the Conservatoire de musique in Luxembourg City, created by law in 1902<sup>580</sup> and officially opened in 1906. The Conservatoire was not a state institution<sup>581</sup>, but managed by the municipality. The law merely capped the amount of state subsidies granted to the Conservatoire in the annual budget. As this limit had been left untouched since then, the discussions in the 1920s and 1930s mainly concerned the increase of the subsidies,<sup>582</sup> as in 1922, when Gaston Diderich submitted a motion to modify the law, arguing that the Conservatoire's scope and interest reached a national level.<sup>583</sup> Unsurprisingly, Diderich was the mayor of Luxembourg and backed by another politician of the capital, Robert Brasseur. Debates surrounding the music school in Esch-sur-Alzette were also characterised by requests to increase financial support, such as in 1924<sup>584</sup>, 1928<sup>585</sup> and 1930<sup>586</sup>.

Concerning tourism, Egide Petges (Party of the Right) once highlighted its “ever stronger development” in Luxembourg (“le développement toujours plus grand du tourisme dans le pays”) and urged that in this context, the subsidies for the local *sociétés d'embellissement*

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<sup>578</sup> See for instance: Chambre des députés, ‘29e et 30e séances (8 mars et 9 mars 1929)’, in *Compte-rendu de la session ordinaire de 1928-1929*, vol. 1 (Luxembourg: Chambre des députés, 1929), 1053.

<sup>579</sup> Chambre des députés, ‘35e séance (18 juin 1925)’, in *Compte-rendu de la session ordinaire de 1924-1925*, vol. 1 (Luxembourg: Chambre des députés, 1925), 14772; Chambre des députés, ‘29e et 30e séances (8 mars et 9 mars 1929)’, 1065.

<sup>580</sup> ‘Loi du 22 mai 1902, concernant la création d’un conservatoire de musique à Luxembourg’, in *Mémorial A*, vol. 33, 1902, 441, <http://data.legilux.public.lu/file/eli-etat-leg-memorial-1902-33-fr-pdf.pdf>.

<sup>581</sup> The government exerted some limited influence on the institution: it approved the programme elaborated by the city administration, and reserved the right to appoint two representatives to the surveillance commission (cf. ‘Arrêté grand-ducal du 11 mars 1904, concernant l’organisation du conservatoire de musique à Luxembourg’, in *Mémorial A*, vol. 15 [Luxembourg, 1904], 265, <http://legilux.public.lu/eli/etat/leg/agd/1904/03/11/n2/jo>).

<sup>582</sup> See for instance: Chambre des députés, ‘37e séance (19 juin 1925)’, in *Compte-rendu de la session ordinaire de 1924-1925*, vol. 1 (Luxembourg: Chambre des députés, 1925), 1477.

<sup>583</sup> Chambre des députés, ‘58e séance (16 mars 1922)’, in *Compte-rendu de la session ordinaire de 1921-1922*, vol. 1 (Luxembourg: Chambre des députés, 1922), 2463–2464.

<sup>584</sup> Chambre des députés, ‘67e séance (7 mai 1924)’, in *Compte-rendu de la session ordinaire de 1923-1924*, vol. 1 (Luxembourg: Chambre des députés, 1924), 2112.

<sup>585</sup> Chambre des députés, ‘47e et 48e séances (31 mars et 1er avril 1928)’, in *Compte-rendu de la session ordinaire de 1927-1928* (Luxembourg: Chambre des députés, 1928), 1494–1495.

<sup>586</sup> Chambre des députés, ‘29e et 30e séances (11 février et 12 février 1930)’, in *Compte-rendu de la session ordinaire de 1929-1930*, vol. 1 (Luxembourg: Chambre des députés, 1930), 1223.

(embellishment societies) should be increased. For Emile Mark (Labour Party), tourism was becoming a “national industry”.<sup>587</sup> René Blum stressed the commitment of the embellishment societies to develop tourism.<sup>588</sup> Occasionally, tourism was linked to protecting and conserving historical monuments and landscapes. Petges, for instance, thought that such monuments represented “a great national richness for the flourishing tourism industry” (“une grande richesse nationale pour l’industrie si florissante du tourisme dans le pays”). As a politician from Vianden, Petges used this opportunity to mention the castle in his hometown, “one of the most beautiful of these monuments”, yet in a poor state.<sup>589</sup> François Erpelding (Labour Party) suggested creating tourist paths around monuments.<sup>590</sup>

The importance of what could be labelled as “heritage”<sup>591</sup> was palpable in the legislative output. The First World War did not create a rupture, but the interwar period stood in continuity with the 19<sup>th</sup> century, even if the focus on objectified culture intensified and was subject to increasing interventionism. The first law on archives dates back to 1794 (*Loi concernant l’organisation des archives établies auprès de la Représentation nationale*), when most of the Duchy of Luxembourg became the French Département des Forêts (Forest Department). In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, several other laws were published, in 1850 on an additional subsidy granted to the Société pour la recherche et la conservation des anciens monuments dans le Grand-Duché<sup>592</sup>, in 1880 on the erection of the monument of William II<sup>593</sup>, or in 1898 on the *droit d’auteur*<sup>594</sup>.

During the interwar period, the trend of a cultural policy focusing on monuments and cultural objects continued while closely linked to the history of the national museum. In 1923,

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<sup>587</sup> Chambre des députés, ‘35e séance (18 juin 1925)’, 1307.

<sup>588</sup> Chambre des députés, ‘46e séance (21 février 1922)’, in *Compte-rendu de la session ordinaire de 1921-1922*, vol. 1 (Luxembourg: Chambre des députés, 1922), 1997.

<sup>589</sup> Chambre des députés, 1994–1995.

<sup>590</sup> Chambre des députés, 1996.

<sup>591</sup> It should be noted, though, that this is an anachronistic term. At the time, at least in Luxembourg, heritage was not used as a concept in cultural policy to encompass monuments, historic buildings and cultural objects. Generally, heritage, in the sense of incorporating “all material evidence of man and his environment” has acquired this sense only gradually from the 1950s onwards (Desvallées and Mairesse, *Key Concepts of Museology*, 40).

<sup>592</sup> ‘Loi du 30 mars 1850 concernant un subside supplémentaire accordé à la Société pour la recherche et la conservation des anciens monuments dans le Grand-Duché’, in *Mémorial législatif et administratif du Grand-Duché de Luxembourg*, vol. 46, 1850, 439–440, <http://data.legilux.public.lu/file/eli-etat-leg-memorial-1850-46-fr-pdf.pdf>.

<sup>593</sup> ‘Loi du 29 décembre 1880, décrétant l’érection d’un monument à la mémoire de S.M. le Roi Guillaume II, Grand-Duc de Luxembourg, et allouant à cet effet un premier crédit de 45,000 fr.’, in *Mémorial du Grand-Duché de Luxembourg*, vol. 87 (Luxembourg, 1880), 809–810, <http://data.legilux.public.lu/file/eli-etat-leg-memorial-1880-87-fr-pdf.pdf>.

<sup>594</sup> ‘Loi du 10 mai 1898, sur le droit d’auteur.’, in *Mémorial du Grand-Duché de Luxembourg*, vol. 20 (Luxembourg, 1898), 209–218, <http://legilux.public.lu/eli/etat/leg/loi/1898/05/10/n2/jo>.

the government passed a law on the acquisition of the Collart-de Scherff building<sup>595</sup>, which would eventually host the future museum.<sup>596</sup> For the government, it was a convenient opportunity to acquire an existing building, as the financial situation did not allow the construction of “one of the vast projects that rests in the boxes of the administration”.<sup>597</sup> Furthermore, the rental agreement for the ancient Vauban casern in Pfaffenthal<sup>598</sup>, where the collections were stored, was cancelled.<sup>599</sup> In its report, the State Council suggested using the opportunity and installing, in addition to the museum, the National Library in the Collart-de Scherff building, instead of the normal school for girls (*école normale de jeunes filles*<sup>600</sup>) as envisaged by the government.<sup>601</sup> During the debates, the question of the exact costs related to the repurposing of the building provoked some controversies, but the Chamber adopted the law with 34 votes against 3.<sup>602</sup>

In 1927, the Chamber of Deputies passed a law on the conservation and protection of national sites and monuments. For the first time, national authorities explicitly addressed heritage protection, previously left in the hands of the Historical Section. The law introduced an inventory system.<sup>603</sup> All monuments, buildings, and sites (subsumed under the term *immeubles*) considered to have historical, artistic or aesthetic qualities would be added to a list, protecting them from demolition or any arbitrary changes, without specifying criteria to determine these qualities. Furthermore, the law obliged individuals to inform a local administration of any discovery they made. The mayor had to inform the government and take

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<sup>595</sup> To be exact, the Collart-de Scherff building consists of two houses: the Majerus-Collart house, and the de Scherff-house (which is the bigger one).

<sup>596</sup> ‘Loi du 5 janvier 1923, concernant l’acquisition par l’Etat de l’immeuble des héritiers Collart-de Scherff, situé à Luxembourg, Marché-aux-Poissons.’

<sup>597</sup> Own translation. “[...] l’un des vastes projets qui reposent dans les cartons de l’administration.” (Chambre des députés, ‘Projet de loi portant approbation de l’acquisition, pour compte de l’Etat, d’un immeuble situé à Luxembourg, Marché-aux-Poissons (Annexes)’, in *Compte-rendu de la session ordinaire de 1922 à 1923*, vol. 3 [Luxembourg, 1924], 308).

<sup>598</sup> The Pfaffenthal (*Pafendall* in Luxembourgish) is a district of Luxembourg City in the valley of the river Alzette.

<sup>599</sup> Chambre des députés, ‘Projet de loi portant approbation de l’acquisition, pour compte de l’Etat, d’un immeuble situé à Luxembourg, Marché-aux-Poissons (Annexes)’, 314.

<sup>600</sup> The normal school for girls was an institution aiming to train female teachers.

<sup>601</sup> Chambre des députés, ‘Projet de loi portant approbation de l’acquisition, pour compte de l’Etat, d’un immeuble situé à Luxembourg, Marché-aux-Poissons (Annexes)’, 312. As the draft law merely concerned an extraordinary expense for the acquisition, the legal text did not stress the future use of the building. Eventually, neither the National Library nor the normal school were installed in the building.

<sup>602</sup> Chambre des députés, ‘Séance du 19 décembre 1922’, in *Compte-rendu de la session ordinaire de 1922-1923*, vol. 1 (Luxembourg: Chambre des députés, 1924), 22–31.

<sup>603</sup> ‘Loi du 12 août 1927, concernant la conservation et la protection des sites et monuments nationaux’.

the necessary measures to protect the discovery. Moreover, the government could prohibit billposting when “the beauty or the conservation of buildings, natural monuments, sites and landscapes” required it (chapter IV, art. 16).<sup>604</sup> The last chapter stipulated the creation of a commission of national sites and monuments (Commission des sites et des monuments nationaux).

The text voted in 1927 differs from the first draft submitted in 1920. A dispatch of 8 June 1920 from the director general of justice and public works, Auguste Liesch, to the State Council reveals that the Historical Section of the Grand-Ducal Institute was involved in putting a respective proposal on the political agenda. The text was based mainly on a French law of 1913.<sup>605</sup> In a letter of 26 May 1920, the president of the Historical Section, Henri Vannérus (1833-1921), urged the director general to protect historical monuments through legal dispositions. Nothing would oblige the public to protect or even refrain from destroying monuments, except for an article in the criminal law (*code pénal*). For Vannérus, “the spirit of destruction can freely roam, without encountering the smallest obstacle”.<sup>606</sup> Vannérus cited France as an exemplary case. Its law of 1913 could serve as a basis for a future Luxembourgish law. It would only need to be adapted in some points and include the creation of a commission of monuments.<sup>607</sup>

The draft proposed by the Historical Section was subject to minor changes by the State Council, which submitted its revised text five years later. This large timespan explains why it took seven years between Vannérus’ pledge and the final vote. In 1926, the central parliamentary section (*section centrale*<sup>608</sup>) examining the draft proposed several changes. Firstly, the law’s title should include the adjective “national” to highlight the text’s importance and scope: a symbolic modification. Secondly, the section suggested a disposition that would

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<sup>604</sup> “Toutes les fois que l’exigera la beauté ou la conservation des édifices, monuments naturels, sites et paysages, le Gouvernement pourra, sur avis de la commission des monuments, prendre un arrêté interdisant l’affichage ou le limitant à un emplacement réservé.” (‘Loi du 12 août 1927, concernant la conservation et la protection des sites et monuments nationaux’, 656).

<sup>605</sup> Chambre des députés, ‘Projet de loi sur la protection des sites et des monuments historiques et artistiques’, in *Compte-rendu de la session ordinaire de 1924-1925: Annexes*, vol. 2 (Chambre des députés, 1924), 327.

<sup>606</sup> Own translation. “[...] l’esprit de destruction peut se donner libre carrière, sans rencontrer la moindre entrave”.

<sup>607</sup> Chambre des députés, ‘Projet de loi sur la protection des sites et des monuments historiques et artistiques’, 330–331.

<sup>608</sup> The *sections centrales* were the predecessors of the parliamentary commissions, replacing the former in 1965. The *sections centrales* had no specialisation and their composition was determined by a draw.

protect all “natural monuments of scientific character”.<sup>609</sup> Thirdly, it rejected measures to protect “mobile objects” (*biens mobiliers*) such as furniture. In Luxembourg, as the argument went, either such artistic objects eligible for protection would be sparse, or they would be part of churches and be protected already. Yet, the most decisive reason, according to the section, was the inexistence of “Luxembourgish art”. It argued that “one can barely speak of Luxembourgish art as such. Our country, during many centuries, had been evolving in a mediocre prosperity hardly favourable to the development of the arts.”<sup>610</sup> Whereas in literature, the political and the cultural elites paid homage to the “national” poets and writers, some of them did not acknowledge the existence of “national” art. The Historical Section was opposed to removing the protection of mobile objects from the draft.<sup>611</sup> As a fourth major change, the central section added a chapter prohibiting billposting in specific contexts. As the rapporteur Marcel Cahen noted during his speech, this was copied from a French legal text.<sup>612</sup>

The aspect of the furniture was also a point of debate within the committee of the Amis des Musées at the meeting on 25 March 1927.<sup>613</sup> In an exchange between Alphonse Nickels, Bech and Stumper, Nickels suggested addressing an appeal to the Chamber of Deputies arguing in favour of a law protecting furniture if the owners expressed this wish. Bech thought that even with this compromise, the law would not have a chance to pass. The Church had an obligation to conserve its furniture anyway. Stumper agreed with Bech and added that the Belgian law did not include private furniture. The idea of an appeal was discarded.

The political debates revealed the politicians’ take on Luxembourgish history and culture. The protection of monuments and sites was considered a duty to future generations, as implied in the rapporteur’s remarks when he affirmed the mission to “completely transmit our treasures of beauty and originality to future generations, to preserve them from the caprice and the ephemeral interest of Men.”<sup>614</sup> Bech went further and embedded this responsibility in his

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<sup>609</sup> ‘[...] tous les monuments naturels de caractère scientifique’. Chambre des députés, ‘Projet de loi sur les sites et les monuments nationaux’, in *Compte-rendu de la session ordinaire de 1925-1926* (Luxembourg: Chambre des députés, 1926), 210.

<sup>610</sup> Own translation. “[...] l’on ne peut guère parler d’un art luxembourgeois proprement dit. Notre pays, de longs siècles durant, s’est débattu dans une prospérité médiocre peu favorable à l’épanouissement des arts” (Chambre des députés, 211).

<sup>611</sup> Chambre des députés, 214.

<sup>612</sup> Chambre des députés, ‘48e séance (5 mai 1927)’, in *Compte-rendu de la session ordinaire de 1926-1927*, vol. 1 (Luxembourg: Chambre des députés, 1927), 1752.

<sup>613</sup> MNHA archives, *Séances du Comité (Registre)* by Joseph Tockert, 1926-1939, p. 116.

<sup>614</sup> Own translation. “[...] transmettre intacts aux générations futures nos trésors de beauté et d’originalité, de les préserver du caprice et de l’intérêt passager des hommes.” (Chambre des députés, ‘48e séance (5 mai 1927)’, 1752).

positive vision of Luxembourg's past and the nation-state's independence. For him, the history of Luxembourg

has sometimes not been without glory and never without honour, and we undoubtedly owe to it, to a certain extent, the miracle of our independence. Is it then not our national duty to devotedly protect and conserve all the monuments that document our past, that affirm and represent our race and our individuality, and that are, according to the famous image by Victor Hugo, a great admirer of our historical monuments, in a certain way the fragments of the stone book about our history, written by the soul of the nation?<sup>615</sup>

As the law was modified to include the protection of natural sites, the environment and landscapes of the country were also discussed. Every politician who intervened praised the country's sceneries. Bech acclaimed the "marvels of natural beauty" and considered the "monuments of men" inseparable from the "monuments of nature".<sup>616</sup> He suggested that the "natural physiognomy" influenced "our natural character".<sup>617</sup> The deputy Nicolas Mathieu did not differ from Bech in his admiration for the country's landscapes. "Nature has generously spread its splendours across our country", he praised.<sup>618</sup> The parliamentarian François Neu (Labour Party) regarded nature with its "beautiful landscapes" (besides arts and monuments) as an appropriate distraction from the difficult everyday life of the workers.<sup>619</sup>

Nature has played a significant role in the discourse about national communities, at least in the European context. Luxembourg, where politicians regularly underlined the independence as an important moment, was not an isolated case. The abstract concept of a political community found its visible representation in the landscapes neatly delimited by borders. As Rainer Guldin explained:

It is now striking that the invention of national formations in the European space was repeatedly anchored in certain metaphorically and metonymically linked landscape typologies, as if it were about adding a natural, scenic foundation to the rather abstract creation of a collectively imagined community.<sup>620</sup>

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<sup>615</sup> Own translation. "[...] parfois, n'a pas été sans gloire et qui, jamais, n'a été sans honneur, et à laquelle nous sommes sans doute redéposables, dans une certaine mesure, du miracle de notre indépendance. N'est-il donc pas de notre devoir national de protéger et de conserver jalousement tous les monuments qui documentent notre passé, qui affirment et incarnent notre race et notre individualité, et qui, selon la célèbre image de Victor Hugo, grand admirateur de nos monuments historiques, sont en quelque sorte les fragments du livre de pierre de notre histoire, écrit par l'âme de la nation?" (Chambre des députés, 1754).

<sup>616</sup> Chambre des députés, 1754.

<sup>617</sup> Chambre des députés, 1755.

<sup>618</sup> Own translation. "[...] la nature a très généreusement répandu ses splendeurs à travers notre pays [...]". (Chambre des députés, 1769).

<sup>619</sup> Chambre des députés, '49e séance (6 mai 1927)', 1782.

<sup>620</sup> Own translation. "Es ist nun auffallend, dass die Erfindung nationaler Formationen im europäischen Raum immer wieder auf bestimmte metaphorisch und metonymisch damit verknüpfte

The strong connection between nation and nature is visible in Bech's discourse, in which the natural environment is thought to influence the nation's spirit. The specificity of the Luxembourgish nation could only be derived from the landscape it was settled in. Guldin highlighted that national landscapes are usually picturesque landscapes without traces of recent human activity, conjuring a pre-industrial world lost due to industrialisation and urbanisation.<sup>621</sup> During the debates, many deputies criticised the destruction of castles and called for the protection and reconstruction of existing ones, such as the castles in Clervaux and Vianden. The focus on this type of monument reveals the wish to hold onto a pre-industrial past. Furthermore, Guldin's analysis is illustrated by Bech's discourse, as the following quote shows:

It is the foreigner, it is tourism that has revealed to us, that has made us taste the exquisite delight of our landscapes, the harmonious and smiling grace of the valleys of the Gutland, the rugged and picturesque beauty of the Ardennes, the surprising glances and the oddities of the fantastic Mullerthal, the proud beauty of our forests, after which our country was called in a specific moment in our history, the majestic site of our capital, a masterpiece both of nature and of man, which elicited the amazement of a Goethe.<sup>622</sup>

Bech did not portray an industrialised country but conveyed a romanticised, idyllic vision of Luxembourg with regional specificities. Nature appears to be untouched. The human factor is excluded, except for the capital, which is portrayed as a perfect symbiosis between man and nature: a fortress constructed on a natural formation. Though Bech's appraisal was one of the most extensive ones in the debates on the 1927 law, it was not a singular occurrence. For Mathieu, other countries would envy "us" for the "incomparable sites" and "ravishing landscapes".<sup>623</sup> The urge to preserve nature as a witness of the past against the fugitive interests

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Landschaftstypologien zurückgeführt wurde, als ginge es dabei darum, dem noch eher im Abstrakten verbleibenden Entwurf kollektiv imaginierten Zusammenlebens eine natürliche landschaftliche Basis nachzuliefern." (Rainer Guldin, *Politische Landschaften: Zum Verhältnis von Raum und nationaler Identität* [Bielefeld: transcript, 2014], 13).

<sup>621</sup> Guldin, 15.

<sup>622</sup> Own translation. "C'est l'étranger, c'est le tourisme qui nous a révélé, qui nous a fait goûter le charme exquis de nos paysages, la grâce harmonieuse et souriante des vallées du Bon Pays, l'âpre et pittoresque beauté des Ardennes, les surprenants coups d'œil et les bizarries du fantastique Mullertal, la beauté fière de nos forêts, d'après lesquelles notre pays fut dénommé à un certain moment de son histoire, le site grandiose de la capitale, chef d'œuvre de la nature autant que de l'homme, qui a fait l'étonnement d'un Goethe." (Chambre des députés, '48e séance (5 mai 1927)', 1755). The Gutland, or in French Bon Pays, is the part of the country south of Ettelbruck. When Bech talked about the country being named after its forests, he referred to the Département des Fôrets under French rule (though, in fact, two thirds of the territory of the former Duchy of Luxembourg was comprised in this department).

<sup>623</sup> Chambre des députés, 1769.

of men, to “preserve the fatherland”<sup>624</sup> (Cahen), was as much expressed by the law as by the members of parliament.

Furthermore, the debates reveal the importance attributed to castles, confirming the discourse about a romanticised, pre-industrial past, such as Cahen’s description of “our superb remains of feudal times” (“nos superbes vestiges des temps féodaux”)<sup>625</sup>. Several parliamentarians criticised the desolate state of the castles, such as Vianden, for which the budget allocation would not suffice.<sup>626</sup> The protection of artificial and natural monuments was partly based on a touristic rationale. Petges, for instance, reminded the touristic potential of the castle of Vianden and that the country had many picturesque sites.<sup>627</sup> Mathieu advised that the government should take care of the “fabulous sites”, which would make foreigners appreciate Luxembourg more.<sup>628</sup>

A short article on the law of 1927 appeared in the *Zeitschrift für Denkmalpflege* in 1929 (published in Vienna and Berlin) written by Richard Maria Staud, a priest from the village of Oetrange. He sent a copy to the state minister Joseph Bech who expressed his gratitude for the “favourable appreciation of the current government’s position”<sup>629</sup>. In the article, Staud welcomed the deletion of passages related to the protection of objects (unsurprisingly, as he was a clergyman), and was optimistic concerning the future protection of monuments, especially “as the president of the government, state minister Joseph Bech, who supervises the preservation of monuments, shows a warm personal interest in the conservation of old art.”<sup>630</sup>

The law of 1937 on excavations and the protection of objects of historical, prehistorical and paleontological value<sup>631</sup> triggered fewer debates. It was designed to complete the law of 1927, especially as the latter’s chapter on excavations and discoveries contained only general principles. Legal consequences in case of their violation were nonexistent. The law of 1937 aimed to change this situation. In his letter to the State Council, Joseph Bech, who submitted the draft law in April 1936, referred to a report by the Historical Section, which “regretted that

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<sup>624</sup> Chambre des députés, 1754.

<sup>625</sup> Chambre des députés, 1750.

<sup>626</sup> Chambre des députés, 1768.

<sup>627</sup> Chambre des députés, 1768.

<sup>628</sup> Chambre des députés, 1770.

<sup>629</sup> ANLux, IP-1810, Letter from Joseph Bech to Richard Maria Staud, 07/03/1929.

<sup>630</sup> Own translation. “[...] als der Präsident der Regierung, Staatsminister Dr. Josef Bech, dem die Denkmalpflege untersteht, persönlich warmes Interesse für die Pflege alter Kunst bestätigt.” (Richard Maria Staud, ‘Gesetzliche Denkmalpflege in Luxemburg’, *Zeitschrift für Denkmalpflege* III, no. 3 [1929]: 100).

<sup>631</sup> ‘Loi du 26 mars 1937, concernant les fouilles et la protection des objets d’intérêt historique, préhistorique et paléontologique’.

the archaeological excavations carried out by individuals have been remained uncontrolled for too long in our country.”<sup>632</sup> The SH had repeatedly urged the government to strengthen the protection of archaeological discoveries in Luxembourg. In a handwritten letter of 1 November 1935 sent to the state minister, the secretary A. Steffen deplored that on the Titelberg, the site of a Gallo-Roman oppidum, amateurs were carrying out excavations and taking discovered objects with them. In response to this problem, the Historical Section submitted three proposals to the government: ensuring controls of the excavations in the country, prohibiting the exportation of discovered objects, and proceeding to systematic excavations on the Titelberg.<sup>633</sup> In its undated activity report (written after November 1935 and before March 1936<sup>634</sup>), the Historical Section complained that “the discovered objects enter the collections of local amateurs, and very often they are exported”<sup>635</sup>. It reminded the government of the three proposals already made in the letter of November to end this “dispersion of our archaeological treasures”.<sup>636</sup>

The law of 1937 sought to solve these issues, i.e. lacking protection of discovered objects, illicit and non-professional excavations, and exportation of valuable objects. Furthermore, the International Museums Office, a sub-organisation of the LN created in 1926, was preparing an international convention on the restitution of stolen, lost or illegally exported objects of artistic, historical and scientific value. As Bech noted, “it is evident that such a convention presupposes the existence, in each country, of a legal protection of the concerned objects.”<sup>637</sup> The convention was one reason among others for the law of 1937, as confirmed by the rapporteur

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<sup>632</sup> “Dans son rapport sur son activité au cours de l’année 1925, la Section Historique de l’Institut Grand-Ducal regrette que les fouilles archéologiques entreprises par des particuliers soient restées trop longtemps sans contrôle dans notre pays.” (Chambre des députés, ‘Projet de loi concernant les fouilles et la protection des objets d’intérêt historique, préhistorique et paléontologique (Annexes)’, in *Compte-rendu de la session ordinaire de 1936-1937* [Luxembourg: Chambre des députés, 1937], 55).

<sup>633</sup> ANLux, IP-1801, Letter from the Historical Section to the state minister, 01/11/1935.

<sup>634</sup> The report mentioned the preliminary draft law (*avant-projet de loi*) on excavations submitted by the government to the State Council. This earliest version should not be confused with the draft law submitted to the State Council on 2 April 1936 (Chambre des députés, ‘Projet de loi concernant les fouilles et la protection des objets d’intérêt historique, préhistorique et paléontologique (Annexes)’, 57). On this newer version, the *section centrale* had already issued its report on 10 March 1936 (Chambre des députés, 117–119).

<sup>635</sup> Own translation. “[...] les objets trouvés entrent dans des collections d’amateurs indigènes, très souvent ils sont exportés.” (ANLux, IP-1801, Activity report of the Historical Section, undated).

<sup>636</sup> ANLux, IP-1801, Activity report of the Historical Section, undated.

<sup>637</sup> Own translation. “[...] il va sans dire qu’une pareille convention suppose l’existence, dans chaque pays, d’une protection légale des objets en question.” (Chambre des députés, ‘Projet de loi concernant les fouilles et la protection des objets d’intérêt historique, préhistorique et paléontologique (Annexes)’, 55).

Jean Origer.<sup>638</sup> Unlike in 1927, the debates were relatively short and did not include contentious issues. The law was unanimously adopted on 17 March 1937.<sup>639</sup>

The impact of both laws was mentioned in the analysis of the state budget, strengthening direct investments, raising the budget for heritage conservation, and adding a new administrative structure in 1938, i.e. the Service des fouilles. It seems that the law of 1927 was not fully implemented even years after its vote. In 1932, the Luxembourg government sent a copy of the law to the International Museums Office. The reasons for this exchange remain unknown, but the letter written by Albert Wehrer, government councillor, reveals that there was still no inventory of monuments and sites to protect.<sup>640</sup> It is unclear whether the 1937 law effectively regulated excavations, but it did seem to ignore the museum as an actor. In a letter written in September 1938 and sent to Bech, Joseph Meyers, curator of the archaeological section, complained about the curators' lack of consultation and involvement in previous years. Excavations would have been done by amateurs or specialists from other branches than archaeology.<sup>641</sup>

The elaboration, discussion and implementation of the laws of 1927 and 1937 have illustrated the various dimensions of cultural policy. They reveal the transnational dimension, especially in 1927, as the law on national monuments and sites was based on many principles of the French law. Furthermore, on behalf of the Prussian Ministry for Science, Art and Popular Education, the German Embassy approached the Luxembourg State Ministry in 1921 on the subject of the future law. Germany requested information about existing legal frameworks and copies of existing draft laws and proposals in Luxembourg in view of preparing its draft on the matter. The message implied that the request was sent to different countries.<sup>642</sup> Luxembourg responded to the request by sending a copy of the draft in French, adding that it was inspired by the French law of 31 December 1913 and that a German version of the text would only exist once the law was published.<sup>643</sup> In the case of the 1937 law, the Luxembourg government

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<sup>638</sup> Chambre des députés, ‘27e séance (17 mars 1937)’, in *Compte-rendu de la session ordinaire de 1936-1937* (Luxembourg: Chambre des députés, 1937), 1072.

<sup>639</sup> Chambre des députés, 1082.

<sup>640</sup> ANLux, AE-SdN-248, Letter from Albert Wehrer to the Secretary general of the International Museums Office, 19/03/1932, no. 191.

<sup>641</sup> ANLux, IP-1809, Letter from Joseph Meyers to Joseph Bech, 12/09/1938.

<sup>642</sup> “Das preussische Ministerium für Wissenschaft, Kunst und Volksbildung hat sich an das Auswärtige Amt mit der Bitte gewandt, es für die Vorarbeiten zum Entwurf eines preussischen Denkmalschutzgesetzes sowie eines Gesetzes betreffend Naturdenkmalpflege und Heimatschutz, mit der einschlägigen Gesetzgebung in ausserdeutschen Ländern vertraut zu machen.” (ANLux, AE-03574, *Verbalnote Deutsche Gesandschaft in Luxemburg N° 3720*, 13/09/1921, no. 2).

<sup>643</sup> ANLux, AE-03574, *Verbalnote Deutsche Gesandschaft in Luxemburg N° 3720*, 13/09/1921, no. 2.

received upon request a brochure from the Austrian Federal Ministry of Education in 1935 about laws and regulations concerning the conservation of monuments (*Denkmalpflege*) in Austria. In his letter, the government attaché Albert Nothumb shared his conviction that the information would serve as a model during the elaboration of the Luxembourgish law.<sup>644</sup>

The laws need to be placed in the larger structural context, not only of the institutional and administrative but also political and social kind. As we have seen with the budget, heritage and fine arts were at the heart of interwar cultural policy, coupled with Luxembourg's efforts to promote tourism and the interest in castles and landscapes. Besides subsidies and arts, cultural policy, as *arts et sciences*, was anchored in a conservative stance, i.e. protection of the objectified past, overlapping with historians' assessment of the 1920s and 1930s as a conservative period. All significant initiatives by the governments in the 1920s and 1930s were embedded in the *arts et sciences* philosophy. The museum's construction was part of this approach, as were the laws of 1927 and 1937. Sometimes, Luxembourg's independence was invoked as an argument to preserve objects and edifices dating back to a romanticised and pre-industrial past. Additionally, the issue of protecting objects in churches underlined the strong position of the Catholic Church: Jean Origer, the rapporteur of the 1927 law, was a cleric.

Of course, these discourses and initiatives needed actors. The Historical Section drafted the first proposal for the 1927 law and advocated a stronger legal disposition to protect buildings and artistic and historical objects. The legislative processes demonstrate the imbrication between socio-cultural and political actors. The cultural policy of the interwar period, however, did not only include the conservation and protection of historical objects and monuments. It was also a monumentalisation of national culture and past events.

### **III.2.2. Consecrating national culture: the literature prize**

During the interwar period, attempts to introduce a literature prize and thus promote national literary production constituted relatively small initiatives. Yet, the literature prize was closely linked to the self-perception of the nationalised *Zwischenraum* and a case of political performance. While based on national criteria, the prize did not exclude works written in German or French. It illustrates the difficulties a small nation-state confronted and its limited cultural production.

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<sup>644</sup> "Ich bin überzeugt, dass sie bei uns bei der Ausgestaltung unserer heimatlichen Gesetzgebung vorbildlich sein kann." (ANLux, IP-1863, Letter from Albert Nothumb to the Zentralstelle für Denkmalschutz im Bundesministerium für Unterricht, 10/04/1935).

The first attempt originates with a decree signed by Joseph Bech on 8 July 1924. According to its dispositions, a literature prize would be rewarded every year “to an unpublished literary piece in Luxembourgish, or a study on Luxembourgish language or folklore written in a language chosen by the author”.<sup>645</sup> The text did not specify what kind of languages were allowed, which theoretically extended the choice beyond German, French, and Luxembourgish. Contemporaries might have implicitly understood which languages were considered, though. The prize should promote and consecrate not merely any cultural production but one that contributed to the knowledge about national culture.<sup>646</sup> The deadline for submissions was set on 1 January 1925. A jury nominated by the director general of public instruction, i.e. Bech, would select the best work.

With the introduction of the award, the state added a new dimension to its cultural policy. It reflects the increasing importance attributed to the Luxembourgish language, not only in cultural policy. During the debates about the naturalization laws, politicians considered the introduction of Luxembourgish as a necessary condition.<sup>647</sup> In the cultural sphere, Luxembourgish received more attention. It was defended as a “real” language, for example, by Lucien Koenig, by associations like the Heemechtssprooch (founded by Adolf Berens), or by the theatre company Lëtzebuerger Nationalbühn, which had a repertoire comprising only Luxembourgish plays.<sup>648</sup>

Bech’s initiative had a difficult start. The deadline for the 1924 prize was extended to July 1925.<sup>649</sup> The first jury comprised Batty Weber (president), Joseph Tockert and Jean-Pierre Erpelding.<sup>650</sup> All of them were recognised figures of the cultural elite. The political orientation did not play a role in Bech’s choice, and their biographies were examples of transnational movements. Weber and Tockert were both liberals, members of popular education societies and of the *Luxemburgische Sprachgesellschaft*. Weber had studied in Berlin and Bonn, was a journalist, and worked as a chief stenographer at the Chamber of Deputies (1893-1928).<sup>651</sup>

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<sup>645</sup> Own translation. “à une oeuvre littéraire inédite en langue luxembourgeoise, resp. à une étude sur la langue ou le folklore luxembourgeois, rédigée dans une langue au choix de l'auteur” (‘Arrêté du 8 juillet 1924, portant création d'un prix de littérature luxembourgeoise’, in *Mémorial A*, vol. 33 [Luxembourg, 1924], 436, <http://data.legilux.public.lu/file/eli-etat-leg-memorial-1924-33-fr-pdf.pdf>).

<sup>646</sup> As we will see in another section, the interest in folklore was not coincidental. This field of study was promoted as well by the cultural society as by the government. In this sense, the literature prize was an early move towards promoting folklore.

<sup>647</sup> Scuto, *La nationalité luxembourgeoise*, 211.

<sup>648</sup> Péporté et al., *Inventing Luxembourg*, 271.

<sup>649</sup> ANLux, IP-1850, *Avis : Prix de littérature luxembourgeoise*, 07/04/1925.

<sup>650</sup> ANLux, IP-1850, Document no. 887 of the Directorate General of Public Instruction, 11/04/1925.

<sup>651</sup> Marson, Pierre, ‘Batty Weber’, Luxemburger Autorenlexikon, accessed 10 April 2018, <http://www.autorenlexikon.lu/page/author/179/1791/DEU/index.html>.

Tockert had studied in Berlin, Bonn, Paris, and London. He wrote pieces for different newspapers and journals and was city councillor of Luxembourg for the Liberal Party in 1915.<sup>652</sup> Erpelding had studied in Lille, Paris, Berlin, and Munich. He contributed to studies about Luxembourg's history of literature and published *Heimatromane*. In the trilogy *Adelheid François*, Erpelding dealt with questions about the identity of Luxembourg at the crossroads of Germany and France. He defended the idea that Luxembourg was embedded in both cultures.<sup>653</sup>

Soon, debates arose on several unclarified aspects of the first decree. Though the deadline had expired several months, the competition rules and eligibility criteria were not even agreed upon. In a note from 22 May 1925, the government official Joseph Wagener disagreed with dedicating the award each year to a specific genre, as the literary production in Luxembourg was too limited. Referring to a not specified commission, Wagener refuted its suggestion only to accept works in Luxembourgish ("patois"), as it would be "fatal" ("néfaste"). He argued that requiring a work to be "essentially Luxembourgish" would suffice as a clause. He did not elaborate on what this clause meant in practice. Besides several other aspects, Wagener thought that the prize should be restricted to authors of Luxembourgish nationality.<sup>654</sup> This is also a point with which the unknown author<sup>655</sup> of the handwritten notes in the margin agreed.

Seven works were submitted; four were in Luxembourgish, and the others in German. The discussions concerning the rules continued at least until July 1925, when a new report was compiled by Joseph Wagener (15 July). This time, he commented on the observations made by a certain Mr Welter<sup>656</sup>. While the latter suggested that the prize should be awarded in January 1926, Wagener preferred not to wait until then, as the jury had already met several times. Furthermore, the authors enquired about the date of publication of the jury's decision. A series of other dispositions, such as the jury size or the possibility of adjourning the award to the following year, were also mentioned.<sup>657</sup>

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<sup>652</sup> Gast Mannes and Claude Kremer, 'Joseph Tockert', Luxemburger Autorenlexikon, accessed 6 April 2018, <http://www.autorenlexikon.lu/page/author/226/2264/DEU/index.html>.

<sup>653</sup> Muller, 'Jean-Pierre Erpelding'.

<sup>654</sup> ANLux, IP-1850, *Règlement concernant l'attribution du prix de littérature luxembourgeoise by Joseph Wagener*, 22/05/1925.

<sup>655</sup> It could have been a member of the jury, for instance Erpelding, who had already written a report dated 9 May 1925, and to whom the director general Etienne Schmit sent Wagener's observations (ANLux, IP-1850, Letter from Etienne Schmit to Erpelding, 16/06/1925).

<sup>656</sup> Though the first name is not specified in the document, it could be Nik Welter.

<sup>657</sup> ANLux, IP-1850, *Projet d'un règlement concernant l'attribution d'un prix de littérature luxembourgeoise : Observations de M. Welter*, document written by Joseph Wagener, 15/07/1925.

In August 1925, the jury communicated its decision to the government. It concluded that no prize should be awarded, as “none of the submitted works seems worthy enough of this distinction”.<sup>658</sup> Due to this situation, two prizes would be awarded in 1926. However, the members resigned in the months following the jury’s decision. First, Batty Weber, suggesting that the modalities should be changed. Instead of organizing a competition, the jury would pay attention to the works published in the preceding year. For the works written in another language than Luxembourgish, a separate prize should be created.<sup>659</sup>

The government apparently decided to renew the jury without consulting the other two members. Shortly after the decree of 21 January 1926 on the jury composition – Weber was replaced by Nik Welter – Erpelding informed Bech that he would not continue as a jury member for reasons he did not expand on.<sup>660</sup> Some days later, Joseph Tockert also resigned. In a private letter to Wagener, Tockert explained that he could not continue due to his activities in the Société de linguistique. He added that he had encountered issues with the Nationalunioun and “several others” who should collaborate on the *Dictionnaire du patois luxembourgeois*.<sup>661</sup>

A new decree of 6 February nominated Nik Welter, Damian Kratzenberg and Nikolaus (or Nicolas) Hein as jury members.<sup>662</sup> Hein (1889-1969) was interested in the question of national autonomy at political and cultural levels and perceived German as aesthetically superior to Luxembourgish.<sup>663</sup> Nik Welter, a former student of the Athenaeum, was the minister of public instruction from 1918 to 1921. He wrote poems and studied Luxembourgish literary production.<sup>664</sup> Damian Kratzenberg was a teacher at the Athenaeum and a proponent of the German language and culture. He was a member of the Liberal Party from 1927 to 1936. During the Nazi occupation, he led the Volksdeutsche Bewegung (VDB), a collaborationist movement that supported the annexation of Luxembourg to the Third Reich.<sup>665</sup>

In 1926, the new jury members evaluated four works. Two of them were by the same author, and one was submitted after the deadline of 1 January 1926.<sup>666</sup> In June 1926, the decision of

<sup>658</sup> Own translation. “[...] aucun des travaux présentés ne lui paraissant digne de cette distinction [...].” (ANLux, IP-1850, *Prix de la littérature luxembourgeoise*, 12/08/1925).

<sup>659</sup> ANLux, IP-1850, Note written by Joseph Wagener, 13/01/1926.

<sup>660</sup> ANLux, IP-1850, Letter from Jean-Pierre Erpelding to Joseph Bech, 28/01/1926.

<sup>661</sup> ANLux, IP-1850, Letter from Joseph Tockert to Joseph Wagener, 01/02/1926.

<sup>662</sup> ANLux, IP-1850, Decree of 6 February 1926.

<sup>663</sup> Claude Conter, ‘Nikolaus Hein’, Luxemburger Autorenlexikon, accessed 6 April 2018, <http://www.autorenlexikon.lu/page/author/154/1542/DEU/index.html>.

<sup>664</sup> Germaine Goetzinger, ‘Nik Welter’, Luxemburger Autorenlexikon, accessed 6 April 2018, <http://www.autorenlexikon.lu/page/author/340/3403/DEU/index.html>.

<sup>665</sup> Pierre Marson, ‘Damian Kratzenberg’, Luxemburger Autorenlexikon, accessed 6 April 2018, <http://www.autorenlexikon.lu/page/author/524/5240/DEU/index.html>.

<sup>666</sup> ANLux, IP-1850, Document no. 4492 of the Directorate General of Public Instruction, 21/01/1926.

the jury was issued. As in 1925, it did not award a prize for the same reason, i.e. the lack of quality. According to the statement, written in German, “as the jury unanimously considers that none of the works sufficiently live up to the expectations, the award of the literature prize has to be refrained from.”<sup>667</sup>

On 1 December 1927, a new decree was signed by Bech, introducing some changes. The prize money was increased from 1,000 to 5,000 francs, with the possibility of splitting it up into three parts: The prize would be awarded every five years, starting in 1928. The jury was not nominated yearly by the director general but by the government without any indication of renewal.<sup>668</sup> In 1928, the jury assessed six submissions (among others by Lucien Koenig and Mathias Tresch) and three works published over the previous five years (among others by Joseph Tockert). Unlike in 1925 and 1926, three publications were awarded. One was the former jury member Tockert’s anniversary edition of Michel Rodange.<sup>669</sup> Whether the prize was awarded again five years later as stipulated by the decree cannot be determined. In 1938, however, Joseph Bech signed a new one, creating awards for literature, science, and art. The stipulations were more elaborate and expressly limited the eligible submissions to French, German and Luxembourgish.<sup>670</sup>

The literature award and the debates reveal the issues concerning literary production in Luxembourg and the question of how to define a “Luxembourgish” work. The jury members were teachers and mutual acquaintances. Their profiles differed to a certain extent, though all of them were writers, and some had already conducted research on the Luxembourgish language and literature. It is not surprising that Tockert was awarded in 1928, considering the importance attributed to Rodange by many intellectuals, writers and politicians. The awards are one example of the government’s attempts to consecrate and elevate Luxembourgish production in accordance with the limited notion of culture and the construction of a nation-state. Unlike many other cultural awards of the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the literature award of 1924/27 was an initiative by the government, specifically by Joseph Bech.

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<sup>667</sup> Own translation. “Da nach einstimmiger Ansicht der Kommission keine derselben den gestellten Anforderungen in genügendem Masse entspricht, muss von der Zuteilung des Literaturpreises abgesehen werden.” (ANLux, IP-1850, *Luxemburgischer Literaturpreis 1925*, 04/06/1926).

<sup>668</sup> ‘Arrêté au 15 décembre 1927 portant règlement du prix de littérature luxembourgeoise’, in *Mémorial A*, vol. 69 (Luxembourg, 1927), 15, <http://data.legilux.public.lu/file/eli-etat-leg-memorial-1927-69-fr-pdf.pdf>.

<sup>669</sup> ANLux, IP-1850, *Rapport sur les opérations du jury pour l’attribution du prix de littérature luxembourgeoise de l’année 1928*, 30/07/1928.

<sup>670</sup> ‘Arrêté du 1er décembre 1938, portant création d’un prix de littérature, d’un prix de science et d’un prix d’art’, in *Mémorial A*, vol. 82 (Luxembourg, 1938), 1289–1290.

Furthermore, the literature prize was a quite pertinent example of Luxembourg's dual nature as a nation-state and *Zwischenraum*: from the choice and discussion of language criteria, over the submissions, to the biography of the jury members.

### **III.2.3. Monumentalising the nation, celebrating culture**

In 1992, Jan Assmann wrote in his seminal memory studies work *Das kulturelle Gedächtnis* that

Every group that wants to consolidate as such pursues the creation and safeguard of sites that do not only represent arenas of its forms of interactions, but also feed symbols of its identity and points of reference for its memory. Memory needs places, it tends toward spatial manifestation.<sup>671</sup>

The monuments erected in Luxembourg in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century illustrate Assmann's statement: they represent the identities of specific groups, even though these groups claimed this identity in the name of a nation. When Luxembourg became an autonomous state after 1839, monuments were not present in the public space. The historian Gilbert Trausch has provided several reasons: the absence of resident sovereigns, the limited financial means of bourgeois and noble families, the lack of space in the fortified city, and the lack of a developed historical consciousness. Only in 1884 was the first monument of more considerable political significance constructed on Place Guillaume II (*Knuedler*) in the city centre, dedicated to the late Grand Duke William II.<sup>672</sup> Thus, the idea of creating monuments existed in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, but the policy intensified in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, especially after the First World War. According to the historian Sonja Kmec's survey of monuments in Luxembourg City, six were erected in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Eight monuments were created between 1920 and 1939. Three bear inscriptions in Luxembourgish and date from the 1930s,<sup>673</sup> alluding to the increasing value conceded to the Moselle-Franconian dialect.

The researcher Sharon Macdonald rightly pointed out that “[t]he national monuments that proliferated during nation-making served to demarcate particular events, individuals and locations as especially significant to the nation's memory; and to materialise this in durable

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<sup>671</sup> Own translation. “Jede Gruppe, die sich als solche konsolidieren will, ist bestrebt, sich Orte zu schaffen und zu sichern, die nicht nur Schauplätze ihrer Interaktionsformen abgeben, sondern Symbole ihrer Identität und Anhaltspunkte ihrer Erinnerung. Das Gedächtnis braucht Orte, es tendiert zur Verräumlichung.” (Jan Assmann, *Das kulturelle Gedächtnis: Schrift, Erinnerung und politische Identität in frühen Hochkulturen*, 2nd ed. [München: C.H.Beck, 1999], 39).

<sup>672</sup> Trausch, ‘Comment devenir une véritable capitale’, 178–179.

<sup>673</sup> Sonja Kmec, ‘Monuments de la ville de Luxembourg’, in *Der Luxemburg Atlas = Atlas du Luxembourg*, ed. Patrick Bousch et al. (Köln: Emons, 2009), 44.

form.”<sup>674</sup> As the following examples will show, Luxembourg was not an exception to this observation. Furthermore, actors and discourses played a crucial role in advancing specific ideas and narratives. Interest groups were created and called for the erection of monuments and commemorative plaques. Yet, the act of remembering historical figures and past events with the creation of *lieux de mémoire* (Pierre Nora) was not only limited to the national level. Similar initiatives were taken at the local level. Bourscheid inaugurated the Renert<sup>675</sup> promenade in 1935. According to the Syndicat d’initiative, it was not only built for touristic reasons but also had a “folklore character” and presented “a new and vivid homage to our great national poet Michel Rodange”<sup>676</sup>.

### *The Monument du Souvenir*

In 1923, the Monument of Remembrance (*Monument du Souvenir*) was inaugurated in Luxembourg City on Constitution Square (*Place de la Constitution*). In this context, the Luxembourg government organised festivities on 26 and 27 May. The official programme included “patriotic concerts” performed by musical associations and the military orchestra, a procession, speeches, and fireworks on Sunday evening.<sup>677</sup> The inauguration was planned for 27 May, attended by the grand-ducal family and numerous representatives of the Allied countries, i.e. Belgium, France, Great Britain, Italy, and the US. Cities such as Arlon, Antwerp and Verdun were invited. Tellingly, the countries of the Entente during WWI, and especially Germany, were absent, nor did they seem to be invited. With the memory of the war still vivid, Luxembourg did not have any interest in exhibiting a close relationship with Germany, even less when Allied countries were invited to inaugurate a monument honouring solely Luxembourgers fighting on the Allied side. Indeed, immediately after the war, in 1918 and 1919, a political crisis unfolded in Luxembourg with debates on whether to abolish the monarchy. At the time, the Allied forces criticised the country for the “German-friendly” behaviour of Grand Duchess Marie-Adélaïde<sup>678</sup>, while Belgium fostered hopes to annex the country. In the end, however, Marie-Adélaïde abdicated in favour of her sister Charlotte.<sup>679</sup>

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<sup>674</sup> Macdonald, *Memorylands: Heritage and Identity in Europe Today*, 166.

<sup>675</sup> Renert was an epic published by Michel Rodange in 1872, loosely inspired by Goethe’s *Reineke Fuchs*.

<sup>676</sup> ANLux, IP-1863, Letter from the Syndicat d’Initiative Bourscheid to the Prime Minister Joseph Bech, 23/07/1935.

<sup>677</sup> ANLux, AE-00697, *Programme des fêtes d’inauguration du Monument du Souvenir (à l’usage des Légations et des autorités)*, undated, no. 35.

<sup>678</sup> Trausch, ‘Comment faire d’un Etat de convention une nation?’, 238.

<sup>679</sup> Pauly, *Geschichte Luxemburgs*, 85.

Some commentators consider the monument more “political propaganda in favour of France than a monument remembering the heroes of the Great War.”<sup>680</sup>

The monument, now a landmark and tourist attraction of the city<sup>681</sup> and more commonly known as Gëlle Fra (Golden Lady), was erected to remember the fallen Luxembourgish volunteers during the war. In December 1918, a month after the armistice, a committee dedicated to the monument was created, presided by Charles Larue, advisor to the grand-ducal Court. In January 1920, the members decided that Constitution Square would be the future site for the monument.<sup>682</sup> The statue had been modelled by the Luxembourgish sculptor Claus Cito, who won the competition launched in 1920.<sup>683</sup> More than an artwork, the monument became a political symbol: in August 1940, the German occupiers tore it down.<sup>684</sup> The statue disappeared for several decades. Rediscovered in 1985, it returned to its original location on a reconstructed pillar. A public subscription was launched to finance the renovation of the monument.<sup>685</sup> In the context of the Shanghai World Fair in 2010, the statue was exhibited at the Luxembourg pavilion. The example of the Gëlle Fra is not only a striking case of a *lieu de mémoire*, but also of how culture can be used for political ideas and how it can change its meaning over time or acquire new meanings.

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<sup>680</sup> Own translation. “Le monument du souvenir [...] fut, dans le contexte du référendum de 1919, davantage un monument de propagande politique en faveur de la France qu’un monument de commémoration des héros de la Grande Guerre.” (Robert L. Philippart, *Luxembourg: Historicisme et identité visuelle d’une capitale* [Luxembourg: Saint-Paul, 2007], 72).

<sup>681</sup> On the webpage of the Luxembourg City Tourist Office, it is listed among sites and attractions: <https://www.lcto.lu/en/things-to-do/sights-and-attractions/map> (last access 21.05.2017).

<sup>682</sup> ANLux, AE-00697, Letter from the president of the commission to the state minister, 12/02/1920, no. 4.

<sup>683</sup> Sabine Dorscheid and Jean Reitz, *Exposition d’Gëlle Fra: 11.12.10-23.01.11 Käerjeng* (Luxembourg: Agence luxembourgeoise d’action culturelle, 2010), 17.

<sup>684</sup> Dorscheid and Reitz, 53.

<sup>685</sup> Cf. Dorscheid and Reitz, 61–65.



Fig. 10: Inauguration of the Monument du Souvenir (Source: E. Desaix, 1923, Copyright: Photothèque VdL).

### Dicks, Lentz, Rodange

Monuments and historical sites played a significant role in Luxembourgish cultural policy during the interwar period. Even contemporaries seemed to be aware of this. “We currently live in a kind of a monument period”<sup>686</sup>, noted Batty Weber in his *Abreißkalender*<sup>687</sup> in October 1920. This monumental policy can be traced back to the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Public spaces had been filled with objects remembering past events and “great men” essential to the master narrative. The majority of these personalities lived either in the Middle Ages, considered in the master narrative as a period when Luxembourg was independent<sup>688</sup>, or in more recent times around or after Luxembourg’s independence.<sup>689</sup> After all, the Luxembourgish authors Dicks (Edmond de la Fontaine) and Michel Lentz, the “national poets”<sup>690</sup>, were honoured with a monument

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<sup>686</sup> ANLux, BW-AK-008-1740, 8/10/1920, <https://battyweber.uni.lu/images/original/BW-AK-008/BW-AK-008-1740.pdf>, last access 22/03/2018.

<sup>687</sup> The *Abreißkalender* was a feuilleton series by Batty Weber published nearly daily in the *Luxemburger Zeitung* between 1913 and 1940. The corpus has been digitized and is accessible online: <http://battyweber.uni.lu/>.

<sup>688</sup> The historian Arthur Herchen, for instance, dated in his *Manuel d’histoire national* (1918) Luxembourg’s birth as a ‘distinct and autonomous state’ in the year 963, when the count Sigefroid acquired the rock of Luxembourg (Péporté et al., *Inventing Luxembourg*, 33).

<sup>689</sup> Philippart, *Luxembourg: Historicisme et identité visuelle d’une capitale*, 64.

<sup>690</sup> A rather common expression, as found, for instance, in: ANLux, AE-03569, Letter from the Comité du Monument Dicks-Lentz to the prime minister, 29/09/1903, no. 3.

inaugurated in 1903 on today's Jan Palach square, next to the Place d'Armes, a square in the city-centre of Luxembourg.

The Gymnastics society (or Gym) developed the initial idea for a monument dedicated to Dicks. The society was composed of members of the urban bourgeoisie.<sup>691</sup> Prime minister Eyschen, however, insisted on adding Michel Lentz, whose writings were, unlike Dicks (author of the political satire *D'Vulleparlament am Gréngewald* [1848]), rather conventional and less inconvenient to the ruling elites.<sup>692</sup> A commission organised a competition for the design of the monument. The members were Eyschen, Tony Dutreux and Franz Heldenstein. Georges Traus and Pierre Federspiel executed the plans.<sup>693</sup> According to Robert Philippart, the Dicks-Lentz monument “celebrates more the political value of Luxembourgish as a language of the people demanding participation in political power than the memory of two personalities.”<sup>694</sup> That the monument expresses the opposition of the people to the French language spoken by the bourgeoisie represented in the Chamber of Deputies, as Philippart assumed, needs to be questioned. The initiators were not representatives of “the people”, despite the Luxembourgish inscription on the monument and their self-perception as such (“To Dicks and Lentz, from the people of Luxembourg, erected in 1903”<sup>695</sup>). Eyschen himself was involved in the project. As Trausch notes, Eyschen wanted it to remind Luxembourgers of the cultural dimension of their community.<sup>696</sup>

For Batty Weber, the Dicks-Lentz-Monument was a *Scheusal*, an “abomination”. He condemned its use by Eyschen to promote the “idea of the fatherland” (*Vaterlandsidée*) instead of the focus on the literary achievements of the poets.<sup>697</sup> Weber pleaded in favour of a monument honouring Michel Rodange: “Because I think the next monument we have to erect – after or simultaneous to that for the Luxembourgian legionnaires – would be the one for

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<sup>691</sup> Péporté et al., *Inventing Luxembourg*, 239–240.

<sup>692</sup> Péporté et al., 240.

<sup>693</sup> ANLux, AE-00323, *Monument Dicks-Lentz: Notes supplémentaires à annexer au procès-verbal de la décision prise par le jury à la date du 15 février 1896*, 15/02/1896, no. 4.

<sup>694</sup> “Le monument en l'honneur des poètes Edmond de la Fontaine (Dicks) et Michel Lentz, décédés après 1867, célèbre davantage la valeur politique du luxembourgeois comme langue du peuple réclamant la participation au pouvoir politique que la mémoire des deux personnalités. En effet, ce monument reflète l'opposition du peuple à la langue française parlée par la bourgeoisie, élue au sens électoral à la Chambre des Députés.” (Philippart, *Luxembourg: Historicisme et identité visuelle d'une capitale*, 66).

<sup>695</sup> Original text: “Dem Dicks an Lentz vum Lëtzebuerger Vollek opgericht 1903”.

<sup>696</sup> Trausch, ‘Comment devenir une véritable capitale’, 179.

<sup>697</sup> Frank Wilhelm confirms that Paul Eyschen played a key role in the promotion of the monument (Wilhelm, ‘La culture au coeur de la réalité luxembourgeoise’, 189).

Michel Rodange.”<sup>698</sup> The Rodange Monument was eventually erected on the Place Guillaume II, a stone’s throw away from the Place d’Armes, in 1932. A committee, whose president was Alfons Nickels, writer and liberal politician, had previously campaigned for its construction. Five years earlier, in 1927, the centenary of Michel Rodange’s birthday had been commemorated.

The monuments dedicated to the “Luxembourgish trinity” Dicks, Lentz and Rodange, as well as those dedicated to the First World War, should not only commemorate what they explicitly represent (first degree), but also convey ideals of the nation-state by promoting a meta-discourse (second degree). These ideals were supported by the public authorities, sensible to matters of independence and national cohesion, and by specific social groups, which defended national (high) culture. The Dicks-Lentz monument illustrates that “by retaining a monopoly on the construction of monuments in Luxembourg, as elsewhere in Europe, the bourgeoisie imposed many of its values on symbolic representations of the nation.”<sup>699</sup>

### *John the Blind*

Besides honouring Luxembourgish intellectuals and fallen soldiers, rulers and “great men” of Luxembourg’s past were remembered through dedicated monuments and commemorative plaques, such as John the Blind. Count of Luxembourg and King of Bohemia in the 14<sup>th</sup> century, he died during the Battle of Crécy in 1346. Even today, he is presented as an “inspiring figure of his time” and “in a certain way protoeuropean” (“en quelque sorte protoeuropéen”) on the official webpage of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg.<sup>700</sup> The initial idea to erect a monument in his honour dates back to the late 1830s.<sup>701</sup> The earliest drawing of a plaque was possibly designed by Pierre Blanc (1872-1946). Blanc studied in Munich, Prague and Paris.

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<sup>698</sup> Own translation. “Ich meine nämlich, das allernächste Denkmal, das wir errichten müßten - nach oder mit dem für die luxemburger Legionäre - wäre das für Michel Rodange.” (ANLux, BW-AK-008-1740, 08/10/1920, <https://battyweber.uni.lu/images/original/BW-AK-008/BW-AK-008-1740.pdf>, last access 19/02/2019). It seems that the idea of a mausoleum had already been present in 1920.

However, according to Jean Reitz, the initiative originated in May 1923, when the plans of a mausoleum in the Notre-Dame cemetery was promoted by the association *Le Souvenir Français*, the Luxembourgish chapter of the *Association nationale pour l’édification et l’entretien des tombes des militaires et marins morts pour la patrie* (Dorscheid and Reitz, *Exposition d’Gëlle Fra*, 39).

<sup>699</sup> Péporté et al., *Inventing Luxembourg*, 240.

<sup>700</sup> ‘Jean l’Aveugle (1296-1346): le dernier chevalier de l’Europe’, Le portail officiel du Grand-Duché de Luxembourg, September 2015, [http://www.luxembourg.public.lu/fr/le-grand-duche-se-presente/luxembourgeois-celebres\\_PHASE-II/personnages-historiques/jean-aveugle/index.html](http://www.luxembourg.public.lu/fr/le-grand-duche-se-presente/luxembourgeois-celebres_PHASE-II/personnages-historiques/jean-aveugle/index.html).

<sup>701</sup> Jules Mersch, ‘Le médecin-historien Claude-Auguste Neyen (1809-1882)’, in *Biographie nationale du pays de Luxembourg depuis ses origines jusqu’à nos jours*, ed. Jules Mersch, vol. 16 (Luxembourg, 1968), 565,

[http://www.luxemburgensia.bn1.lu/cgi/luxonline1\\_2.pl?action=fv&sid=luxbio&vol=16&page=388&zom=3](http://www.luxemburgensia.bn1.lu/cgi/luxonline1_2.pl?action=fv&sid=luxbio&vol=16&page=388&zoom=3).

Back in Luxembourg, he became teacher at the *Ecole d'artisans de l'Etat*. He was a founding member of the Cercle artistique de Luxembourg (CAL) and its president from 1920 to 1927, and vice-president of the Société des Amis des Musées.<sup>702</sup> Blanc's drawing was used by Jean-Baptiste Wercoller, like Blanc founding member of the CAL, as a model. Many political, socio-cultural and even economic actors participated in either funding, promoting or executing the project: Joseph Bech, Edmond Zinnen (politician and president of the Association pour les intérêts du Vieux-Luxembourg), Pierre Blanc, Batty Weber, Lucien Koenig (secretary), Pierre Dupong, Etienne Schmit, Emile Reuter, Auguste (or Tony) Dutreux, Victor Ferrant, Aloyse Meyer (director general of Arbed Terres Rouges<sup>703</sup>), Nicolas Ries, and Joseph Tockert. Many of them participated in the cultural sphere at the time, though this list is far from exhaustive.<sup>704</sup>

In a letter of 20 June 1935 sent to Bech, Blanc and Koenig outlined their project and suggested the plaque be attached to a wall opposite the *Huelen Zant* (literal translation: hollow tooth), a reconstructed part of the early medieval castle built on the rocky promontory of Luxembourg City.<sup>705</sup> Today, such a plaque hangs on that wall, but further towards the city centre. It is smaller than the original description of the plaque suggests, lauded as "one of the most beautiful coats of arms of King John".<sup>706</sup> According to the letter, a monument in honour of John of Luxembourg in the village of Crécy-en-Ponthieu in north-western France, erected in 1905, is based on the same design by Blanc. If this is true, the plaque that is visible today greatly differs from the original concept, as a large, round relief of King John on a horse is attached to the monument in Crécy-en-Ponthieu. The commemorative plaque in Luxembourg is rectangular and shows a Latin text honouring John of Bohemia, flanked by one coat of arms on each side, one of Luxembourg (on the left), and one of Limburg. It was attached thirty years after Blanc's proposal, in the context of the commemoration of the thousandth anniversary of Luxembourg in 1963.<sup>707</sup>

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<sup>702</sup> Joseph Tockert, 'Pierre Blanc', in *Annuaire 1949*, ed. Société des Amis des Musées (Luxembourg: Imprimerie de la Cour Victor Buck, 1949), 59.

<sup>703</sup> A production site of the steel company Arbed in the vicinity of Esch-sur-Alzette in southern Luxembourg.

<sup>704</sup> ANLux, IP-1863, *Projet: Oeuvre de la plaque commémorative du Roi Jean l'Aveugle*, undated.

<sup>705</sup> The *Huelen Zant* was devised by state architect Charles Arendt and constructed in 1874. It is not an original part of the medieval castle.

<sup>706</sup> ANLux, IP-1863, Letter from Pierre Blanc and Lucien Koenig to the state minister Joseph Bech, 20/06/1935.

<sup>707</sup> 'Lettre à l'éditeur: le Millénaire, vu par les autres', *d'Letzeburger Land*, May 1963.

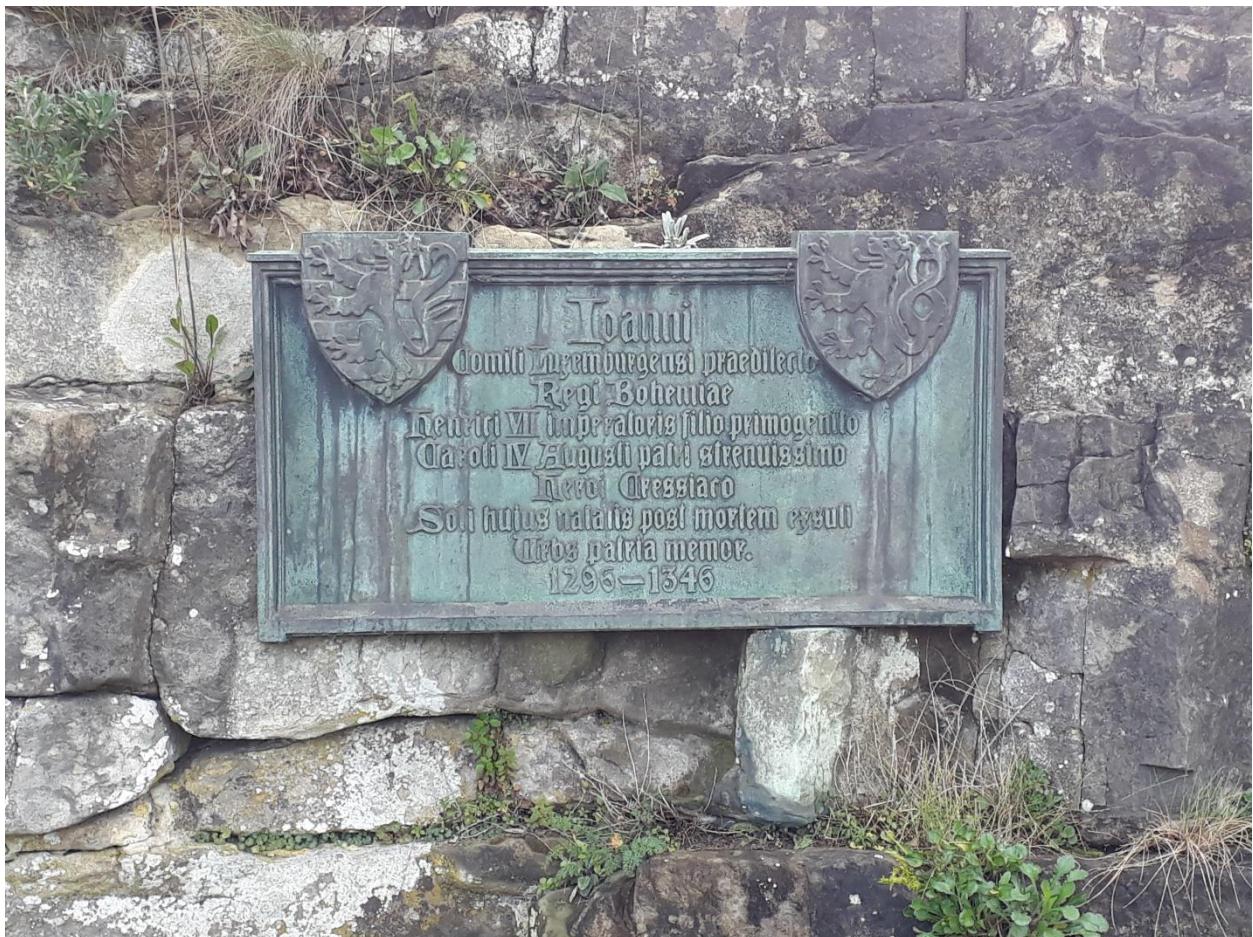


Fig. 11: The plaque honouring John the Blind in Luxembourg City (Photo credit: Fabio Spirinelli, 2017).

### Celebrating culture

The political and socio-cultural actors did not miss an opportunity to celebrate anniversaries of people considered important in a national context, such as Edmond de la Fontaine and his centenary in 1923. The initiative originated in government circles and was not a bottom-up project, though the participation of societies was desired. In early 1923, a call for participation was published in newspapers and signed by Joseph Bech as director general of the interior and public instruction. Several local and national culture societies replied to the call throughout January and February 1923.<sup>708</sup> Bech instituted a committee for the Dicks Centenary, which met for the first time on 23 April 1923. The members chosen by Bech were Batty Weber, the liberal politician and industrial Marcel Cahen, Jean Scheer, the playwright and author Dominique (Demy) Schlechter (who passed away on 13 June 1923), Lucien Koenig and Joseph Imdahl.<sup>709</sup>

<sup>708</sup> ANLux, IP-1861, Letters from different societies to Joseph Bech, between 15/01/1923 and 23/02/1923. These letters can be found in the sub-folder “Centenaire Edmond de la Fontaine (Dicks). 24 juillet 1923”.

<sup>709</sup> ANLux, IP-1861, *Comité pour l'organisation des fêtes du Centenaire Dicks. Rapport de la 1re séance tenue au Café Français, le 23 avril 1923.*

As in other cases, connections between some members had existed before they collaborated in the committee. Schlechter and Koenig participated in the Nationalunio'n and the attached Nationalinstitut; Schlechter and Imdahl were founding members of the short-lived Fédération des sociétés dramatiques luxembourgeoises in 1922. The committee suggested the creation of a commemorative plaque, insisting that the engraved text should be both in French and Luxembourgish.<sup>710</sup> A report attached to a letter from a government councillor to Bech summarised the debates and results of the committee's meetings. Besides the commemorative plaque, a popular procession with all the societies of the country ("défilé populaire de toutes les sociétés du pays") was planned on 22 July 1923 (the date had no apparent link with Dicks' biography). Popular concerts and theatrical performances were organised on the same day and the following days. The Dicks Centenary also elicited publications: a biography by Batty Weber, a new edition in two volumes of Dicks' oeuvre, and commemorative postcards. As the report explains, the expenses for Weber's piece were covered by the contribution of a Luxembourgish sponsor. The Dicks edition was financed with a budget voted by the Chamber of Deputies. The earnings from the festivities were allocated to a fund for the erection of a Dicks monument. The councillor stressed the importance of including schools, as "the youth should also be interested in the celebration", through the "possible organisation of a Dicks day" at all education levels.<sup>711</sup>

Dicks was not the only one to be honoured; others such as Michel Lentz some years earlier or Antoine Zinnen in 1928 were celebrated, too. Unsurprisingly for a nationalised *Zwischenraum* such as Luxembourg, not only a national high culture was celebrated. As symbols of the two primary cultural references, non-Luxembourgers such as Goethe, Richard Wagner and Molière were celebrated throughout the 1920s and 1930s. They were not only attributed to a specific cultural canon, i.e. high culture, but were also of national importance in their respective countries, France and Germany.

The Dicks Centenary combined all the ingredients of national commemorations, from celebrating national culture over ephemeral events to producing lasting memorabilia and objects. It was a top-down initiative, though the state collaborated with non-government actors. It included the participation of societies and combined culture with education through the

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<sup>710</sup> ANLux, IP-1861, *Comité pour l'organisation des fêtes du Centenaire Dicks. Rapport des séances du 7 mai 1923 et du 14 mai 1923*.

<sup>711</sup> Original text: "La jeunesse devrait aussi être intéressée à la célébration du centenaire par l'organisation éventuelle d'une journée Dicks: enseignement primaire et primaire supérieur, enseignement normal, enseignement moyen." (ANLux, IP-1861, Letter from a government councillor to Joseph Bech with an attached report, 26/05/1923).

participation of schools.<sup>712</sup> It illustrates the connection between actors, the discourses they carry, and the structures that shape the processes. As an event in the context of national aggrandizement, the Dicks Centenary, like other manifestations, anticipated a much grander celebration sixteen years later that mobilised every means available to the government.

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<sup>712</sup> Differdange, for instance, organised a school festival celebrating Dicks on 4 and 5 August 1923, which shows that local initiatives were not necessarily controlled by the government (ANLux, IP-1861, Brochure *Centenaire de Dicks – Fête scolaire* by the City of Differdange, undated).

### III.3. An Aggrandizement of the Nation: the Centenary of Independence in 1939

You will learn that this small people did not emerge from the vagaries of a diplomatic game or an accident of History, but that it is a thousand-year-old political organism, still young and vivid, always ready to adapt to the rhythm of civilisation and to follow its great neighbours.<sup>713</sup>

Pierre Frieden (1892-1959)

In the quote above, Pierre Frieden, minister of national education from 1948 to 1958, addresses the reader in his contribution to the *Livre du Centenaire*. Its publication was planned for 1939/1940 but delayed until 1948 due to the war and the occupation of Luxembourg. Frieden's contribution concludes the anthology when the reader is supposed to have explored the previous texts and to be persuaded that Luxembourg is a legitimate country with its history and culture. According to the quote, the Luxembourgish people have been speaking the same language and bearing the same name for centuries.<sup>714</sup> Frieden's words fittingly express the aggrandizement objective of the Centenary as a whole. Luxembourg's independence was celebrated and presented to the extent that it almost looked like a historical necessity. The essence of the Luxembourgish nation had supposedly always been present, and the events, the historical figures and the cultural characteristics were interpreted from this viewpoint.

Luxembourg celebrated its Centenary in 1939 in a context of international tensions. The discourses referred more than once to the danger of German annexationism. In this respect, Luxembourg was not the only country feeling menaced.<sup>715</sup> In 1938, the Chamber of Deputies passed a law extending the executive powers of the government. The law of 1939 renewed these powers and explicitly mentioned the risk of a European war.<sup>716</sup> It was, however, not

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<sup>713</sup> Own translation. “Tu auras appris que ce petit peuple n'est pas né des caprices d'un jeu diplomatique ni d'un accident de l'histoire, mais qu'il est un organisme politique vieux de mille ans, toujours jeune et vivace, toujours prêt à s'adapter au rythme de la civilisation et à emboîter le pas derrière ses grands voisins” (Pierre Frieden, ‘Plaidoyer pour un petit pays’, in *Le Luxembourg: Livre du Centenaire* [Luxembourg: Gouvernement Grand-Ducal, 1949], 653).

<sup>714</sup> “[...] nous avons grandi comme les chênes des montagnes et nos racines plongent au plus profond du sol luxembourgeois, nourri d'une longue suite de générations parlant le même langage et portant le même nom.” (Frieden, 655). The trope of soil appeared in another contribution to the *Livre du Centenaire*, by Michel Lucius, who posited that the soil, or the landscape, is linked to the “evolution of our race”: “La terre luxembourgeoise forme la base matérielle de l'essor de notre race et de sa culture.” (Michel Lucius, ‘La terre luxembourgeoise’, in *Le Luxembourg: Livre du Centenaire* [Gouvernement Grand-Ducal, 1949], 527).

<sup>715</sup> As Moritz Föllmer explains: “Zunehmend fühlten sich die angrenzenden Länder unmittelbar bedroht, militärisch wie kulturell, und bemühten sich daher um Abgrenzung.” (Moritz Föllmer, *Kultur im Dritten Reich* [München: C.H. Beck, 2016], 148).

<sup>716</sup> ‘Loi du 29 août 1939, portant extension de la compétence du pouvoir exécutif’, in *Mémorial A*, vol. 58 (Luxembourg, 1939), 837–838, <http://legilux.public.lu/eli/etat/leg/loi/1939/08/29/n1/jo>.

necessarily that this danger motivated the initial idea of the Centenary, nor was Luxembourg the first country to do it. Belgium celebrated its centenary in 1930.<sup>717</sup>

While the festivities should legitimise and disseminate the idea of Luxembourg as a legitimate and independent nation-state, it was the most visible expression of the nationalist era. In Luxembourg, the Fête du Centenaire constituted the climax of an evolution that preceded it.<sup>718</sup> 1839 was not even considered a “defining moment of national independence” for a long time.<sup>719</sup> Though Paul Eyschen attempted a celebration in 1889, it did not receive much public support.<sup>720</sup> In times of political tension and nationalist policies, the Centenary became a suitable occasion for a political performance aiming at national aggrandizement.

To analyse the Centenary, the present study applies the concept of national aggrandizement, coined by the cultural studies scholar Raymond Williams in 1984. Williams distinguished between “cultural policy as display” and “cultural policy ‘proper’”. National aggrandizement and economic reductionism are subsumed under the first category; public patronage of the arts, media regulation, and negotiated construction of cultural identity fall under the second one. Thus, Williams identified national aggrandizement as one of five state/culture relations.<sup>721</sup> According to him, the display function of cultural policy consisted in “embellishing, representing, making more effective a particular social order or certain preferred features of it.”<sup>722</sup> Williams himself did not provide an elaborate analysis based on these concepts, but Jim McGuigan reused them to discuss examples such as France’s cultural policy, the Disney Theme Park, or the Millennium Dome in London.<sup>723</sup> In all these cases, however, McGuigan considered “cultural policy as display” as a whole, combining economic reductionism and national aggrandizement. Though I do not intend to criticise this legitimate approach, I will focus on national aggrandizement in the case of the Centenary Celebration. Of course, tourism and economic rationales were not absent from the interwar period. Still, the Centenary was explicitly an event – or rather a set of events – that aimed to glorify, perform, and strengthen the nation. Following Williams, the social order was embellished.

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<sup>717</sup> René Leclercq, ed., *Livre d’Or du Centenaire de l’Indépendance Belge: 1830-1930* (Bruxelles: Leclercq, De Ridder et De Haas, 1930).

<sup>718</sup> Scuto, *La nationalité luxembourgeoise*, 192.

<sup>719</sup> Péporté et al., *Inventing Luxembourg*, 86.

<sup>720</sup> Péporté et al., 86 (footnote 65).

<sup>721</sup> Especially cultural policy as display has been explored in more depth by Jim McGuigan (McGuigan, *Rethinking Cultural Policy*, 64).

<sup>722</sup> Cited in: McGuigan, 62. Unfortunately, at the time of writing, it was not possible to retrieve the original book in which Williams exposed his concept.

<sup>723</sup> McGuigan, 61–91.

### III.3.1. Organising the national aggrandizement

In January 1934, the proposal to commemorate the Centenary appeared for the first time in the sources, but the underlying message had changed over time, as pointed out by the historian Claude Wey. Albert Wehrer, government councillor at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, penned a note entitled *Le Centenaire de 1939* (“The Centenary of 1939”). For Wehrer, the year 1839 marked the true birth of the Grand Duchy, “as it was then that the Government was installed in Luxembourg and that a truly independent national administration was built.”<sup>724</sup> At this point, the term nation remained unmentioned, and Wehrer merely stressed the creation of an autonomous state. The councillor also suggested publishing a *Centenary Book (Livre du Centenaire)*, destined for the public and everyone interested in national history.<sup>725</sup>

A gap of several years followed, for which it is difficult to assess if the idea was put on hold or if it is due to a lack of sources. A second note was written in March 1938, with an essential difference from the note of 1934. This time, it mentioned the Treaty of London. 1839 was the “real starting point of our national independence”. This viewpoint contained a more nationalist tone. The concept of independence was linked to the nation, whereas in 1934, it was used in the narrowest sense (autonomy of the state). Thus, the “Centenaire de 1839” became the “Centenaire de l’Indépendance”.<sup>726</sup> Another document of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs went even further, discarding the idea of the Centenary of Independence and pointing out that the “re-establishment of the Luxembourgish independence” would be more accurate. It reused the trope of the master narrative according to which Luxembourg was “perfectly autonomous” in the Middle Ages, preceding the “painful and eventful period of the foreign dominations”.<sup>727</sup> In his article, Wey mentions this note, but does not further analyse this statement. The rejection of considering the Centenary of the Treaty of London as such and the choice to opt for the Centenary of Independence was motivated by the master narrative, an aspect that Wey leaves unmentioned.<sup>728</sup> It illustrates that this narrative was influential among the political elite. In some cases, the expression *Centenaire du rétablissement de notre Indépendance* was used, stressing that 1839 did not simply institute a new independence, but re-established it. It can be found in different documents, such as the circular of 25 January 1939, signed by the historian

<sup>724</sup> Own translation. “[...] puisque c’est à cette date que le Gouvernement s’installa à Luxembourg et que se prépara une administration nationale vraiment indépendante.” (Claude Wey, ‘Le Centenaire de l’Indépendance et sa commémoration en 1939’, *Hémecht* 41, no. 1 [1989]: 32).

<sup>725</sup> ANLux, ET-110, Note *Centenaire de 1939* by Albert Wehrer, 12/01/1934, no. 7-9.

<sup>726</sup> Wey, ‘Le Centenaire de l’Indépendance et sa commémoration en 1939’, 32–33.

<sup>727</sup> ANLux, ET-142, *Mitteilung*, 20/04/1939, no. 26.

<sup>728</sup> Wey, ‘Le Centenaire de l’Indépendance et sa commémoration en 1939’, 33.

and minister for public instruction Nicolas Margue and addressed to local authorities and primary school teachers.<sup>729</sup>

Luxembourg was by far not the only country to celebrate its independence, nor to celebrate an anniversary in 1939. In the same year, France marked the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the French Revolution and Strasbourg the 500 years of the Münster. In 1930, the Belgian authorities organised the Centenary Celebration of the country's independence. For the occasion, a book was published, titled *Livre d'Or du Centenaire de l'Indépendance Belge: 1830-1930*, and two international exhibitions were organised in Antwerp and in Liège.<sup>730</sup>

Wehrer's idea certainly stemmed from his living context, but was also anchored in personal motivations. Wehrer studied in Liège, Geneva and Strasbourg. Upon his return to Luxembourg, he became a member of the nationalist organisation Letzeburger Nationalunio'n in 1919. After working for the Ministry of Justice, he became a judge in 1929, but then changed his career and worked at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, where he became a close collaborator of Bech. In 1919, Wehrer wrote articles for the *D'Natio'n*, the official journal of the nationalist movement, in which he attacked Belgium and the “neo-panbelgism” (*néopanbelgisme*) with its goal of annexing Luxembourg. Several pieces by Wehrer illustrate his position, and they were published at a moment in Luxembourgish history when a decision had to be taken concerning the country's economic orientation. Wehrer was against any union with Belgium, as expressed in the following excerpt predicting that Belgium might annex Luxembourg:

What are we talking about today? Of a close and fraternal union (darn! you know), of a military, economic and diplomatic union; tomorrow we will have the privilege to salute the Grand Duke Albert of Luxembourg and the day after tomorrow, God willing, the governor Pescatore will ensconce himself in the grand-ducal palace.<sup>731</sup>

His view on Belgium was tempered after a meeting between Luxembourgish and Belgian nationalists in Brussels in June 1919. Wehrer expressed relief that the Belgian nationalists

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<sup>729</sup> Ministère de l'Instruction publique, ‘Circulaire aux administrations communales et au personnel enseignant, concernant la commémoration dans les écoles primaires et primaires supérieures du Centenaire du rétablissement de notre indépendance’, in *Mémorial A*, vol. 10 (Luxembourg, 1939), 104, <http://data.legilux.public.lu/file/eli-etat-leg-memorial-1939-21-fr-pdf.pdf>.

<sup>730</sup> ‘Eröffnung der Antwerpener Weltausstellung’, *Tageblatt*, April 1930.

<sup>731</sup> Own translation. “De quoi nous parle-t-on aujourd’hui? D'une union étroite et fraternelle (zut! savez-vous), d'une union militaire, économique et diplomatique, demain on nous donnera le privilège de saluer le Grand-duc Albert de Luxembourg et après-demain, si Dieu le veut!, le gouverneur Pescatore s'installera au palais grand-ducal.” (Albert Wehrer, ‘Notre devoir anti-belge’, *D'Natio'n*, April 1919, 142).

pledged to respect Luxembourg's independence. In general, he was overtly positive about the conclusions of the meeting.<sup>732</sup>

In his article *Nationalisme et Internationalisme*, published on 31 May 1919<sup>733</sup>, he described Luxembourgish nationalism, or rather his perspective on it. He distanced himself from racial nationalism, such as the “pangerman nationalism” (*nationalisme panboche*<sup>734</sup>), and saw nationalism and internationalism not as two opposites but as complements. Yet, while distancing himself from German racial nationalism, Wehrer defended ethnocultural nationalism in an editorial only a week later. It was written in Luxembourgish and discussed the naturalisation of foreigners in Luxembourg. From a nationalist perspective, naturalisation should be rejected in principle for several reasons:

Naturalisation was a much-discussed topic during the war in France, England and Switzerland. It became apparent how foreign elements systematically tried to penetrate the national body of these countries, and how often they gained influence on the political and economic situation. Because of this, the integrity of the national body has been questioned. [...] Nationalism considers only those people as true Luxembourgers who descend from Luxembourgish parents, who speak Luxembourgish, and who feel Luxembourgish. [...] As nationalists, we rise against the expulsion of the Luxembourger from our homeland. We want to manage our affairs ourselves, and we want guarantees that those who gain influence on the government of our country through elections are true Luxembourgers, Luxembourgers in their mind and Luxembourgers in their feeling.<sup>735</sup>

This quote includes the idea of a strong link between democracy and nationalism. With the extension of political rights, these rights should be exclusively reserved for nationals. The political body, according to Wehrer, needs to be protected against foreign influences. While not further discussing the vague formulations of “feeling Luxembourgish” and “true Luxembourger”, and suggesting an immutable essence of Luxembourgers, Wehrer’s stance constituted an exclusive vision of the Luxembourgish nation.

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<sup>732</sup> Albert Wehrer, ‘A Bruxelles’, *D’Natio’n*, June 1919.

<sup>733</sup> Albert Wehrer, ‘Nationalisme et Internationalisme’, *D’Natio’n*, May 1919.

<sup>734</sup> Wehrer, 183. In fact, the term “boche” has a negative, pejorative connotation in French; its English equivalent would be “Kraut”.

<sup>735</sup> Own translation. “[D’Naturalisatio’n] huet vèrent dem crich a Francreich, an England an an der Shveits fil fun séch réden gemâch. T’luet én néMLE’CH gesin ve’ systématesh friém elemènter gesicht hun séch an de volléccscîrper fun desen natio’nén eranzedrèngén a ve’ se meshtens och op t’politish an oeconomesh verhèltnesser en onléchenbaren afloss crûten. T’intégrite’t fum nationalcîrper ass dodurch oft a frô gestalt gin. [...] De nationalissem geseit nemmen eso’ pero’nen als richtéch Letzeburger un, de’ fun letzeburger èlteren ôftsâmen, de’ t’letzeburger sprôch shvètze cennen, de’ letzeburgesh fillen. [...] Vo’gént mer als nationalisten ons erhéven dat ass ge’nt t’politish verdrèngong fum Letzeburger aus onser hémécht. Mir velle dat frun allem mir sèlver onse stôt mache kennen a mir velle garantien hun, dat de’je’néch, de’ duréch de stemziédel en afloss op t’lédong fun onsem lant cre’en, richtéch Letzeburger, Letzeburger der idi an dem gefill no sin.” Albert Wehrer, ‘Editorial’, *D’Natio’n*, June 1919.

In the following years, however, Wehrer's publishing activities became less prolific. Strong positions as those voiced in 1919 were not endorsed anymore. Around 1921/1922, he left the *Nationalunio 'n*, probably because of internal disagreements. In 1923, Wehrer and Lucien Koenig disputed in the newspaper *L'indépendance luxembourgeoise*, with personal attacks against each other. Wehrer accused Koenig of drawing inspirations from Charles Maurras' *Action française*, and from Mussolini's fascism. He wondered why the Luxembourgish movement would turn to foreign models instead of developing its own.<sup>736</sup> In his reply, Koenig attacked Wehrer and defended himself. He vividly refuted any ambitions like those of Mussolini (though he did not distance himself from his views). Moreover, Koenig denied Wehrer any authority in discussing the essence of the Luxembourgish nationalist movement.<sup>737</sup> Wehrer's reaction was published a couple of days later, attacking Koenig's tone.<sup>738</sup> He denied any ambition of creating a national section of the League of Nations, as the organisation had never sought to pursue such a policy. Yet, in 1925, a society for the League of Nations, the Association Luxembourgeoise pour la Société des Nations et la Paix, was indeed founded, with Wehrer as a founding member and secretary general.<sup>739</sup>

Wehrer might not have defended the same strong, nationalist stance in 1934 when he first presented his idea for the Centenary. His biography shows, however, that his nationalist convictions originated in 1919 at the earliest. He was an avid defender of Luxembourg's independence and would go as far as adopting ethnocultural arguments against any policy that might endanger Luxembourg's status. His rejection of the naturalisation laws in 1919 predated the immigration and nationality policies in the nationalist era. His proposal for the Centenary primarily resulted from his personal views and experiences.

The government eventually agreed to Wehrer's idea. A further document of November 1938 – the organisation of the Centenary was already ongoing – linked the Centenary to the challenging international context. The commemoration of the Centenary "has to unite in the same patriotic feeling all the classes of the population and confirm to observers abroad our

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<sup>736</sup> Albert Wehrer, 'Autour du Nationalisme Luxembourgeois', *L'Indépendance luxembourgeoise*, May 1923.

<sup>737</sup> Lucien Koenig, 'Autour du Nationalisme Luxembourgeois: Réponse à M. Albert Wehrer', *L'Indépendance luxembourgeoise*, May 1923.

<sup>738</sup> Albert Wehrer, 'Autour du Nationalisme Luxembourgeois', *L'Indépendance luxembourgeoise*, May 1923.

<sup>739</sup> 'Association Luxembourgeoise pour la Société des Nations et la Paix', *L'Indépendance luxembourgeoise*, July 1925.

right to exist, our vitality and our will to be independent,” the note claimed.<sup>740</sup> The document insisted on integrating all social classes – including workers – into the national community. According to Wey, the Centenary enjoyed considerable support from the population, caused by the fear of the deteriorating international situation.<sup>741</sup>

To prepare for the festivities and delegate tasks, the government created the Commission du Centenaire, presided by none other than Wehrer (secretary general of the Government since 1938). Pierre Majérus, a government councillor at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, acted as the commission’s secretary. The other members were mainly well-connected political and socio-cultural actors: Jérôme Anders (economist, journalist, author and secretary of the Union des villes et centres touristiques, founded in 1933), Pierre Frieden, Jean-Pierre Koltz (historian and engineer), Albert Nothumb (state official of the Ministry for Public Instruction), François Simon (engineer and director of the Ponts et Chaussées<sup>742</sup>), and Nicolas Ries. As the sources only indicate the surnames, not all participants can be identified, such as Putz, Simmer (possibly Louis Simmer), and Mandres. Wehrer himself probably influenced the composition of the group. In an undated note to the state minister, drafted before 1938, he suggested the creation of such an administrative commission, with himself (representing the State Ministry), Simon (Public Works), Putz (Agriculture), Weber (Economy), Nothumb, Frieden and Ries (publications), and Koltz as a specialist of the “old Luxembourg”.<sup>743</sup>

The meeting minutes of 17 October 1938 are the earliest available document from the Commission. During this meeting, it outlined its mission “to coordinate all efforts that have been invested until now or will be invested in the future, with the aim to commemorate the Centenary of Independence of the Grand Duchy worthily.”<sup>744</sup> Furthermore, the report stated that “through the Commission, the Government will canalise all private or administrative initiatives, will collect and examine all interesting suggestions related to the Centenary

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<sup>740</sup> Own translation. “[...] la commémoration du Centenaire doit unir dans un même sentiment patriotique toutes les classes de la population et attester aux yeux de l’étranger notre raison d’être, notre vitalité et notre volonté d’indépendance” (Wey, ‘Le Centenaire de l’Indépendance et sa commémoration en 1939’, 36; ANLux, AE-03992 [Fêtes du Centenaire: Instructions aux départements ministériels], 1938-1939, Le Centenaire du Traité de 1839, no. 82).

<sup>741</sup> Wey, 45–46.

<sup>742</sup> The Ponts et Chaussées (literally: “Bridges and Roads”), was the name of the public administration responsible for the maintenance and extension of road infrastructures.

<sup>743</sup> ANLux, ET-110, *Note pour Monsieur le Ministre d’Etat, Président du Gouvernement. Centenaire de 1939*, Albert Wehrer, undated, no. 2.

<sup>744</sup> Own translation. “La Commission a pour mission de coordonner tous les efforts qui se sont manifestés jusqu’à présent ou qui se manifesteront à l’avenir dans le but de commémorer dignement le Centenaire de l’Indépendance du Grand-Duché.” (ANLux, ET-113, Report of the Commission du Centenaire, 17/10/1938, no. 2-4).

festivities.”<sup>745</sup> The Centenary Commission sent letters to federations and societies to draft a programme for 1939 and coordinate the initiatives. Radio Luxembourg was contacted for a possible cooperation.<sup>746</sup> While extending the festivities from the most official to the most private and local levels and including as many actors as possible to achieve the broadest support possible, the government exerted some control on what was organised.

The commission intended to contact ministries, towns and associations.<sup>747</sup> It wanted the Catholic Church to be involved in the commemoration.<sup>748</sup> Furthermore, a series of suggestions were developed that reflected the cultural policy at the time. The commission recommended the official opening of the national museum in 1939, the construction of an art museum (*musée de la peinture*), and the inauguration of a folklore museum (*Musée folklorique*). Some of these suggestions were not a coincidence. Albert Nothumb had been involved in the plans for the folklore museum some years earlier. A national monument should also be constructed, as the Luxembourg City Council initially suggested.<sup>749</sup> The ideas advanced by the commission reflected the monumental policy and the national aggrandizement of the interwar period, though not all of them were realised. Apparently, the government also envisaged a “palace of culture”.<sup>750</sup>

The Centenary comprised the largest mobilisation of the cultural society in the interwar period in Luxembourg. The Centenary Commission devolved tasks to sub-committees involving at least 60 people.<sup>751</sup> They were political, socio-cultural and, in some cases, economic

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<sup>745</sup> Own translation. “Par l’intermédiaire de la Commission, le Gouvernement canalisera toutes les initiatives privées ou administratives, recueillera et examinera toutes les suggestions intéressantes qui auront pour objet les fêtes du Centenaire.” (ANLux, ET-113, Report of the Commission du Centenaire, 17/10/1938, no. 2-4).

<sup>746</sup> ANLux, ET-174, Letter from Albert Wehrer to the Director of the *Compagnie Luxembourgeoise de Radiodifussion*, 08/11/1938, no. 46.

<sup>747</sup> ANLux, ET-113, Report of the Commission du Centenaire, 17/10/1938, no. 2-4.

<sup>748</sup> ANLux, ET-113, Report of the Commission du Centenaire, 07/11/1938, no. 7-8.

<sup>749</sup> ANLux, ET-113, Report of the Commission du Centenaire, 07/11/1938, no. 7-8 ; ANLux, ET-170, Letter from the Mayor of Luxembourg City to the Minister of State, 24/10/1938.

<sup>750</sup> Wilhelm, ‘La culture au coeur de la réalité luxembourgeoise’, 186; Spang, ‘La politique culturelle des Gouvernements luxembourgeois de 1848 à nos jours’, 602. While Wilhelm mentions the “palais de la culture”, Spang speaks of the “palais de la Nation” used as a cultural centre on the Saint-Esprit plateau.

<sup>751</sup> The number does not include the members of the Comité de presse et de propagande (Press and Propaganda Committee), consisting of six or seven members, all journalists. Following the suggestion of the Centenary Commission, the Association des journalistes luxembourgeois created the committee and nominated its own members, which they did at their general assembly of 21 November 1938. The members were communicated in a letter to Albert Wehrer (ANLux, ET-142, Letter from the president of the Association des Journalistes luxembourgeois to Albert Wehrer, 22/11/1938, no. 49). A handwritten note on the letter reveals that the *Volksblatt* was later contacted, too, and agreed to collaborate by designating its delegate. Due to a lack of sources, the press committee’s exact number

actors: teachers, engineers, industrials, architects, intellectuals, journalists, writers, state officials, and representatives of societies such as the CAL or the Automobile Club Luxembourg. This elite was nearly exclusively composed of men; only one participant was a woman. Many of them had been implicated in previous government initiatives, such as Emile Etienne, Jérôme Anders and Albert Wehrer in the organisation of Luxembourg's presence at the Brussels fair in 1935.<sup>752</sup>

The main celebration took place on 22 and 23 April, but the choice of the date was based on pragmatic reasons. Initially, the festivities were planned on 18 and 19 April.<sup>753</sup> Then, a letter by Albert Wehrer of 10 March 1939 stated that the commemoration would take place on 22 and 23 April.<sup>754</sup> According to another undated note of February 1939, the government agreed on 15 and 16 April, but as it was the first weekend after Eastern, many children would have their first communion. Thus, 22 (Saturday) and 23 (Sunday) April were chosen.<sup>755</sup> It is not clear why 18 and 19 April, chosen in an early stage of the preparations<sup>756</sup>, were discarded. It might have simply been because they were not on the weekend.

The final programme of 22 and 23 April included fireworks, a historical procession, a speech by the grand duchess, a gala dinner, and a concert in the Grand-Ducal Palace.<sup>757</sup> Streets were illuminated at night, public buildings were decorated with flags, and the inhabitants were prompted to do the same with their houses.<sup>758</sup> Albert Wehrer asked the director of the Post Administration to design and issue post stamps for the "Centenary of the Resurrection of our Independence" ("Centenaire de la renaissance de notre Indépendance") with the aim of "national propaganda" ("dans un but de propagande nationale").<sup>759</sup> Public schools were involved in the festivities, too. The minister of public instruction Nicolas Margue encouraged the organisation of school festivals.<sup>760</sup> The organisers of the Centenary also thought of

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of members cannot be confirmed and its working modalities cannot be determined. For the Commission, the press committee would allow it to direct and control the reactions of the public opinion (ANLux, ET-113, Report of the Commission du Centenaire, 07/11/1938, no. 7-8).

<sup>752</sup> Commissariat général du gouvernement grand-ducal à l'exposition, ed., *Le Grand-Duché de Luxembourg* (Luxembourg: Commissariat général du gouvernement, 1935), 5–6.

<sup>753</sup> ANLux, ET-113, Report of the Comité du cortège historique, 22/11/1938, no. 16.

<sup>754</sup> ANLux, AE-03992, Letter by Albert Wehrer to the Minister of Transportation, 10/03/1939, no. 8.

<sup>755</sup> ANLux, ET-131, *Fêtes du Centenaire. Note sur le choix de la date des fêtes officielles*, undated, no. 87.

<sup>756</sup> ANLux, ET-131, *Fêtes du Centenaire. Note sur le choix de la date des fêtes officielles*, undated, no. 87.

<sup>757</sup> ANLux, AE-03989, Programme adopted by the Council of Government, 10/02/1939, no. 27.

<sup>758</sup> ANLux, ET-142, *Mitteilung*, 20/04/1939, no. 25.

<sup>759</sup> ANLux, AE-03992, Letter from Albert Wehrer to the Director of the postal service, 25/03/1939, no. 6.

<sup>760</sup> ANLux, AE-03992, Letter from Nicolas Margue to the school directors, 03/11/1938, no. 45.

Luxembourgish communities abroad (“colonies luxembourgeoises”), who could organise events in their country of residence or at the embassy.<sup>761</sup> Such was the case in Brazil, where the Consul General of Luxembourg, Bandeira de Mello, organised a reception in Rio de Janeiro in which high political officials from Brazil (such as the Minister for Labour, Industry and Trade) and ambassadors took part.<sup>762</sup>

Of course, the Centenary was not limited to two days. A non-official brochure published in 1939 by the printing house P. Linden presented the most important events of the year: from the main celebrations, over sports championships, to regional and local events. The Centenary even coincided with the twelve hundredth anniversary of Saint Willibrord’s death, the missionary who “brought Christian civilisation even to the dark depths of the Ardennes and founded the abbey of Echternach”<sup>763</sup>.

Budgetary questions mirrored the practical aspects of the Centenary. The total expenses for the Centenary – encompassing the procession and brochures, posters, gala dinner, subsidies to local authorities, etc. – amounted to 955,000 francs. The historical procession was inscribed with a cost of 150,000 francs.<sup>764</sup> According to another note on the provisional budget, the historical procession alone would generate costs of about 136,000 francs. The document suggested reducing the number of brochures from 10,000 to 5,000 units.<sup>765</sup> The state budget of 1939, as voted by the Chamber of Deputies, included two articles directly related to the Centenary: “Commémoration de l’Indépendance du Grand-Duché” (300,000 francs) under the section *Gouvernement*, and “Publications en vue de la commémoration du centenaire de 1939” (100,000 francs) under the section *Arts et Sciences*.<sup>766</sup> In 1940, the budget listed an article labelled “Subvention à la Commission des fêtes du Centenaire de l’indépendance du Grand-Duché” (500,000 francs).<sup>767</sup>

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<sup>761</sup> ANLux, AE-03992, Letter from Albert Wehrer to Joseph Bech, 09/11/1938, no. 78.

<sup>762</sup> ANLux, AE-03956, Letter from Bandeira de Mello to Joseph Bech, 02/05/1939, no. 6.

<sup>763</sup> Own translation. “[...] qui apporta la civilisation chrétienne jusque dans les sombre profondeurs de la Forêt Ardennaise et fonda l’abbaye d’Echternach”. The publication is bilingual (German and French); the German version is actually shorter and not a literal translation of the French: “[...] welchem Luxemburg die Segnungen der christlichen Kultur verdankt.”; cf: *Fêtes de l’indépendance, Grand-Duché de Luxembourg = Unabhängigkeitseieren im Grossherzogtum Luxemburg* (Luxembourg: P. Linden, 1939).

<sup>764</sup> ANLux, ET-131, *Fêtes du Centenaire : Note sur le Cortège historique*, undated, no. 67.

<sup>765</sup> ANLux, ET-131, *Fêtes du Centenaire : Note sur le Cortège historique*, undated, no. 94.

<sup>766</sup> ‘Loi du 20 avril 1939, concernant le Budget des recettes et des dépenses de l’Etat pour l’exercice 1939’.

<sup>767</sup> ‘Loi du 21 mars 1940, concernant le Budget des recettes et des dépenses de l’Etat pour l’exercice 1940’, in *Mémorial A*, vol. 16 (Luxembourg, 1940), 155–198.



Fig. 12: The illuminated Hôtel de Ville (town hall) on Place Guillaume II. The coat of arms is flanked by two smaller, rotund depictions of a figure probably holding a balance (left), and possibly of a horseman (right). Source: Photothèque de la Ville de Luxembourg, no. 1939/4/3556, Batty Fischer, 1939, 18 x 24 cm.



Fig. 13: View on the Hotel Staar, at the junction of the avenue de la Liberté (left) and the avenue de la Gare (right). Both streets were decorated for the Centenary. Source: Batty Fischer, 1939, 18 x 24 cm, Photothèque de la Ville de Luxembourg, no. 1939/4/3561.

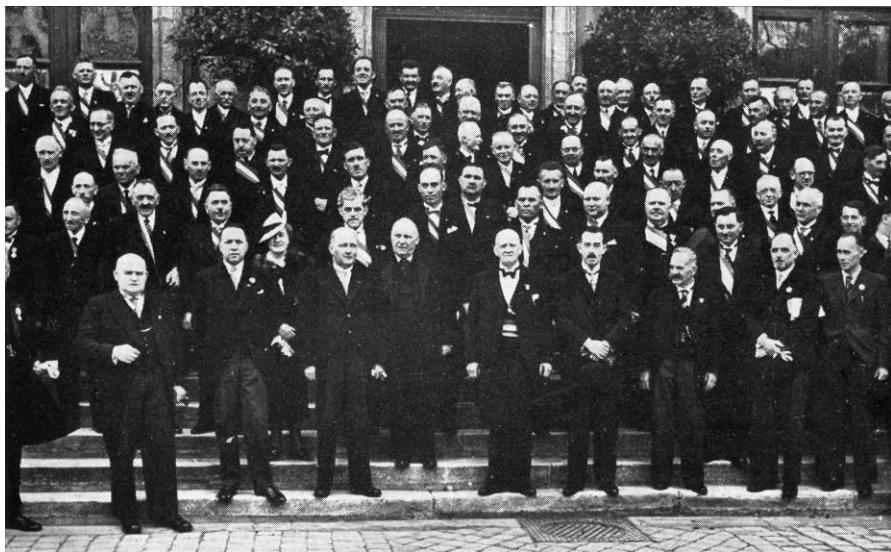


Fig. 14: Mobilisation of the political class: group photo of the mayors of the country, posing in front of the Hôtel de Ville, during the main celebration.

Source: Photothèque de la Ville de Luxembourg, no. 1939/3/3533, P. Greischer, 1939, 18 x 24 cm.

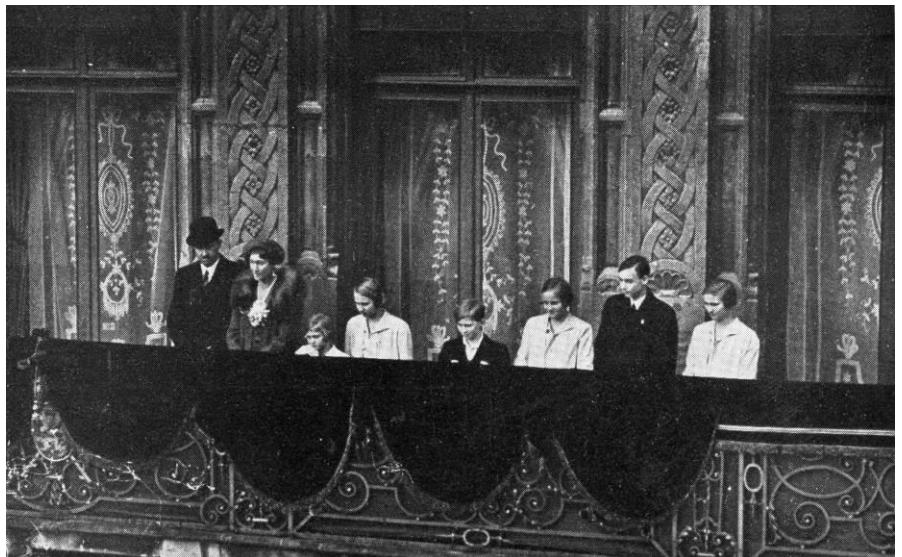


Fig. 15: Mobilisation of the dynasty: the royal family on the balcony of the grand-ducal palace. From left to right: prince Félix, grand duchess Charlotte, princesses Alix and Marie-Adelaïde, prince Charles, princess Marie-Gabrielle, crown prince Jean and princess Elisabeth. Source: Photothèque de la Ville de Luxembourg, no. 1939/3/3546, P. Greischer, 1939, 18 x 24 cm.



Fig. 16: Mobilisation of the military: the grand duchess, prince Félix, prince Jean, and high-ranking officers inspecting the troops at the casern. Source: Photothèque de la Ville de Luxembourg, no. 1939/3/3547, P. Greischer, 1939, 18 x 24 cm.

### **III.3.2. Initiatives of the sub-committees**

As indicated in the previous sub-section, the Commission instituted several sub-committees dedicated to specific tasks and projects. The present sub-section discusses some of them, revealing not only the discourses surrounding the Centenary but also representing, at a smaller scale, the cultural policy of the interwar period and the mobilisation of all forms of symbolic representation of the nation-state.

Among the more notable projects of the Centenary figured the *Livre du Centenaire*, which should “highlight the specific character of the Luxembourgish people and demonstrate to foreign countries the legitimacy of our national existence.”<sup>768</sup> Thus, the book contributed to the objective of the Centenary by illustrating Luxembourg’s specificity. However, due to the German occupation, it was published after the war in 1948. A second, revised edition followed in 1949. The editorial board members were Albert Nothumb, Georges Schmitt (assistant-curator at the State Museum), and Tony May (Government Archives). For the second edition, Mathias Thines (Ministry of National Education) and Joseph Petit (Director of the Government Information Office) joined the team.<sup>769</sup> Though the initial idea was to create a book intended for the large public, Georges Schmitt explained in a letter of 7 May 1947 that the book was primarily destined for illustrious foreigners (“étrangers de marque”) visiting the grand duchy.<sup>770</sup>

The *Livre du Centenaire* was conceived to improve Luxembourg’s image and promote an ethnocultural vision of Luxembourg, as illustrated by Frieden’s quote opening the present section. Curiously, the bibliography at the end of the volume includes a publication by the German geographer and *Westforscher* Josef Schmithüsen, *Das Luxemburger Land*, published in 1940. On the one hand, this is not surprising, considering the contacts between the researchers in Luxembourg and the *Westforscher*. On the other hand, the *Westforscher* pursued opposite objectives to that of the editors of the *Livre du Centenaire*.

#### *The Centenary Monument*

The idea of the nation was, however, not only to be exalted in a publication. Like the monuments erected in the interwar period, it was also to be set in stone. The Commission

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<sup>768</sup> Own translation. “Le but de la publication sera de souligner le caractère propre du peuple luxembourgeois et de démontrer à l’étranger la raison d’être de notre existence nationale.” (ANLux, ET-113, Report of the Commission du Centenaire, 17/10/1938, no. 2-4).

<sup>769</sup> Gouvernement Grand-Ducal, ed., *Le Luxembourg: Livre du Centenaire* (Luxembourg: Gouvernement Grand-Ducal, 1949), 671.

<sup>770</sup> MNHA archives, separate shelf, unnumbered Folder (Correspondance), Letter from Georges Schmitt to the widow of Maurice Pescatore, 07/05/1947.

created a sub-committee for the “historical monument”, composed of state architect Paul Wigreux (president), Pierre Majerus (secretary), Victor Engels, Frantz Heldenstein, Henri Luja, Nicolas Petit, Michel Stoffel and Auguste Trémont. All of them were sculptors, engineers or architects, i.e., people with the skills to devise plans for a monument. Frantz Heldenstein and Michel Stoffel were official representatives of the Cercle Artistique du Luxembourg (CAL), Heldenstein being the society’s secretary. Paul Wigreux was, at the time, the president of the CAL. Henry Luja was the city architect of Luxembourg, as his father Auguste had been before him.

The idea of a monument had already appeared in deliberations of the Luxembourg City Council on 21 October 1938. Yet, the public authorities were not the only actor to discuss it.<sup>771</sup> A group of foreigners created the Comité des Etrangers pour l’Erection d’un Mémorial de Reconnaissance to raise funds for the erection of a monument as a sign of gratitude. In March 1939, Keucker de Watlet, president of the committee, informed the mayor of Luxembourg about the initiative. The committee was composed of nine members, each representing one country or community of foreigners in Luxembourg. An appeal was published in the newspapers, targeting resident foreigners, and companies abroad with industrial and commercial ties to Luxembourg.<sup>772</sup> The committee members had close ties to or were well-connected and part of the diplomatic corps. De Watlet (Belgium) was lieutenant-general of the Belgian army. Heinrich Diehl was heading the economic service of the German embassy in Luxembourg. Achille Giorgetti (Italy) was an entrepreneur, co-founder of the Giorgetti construction company, and president of the Italian Chamber of Commerce in Luxembourg. Charles Alexandre (France) was the president of both the Souvenir Français and the Société française de bienfaisance. Fernand Loesch was the consul for Poland in Luxembourg. Considering the political context, the composition might appear rather curious in hindsight. Diehl was, according to the *Tageblatt*, a convinced Nazi (“überzeugter Nationalsozialist”<sup>773</sup>) and Landesgruppenleiter (regional group leader) of the NSDAP in Luxembourg. During the occupation, he became Kreisleiter (Kreis leader) of Esch-sur-Alzette. Giorgetti was a member of the Fascist Party. After the war, he was brought to trial and sentenced to a fine of three million francs. The *Tageblatt* extensively covered the process.

Having a committee composed of a Fascist, a Nazi, a French official, and a diplomat for Poland (besides other members) was probably a rare and peculiar case of international

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<sup>771</sup> ‘Präzisionen zur Frage des neuen Athenäums’, *Obermosel-Zeitung*, October 1938, 4.

<sup>772</sup> VDL archives, LU 03.2.2, Letter from Keucker de Watlet to Gaston Diderich, 27/03/1939.

<sup>773</sup> ‘Aus Wirtschaft und Politik’, *Tageblatt*, March 1936.

collaboration for a common cause in times of political tensions. Until August 1939, the committee had collected more than 284,000 francs for the monument;<sup>774</sup> Diehl indicated 247,456 francs.<sup>775</sup> It was the last time that the subscriptions were published. The monument was not erected.<sup>776</sup> Several months after the invasion of Luxembourg in May 1940, Diehl explained in a letter to the Stillhaltekommissar in Luxembourg (responsible for liquidating associations) that the Belgians had initially suggested the idea and that the *Reichsdeutsche* in Luxembourg had to participate for political reasons.<sup>777</sup>

The reactions to the foreigners' initiative were lukewarm at best. In December 1938, the sub-committee of the Centenary believed that the national monument should take priority over that of the foreigners, who envisaged the square in front of the Arbed building (today Place des Martyrs in the Avenue de la Liberté). In the committee's opinion, they should not be granted permission, as the place would not be adequate "for multiple reasons". The report remains tacit on the exact reasons. In the press, the project of the foreigners' committee was critically evaluated. *Die neue Zeit*, according to Romain Hilgert a leftist, antifascist newspaper<sup>778</sup>, rejected the initiative in a piece published on 15 March 1939. The article combined chauvinism and philanthropy, suggesting that the foreigners should instead create a social charity to support other foreigners in need. The latter would represent a burden to the Luxembourgish community. In addition, the newspaper assumed that immigrants were "sent" to Luxembourg, implying that they were agents of their respective countries:

Man kann der Meinung sein, daß man die Luxemburger bei der Feier ihrer Unabhängigkeit hübsch unter sich lassen sollte. Jede, selbst wohlgemeinte, Einmischung von Fremden könnte gewissermaßen als eine Taktlosigkeit empfunden werden. Aber auch die Zurückweisung des ehrlichen Wunsches, sich dem Gastland erkenntlich zu zeigen, wäre verletzend für jene Ausländer, denen wir gerne Gastrecht geben. Nur sind wir der Meinung, die Errichtung eines protzigen Denkmals, das sich irgendwo immer wieder der Beachtung aufdrängt, sei nicht die

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<sup>774</sup> 'Comité des Etrangers pour l'Erection d'un Mémorial de reconnaissance à offrir au Grand-Duché de Luxembourg: 24me Liste de souscription', *Luxemburger Wort*, August 1939.

<sup>775</sup> ANLux, CdZ-A-1600, Letter from H. Diehl to the Oberbereichsleiter Schmit, 16/09/1940, no. 116.

<sup>776</sup> A report by one of the members, Fr. Muller, from 1944, explains how their plan was interrupted by the invasion in 1940 (ANLux, ET-103, Memoir from Fr. Muller, director of the Banque Internationale à Luxembourg, 08/12/1944, no. 3-8).

<sup>777</sup> Own translation. "Wir haben notgedrungen bei der Sammlung mitgemacht, weil wir uns aus politischen Gründen nicht ausschliessen konnten." (ANLux, CdZ-A-1600, Letter from Heinrich Diehl to the Oberbereichsleiter Schmit, 16/09/1940, no. 116). As the invasion and the subsequent occupation rendered the initiative obsolete, the collected money was planned to be donated for a social cause. Diehl had an exchange with De Watlet and suggested donating a third of the amount each to the NSV (Nationalsozialistische Volkswohlfahrt), to the League against Tuberculosis, and to the Society for the Fight against Cancer.

<sup>778</sup> Romain Hilgert, *Les journaux au Luxembourg 1704-2004* (Luxembourg: Service information et presse, 2004), 193.

richtige Art für Ausländer, ihren Dank an die Wahlheimat Luxemburg abzustatten. Weniger aufdringlich und nachhaltiger wäre diese Dankbezeugung jedenfalls, wenn man die gesammelten Gelder zu einer sozialen Stiftung verwenden würde. Und wir schlagen den Ausländern vor, daß sie ein Unterstützungs werk ins Leben rufen, das dem Luxemburger Land hilft, unterstützungsbedürftige Ausländer, die unserm Gemein wesen zur Last fallen – etwa die uns von Nachbarländern zugesandten Emigranten – über Wasser zu halten. Das wäre die richtige Anerkennung für Luxemburg als ein Land der Gastfreundschaft und des Asylrechtes!<sup>779</sup>

The sub-committee of the Centenary was aware that the construction of the national monument could not start in April 1939. As a potential site, the members suggested “les deux plates-bandes en forme d’hémicycles qui se trouvent devant les bâtiments de la Caisse d’Epargne, resp. de l’Administration des chemins de fer Guillaume Luxembourg” (today Place de Metz).<sup>780</sup> The costs should not exceed 600,000 francs. The monument was not constructed. It was not even listed in the projected expenses for the whole Centenary.<sup>781</sup>

#### *Poster competition*

The sub-committee dedicated to the monument also briefly discussed a poster competition in a meeting on 14 December 1938. The jury would be exclusively composed of CAL members. This far-reaching implication is, in fact, unsurprising, as the CAL was not only the most important art society in Luxembourg at the time but also well represented in the sub-committee. In total, 22 posters were submitted following a call in the newspapers. The artists abundantly used national symbols in their designs, clearly reflecting the occasion for which they were conceived. The posters depicted crowns, the red lion or the colours of the national flag. Many of them reproduced the quote “Mir wölle bleiwe wat mir sinn” (“We want to remain who we are”) from Michel Lentz’s patriotic song *De Feierwon* (1859) to celebrate Luxembourg’s first train, or referred to nationalist songs. Some posters depicted characterisations of Luxembourg’s regions (agricultural North and industrial South) or represented, for example, the different classes of Luxembourg’s society while alluding to their unity. Indeed, the posters were visual representations of discourses and tropes widely spread by newspapers and speeches at the time, no matter the political orientation. Many posters also conveyed ideas of protection, freedom,

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<sup>779</sup> ‘Unerwünschte Unabhängigkeits-Apostel’, *Die neue Zeit*, March 1939.

<sup>780</sup> ANLux, ET-113, Report of the Comité du Monument historique, 14/12/1938, no. 24-25.

<sup>781</sup> The total provisional expenses amounted to 955,000 francs (ANLux, ET-131, *Centenaire: Budget des Dépenses*, undated, no. 67).

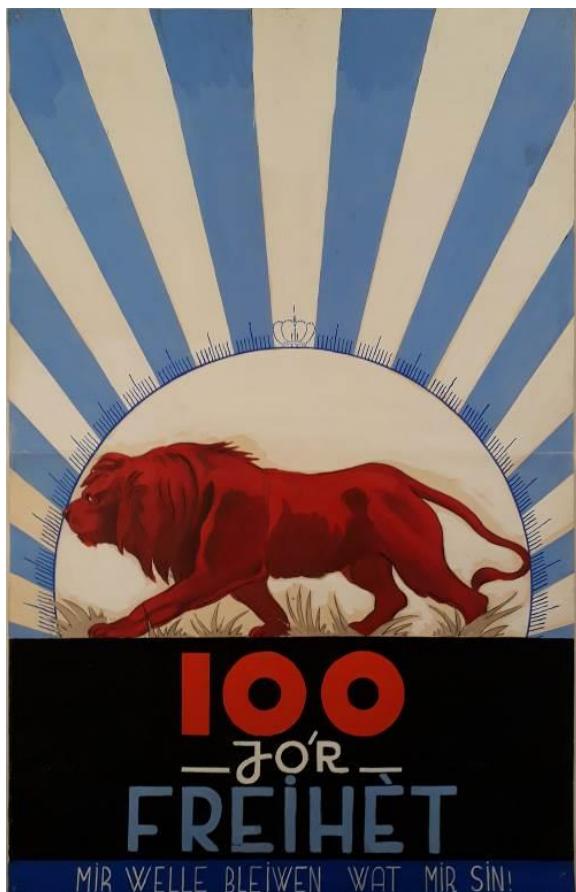
or independence. The posters either used only French (six cases), only Luxembourgish (nine posters), or a mix of both languages (seven posters).



Fig. 17: Poster using the term "independence". A figure holds or places a pole to which is attached the flag depicting the red lion. It might be regarded as a symbol of territorial appropriation, signalling to other nations that the land is taken. Another feature of this poster, the white hand in the upper left corner, probably refers to a verse in Luxembourg's present-day national anthem *Ons Heemecht* by Michel Lentz (1859): "O Du do uewen, deen seng Hand / Duerch d'Welt d'Natioune leet, / Behitt Du d'Lëtzebuerg Land / Vru friemem Joch a Leed" ("O Thou above, who night and day / Guides nations with thine own hand / Guard this Luxembourger land / From alien yoke and pain!"). It might also be combined with the "Freedom Sun" of the national anthem. Source: ANLux, BP-63(2)-011, 100. 1939 19 Avril Centenaire du Luxembourg independent, J. P. Calteux, around 1939.



*Fig. 18: Luxembourg with the industrial south represented by the gear wheel, and the agrarian north represented by cattle. The Feierwon quote, the flag and the coat of arms are depicted, too. The sun might refer to the "Fräheitsson" ("Freedom Sun") of Lentz' *Ons Heemecht* (1859). Source: ANLux, BP-63(2)-003, Lecebburg 1839 1939, unknown artist, around 1939.*



*Fig. 19: "100 years of freedom" ("100 Jo'r Freihét"). Poster showing the red lion walking in front of the "Fräheitsson", radiating blue-white rays. The quote "Mir welle bleiwen wat mir sin!" is not missing too. The colours used (red, white, blue) are those of Luxembourg's flag. Source: ANLux, BP-63(2)-004, 100 Jor Freihét. Mir welle bleiwen wat mir sin!, unknown artist, unknown artists, around 1939.*



*Fig. 20: Poster showing the red lion on what might be a reference to the Bock, with the tower of the cathedral in the background. The quote "Ro'de Léiw bewach dei Feld!" ("Red Lion guard your field!") refers to the song U Lëtzebuerg (To Luxembourg) by Lucien Koenig. Source: ANLux, BP-63(2)-021, Ro'de Le'w bewach dei Feld!, J. P. Calteux, around 1939.*



*Fig. 21: Alluding to the “separation” from Belgium, with the quote “Letzeburg dem Letzebuerger” (“Luxembourg to the Luxembourg”). It is inspired by a teleological narrative of Luxembourg’s history, positing that the country has always existed in its essence, and needed to be separated from Belgium in order to become truly independent. Source: ANLux, BP-63(2)-014, Letzeburg dem Letzebürger 1839 1939, Jos Schaus, around 1939.*



*Fig. 22: The foremost person holding the coat of arms, followed by people representing the different classes of society (worker, miner, probably a baker, farmer, winegrower). Underneath the quote “We want to remain who we are” (“Mir welle bleiwen wat mir sin”). Source: ANLux, BP-63(2)-021, Mir welle bleiwen wat mir sin. 19 avril 1939 Centenaire de l’indépendance du pays de Luxembourg, unknown author (1938/1939).*

### *The national flag*

A sub-committee reflected on introducing a new national flag, representing ten vertical blue and white stripes with the red lion in the foreground, as used in the coat of arms. The committee was composed of Wigreux, Koenig, Medinger, Meyers, Majérus, Schulté (Ministry of Foreign Affairs), Wehrer and Wigreux. They discussed two reports on the introduction of a national flag, penned by Lucien Koenig (dated 29 November 1938) and by Albert Wehrer (5 January 1939), respectively. For Koenig, the existence of the tricolour cannot be proven for the time before William I. Yet, it would be wrong to consider it the Dutch flag, because it would include the colours of the coat of arms of the former Duchy of Luxembourg. The flag depicting the coat of arms was introduced by William II. Koenig interpreted this act as a contribution to consolidating the national consciousness.<sup>782</sup> It was precisely this flag that the government considered officialising, an initiative supported by Koenig for nationalist and pragmatic reasons. Not only was the tricolour the same as the Dutch flag, but other countries, France, Paraguay and Yugoslavia, used the same colours. Albert Wehrer shared Koenig's conclusions. However, Wehrer stressed that the tricolour was the Dutch flag. He noted that it had neither a constitutional nor a legal basis and deplored that Luxembourg "is probably the only country in the world to have kept the flag that a foreign domination imposed on it because in 1815 we were ruled by the Netherlands, the autonomous regime with a personal union only commencing in 1839 or rather in 1841."<sup>783</sup> The final report of the sub-committee, also drafted by Wehrer, summarised the discussion and the two positions. It observed that both flags were used in Luxembourg. The members of the commission recommended not replacing either flag with the other. However, it suggested adding at the centre of the tricolour the hatchment of the Grand Duchy to avoid any confusion with foreign flags.<sup>784</sup>

### *Linguistic questions*

As already observed elsewhere, Luxembourgish gained importance in the 1930s. Its status in the commemoration reflected this shift. The Centenary Commission created a linguistic committee to study "the possibilities of organising throughout the year of the Centenary events

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<sup>782</sup> Koenig wrote: "[...] le Roi Grand-Duc Guillaume II a voulu faire revivre le passé Glorieux du comté respectivement du duché de Luxembourg et éveiller et fortifier le sentiment national du peuple luxembourgeois." (ANLux, ET-060a, *La Question du Drapeau Luxembourgeois*, Lucien Koenig, 29/11/1938, no. 331-341).

<sup>783</sup> "[...] nous sommes peut-être le seul pays dans le monde qui ait maintenu le drapeau qu'une domination étrangère lui a imposé, car en 1815 nous étions sous la domination des Pays-Bas, le régime d'autonomie avec l'union personnelle n'ayant commencé qu'en 1839 ou plutôt 1841." (ANLux, ET-060a, *La question du Drapeau National*, Albert Wehrer, 05/01/1939, no. 574-584, p. 9.)

<sup>784</sup> ANLux, ET-060a, Letter from Albert Wehrer to the Minister of State, 03/02/1939, no. 102-108.

in Luxembourgish and, more generally, of putting Luxembourgish at the service of the national idea.”<sup>785</sup> The Ministry for Public Instruction considered publishing a Luxembourgish dictionary.<sup>786</sup> In addition to the secretary Pierre Majérus, the linguistic committee included two members of the association Hémechtssprôch (Adolf Berens and Max Duchscher), several teachers (Godefroid, Willy Goergen, Lucien Koenig, Joseph Meyers, “Melle Palgen”), Poutty Stein and Batty Weber.<sup>787</sup> “Melle Palgen” (“Miss Palgen”) was probably Hélène Palgen (1902-1993), though her full name was not mentioned in any document. As she was a linguist, member of the linguistic section of the IGD and teacher, her profile fits her description in a letter from Joseph Tockert to Albert Wehrer.<sup>788</sup> It is also worth noting that the same working group reunited opposed political views. On the one hand, the liberal and anti-clerical author Poutty Stein (1888-1955); on the other hand, the conservative historian and curator of the archaeological collection Joseph Meyers (1900-1964). The linguistic committee suggested the organisation of a competition of Luxembourgish theatre pieces. In the opinion of the committee members, the prime minister’s speech during the official ceremony should be held in Luxembourgish, at least when he does not address foreign diplomats.<sup>789</sup> The linguistic committee also launched a competition for a Luxembourgish theatre piece.<sup>790</sup>

### **III.3.3. Performing the master narrative: the historical procession**

The historical procession was undoubtedly one of the highlights of the main celebration in April 1939. Claude Wey, in his analysis of the Centenary and drawing on Pascal Ory, stressed the importance of historiography in the “commemorative system” (“système commémoratif”).<sup>791</sup> It is therefore not surprising that the sub-committee for the historical procession figured among the most important ones. Victor Engels (architect), Joseph Hess (ethnologist), Mandres, Venant Pauké, Schaul, Thiry, Paul Wigreux, Pierre Majérus and Joseph Meyers were members of the committee.<sup>792</sup> The result of their reflections was a historical narrative as defended by the elite and conveyed to the masses.

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<sup>785</sup> Own translation. “[...] les possibilités d’organiser, pendant toute l’année du Centenaire des manifestations de langue luxembourgeoise et, d’une façon générale, de mettre la langue luxembourgeoise au service de l’idée nationale.” (ANLux, ET-113, Report of the Commission du Centenaire, 07/11/1938, no. 7-8).

<sup>786</sup> ANLux, ET-113, Report of the Commission du Centenaire, 17/10/1938, no. 2-4.

<sup>787</sup> ANLux, ET-190, Letter from the Commission du Centenaire, undated, no. 43.

<sup>788</sup> ANLux, ET-132, Letter from Joseph Tockert to Albert Wehrer, 23/11/1938, no. 115.

<sup>789</sup> ANLux, ET-131, *Notes sur le fêtes du Centenaire*, undated, no. 24-26.

<sup>790</sup> ANLux, ET-132, *Wettbewerb*, 04/03/1939, no. 27.

<sup>791</sup> Wey, ‘Le Centenaire de l’Indépendance et sa commémoration en 1939’.

<sup>792</sup> It was not possible to identify the first names in all cases.

The organisation of parades for specific anniversaries was not a phenomenon limited to Luxembourg. It was a popular instrument in the 1930s and followed a bourgeois tradition of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. In Switzerland, the Eidgenössische Schützenfest in Lucerne in 1939 included a historical pageant, which was, among other reasons, a reaction to the one in Munich.<sup>793</sup> Between 1937 and 1939, the Nazis organised an annual historical parade, *2000 years of German culture* (*2000 Jahre Deutsche Kultur*), for the Day of German Art (*Tag der deutschen Kunst*) in the Bavarian capital.<sup>794</sup> It conveyed an interpretation of the German past as forged by Nazi ideology. It celebrated the German achievements in different periods and featured “great men” such as Charlemagne (also featured in the Luxembourgish pageant), Frederick Barbarossa and Henry the Lion. The event was recorded on camera. Amateur photographers were encouraged to take pictures.<sup>795</sup> The organisers intended to present an enduring national community (*Volksgemeinschaft*) through the demonstration of unity.<sup>796</sup> In 1937, the parade took place on 14 July; in 1938, on 8 July, with minor adaptations. Thus, Luxembourg was not an exception in using this bourgeois tradition. The historical procession in 1939 was informed by principles similar to the Munich pageant.

Whether the pageant in Munich might have influenced the Luxembourgish one cannot be answered. The Munich event was not hinted at in the reports of the commission, which does not mean that it was not mentioned during the meetings. The Luxembourgish press did not report on the event; in 1937, it preferred to deal extensively with the French national holiday (14 July). Yet, the pageant in Luxembourg constructed a linear and continuous narrative from Antiquity to the contemporary period. As for the pageant in Munich, a brochure was edited. The city was decorated for the occasion. Not unlike the Nazis in the framework of their ideology, the Luxembourgish government posited a unity of the national community. Officially, the committee preferred to collect information about other processions in the Francophone countries – in the Swiss town Vevey (*Cortège des Vignerons*), and Nancy in France (procession for the bicentenary of the adhesion of the Lorraine to France).<sup>797</sup> It remains unclear if and to what extent they inspired the procession in Luxembourg.

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<sup>793</sup> Valentin Groebner, *Retroland: Geschichtstourismus und die Sehnsucht nach dem Authentischen* (Frankfurt am Main: S. Fischer, 2018), 101.

<sup>794</sup> For a detailed analysis of the parade in Munich, see: Schweizer, *Unserer Weltanschauung sichtbaren Ausdruck geben*.

<sup>795</sup> Föllmer, *Kultur im Dritten Reich*, 113–114; Groebner, *Retroland*, 100–102.

<sup>796</sup> Karl Möseneder, ‘Fest’, ed. Uwe Fleckner, Martin Warnke, and Hendrik Ziegler, *Handbuch der politischen Ikonographie* (München: C.H. Beck, 2011), 321.

<sup>797</sup> ANLux, ET-113, Report of the Comité du Cortège historique, 11/11/1938, no. 13.

The composition of the parade and the choice of events and historical figures changed from one meeting to the next. In the first phase, the members asked Joseph Hess to conceive a draft programme including episodes of the national history. At this stage, the pageant was devised as a luminous parade of cars. At least four versions exist, from Joseph Hess' version as discussed in the meeting of 1 December<sup>798</sup> to the official programme.<sup>799</sup> The first and second versions included micro-stories, such as countess Ermesinde (1186-1247) granting the enfranchisement of Luxembourg. Seven scenes out of twenty-six were kept in the final version of the procession; the micro-stories disappeared. The procession generally highlighted personalities and moments from Luxembourg's master narrative. Besides Ermesinde, count Siegfried (922-998) and the governor Peter Ernst I von Mansfeld-Vorderort (1517-1604) had been retained since the earliest version. Events such as the *Klöppelkrich*, or Peasant's War, of 1798, were also part of the actual procession. It invented a continuity from Antiquity with Indutiomarus, an aristocrat of the Treveri<sup>800</sup>, to the 19<sup>th</sup> century and beyond. It should underline the country's long history and the importance of its medieval rulers. The period of the "foreign dominations" was indirectly represented. Mansfeld, the governor of Luxembourg in the Spanish Low Countries, was introduced as a Luxembourgian personality. The theme of industrialisation was ignored. Even the illustration of the Luxembourgish small-scale industrial activities in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, i.e. before the discovery of the *minette* and the development of the steel industry, was not retained. The reasons are unknown; maybe it was too contemporary or did not fit within the conservative, romantic vision of Luxembourg's past. The only abstract or allegorical representation in the procession on 22 April was the Independence wagon as the finale. As Peporté et al. have stressed, the parade was dominated by native Luxembourgers.<sup>801</sup> As stated in the introduction to this chapter, the teleological narrative was abundantly disseminated and re-adapted during the Centenary. The historical pageant was a medium to perform this narrative, which did not concede any space to foreigners and immigrants living in Luxembourg.

Unfortunately, the committee reports do not always reveal why specific scenes of the procession were added or removed. In its meeting on 1 December, the committee decided to add John the Blind, Napoleon and the era of Prince Henry. From the second version onwards, the members decided to exclude figures such as Louis XIV, the Habsburgian empress Maria-

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<sup>798</sup> ANLux, ET-113, Report of the Comité du Cortège historique, 01/12/1938, no. 17-19.

<sup>799</sup> ANLux, ET-142, *Der historische Festzug*, 19/04/1939, no. 19-20.

<sup>800</sup> The Treveri were a Belgic tribe living in the area around present-day Luxembourg and Trier

<sup>801</sup> Péporté et al., *Inventing Luxembourg*, 87.

Theresa or Napoleon, reminiscent of the foreign dominations and risking to “eclipse” with their importance the “specifically Luxembourgish historical figures”.<sup>802</sup> The last scene with Grand Duke Adolphe in the first version was deleted on the grounds of being too contemporary. The committee accepted Hess’ suggestion to contact Joseph Meyers and ask for his version and comments.<sup>803</sup> The second version might be inspired by Meyers’ input; it was discussed in the meeting on 7 December 1938.<sup>804</sup> Probably as a result of Meyers’ comments, the new version included emigrants to the historical region of Banat and to Transylvania. The latter partly nourished the false narrative of ethnic ties between Luxembourg and the Romanian city of Sibiu (Siebenbürgen), as promoted by Meyers.<sup>805</sup> It also appears in his book *Geschichte Luxemburgs*, in which he explicitly referred to the concept of *Volkstum*:

During the 12<sup>th</sup> century, numerous rural families moved from the regions of the Rhine and the Moselle and from the Low Countries towards the East, to Bohemia and Sibiu, to settle abandoned territories or reclaim land. Thus, through this emigration, a kinship between the folklore of the Saxons of Sibiu and ours can be retraced.<sup>806</sup>

The emigrations to the Banat and Transylvania did not make it in the final version. From the second version onwards, the draft programme included a scene of “a group of migrants to Brazil and their chant” (“groupe d’émigrants vers le Brésil, avec leur chant”). It cannot be determined upon whose request this scene was added. Maybe it was Meyers, or Joseph Hess, who was the author of a chapter in the Centenary Book on Luxembourgish emigration, including to Brazil. In the final procession, Brazil was substituted by America.

According to a handwritten note beneath the schematic version of 6 January 1939, “around 440” people would participate in the procession. As this version included more wagons than

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<sup>802</sup> “The foreign sovereigns who evoke the foreign domination such as Louis XIV, Maria-Theresa, Napoleon etc., were removed from the programme, as they risk eclipsing with their importance the historic Luxembourgish figures.” (ANLux, ET-113, Report of the Comité du Cortège historique, 07/12/1938, no. 20).

<sup>803</sup> ANLux, ET-113, Report of the Comité du Cortège historique, 01/12/1938, no. 17-19.

<sup>804</sup> ANLux, ET-113, Report of the Comité du Cortège historique, 07/12/1938, no. 20-22.

<sup>805</sup> The Linguistic Section of the IGD was the main defender of the mythical ties to Sibiu, as part of the idea of the “Urheimat”, in the context of an increasingly nationalist historiographic narrative centred around an ethnocultural definition of the *Luxemburgertum*, inspired by and reacting to the research of the “Westforscher” (Thomas, *Le Luxembourg dans la ligne de mire de la Westforschung*, 221–224). The myth of “Luxembourgers” having emigrated to Sibiu was also disseminated by *völkisch* narratives. The journalist Peter Cariers published an extensive article in the *Luxemburger Wort* of 1 February 1941 reusing this narrative (Peter Cariers, ‘Die Luxemburger Siedler in Siebenbürgen’, *Luxemburger Wort*, February 1941).

<sup>806</sup> Own translation. “Im Lauf des 12. Jahrhunderts zogen zahlreiche Bauernfamilien aus den Rhein- und Moselgegenden und den Niederlanden nach Osten, nach Böhmen und Siebenbürgen, um dort verlassenes Land neu zu besiedeln oder wüsten Boden urbar zu machen. Die Siebenbürger Sachsen führen auf diese Auswanderung eine Verwandtschaft ihres Volkstums mit dem unsern zurück.” (Joseph Meyers, *Geschichte Luxemburgs* [Luxembourg: Der Freundeskreis, 1939], 80).

the final procession, the actual number probably diverged from that estimate, but it must have still been considerable, not to forget the horses.

01-12-1938	07-12-1938	06-01-1939	19-04-1939
Gaulois Indutiomar part en guerre contre les légions romaines	Indutiomar, chef des Trevires (53 av. J.Ch.)	Indutiomar	Indutiomar, gallois Führer (53 v. Chr.)
	Groupe de Gallo-Romains (53 sv. J. Ch.-450 apr. J. Ch.)	Gallo-Romains	
Fondation de l'hôpital d'Echternach par Irmine			
	St. Willibord, entouré de ses moines - Char reproduisant les bâtiments d'Echternach de cette époque (698-739)	St. Willibord	Sankt Willibord (gest. 739)
			Pipin der Kurze (5. Jahrhundert)
			Karl der Grosse (9. Jh.)
Le Comte Sigefroy avec ses sujets des faubourgs nouvellement créés	Les comtes de Luxembourg: Sigefroid (963-998), Henry Ier (998-1027), Henri II (1027-1047), Giselbert (1047-1059), Conrad Ier (1059-1086), Henri III (1086-1096), Guillaume (1096-1129), Conrad II (1129-1136), Cunégonde	Sigefroid	Graf Siegfried (10. Jh.)
			Bauern und Handwerker (13. Jh.)
Un groupe d'émigrants vers la Transylvanie	Groupe d'émigrants vers la Transylvanie	Artisans et citadins	
Ermesinde accorde une lettre d'affranchissement	Ermesinde (1196-1247) avec toute sa suite	Ermesinde	Ermesinde (13. Jh.)
			Tempelherren, Magistratspersonen, Bürger (13. Jh.)
			Heinrich V. (13. Jh.)
Yolande - Célébration d'un mariage à Vianden	Yolande, Célébration d'un mariage à Vianden; Mariage d'Adelaïde de Vianden avec Othon de Nassau	Yolande	
Mariage de Adelaïde de Vianden avec Othon de Nassau			
			Musiker, Kinder, Hochzeitsgäste (13. Jh.)
	Henri VII (1203-1310) avec Baudouin et Pierre d'Aspelt	Henri VII	Heinrich VII. (14. Jahrhundert)
			Vier Töchter Heinrichs VII. (14. Jh.)
	Jean l'Aveugle (1310-1346) en guerrier	Jean l'Aveugle	Johann der Blinde (14. Jh.)
La Schobermesse. Priviléges, ancien Hämmelsmarch des Corporations	Corporations, évocation de la Schobermesse, Hämmelsmarsch	Les Corporations	
			Wenzel I. mit zwanzig Künstlern, Schriftstellern, und Gelehrten (14. Jh.)
	Wenceslas Ier (1353-1383) avec sa Cour: écrivains, musiciens, troubadours	Wenceslas	
	Conseil provincial (1531): Gouverneur et neuf membres		Handwerker, Meister und Lehrlinge (14./15. Jh.)
			Humanisten (16. Jh.)
Mansfeld avec ses doctes contemporains (Mameranus, etc.)	Mansfeld (1545-1604)	Le Gouverneur Mansfeld avec le Conseil provincial	Graf von Mansfeld (16. Jh.)
	Les généraux Altringer et Beck avec cuirassiers	Aldringen et Beck	Die Generäle Aldringen und Beck (17. Jh.)
			Klerus, Adel, Bürger (17. Jh.)
	Groupes d'humanistes luxembourgeois: Mameranus, Berthels, Wiltheim etc.	Humanistes	
	Postes - diligences, messagers (18me siècle)	Postes-diligences	Postkutsche (18. Jh.)

	Groupe d'émigrants vers le Banat		
	Industrie Luxembourgeoise au 18me siècle, deux ou trois chars	L'industrie luxembourgeoise au 18me siècle [CROSSED OUT]	
Mariage de Wiltheim au château de Vianden avec leurs descendants			
Prestation de Serment de Fidélité à Albrecht et Isabelle			
Départ des cuirassiers de Wallenstein, racolés au Luxembourg			
Louis XIV fait sa joyeuse entrée à Luxembourg			
Construction du Refuge St. Maximin: Défilé des artisans			
Les fayenciers de Sepfontaines			
Entrée de Joseph II à Luxembourg			
Les Corporations de la Ville			
Goethe à Luxembourg			
Les chasseurs luxembourgeois sous Léonardy participent à la défense de la ville en 1795	Les chasseurs luxembourgeois sous Leonardy	Les chasseurs sous Leonardy	Luxemburger Jäger unter Kommandant Leonardy (18. Jh.)
Les insurgés du Klöppelkrieg	Evolution du "Klöppelkrieg"	Klöppelkrieg	Klöppelkrieg (18. Jh.)
Les volontaires luxembourgeois à la Révolution belge			
Les parlementaires luxembourgeois à Bruxelles			
Types populaires du 19me siècle: Blannen Theis, John Grün, Wolf, professeur Engling, André de Roth, Dams de Reckingerhof etc.	De Blanne Theis	De Blannen Theis	"De Blannen Theis" (19. Jh.)
	Groupe d'émigrants vers le Brésil, avec leur chant	Groupes d'émigrants vers le Brésil	Luxemburger Auswanderer nach Amerika (19. Jh.)
	Allégorie de 1839	Allégorie de 1839	Wilhelm II., Regierung und Abgeordnete (19. Jh.)
	Entrée de Guillaume II à Luxembourg	Entrée de Guillaume II	
	Le Gouvernement et les Etats		
	De "Feierwôn"	Feierwôn [CROSSED OUT]	
Entrée des soldats luxembourgeois à Luxembourg 1867	Allégorie de 1867	Allégorie de 1867	
	Le Prince Henri et la Princesse Amélie	Prince Henri et Princesse Amélie	Kutsche mit Prinz Heinrich und Prinzessin Amelie (1867)
	L'"Uelzéch"		Dreissig Bürgermeister
			Sechzehn Schützen
	Détachement des premiers volontaires	Bataillon de Volontaires	Vierzig Soldaten der Freiwilligenkompanie
D'Fulleparlament			
Le Grand-Duc Adolphe en Carosse			
	Char de l'Indépendance	Char de l'Indépendance et Uelzech	Der Wagen der Unabhängigkeit

Fig. 23: Table comparing the different versions of the procession as discussed by the sub-committee. The descriptions are exact quotes of the original sources. The most recent version of 19 April is the one used for the actual procession; it was communicated to the press (cf. ANLux, ET-142, *Der historische Festzug*, 19/04/1939, no. 19). The other versions can be found in the committee reports. My notes between brackets.



*Fig. 24: A group of medieval horsemen in the procession, on the Adolphe bridge with the building of the State Bank in the background. Source: Photothèque de la Ville de Luxembourg, no. 1939/3/3535, P. Greischer, 1939, 18 x 24 cm.*



*Fig. 25: An actor impersonating the missionary Saint Willibrord, who died in Echternach in 739, followed by a group of monks. Source: Photothèque de la Ville de Luxembourg, no. 1939/3/3536, P. Greischer, 1939, 18 x 24 cm.*



*Fig. 26: Actor impersonating John the Blind. The text on the original postcard presented him as "our first national hero" ("Onsen e'schten Nationalheld"). Source: Photothèque de la Ville de Luxembourg, no. 1939/3/3538, P. Greischer, 1939, 18 x 24 cm.*



Fig. 27: Performers dressed as artisans and citizens. Source: Photothèque de la Ville de Luxembourg, no. 1939/3/3539, P. Greischer, 1939, 18 x 24 cm.

Fig. 28: Wenceslaus, king of Bohemia and Duke of Luxembourg. Source: Photothèque de la Ville de Luxembourg, no. 1939/3/3540, P. Greischer, 1939, 18 x 24 cm.



Fig. 29: Representation of a court lady. Source: Photothèque de la Ville de Luxembourg, no. 1939/3/3541, P. Greischer, 1939, 18 x 24 cm.



*Fig. 30: Actor impersonating the musician Mathias Schou, alias "blannen Theis". On the original postcard, he is presented as "our first national singer" ("Onsen e'schten Nationalsänger"). Source: Photothèque de la Ville de Luxembourg, no. 1939/3/3543, P. Greischer, 1939, 24 x 18 cm.*



*Fig. 31: Mobilisation of the masses: spectators of the procession on the decorated Adolphe Bridge. Source: Photothèque de la Ville de Luxembourg, no. 1939/3/3545, P. Greischer, 1939, 24 x 18 cm.*



*Fig. 32: The last scene of the procession, the wagon of Independence, in the rue Notre-Dame. Source: Photothèque de la Ville de Luxembourg, no. 1939/4/3569, Batty Fischer, 1939, 18 x 24 cm.*

The procession was accommodated with the master narrative. Moreover, it reflected a right-wing conservative vision of Luxembourg's past, especially when considering themes that struck with their absence: immigration, industrialisation, and urbanisation. The trope of untouched nature, pre-industrial society, and harmony between landscape and nation, has already been illustrated in another section. In this context, Bernard Thomas noted, though without clearly explaining what is meant by "modernity", that

some elements of Luxembourgish Catholicism expressed nostalgia for a golden age, celebrating a supposedly "immutable" peasantry as a vector for Luxembourgish particularism and rejected en bloc modernity, industrialisation and immigration.<sup>807</sup>

The presence of conservatives like Hess and Meyers in the committee partly explains the results. The positive description of the rural population and its way of life also appeared, in its essence, in the narratives of the *Westforscher*.<sup>808</sup> This interest continued under Luxembourg's occupation by Nazi Germany.

The master narrative was reproduced in the official brochure of the historical procession, explaining the different scenes of the pageant. Luxembourg's history was depicted as being eventful and dating back to ancient times, with "great periods" ("grands épisodes") and "heroes":

Souvent glorieuse, l'histoire du Luxembourg n'a jamais cessé d'être mouvementée. Le cortège historique qui parcourra les rues gaîment pavoiées de la capitale à l'occasion des fêtes du Centenaire, en fera revivre sous une forme impressionnante et multicolore les principaux épisodes, depuis les débuts lointains, qui se confondent avec la légende, jusqu'au présent, en passant par les grandeurs du Luxembourg médiéval et les malheurs des époques de domination étrangère.<sup>809</sup>

This brochure was even the product of transnational exchanges. The French text was enriched with drawings from Lucien Rousselot (1900-1992), a French painter and illustrator known for drawing uniforms of the French army. In its short review of the publication, the newspaper *Luxembourg* presented him as the "grand artiste parisien"<sup>810</sup>. In the brochure, John the Blind was described as one of his time's most powerful and bravest princes. The authors introduced Count Mansfeld as "the most remarkable figure of our history". The *Klöppelkrich* was interpreted as a revolt of the farmers against the "foreign domination". The writers did not

<sup>807</sup> Own translation. "[...] certains éléments du catholicisme luxembourgeois exprimaient une nostalgie pour un âge d'or, célébrant une paysannerie supposée « immuable » comme vecteur du particularisme luxembourgeois et rejetaient en bloc la modernité, l'industrialisation et l'immigration." (Thomas, *Le Luxembourg dans la ligne de mire de la Westforschung*, 150–151).

<sup>808</sup> Thomas, 106.

<sup>809</sup> *Centenaire de l'Indépendance: Cortège Historique* (Luxembourg: St. Paul, 1939).

<sup>810</sup> 'Une brochure sur le cortège historique', *Luxembourg: Quotidien du Matin*, April 1939.

acknowledge William III as the real sovereign of Luxembourg, but Amélie and her husband Henry, brother of William III, “living in Walferdange, among us”. Even the war of Indutiomarus against the Romans was overstated as a fight for the “independence of the country”<sup>811</sup>.

The authors of the brochure are not known, but it could be at least one historian involved in the organisation of the Centenary, i.e. Joseph Meyers. In 1939, he published his book *Geschichte Luxemburgs*, in which he dedicated a chapter to the “period of autonomy in the Middle Ages”.<sup>812</sup> Similarities to such a teleological narrative can also be found, for instance, in the master narrative constructed in France. There too, some narratives, as Suzanne Citron has shown, presumed that the country has always existed in its essence.<sup>813</sup> The pageant, as much as the brochure, supposed that the essence of contemporary Luxembourg was to be found in its history since ancient times. In this sense, this narrative was a continuation and development of what the Société archéologique had been constructing since the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Past and presence were interwoven. As Pol Schock explained in his analysis of the Archaeological Society:

Die Vergangenheit wurde [...] zur Projektionsfläche, um gegenwärtige Sinnfragen und Herausforderungen zu bewältigen. Hier lässt sich demnach ein Wechselspiel zwischen Vergangenheit und Gegenwart erkennen. Man suchte die Gegenwart in Vergangenem und fand die Vergangenheit in Gegenwärtigem.<sup>814</sup>

Considering the tropes mobilised in 1939, the same conclusion can be drawn for the Centenary Celebration.

The political performance of the pageant, however, did not only rely on the content but also on the choice of the trajectory. A police document with instructions related to security and traffic control during the Centenary Celebration described the route taken by the pageant. Departure and arrival were both at the casern on the Saint-Esprit Plateau. From there, the pageant crossed the Passerelle, through the avenue de la Gare, turned into the avenue de la Liberté in front of the Hotel Staar, proceeded over the Adolphe bridge, continued in the Boulevard Royal until it turned into the avenue de la Porte-Neuve. Then, the pageant passed in front of the official tribune at the Place Guillaume, turned westwards into the rue Notre-Dame,

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<sup>811</sup> *Centenaire de l'Indépendance: Cortège Historique*, 2.

<sup>812</sup> Meyers, *Geschichte Luxemburgs*, 47. The main structure of Meyer's book follows dynastical changes.

<sup>813</sup> Suzanne Citron, *Le mythe national: L'histoire de France revisitée* (Paris: Les Editions de l'Atelier, 2017).

<sup>814</sup> Schock, ‘Imagining Luxembourg oder: Die Kunst, Beliebiges zu verewigen: Konstitution nationaler Identität in Luxemburg in der Mitte des 19. Jahrhundert (Teil I)’, 439.

then southwards into the rue de l'Athénée, then eastwards into today's boulevard Roosevelt before arriving on the Saint-Esprit Plateau. The pageant proceeded in the most important streets of Luxembourg City, crossed both main bridges, and passed in front of or close to symbolic buildings such as the central train station, the Arbed building, the grand-ducal palace, the Hôtel de Ville, the Cathedral and the Gëlle Fra.<sup>815</sup> This choice allows at least two possible interpretations: such a trajectory would not only attract as many people as possible (broad avenues were preferable to small streets), but it also took advantage of Luxembourg's urban landscape. The representative buildings and infrastructures were as much part of the pageant as the actors and participants themselves. In addition, two of the most important districts of the capital were connected: the historical centre of Luxembourg and the newer district of the train station.

Of course, the historical pageant was not the only performance in the framework of the Centenary. Local as well as national organisers, made use of traditional cultural forms to convey the master narrative. For example, the local authorities of Luxembourg City organised an open-air theatrical performance, *D'Hémecht Erzielt*, in the Pétrusse Valley on 17 June. The story was mainly set in the Middle Ages and divided into a prologue and three tableaux; the Early Modern Times, not explicitly mentioned, were “long centuries of misery and slavery”, represented by an old witch.<sup>816</sup> Victor Jaans wrote the theatre piece, and the music was composed by L. Lambotte, director of the Conservatoire de Musique of Luxembourg City. Lambotte submitted the project on 16 December 1938, underpinning his proposal with patriotic and touristic arguments. According to Lambotte, such a “special” open-air spectacle would take advantage of the environment (the “romantic character of certain places”), aggrandize the prestige of the city and country, and contribute to the development of tourism. In this context, Lambotte referred to the Oberammergau Passion Play in Bavaria and the Salzburg Festival:

Depuis toujours déjà, j'avais rêvé de la composition et de l'organisation d'une sorte de spectacle d'un caractère spécial, qui profiterait de certains avantages indéniables de la Ville (notamment le caractère romantique de certains endroits), et qui, au prix de certains sacrifices, pouvait revêtir d'immenses attractions spectaculaires, artistiques (littéraires et musicaux), nationaux et historiques,

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<sup>815</sup> Original text in the police document: “Der historische Umzug bewegt sich von der Hl. Geistkaserne aus über die Passerelle durch die Bahnhofavenue, am Hôtel Staar vorbei, durch die Freiheitsavenue, Adolfbrücke, Königring bis Neutorstrasse, über den Wilhelmsplatz an der offiziellen Tribüne vorbei, Liebfrauenstrasse, Athenäumstrasse, über den Brückenring zur Kaserne zurück.” (VDL archives, LU 03.2.3, *Polizei-Direktion. Instruktionen betreffend Ordnungs- Sicherheits- und Verkehrsdiensst am 22. und 23. April anlässlich der Unabhängigkeitfeier zu Luxemburg*, undated).

<sup>816</sup> For the whole theatre piece, see: Victor Jaans, ‘*D'Hémecht erzielt*’ (*La patrie parle*): en un prologue et 3 tableaux: le 17 juin 1939: spectacle historique en plein air (Lëtzebuerg: Administration communale, 1939).

suffisants pour rehausser le prestige de la Ville et du Pays et contribuer au développement du tourisme d'une façon plus ou moins comparable, sous certain aspect, au spectacle de la Passion d'Oberammergau, par exemple, ou à certains Festivals de Salzbourg.<sup>817</sup>

However, the theatre piece competed with another proposal and was not uncritically received. A group of figures of the cultural society – Pierre Faber<sup>818</sup>, Pierre Grégoire, Evy Friedrich, Josy Imdahl, Lucien Koenig, Joseph Meyers, Venant Pauké, Henri Pensis<sup>819</sup> and J.P. Welter<sup>820</sup> –submitted a project for a theatrical performance on the Guillaume II Square in July and August, first to the national commission, then to the local festivities commission of the capital. Nearly all of them belonged to the same generation, mostly born around 1900 (except for Koenig, born in 1888), sharing the same interests or exercising similar professions.

Despite the group's effort, the local authorities chose the project submitted by Lambotte. The group around Pauké was informed of the decision in February 1939; the administration preferred collaborating with its own institutions.<sup>821</sup> The interest group protested against the decision, claiming that their project had not been considered. They also highlighted the fact that they were Luxembourgers, implying that this made the city's decision even more questionable:

On 16 February, we were told by the Festivities Commission that the Executive Council had accepted the Lambotte project. Thus, we were purely and simply avoided, and in our quality as Luxembourgers, we must protest against this injustice.<sup>822</sup>

In fact, Lambotte was a foreigner. This aspect was explicitly addressed by the right-wing politician Lambert Schaus, a municipal council member. In a letter destined for the executive council of Luxembourg City, he criticised that a foreigner could play a notable role in the Centenary, considering the “special character” of the festivities and the fact that there were enough Luxembourgers who were able to assume the same task:

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<sup>817</sup> VDL archives, LU 03.2.3, Letter from L. Lambotte to the City Council of Luxembourg, 16/12/1938.

<sup>818</sup> Pierre Faber (1900-1975) was employee at COLUMETA, where he met Poutty Stein. Both created the singing duo *Die Straßensänger*. In the 1930s, Faber created a series of sketches for Radio Luxembourg. For further information, see:

<https://www.autorenlexikon.lu/page/author/105/1051/FRE/index.html> (last access 13/04/2019).

<sup>819</sup> Henri Pensis (1900-1958) was conductor of the Radio Luxembourg orchestra.

<sup>820</sup> Jean-Pierre Welter (1902-1945) was journalist and songwriter.

<sup>821</sup> VDL archives, LU 03.2.3, Letter from the Commission des Fêtes de la Ville de Luxembourg, signed by the secretary P. Weyrich, 16/02/1939.

<sup>822</sup> Own translation. “Le 16 février nous avons reçu de la part de la Commission des Fêtes une réponse nous informant que le Collège Echevinal avait accepté le projet Lambotte. De ce fait, nous avons été purement et simplement écartés, et en notre qualité de Luxembourgeois nous ne pouvons que protester contre cette injustice.” (VDL archives, LU 03.2.2, Letter from the group around Venant Pauké to the executive council of Luxembourg City, 10/04/1939).

Je ne veux faire aucune objection contre M. Lambotte ni en ce qui concerne sa personne ni en ce qui touche ses capacités professionnelles [sic]. Mais en l'occurrence, eu égard au caractère spécial des Fêtes du Centenaire, il me semble inadmissible qu'un étranger puisse être chargé de jouer un rôle quelque peu en vue, alors surtout qu'il y a suffisamment de Luxembourgeois pouvant assumer le même rôle.<sup>823</sup>

The reactions confirm that foreigners were ignored during the Centenary or at least regarded with unease when they played a larger role in the organisation. In the latter case, attempts were made to hinder foreigners from assuming their roles. The protest did not change the stance of the decision-makers; the choice for the project submitted by Jaans and Lambotte was retained. The local authorities expected around 5,000 spectators for the event. The entrance fees would cover more or less the costs generated by the organisation (42,500 francs according to an estimate of early January 1939).<sup>824</sup> The income generated by the spectacle totalled 31,954.50 francs.<sup>825</sup> There must have been other expenses not specified in the available sources, as the total income generated according to the accounts of the cashpoints equalled 36,818 francs; this amount is based on the total number of tickets (4,508 units) and programmes (404 units) sold. Hence, though the estimates were not met, the spectacle still attracted more than 4,500 people.

While the participation of a foreigner in an event of the Centenary had already been criticized beforehand, the *Luxemburger Wort* published a negative review of the theatre piece, repeatedly highlighting Lambotte's non-Luxembourgish citizenship. According to the critic, who stressed that the music was conceived by the "non-national L. Lambotte", the composition was "the saddest manifestation in the programme of our Independence" ("die traurigste Erscheinung in der Aufzählung unserer Unabhängigkeit"):

Firstly because the "composer" Mr Lambotte, as a foreigner, should generally keep his hands off our Centenary Celebration. Then because it is a shame that subsidies are undeservedly squandered to one recipient, whereas at least twelve Luxembourgish compatriots could have carried out the work much better and cheaper. Thirdly because the composing effort reveals incompetence that can only elicit bewilderment at the position of director of our music school.<sup>826</sup>

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<sup>823</sup> VDL archives, LU 03.2.2, Letter from Lambert Schaus to the executive council of Luxembourg City, 22/02/1939.

<sup>824</sup> VDL archives, LU 03.2.2, *Spectacle historique, vallée de la Pétrusse: Devis indicatif*, 03/01/1939.

<sup>825</sup> VDL archives, LU 03.2.3, Letter from the President of the Commission des Fêtes to the Mayor of Luxembourg, 01/07/1939.

<sup>826</sup> Own translation. "Zuerst weil der "Komponist" Herr Lambotte als Ausländer überhaupt die Finger von unserer Unabhängigkeitsfeier lassen sollte. Dann weil es eine Schande ist, daß Subsidien unverdienterweise an eine Adresse verschwendet werden, wogegen wenigstens zwölf Luxemburger Landsleute die Arbeit viel besser und billiger gemacht hätten. Drittens, weil die kompositorische Bemühung eine Unfähigkeit dokumentiert, die an dem Direktionsposten unserer Musikschule einfach hin Staunen erregt." ('Theater und Konzerte: "D'Hémecht erzielt"', *Luxemburger Wort*, June 1939).

The harsh tone struck by the *Wort* reflected the nationalist context and the scepticism towards, if not rejection of, foreigners in a celebration that was supposed to be exclusively reserved for Luxembourgers.

### III.3.4. Capturing the performance: The *Film du Centenaire*

On 17 January 1938, Bech received a letter from the Luxembourgish filmmaker René Leclère, who lived in Paris at the time. “As the year 1939 will be the one in which Luxembourg will celebrate in joy and jubilation the CENTENARY OF ITS INDEPENDENCE,” he started his text and put these last words in capital letters, “I take the liberty to submit to your attention and your gracious solicitousness a project that will not miss drawing your interest.”<sup>827</sup> This project was a movie on the Centenary. A month later, as a follow-up to his first letter, Leclère mentioned a discussion with Albert Nothumb. Both had agreed that the movie should become “a great and beautiful thing” (“une grande et belle chose”), which would do honour to the country. Leclère had found a filmmaker who would work for free (except for travel fees). The movie would depict the most important dates since 1839, reconstruct some of the historical events and give a new life to important figures of the country’s past.<sup>828</sup>

Besides Evy Friedrich, Leclère was the most notable Luxembourgish filmmaker at the time. Born in Pétange, he grew up in Dudelange. He studied law in Germany and France and became a lawyer in Luxembourg in 1914. After the First World War, he abandoned legal practice and started his career as a movie director. Prior to his involvement in the *Film du Centenaire*, he directed a documentary on the Grand Duchy titled *Il est un petit pays* (1937) in the context of the world exhibition in Paris and commissioned by the government.<sup>829</sup>

Leclère was not the only actor interested in making a movie. The Comité Ciné-Radio Luxembourg, in collaboration with the French production company Atlantic Film, and the Compagnie luxembourgeoise de radiodiffusion (CLR, predecessor of RTL) submitted each a proposal. The CLR’s project planned a collaboration between Jean Masson, the company’s editor-in-chief, and Leclère.<sup>830</sup> The movie would be shown in cities in France, Belgium, the

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<sup>827</sup> Own translation. “Comme l’année 1939 sera celle où le Luxembourg fêtera dans la joie et l’allégresse le CENTENAIRE DE SON INDEPENDENCE, je prends la liberté de soumettre à votre attention et à votre bienveillante sollicitude un projet qui ne manquera de vous intéresser.” (ANLux, IP-1858, Letter from René Leclère to Joseph Bech, 17/01/1938).

<sup>828</sup> ANLux, IP-1858, Letter from René Leclère to Joseph Bech, 04/02/1938.

<sup>829</sup> Germaine Goetzinger, ‘René Leclère’, Luxemburger Autorenlexikon, accessed 20 March 2018, <http://www.autorenlexikon.lu/page/author/110/1109/DEU/index.html>.

<sup>830</sup> In fact, it is not clear how it came to be that Leclère submitted his own project, but would also collaborate in another project. Either both were, at least initially, different in their essence and therefore not really competing projects, or Leclère might have preferred to increase his chances.

Netherlands, Switzerland, and even in French colonies (Rabat and Alger). Germany was not mentioned. Lou Marell submitted a proposal in December 1938, but it is not mentioned or alluded to in other sources and has been largely forgotten in the literature. Though not providing specifics on the execution or the script, she suggested an England-based production company specialising in colour movies. In her letter, she highlighted her résumé that included studies in Munich and internships at Pathé Nathan in Paris.<sup>831</sup> Why her request disappeared or was ignored remains an open question. Wehrer must have had knowledge of her letter, as it was transmitted to him.

With the celebration approaching, the CLR withdrew from the competition.<sup>832</sup> Leclère and the Comité Ciné-Radio Luxembourg attempted to convince the government of their respective projects. The Comité, upon hearing that they were not the only ones, highlighted the quality of the project and its advantages (such as the interior shots of the parliament, the cathedral and the palace).<sup>833</sup> Leclère's idea was cheaper, whereas Atlantic Film owned the required equipment. In April 1939, a compromise was reached. Atlantic Film was going to produce the movie and hire Leclère.<sup>834</sup> Though not explicitly mentioned as a director in the movie credits, René Leclère was involved as director of production (*directeur de production*).

According to the specifications, the movie should subtly allude to the contemporary “annexionist wave” (“vague d'annexion”). It should highlight the positive and festive atmosphere of the Centenary but also include the “current preoccupations and the profound national aspiration to stay united and conserve this ideal of liberty.”<sup>835</sup> The content of the movie should legitimise the grand duchy's right to autonomy.<sup>836</sup> The first lines spoken by the French voice-over in the *Film du Centenaire* hint at international tensions and underline Luxembourg's right to be independent: “At the crossroads of the big European nations exists a small country, an island of peace, that knows how to maintain its specificity and independence throughout the

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<sup>831</sup> ANLux, ET-129a, Letter from Lou Marell to the Prime Minister Pierre Dupong, 18/12/1938.

<sup>832</sup> ANLux, ET-129a, *Note pour le Conseil de Gouvernement. Film du Centenaire*, Albert Wehrer, 03/04/1939.

<sup>833</sup> ANLux, ET-129a, Letter from the Comité Ciné-Radio Luxembourgeois to Albert Wehrer, 20/03/1939, and ANLux, ET-129a, Letter from the Comité Ciné-Radio Luxembourgeois to Nicolas Margue, 27/03/1939.

<sup>834</sup> Paul Lesch, *René Leclère, pionnier du cinéma luxembourgeois* (Dudelange: Centre national de l'audiovisuel, 1999), 71–73.

<sup>835</sup> My translation. “[...] les préoccupations de l'heure et la profonde aspiration nationale de rester unis pour conserver cet idéal de liberté.” (ANLux, ET-131, Projet de film sur les fêtes du Centenaire de l'Indépendance, 22/03/1939, no. 9).

<sup>836</sup> ANLux, ET-131, *Projet de film sur les fêtes du Centenaire de l'Indépendance*, 22/03/1939, no. 9.

vicissitudes of history.”<sup>837</sup> The background shows a topographical map of Europe, with lines converging towards Luxembourg, situated at the centre.



Fig. 33: Screenshot of the Film du Centenaire (CNA, AV000327, Pierre Hart/René Leclère, Luxembourg, le film du Centenaire [1939]).

The movie retraces the Centenary programme on 22 and 23 April. The ceremonies, the speeches by the grand duchess, Emile Reuter (president of the Chamber of Deputies), Joseph Bech and Gaston Diederich (mayor of Luxembourg City), and the historical procession feature in the movie. Symbols and cues such as the flag of Luxembourg, the national hymn and the capital itself are prominently exposed and used. The speeches highlight peace, patriotism and the independence of Luxembourg. They are, however, only excerpts due to technical limitations of recording them completely.<sup>838</sup> Only the grand duchess' speech still exists in a complete version as an audio recording. She emphasised the vitality, strength, pacifism and industriousness of the Luxembourgian people. For the head of state,

[...] notre pays a rapporté la preuve évidente de sa vitalité personnelle et de son droit à continuer son existence indépendante. Ce résultat nous devons en premier lieu aux vertus héréditaires du peuple luxembourgeois lui-même, dont la volonté tenace a su triompher des adversités de toute sorte qu'il a rencontré sur sa route.<sup>839</sup>

<sup>837</sup> Own translation. “Au carrefour des grandes nations européennes, il existe un petit pays, îlot de paix, qui a su maintenir à travers les vicissitudes de l’histoire son originalité et son indépendance.” (CNA, AV-000327, *Luxembourg, le film du Centenaire*, Atlantic Film, 1939).

<sup>838</sup> ANLux, ET-131, Document with technical specifications, 22/03/1939, no. 13.

<sup>839</sup> CNA, *Discours de la Grande-Duchesse Charlotte. Fêtes du Centenaire de l’Indépendance 19.04.1939* (Radio Luxembourg), no. 1277.

The film prominently features three themes: the monarchy, the Catholic Church and, to a lesser extent, the military (of which the grand duchess was the supreme commander). The *Te Deum* ceremony in the Cathedral, which mobilised the clerical and the political classes, occupies roughly three and a half minutes of the movie, out of a total of 22 minutes. The dominant presence of this triptych cannot be explained with the available sources, but it can be assumed that it represents stability and continuity in a young nation-state. The themes of the movie were, however, not simply limited to the visual aspect. The music played an important role, too. Its selection was a conscious choice. The national hymn *Ons Heemecht*, the royal anthem *Wilhelmus* and the *Te Deum* accompany many shots. Though it is not clear how much the Comité Ciné-Radio could influence the script of the movie and its execution entrusted to Atlantic Film, the presence of these symbols and themes is not surprising considering the involved actors. The three prominent figures of the Comité were representatives of a conservative social milieu: Pierre Grégoire (editor-in-chief of the *Luxemburger Wort*) and the two abbots Bernard and Turpel.

The premiere of the *Film du Centenaire* took place on 2 June 1939 at Marivaux, one of the capital's cinemas, in the presence of members of the grand-ducal family and of the government. According to the guest list, representatives and officials of state institutions and public administrations, the diocese, the military, the Centenary Commission, parliamentarians, journalists, and the embassies of Germany, France, Belgium and Italy were invited.<sup>840</sup> The reception of the movie in the newspapers was generally positive, though commentators criticised some technical imperfections. The *Escher Tageblatt* deplored the lack of shots of the masses and the atmosphere in the streets while praising the movie's importance for propagandistic purposes.<sup>841</sup> The available sources confirm that the movie was projected at least in Paris in the cinema REX. As Leclère lived in the French capital, he was asked by Albert Nothumb to check if the movie featured on the programme. Leclère could confirm that it was shown in an abridged version from 19 to 25 July.<sup>842</sup> As a letter from Atlantic Film reveals, the speeches in Luxembourgish were removed.<sup>843</sup> The government desired the distribution of the

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<sup>840</sup> ANLux, ET-105, *Présentation du Film du Centenaire: Liste des invités*, 02/06/1939.

<sup>841</sup> Lesch, *René Leclère, pionnier du cinéma luxembourgeois*, 74.

<sup>842</sup> ANLux, ET-129a, Letter from René Leclère to Albert Nothumb, 30/07/1939.

<sup>843</sup> ANLux, ET-129a, Letter from Marcel de Hubsch, managing director of Atlantic Film, 19/07/1939.

movie outside of Luxembourg. For Wehrer, the movie should document “the will of independence and the national enthusiasm of the Luxembourgish people”.<sup>844</sup>

Leclère himself, however, was not satisfied with the result to the extent that, in a personal letter to Albert Wehrer of 1 June 1939 (and ignored in historiography), he explicitly distanced himself from the movie. Once the contract was signed with Atlantic Film, he was barely implicated in the production. He criticised the editing, the shots and the overall bad quality. Thus, he declined any responsibility for the movie:

En conséquence, je voudrais, pour la sauvegarde de ma réputation de metteur en scène luxembourgeois, vous dire, à titre personnel et amical que je dois décliner toute la responsabilité pour la qualité de ce film [...].<sup>845</sup>

One might question the sole attribution of the film to René Leclère nowadays, who was a collaborator but not necessarily the leading figure during the production. These questions of authorship set aside, the *Film du Centenaire* is an important document, as it shows how parts of the programme were implemented. Written sources cannot provide such a clear depiction. The debates of the Commission and its sub-committees can only allow historians to approximate how it looked, but the movie captured the Celebration.

### **III.3.5. Multiplication and reception of the Centenary of Independence**

In her official speech, and using a widely disseminated trope, the grand duchess depicted the situation of Luxembourg as being at the crossroads of two great European cultures.<sup>846</sup> Furthermore, her emphasis on peace reveals the difficult context and the fears palpable in the writings of her contemporaries, such as Batty Weber. The latter dedicated his *Abreißkalender* of 31 December 1939 to the risk of war and quoted his text from 15 years ago, when the Great War raged in Europe.<sup>847</sup>

Throughout 1939, Weber shared some thoughts about the Centenary. His observations and comments in the *Abreißkalender* offer an insight into the year through a contemporary's (subjective) eyes. As seen in the case of the Dicks-Lentz monument, Weber was a strong proponent of Luxembourgish literature and language. On 10 February 1939, he deplored that

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<sup>844</sup> “Notre Gouvernement a un intérêt bien compréhensible à la distribution du Film qui doit documenter devant l'étranger la volonté d'indépendance et l'enthousiasme national du peuple luxembourgeois” (ANLux, ET-129a, Letter from Albert Wehrer to Atlantic Film, 27/06/1939).

<sup>845</sup> ANLux, ET-129a, Letter from René Leclère to Albert Wehrer, 01/06/1939.

<sup>846</sup> “[...] au point de contact entre deux grandes cultures européennes qui ont de tout temps alimenté sa vie spirituelle [...]” (CNA, Discours de la Grande-Duchesse Charlotte. Fêtes du Centenaire de l'Indépendance 19.04.1939 (Radio Luxembourg), no. 1277).

<sup>847</sup> ANLux, BW-AK-028-6783, Batty Weber, 31/12/1939,

<https://battyweber.uni.lu/images/original/BW-AK-028/BW-AK-028-6783.pdf>, last access 22/03/2018.

the association Hemechtssproch, participating in the Centenary with its event, focused on songs instead of the Luxembourgish language. The Centenary would be an opportunity “to showcase the significance of our language in a particular way”, especially as it was the hundredth anniversary of an event that “cost” Luxembourg for the third time “a large part of our territory”. People from these areas still speaking “our language” (i.e. Luxembourgish) could have been invited to stress existing links.<sup>848</sup> A week later, Weber opined that 1939 could be used to concede greater importance to school history lessons. For Weber, would “our people” (“unser Volk”) know its history, as well as the “neighbouring peoples” (“Nachbarvölker”), know theirs, the Centenary would acquire much more significance in the consciousness. The autonomy of Luxembourg did not begin in 1839, but in 1815, with the “Wiener Diktat”. The time from 1814 to 1839 could become a topic at school. Weber recommended two books by Prosper Müllendorff (1854-1922) and Auguste Collart (1890-1978).<sup>849</sup> The latter was a member of the Section historique, mayor of Bettembourg, and minister for agriculture, industry, trade and labour from 1918 to 1920.<sup>850</sup> Through Batty Weber, the reader learns that a monument commemorating the centenary was planned (and built) in Mersch. For the journalist, it was a testimonial to the “love” for the “Luxembourgish fatherland”.<sup>851</sup> Despite criticisms and suggestions on how it could be improved, Weber seemed to have a somewhat favourable opinion of the Centenary. On 13 June, when looking back at the events, Weber considered them to be proof that

[...] we Luxembourgers support our homeland, because we are convinced that it has an unalterable right to be independent, and that our people deserves its independence thanks to its patriotism and honest work.<sup>852</sup>

The tropes of homeland and independence were not only present in Weber’s comments. The national daily newspapers did not miss the opportunity to report the main events in their

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<sup>848</sup> ANLux, BW-AK-027-6577, 10/02/1939, <https://battyweber.uni.lu/images/original/BW-AK-027/BW-AK-027-6577.pdf>, last access 23/03/2018.

<sup>849</sup> ANLux, BW-AK-027-6583, 17/02/1939, <https://battyweber.uni.lu/images/original/BW-AK-027/BW-AK-027-6583.pdf>, last access 23/03/2018.

<sup>850</sup> Nicole Sahl, ‘Auguste Collart’, Luxemburger Autorenlexikon, n.d., <http://www.autorenlexikon.lu/page/author/459/4594/DEU/index.html>.

<sup>851</sup> ANLux, BW-AK-027-6671, 08/06/1939, <https://battyweber.uni.lu/images/original/BW-AK-027/BW-AK-027-6671.pdf>, last access 23/03/2018.

<sup>852</sup> Own translation. “Durch das ganze Land haben bisher die Zentenarfeiern bestätigt, daß wir Luxemburger zu unserer Heimat halten, weil wir überzeugt sind, daß sie in jedem Betracht ein unumstößliches Recht auf ihre Unabhängigkeit hat, und daß unser Volk noch immer durch seine nationale Gesinnung und durch ehrliche Arbeit seine Unabhängigkeit vollauf verdient.” (ANLux, BW-AK-027-6675, 13/06/1939, <https://battyweber.uni.lu/images/original/BW-AK-027/BW-AK-027-6675.pdf>, last access 23/03/2018).

Monday issues of 24 April. The political orientation did not impact the overtly positive and patriotic description of the events. Besides reprinting or summarising speeches by monarchical and political dignitaries, newspapers stressed the exalted unity. This trope could be found in official speeches, too, such as in the case of Emile Reuter:

In the face of this great national duty, all party distinctions vanish, all differences of opinion vanish. With its parliamentary representation, our people constitute a homogeneous block capable of victoriously resisting all attempts at disintegration.<sup>853</sup>

The press described the Centenary as a unique event. The anonymous journalist of the *Obermosel-Zeitung* commented that “Luxembourg has never experienced what it saw yesterday and the day before yesterday”.<sup>854</sup> The *Tageblatt* highlighted the “enthusiasm” of thousands of people during the celebration. “It is impossible for the chronicler of those two days to describe the enthusiasm that animated a whole people and a whole nation,” the newspaper observed with great delight.<sup>855</sup> The article in the francophone publication *Luxembourg: Quotidien du Matin* struck a similar tone and claimed that the event was followed by the “biggest crowd that Luxembourg has ever contained within its walls”.<sup>856</sup>

The *Obermosel-Zeitung* and the *Tageblatt* dedicated a couple of lines to the historical procession, which both newspapers described as the “chief attraction” (“clou”) of the programme. The journalist of the *Obermosel-Zeitung* feared that the museum’s opening might not receive enough attention with the plethora of events. “There are so many events,” the commentator observed, “that one almost wishes that the opening of the museum, for which we have been waiting for so long, might be postponed for the time being”.<sup>857</sup> The *Tageblatt* lauded that “a piece of millennial history unfolded in front of the enraptured eyes of the whole country

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<sup>853</sup> Own translation. “Devant ce grand devoir national toutes les distinctions de parti s’effacent, toutes les divergences d’opinion s’évanouissent. Notre peuple, avec sa représentation parlementaire constitue un bloc homogène capable de résister victorieusement à toutes les tentatives de désagrégation.” (‘Luxemburgs Wille: frei und unabhängig für immer! (Zur großen Jahrhundertfeier)’, *Luxemburger Wort*, April 1939).

<sup>854</sup> Own translation. “Doch was Luxemburg gestern und vorgestern geschaut, hat es noch nie erlebt gehabt.” (‘Luxemburg feiert seine Unabhängigkeit’, *Obermosel-Zeitung*, April 1939).

<sup>855</sup> Own translation. “Unmöglich ist es für den Chronisten dieser beiden Tage den Enthusiasmus wiederzugeben, der ein ganzes Volk und eine ganze Nation beseelte [...].” (‘Die Unabhängigkeitfeier in der Hauptstadt: Ein ganzes Volk in Freude und Jubel’, *Tageblatt*, April 1939).

<sup>856</sup> Own translation. “La foule, en ces deux journées, fut la plus considérable que jamais Luxembourg ait contenue dans ses murs” (‘Dans l’enthousiasme et la dignité, Luxembourg a fêté le Centenaire de son Indépendance’, *Luxembourg: Quotidien du Matin*, April 1939).

<sup>857</sup> Own translation. “Es sind soviel Veranstaltungen vorgesehen, daß man fast wünschen möchte, die Eröffnung des Museums, auf die wir nun schon so lange warten, möchte einstweilen verschoben werden, damit dieses Ereignis nicht etwa im Trubel der Feiern nicht genügend zur Geltung käme.” (‘Luxemburg feiert seine Unabhängigkeit’).

and let epoch after epoch of our national past arise synoptically.”<sup>858</sup> The *Luxemburger Wort* stressed the celebration’s “splendour” and the “flames of patriotic love” (“Flammen der Heimatliebe”).<sup>859</sup> For the Catholic newspaper, it was clear that the event illustrated Luxembourg’s wish to remain free and independent. While the *Tageblatt* used the opportunity to look back at Luxembourg’s economic development<sup>860</sup>, the *Obermosel-Zeitung* included a historical retrospect. The article did not refrain from using racial ideology. The “völkisch” unity of the Luxembourgers consisted, among others, in their blood (“Blutmischung”). But, moving beyond the racial aspect, the article claimed that the most certain characteristic of being a Luxembourger was the mother tongue.<sup>861</sup>

When examining how newspapers put their reports of the Centenary in the same issue with articles mentioning international tensions, this juxtaposition amplifies the messages of the Centenary. The *Luxemburger Wort* is the most striking example, as it chose to display an article related to Switzerland on the cover page of its Monday issue, instead of the report on the Centenary: *Die Schweiz wehrt sich* (“Switzerland defends itself”), as the piece was titled. The article was related to the measures taken by the Swiss authorities against the danger of an “Überfremdung” (“over-foreignisation”, expressing the idea of a high increase of foreigners to the extent that the particularity of the indigenous population gets lost). Indirectly reporting a lecture by the chief of the police department of the Confederate Justice Department, the “national self-consciousness” would be “the only way to freedom from a policy of well-understood patriotic interest” (“das einzige Mittel, das den Weg ins Freie zeigt aus einer Politik des wohlverstandenen Heimatinteresses”).<sup>862</sup> This piece can be considered as one example of what Luise Clemens called “proxy article” (“Stellvertreter-Artikel”) in her study on the *Malmedy-St. Vither Volkszeitung* for the years 1919-1925.<sup>863</sup> Instead of directly reporting on issues in the region that is the focus, such proxy articles report on similar issues in other countries or regions. The fact that Switzerland, like Luxembourg, was a neutral country at the

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<sup>858</sup> Own translation. “[...] ein Stück tausendjähriger Geschichte wickelte sich vor den entzückten Augen gleichsam des ganzen Landes ab und ließ Epoche um Epoche unserer nationalen Vergangenheit synoptisch erstehen.” (‘Die Unabhängigkeitseier in der Hauptstadt: Ein ganzes Volk in Freude und Jubel’).

<sup>859</sup> ‘Luxemburgs Wille: frei und unabhängig für immer! (Zur großen Jahrhundertfeier)’.

<sup>860</sup> ‘Die Wirtschaft im Dienste unserer Unabhängigkeit’, *Tageblatt*, April 1939.

<sup>861</sup> ‘Luxemburg feiert seine Unabhängigkeit’.

<sup>862</sup> ‘Die Schweiz wehrt sich’, *Luxemburger Wort*, April 1939.

<sup>863</sup> Luise Clemens, ‘Zwischen den Zeilen: Die Malmedy-St. Vither Volkszeitung und der “Vaterlandswechsel” Eupen-Malmedys (1919-1925)’, in *Zwischen den Zeilen: Die Geschichte des Kreisblattes für den Kreis Malmedy und der St. Vither Volkszeitung 1866-1940*, ed. Andreas Fickers (Brüssel: Generalstaatsarchiv, 2008), 154.

heart of a continent riddled with political tensions certainly motivated contemporaries to look closer at what was happening in the Eidgenossenschaft. Next to this article, a small box on the cover page referred to the Centenary Celebration. According to it, everyone – the grand duchess, the government, the Luxembourgish people, the Chamber of Deputies, local councils, resident foreigners and their diplomats – paid tribute to the independence. The text was concluded with the slogan “Mir welle bleiwe, wat mir sin!” (“We want to stay who we are!”).

Foreign newspapers also wrote about the Centenary celebration. The *Kölner Zeitung* reported on 23 April:

Mit einem historischen Festzug und einem Feuerwerk wurde an diesem Samstag in Luxemburg die Jahrhundertfeier der Unabhängigkeit des Landes, zu der auch der Führer seine Glückwünsche übermittelte, eröffnet. Luxemburg ist gewiß ein kleines “Land zwischen den Nationen”, aber es hat im Laufe der Geschichte durchaus ein eigenes Staatsbewußtsein entwickelt, und die Luxemburger wollen daran festhalten, weder Belgier, noch Franzosen, noch Deutsche, sondern eben Luxemburger sein.<sup>864</sup>

Besides using the trope of the intermediate character of Luxembourg, the article highlighted the “ambiguous” character of Luxembourg, inclined towards France despite the German language. Here, Nazi ideology transpired between the lines, even though the piece remained cautious in the choice of words and did not explicitly question Luxembourg’s independence.

Until now, the focus has relied on the main celebration in the capital in April 1939. Yet, festivities throughout Luxembourg took place during the whole year. The population should be constantly reminded of the importance of the event and kept in a state of celebration. The reports of the Commission’s sub-committees provide insights into initiatives taken by non-government actors, besides those planned by public authorities. The Luxembourgish Olympic Committee, for instance, organised a sportive event, the “coupes du centenaire” (“centenary championships”).<sup>865</sup> It requested a state grant for the event, which was accepted.<sup>866</sup> The results of the games were published in the press. Additionally, various sports federations, such as the Fédération des Sociétés Cyclistes Luxembourgeoises or the Fédération des Sections Luxembourgeoises de Gymnastique Féminine planned to organise their own events. The sports initiatives were discussed in the touristic committee.<sup>867</sup> Within this committee, one member suggested the restoration of the promenades of the Bock, the St. Esprit and the Pescatore Foundation; his colleagues welcomed it. Yet, it is unclear whether it was realised; the 1939

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<sup>864</sup> BArch Berlin, R 4902/7085, ‘Luxemburg Feiert’, in *Kölner Zeitung*, 23/04/1939.

<sup>865</sup> ANLux, ET-131, *Centenaire Budget des Dépenses*, no. 67.

<sup>866</sup> ANLux, ET-131, *Centenaire: Budget des Dépenses*, no. 98.

<sup>867</sup> ANLux, ET-113, Report of the touristic committee, 13/01/1939, no. 28-34.

state budget did not include any reference. Another suggestion supported by the committee concerned the publication of a touristic brochure (“bulletin de propaganda touristique”) related to the Centenary,<sup>868</sup> but the provisional budget for the Centenary did not mention it.

Between 7 May and 3 September, official festivities took place in every cantonal capital (except for the canton Luxembourg) and were attended by the grand duchess. The first city was Esch-sur-Alzette on 7 May<sup>869</sup>. In the press coverage of this event, some themes remind those of the main national celebration in Luxembourg. For the *Tageblatt*, Esch-sur-Alzette was rightfully the first cantonal capital in the series, as the second biggest city of Luxembourg, where the industry had produced prosperity. Not only was Esch a place of tolerance towards different nationalities, as the *Tageblatt* stressed, but it demonstrated its deepest patriotic feelings. The city of Esch “knows that it is the great order of the day to express in unambiguous words the commitment to a free and independent native soil.”<sup>870</sup> While referring to the “European troubles” (“Europäische Wirren”), the festivity in Esch was presented in a very positive light, having exceeded all expectations. The streets were “flooded with people” (“überflutet von Menschen”).<sup>871</sup> The festivities included a torch relay and musical performances. A procession with more than 300 societies of the canton moved through the streets. The event in Esch was again interpreted through a patriotic lens, but it was published on the third page, following two pages filled with reports concerning the political situation in Europe, such as the military alliance between fascist Italy and Nazi Germany. According to the newspaper *Luxembourg*, two main ideas guided the celebration in Esch: homage to the grand duchess, and celebration of the formation of a free and independent Luxembourg.<sup>872</sup>

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<sup>868</sup> ANLux, ET-113, Report of the touristic committee, 13/01/1939, no. 28-34.

<sup>869</sup> ‘La Fête du Centenaire à Esch-sur-Alzette: Manifestation cantonale’, *Luxembourg: Quotidien du Matin*, May 1939; ‘Die Kantonal-Jahrhundertfeier in Esch-Alz.’, *Escher Tageblatt*, May 1939.

<sup>870</sup> Own translation. “[...] daß es das große Gebot der Stunde ist, jetzt mit den unzweideutigen Worten das Bekenntnis abzulegen zu der freien und unabhängigen Heimaterde.” (‘Die Kantonal-Jahrhundertfeier in Esch-Alz.’, 3).

<sup>871</sup> ‘Die Kantonal-Jahrhundertfeier in Esch-Alz.’, 3.

<sup>872</sup> ‘La Fête du Centenaire à Esch-sur-Alzette: Manifestation cantonale’.



*Fig. 34: Photo of the procession in Esch, showing a folkloristic group with costumes – as explained below the picture – from the “past century”. Source: ‘Die Kantonal-Jahrhundertfeier in Esch-Alz.’, Escher Tageblatt, 8 May 1939.*

Celebrations were not only organised in the cantonal capitals. In the southern industrial town of Dudelange, for example, the local authorities organised concerts, a reception, an exhibition dedicated to the artist Dominique Lang (originally from Dudelange), and a parade.<sup>873</sup> For the organisers, the celebration should have a local character and leave a lasting impression on the inhabitants.<sup>874</sup> The parade, the finale of a week of celebrations, started with the Antiquity, included local legends and references to the steel industry, and ended with the “freedom wagon” (*Freiheitswagen*). Government officials attended the celebration, among others the state minister Pierre Dupong, who stressed the importance of the monarchy as a guarantee for the independence of the country.<sup>875</sup>

<sup>873</sup> ‘Zentenarfeier in Düdelingen’, *Obermosel-Zeitung*, August 1939.

<sup>874</sup> ‘Großherzogtum. Tageskalender’, *Obermosel-Zeitung*, January 1939.

<sup>875</sup> ‘Grandioser Schlußakt der Düdelinger Jahrhundertfeiern’, *Obermosel-Zeitung*, August 1939.



Fig. 35: The presence of the political and economic elite at the Centenary celebration in Dudelange. Front row, from left to right: Camille Beissel (director of the ARBED steelwork in Dudelange), Jean Fohrmann (member of parliament), Pierre Dupong (state minister), René Blum (minister). In the background, the city administration building (*Hôtel de Ville*). Source: ANLux, Arbed-Ph-00073, Centenaire de l'indépendance 1939, unknown author, 172 x 125.

The Centenary Celebration was the most significant cultural policy initiative of the interwar period. It was an example of a cultural policy when it was not yet an explicit policy category, from the planned construction of a monument to the use of national symbols. History played a central role. It was meant to legitimise and aggrandise the nation in a tense international context by conveying the master narrative to a national audience using different kinds of media, performances and events. Klas-Göran Karlsson distinguished different uses of history: existential, moral, political and scholarly-scientific.<sup>876</sup> The Centenary Celebration was partly an existential use of history responding to international tensions and including the wish to strengthen national consciousness. As Karlsson explained, this use “is triggered by the need to remember, or alternatively to forget, in order to uphold or intensify feelings of orientation and identity in a society characterised by insecurity, pressure or sudden change.”<sup>877</sup> In addition, the Centenary encompassed a political use of history, which

<sup>876</sup> Karlsson Klas-Göran, ‘The Uses of History and the Third Wave of Europeanisation’, in *A European Memory? Contested Histories and Politics of Remembrance*, ed. Małgorzata Pakier and Bo Strath, *Studies in Contemporary European History* 6 (New York: Berghahn Books, 2010), 38–55.

<sup>877</sup> Klas-Göran, 46.

may be characterised as a deliberate comparative, metaphorical or symbolic use in which the transfer effect between 'then' and 'now' is rendered simple and unproblematic, while the traditional scholarly idea that history is anchored in the structures of the relevant period is toned down.<sup>878</sup>

The concept of 1839 as marking a resurrection of Luxembourg's autonomy constitutes one example of this "transfer effect" between "then" and "now". The history of Luxembourg was reduced to a simplistic vision of the country's past, supposedly reaching back centuries in time, in order to legitimise the nation-state as it was in 1939.

On the organisational level, the authorities mobilised political, socio-cultural and economic elites. On the performative level, they mobilised the population to foster an adherence to the nation-state. From a symbolic perspective, the organisers lavishly resorted to national signifiers: the military, the Catholic Church, flags, music, and especially the dynasty. In this sense, the Centenary was the synecdoche of the conservative vision of the interwar period. This vision guided the elite in its choices, from historians such as Meyers, over state officials like Wehrer, to the highest political offices with Bech. The importance of the monarchy was regularly highlighted in public discourse. It was not a coincidence. The trope of the monarchy's importance for Luxembourg's independence was constructed immediately after the First World War, particularly by conservative historians and right-wing politicians.

Thus, the Centenary was not only meant to celebrate the year 1839; it was also, and maybe even more so, a celebration of contemporary Luxembourg. Past, present and future were merged so that temporal boundaries became blurred. The Centenary was not an isolated event. It was the result of deliberate choices shaped by a specific context.<sup>879</sup> In 1940, the affirmation of the nation-state was turned into its exact opposite with the invasion of Luxembourg by Nazi Germany.

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<sup>878</sup> Klas-Göran, 52.

<sup>879</sup> An aspect that was highlighted by Bernard Cottret and Lauric Henneton regarding commemorations. In this respect, they quote Pierre Nora: "l'histoire propose, mais le présent dispose." (cf. Bernard Cottret and Lauric Henneton, 'La commémoration, entre mémoire prescrite et mémoire proscriite', in *Du bon usage des commémorations: Histoire, mémoire et identité XVIIe-XXIe siècle*, ed. Bernard Cottret and Lauric Henneton [Rennes: Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2010], 15).

### III.4. From Private Initiatives to the Musée(s) de l'Etat

The history of the State Museums<sup>880</sup> is closely intertwined with interwar cultural policy and the initiatives to protect and conserve the past. To understand the situation of the museum in the interwar period, we will begin with the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the first private initiative, the Archaeological Society. Further sections will retrace, among other aspects, the history of the collections, the situation of the curators, the discarded or unfulfilled plans drafted for a national museum before the acquisition of an existing building in Luxembourg City, and the project of a folklore museum.

#### **III.4.1. The origins of the State Museum(s)**

The origins of the national museum are not much different to similar examples in other countries. In Luxembourg and elsewhere, many museums have their roots in private collections.<sup>881</sup> Concerning the existing historiography of the State Museums in Luxembourg, the authors were often actors involved in the activities of the museum or the Section historique of the Grand-Ducal Institute. One notable example is the book *De la Société archéologique à la Section historique de l'Institut grand-ducal: tendances, méthodes et résultats du travail historique de 1845 à 1985*, written by Joseph Goedert and published in 1987. Goedert headed the Luxembourg State Archives (today National Archives) from 1959 to 1964 and the National Library from 1961 to 1972. In addition, he had been a member of the Section historique from 1949 onwards. From 1972 to 1983, he was the society's president. Despite offering a detailed overview of the activities of the Société archéologique/Section historique, Goedert's volume remains factual. It does not provide much analytical content, except when considering the general intellectual context in which the Société archéologique was founded.<sup>882</sup>

One of the most fervent advocates of the society's creation was Auguste Neÿen, an amateur historian<sup>883</sup> who is nowadays better known for his historiographic production than his profession as a physician. Neÿen showed interest in geography and history during his years as a student at the Athenaeum. After that, however, he reoriented his studies to natural sciences. From 1828 to 1831, he studied at the University of Liège, first in the Faculty of Mathematics and Physics, then in the Faculty of Medicine, and received his doctor's degree in 1831.<sup>884</sup> As

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<sup>880</sup> In the sources, either plural or singular form is used. After the war, the plural form established itself as the standard expression when referring to both the history and the natural history museums.

<sup>881</sup> Peter Vergo, ed., *The New Museology* (London: Reaktion Books, 1989), 6–7.

<sup>882</sup> Goedert, *De la Société archéologique à la Section historique de l'Institut grand-ducal*, 7–38.

<sup>883</sup> For lack of a better expression, I will use “amateur historian”.

<sup>884</sup> Mersch, ‘Le médecin-historien Claude-Auguste Neyen (1809–1882)’, 553–554.

an amateur historian, Neyen published the first edition of the *Biographie nationale*, which ranges among his most significant works. Both Goedert and Jules Mersch, biographer of Neyen, highlight the physician's role in the foundation of the Société archéologique.

According to Mersch, Neyen's efforts in creating the society can be traced back to 1838, when the remains of John the Blind were ceded to the crown prince of Prussia. A handful of individuals, including Neyen, protested.<sup>885</sup> In this context, Neyen contacted the governor Gaspard-Théodore-Ignace de la Fontaine. The governor was not opposed to an archaeological society but observed that it would need the collaboration of "studious men and amateurs of the national history".<sup>886</sup> De la Fontaine recommended contacting the prosecutor and politician François-Xavier Wurth-Paquet. Illustrating the blurred boundaries between the political and socio-cultural fields, Wurth-Paquet was general administrator/director general in the government headed by Charles-Mathias Simons, first responsible for Judicial Affairs (1853-1856) before heading the Department of Interior (1856-1858).<sup>887</sup>

A small group of men was soon constituted. Neyen and Wurth-Paquet were joined by Joseph Paquet, a teacher at the Athenaeum and Wurth-Paquet's brother-in-law, and the abbot Mathias Manternach, chaplain at the Athenaeum. This group drafted the first version of the future society's charter in 1843. De la Fontaine disagreed with several aspects when it was presented to him. For instance, he rejected the proposal to call the society "institute" and judged the text too ambitious for a small country. After revision, the new version elicited the government's consent.<sup>888</sup>

On 14 March 1844, a larger committee met in Luxembourg City for a provisional inauguration of the society. Besides Neyen, Wurth-Paquet and Joseph Paquet (Manternach had passed away in the meantime), the group included Fontaine, the physician Nic. Clasen, the teachers P. Clomes, P. D. Joachim, Antoine Namur and J. Wolff, the Athenaeum director M. N. Muller, a certain Munchen, and Jean Ulveling, member of the government.<sup>889</sup> In August 1845, on behalf of the informal group, Muller, Clasen and Wurth-Paquet appealed to the King Grand-Duke and asked for permission to found a society. "You have saved the Luxembourgish

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<sup>885</sup> Mersch, 564.

<sup>886</sup> Own translation. "[...] réunion d'hommes studieux et amateurs de l'histoire nationale". Cited in: Goedert, *De la Société archéologique à la Section historique de l'Institut grand-ducal*, 41.

<sup>887</sup> Thewes, *Les gouvernements du Grand-Duché de Luxembourg depuis 1848*, 21–22.

<sup>888</sup> Goedert, *De la Société archéologique à la Section historique de l'Institut grand-ducal*, 47–48.

<sup>889</sup> In Neyen's biography, Mersch writes that this meeting took place in 1843, which is a mistake (Mersch, 'Le médecin-historien Claude-Auguste Neyen (1809-1882)', 565).

nationality from being wrecked,” they reminded him, “also save what we have left of its antique monuments.”<sup>890</sup>

Their plea proved successful. A royal grand-ducal decree officially created the Archaeological Society in 1845. It listed the people mentioned above as members of the new society, plus Constantin-Joseph-Antoine Pescatore, brother of Jean-Pierre Pescatore and former mayor of Luxembourg.<sup>891</sup> Yet, despite his preliminary efforts, Neÿen did not hold any position in the officialised society. Wurth-Paquet became president and held this position until 1854 and from 1876 to 1885.<sup>892</sup> Antoine Namur became curator-secretary. As for the objectives, according to the third article of the decree, “the mission of the society is the research and the conservation of monuments, and of historical and archaeological documents related to the Grand Duchy and the territory of the former Duchy of Luxembourg.”<sup>893</sup> Furthermore, the “monuments” (archaeological discoveries) coming into possession of the society would be conserved in the “Museum” annexed to the “Bibliothèque spéciale de l’Athenée”.<sup>894</sup> The expression *monuments historiques* should be regarded in its broadest definition, not only comprising monuments in the restricted sense as understood today (immobile objects in public spaces) but every kind of object related to the national past. This use was the same in France, where the expression probably appeared for the first time in a document in 1790. As J.-P. Babelon and André Chastel explained: “‘Monument’ means here [in the text of 1790] edifices

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<sup>890</sup> Own translation. “Vous avez sauvé du naufrage la nationalité luxembourgeoise, sauvez-en aussi ce qui nous reste de ses antiques monuments.” (Nic Clasen, M.N. Muller, and François-Xavier Wurth-Paquet, ‘Adresse présentée à Sa Majesté le Roi Grand-Duc, vers la fin du mois d’août 1845’, in *Publications de la Société pour la recherche et la conservation des monuments historiques dans le Grand-Duché de Luxembourg*, vol. 1 [Luxembourg: J. Lamort, 1846], 3–4).

<sup>891</sup> Antoine Pescatore, who participated in the power structures at the time, was an Orangist. This confirms the fact that the SH disseminated a historiography embedded in the Orangist tradition (Jules Mersch, ‘Constantin Jos. Antoine Pescatore’, in *Biographie nationale du pays de Luxembourg depuis ses origines jusqu’à nos jours*, ed. Jules Mersch, vol. 2 [Luxembourg, 1949], 463–473, [http://www.luxemburgensia.bnll.lu/cgi/luxonline1\\_2.pl?action=fv&sid=luxbio&vol=02&page=463&zom=3](http://www.luxemburgensia.bnll.lu/cgi/luxonline1_2.pl?action=fv&sid=luxbio&vol=02&page=463&zoom=3)).

<sup>892</sup> Jules Mersch, ‘François-Xavier Wurth-Paquet’, in *Biographie nationale du pays de Luxembourg depuis ses origines jusqu’à nos jours*, ed. Jules Mersch, vol. 15 (Luxembourg, 1967), 318, [http://www.luxemburgensia.bnll.lu/cgi/luxonline1\\_2.pl?action=fv&sid=luxbio&vol=15&page=299&zom=3](http://www.luxemburgensia.bnll.lu/cgi/luxonline1_2.pl?action=fv&sid=luxbio&vol=15&page=299&zom=3).

<sup>893</sup> Own translation. “[...] le but de la Société sera la recherche et la conservation des monuments et des documents historiques et archéologiques concernant le Grand-Duché et le territoire de l’ancien Duché de Luxembourg.” (‘Arrêté royal grand-ducal du 2 septembre 1845, litt. B, autorisant la constitution définitive d’une Société pour la recherche et la conservation des monuments historiques dans le Grand-Duché de Luxembourg’, in *Mémorial A*, vol. 46 [Luxembourg, 1845], 457–459, <http://legilux.public.lu/eli/etat/leg/argd/1845/09/02/n1/jo>).

<sup>894</sup> ‘Arrêté royal grand-ducal du 2 septembre 1845, litt. B, autorisant la constitution définitive d’une Société pour la recherche et la conservation des monuments historiques dans le Grand-Duché de Luxembourg’.

but also tombs, statues, stained glass, everything that can fix, illustrate, clarify national history.”<sup>895</sup> The society’s objectives – collection and preservation – did not considerably differ from the monumental policy implemented by the state in the 1920s and 1930s. A clear difference, however, resided in the initial ambition to include the former territory of the Duchy of Luxembourg, which was not static throughout its history. It might be argued that this did not contradict the wish to research national history, a goal that had been set since the beginning<sup>896</sup>, but over the years and decades of the society’s existence, this ambition had disappeared entirely. While the society kept in touch with other research communities abroad and built a transnational network, barely anyone within the society voiced a clear interest in collecting objects from beyond the contemporary borders of Luxembourg.

In addition to studying the objectives and the society’s members, the appearance of this community needs to be contextualized. The period after 1814/1815 was characterised by an intellectual resurgence and a rising historical consciousness. New cultural societies were founded, such as the Société littéraire in 1818 or the Cercle littéraire in 1826. These societies brought together intellectuals, politicians and other members of the educated classes and liberal professions. The first president of the Cercle littéraire was none other than the governor de la Fontaine.<sup>897</sup> These intellectual activities circumscribed the interest in the country’s past and its archaeological remnants. A series of related works were published in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, by Dominique-Constantin Munchen, abbot Maeys, François-Xavier Wurth-Paquet, François-Julien Vannérus, Mathias Hardt, or Claude-Auguste Neyen.<sup>898</sup> Amateurs conducted excavations and constituted private collections.<sup>899</sup> Initiatives such as the foundation of the Verein für christliche Kunst, the Kunigundis Verein Clausen, or the Willibrordus Bauverein illustrate this consciousness and interest.<sup>900</sup>

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<sup>895</sup> Own translation. “‘Monument’ signifie ici [in the text of 1790] édifices mais aussi tombeaux, statues, vitraux, tout ce qui peut fixer, illustrer, préciser l’histoire nationale.” (J.-P. Babelon and André Chastel, *La notion de patrimoine* [Liana Levi, 1994], 71).

<sup>896</sup> Pol Schock, for instance, quotes article 3 of the decree in his study, and concludes that the reference frame for the society was the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg. (Schock, ‘Imagining Luxembourg oder: Die Kunst, Beliebiges zu verewigen: Konstitution nationaler Identität in Luxemburg in der Mitte des 19. Jahrhundert (Teil I)’, 432–433). Depending on the viewpoint, this might be correct, if the members considered that an essence of contemporary Luxembourg was to be found in the past duchy. On the other hand, it is not clear what motivations lay behind adding the duchy of Luxembourg to the geographical area of activity.

<sup>897</sup> Goedert, *De la Société archéologique à la Section historique de l’Institut grand-ducal*, 17.

<sup>898</sup> Goedert, 18–22.

<sup>899</sup> Goedert, 30.

<sup>900</sup> Schock, ‘Imagining Luxembourg oder: Die Kunst, Beliebiges zu verewigen: Konstitution nationaler Identität in Luxemburg in der Mitte des 19. Jahrhundert (Teil I)’, 437.

The foundation of the Société pour la recherche et la conservation des monuments historiques dans le Grand-Duché de Luxembourg, or Société archéologique in short, must be considered in this context. Over the years, the society came to dominate historiography. It participated in disseminating specific historical narratives by adopting what Pit Péporté et al. labelled the “‘centripetal’ discursive strategy”, of which one strand was based on the idea of monarchical loyalty as a constant in Luxembourgish history.<sup>901</sup> The members of the society, 88 people at the end of 1846, contributed to the dissemination of a distinct teleological narrative, relativizing the artificial construct of the Grand Duchy as created in 1815. In their eyes, it was the legitimate heir to the House of Luxembourg in Medieval times.<sup>902</sup> Already in the 1840s, the members of the society had created a core narrative that was to be reused over and over again in the following decades by succeeding generations of historians. If the Centenary Celebration of 1939 was a culminating point (but not an endpoint) of the master narrative, its origins can be traced back to the early years of the society.

Considering that history progressively evolved into a professional discipline over the course of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, it would be inaccurate to identify professional historians among the founders of the Archaeological Society. They belonged to the educated classes and pursued personal interests in history and archaeology at a time marked by the emergence of historicism.<sup>903</sup> The historian Daniel Woolf summarised the evolution of 19<sup>th</sup>-century historiography as follows:

If the first half of the West’s nineteenth century is characterized by literary historical writing in a romantic and nationalist vein, the second half may be noted for a rapid growth in what may be loosely called ‘professionalization’.<sup>904</sup>

The German historian Leopold von Ranke emphasised the critical analysis of documents as the historian’s work.<sup>905</sup> Wilhelm Dilthey continued in this hermeneutic tradition while “turning away from the post-Rankean fetish of the document” and developing the concept of *Verstehen*, or history as a mental act of understanding. For Dilthey, it was not evident that the critical analysis of a document would lead to the understanding of an objective reality. The historian’s approach could not be compared to natural sciences: history was part of the

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<sup>901</sup> Péporté et al., *Inventing Luxembourg*, 140–141.

<sup>902</sup> Schock, ‘Imagining Luxembourg oder: Die Kunst, Beliebiges zu verewigen: Konstitution nationaler Identität in Luxemburg in der Mitte des 19. Jahrhundert (Teil I)’, 433.

<sup>903</sup> Markus Völkel, *Geschichtsschreibung* (Köln: Böhlau, 2006), 283–284.

<sup>904</sup> Daniel Woolf, *A Global History of History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 364.

<sup>905</sup> Woolf, 371.

*Geisteswissenschaften* (“sciences of the spirit”)<sup>906</sup>, a term still used in the German language and roughly synonymous with the English concept of human sciences.

Wurth-Paquet is a fitting example of the emerging approaches to historiography. Like Neÿen, he was a former student of the Athenaeum and an alumni of the University of Liège. The prosecutor was an amateur historian, too, and invested many efforts in archival work, examining judicial archives and the archives of Luxembourg City. The biographer Jules Mersch even considers him as the “father of the Luxembourgian historical science” (“père de la science historique luxembourgeoise”).<sup>907</sup> Wurth-Paquet “was the first Luxembourgish historian to edit [the historical sources] in the ‘scientific’ spirit that was emerging in Germany at the time”.<sup>908</sup> Many of his texts featured in the *Publications de la Société Archéologique*, or *Publications de la Section historique* after 1868. Among the most notable ones figures the ‘Table chronologique des chartes et diplômes relatifs à l’histoire de l’ancien pays de Luxembourg’, commonly referred to as *Régestes*, and based on the knowledge Wurth-Paquet acquired during his research.

The members of the society saw a clear patriotic purpose in their activities. Simultaneously to developing an autonomous state with a delimited territory, studying the past and conserving objects within this territory should contribute to the construction of nationhood. The political and intellectual elites involved in the foundation of the society were interested in the survival of the state. Their letter to the sovereign stressed that private collections and a significant number of objects were dispersed all over the country, not to mention the disappearance of many “treasures” (*richesses*). The reunion with these “treasures” would make up for past mistakes. “Reunited, they would ease the insulting losses incurred to it,” the supplicants esteemed.<sup>909</sup>

The creation of an autonomous state from 1839 onwards, the charter of 1841 and the school reform certainly promoted the development of intellectual life. The society was also anchored in the Orangist tradition, supporting the grand duke and defending the concept of a specific non-Belgian and Luxembourgish nationality as developed by the Orangists in the 1830s and confirmed by the appeal to the King Grand-Duke in August 1845. The conservation of past remnants should undergird their concept of Luxembourg’s specificity as conceived in

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<sup>906</sup> Woolfe, 386–387.

<sup>907</sup> Mersch, ‘François-Xavier Wurth-Paquet’, 317.

<sup>908</sup> Péporté et al., *Inventing Luxembourg*, 54.

<sup>909</sup> Own translation. “[...] réunis ils consoleraient l’honneur national des pertes injurieuses qu’on lui fait subir.” (Clasen, Muller, and Wurth-Paquet, ‘Adresse présentée à Sa Majesté le Roi Grand-Duc, vers la fin du mois d’août 1845’).

opposition to Belgium.<sup>910</sup> According to the historian Sonja Kmec, the group of thirteen founding members was composed of “six secondary school teachers, including one priest, four trained lawyers, two physicians and one tradesman, among them two members of the government.”<sup>911</sup> Either they participated in the power structures at the time, or they received advanced education and had the means to pursue cultural activities in their leisure time.<sup>912</sup> In their historical methods, most of the members of the Archaeological Society were strongly influenced by rationalism and German positivism.<sup>913</sup>

The members of the society were sensible to the question of liberty and independence from the authorities, a point of view shared by the governor.<sup>914</sup> The society was created by people belonging to the bourgeoisie, even if this bourgeoisie was not a homogeneous group. Luxembourg was not an exceptional case. In the territory of the future German Empire, the 19<sup>th</sup> century saw a rising consciousness and confidence of the bourgeoisie. The creation of museums was an example of this evolution, as they became places where the bourgeoisie could disseminate its (cultural) values and interpretative frameworks.<sup>915</sup>

Decades before a public museum came into existence in Luxembourg, the Archaeological Society had planned to maintain one, even if the charter did not provide many details on its accessibility or organisation. It merely stipulated that the society would nominate not only a

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<sup>910</sup> Pit Péporté, ‘History-Writing and Historicist Landmarks: Luxembourg’, ed. Joep Leerssen, *Encyclopedia of Romantic Nationalism in Europe* (Amsterdam: Study Platform on Interlocking Nationalisms, 2017), <http://ernie.uva.nl/viewer.p/21/56/object/122-160023>.

<sup>911</sup> Sonja Kmec, ‘Historical Societies: Luxembourg’, ed. Joep Leerssen, *Encyclopedia of Romantic Nationalism in Europe* (Amsterdam: Study Platform on Interlocking Nationalisms, 2017), <http://ernie.uva.nl/viewer.p/21/56/object/122-159611>.

<sup>912</sup> In his study, Pol Schock discussed the question whether the society had been a mere tool to convey the new state with a historically legitimising narrative, as interpreted by newer research. Schock himself considered that the Archaeological Society had not only been created out of necessity for safeguarding the nation-state, but also because its members could simply afford to do so. The society, then, had neither been part of a masterplan of the Orangists to establish their power, nor of a strategy to mould a Luxembourgish nation-state. This does not exclude that the elite used the society afterwards for advancing their interpretations (Schock, ‘Imagining Luxembourg oder: Die Kunst, Beliebiges zu verewigen: Konstitution nationaler Identität in Luxemburg in der Mitte des 19.

Jahrhundert (Teil I)’, 435). Goedert seemed to link the creation of this community to the intellectual context, at a time when the premises were united to allow for such an initiative. Furthermore, he largely recognised Neyen’s initial role, a view that is also shared by Pol Schock. While a further study on the foundation of the society, the context and the possible reasons might be needed, I will not further delve into the details. However, I share Schock’s views, and would add the intellectual context as described by Goedert. The Société archéologique’s foundation cannot be fixed to one clear motivation or reason, but was part of the congruence of political, social, and intellectual contexts, in addition to the personal and collective interests of the involved actors.

<sup>913</sup> Kmec, ‘Historical Societies: Luxembourg’.

<sup>914</sup> Mersch, ‘Le médecin-historien Claude-Auguste Neyen (1809-1882)’, 52.

<sup>915</sup> Hartung, *Kleine deutsche Museumsgeschichte*, 9–10.

president, but also a curator-secretary.<sup>916</sup> The conditions for carrying out this position did not favour a professionalisation. According to Goedert, the curator-secretaries were chosen among the Athenaeum teachers and could only work for the society during leisure time.<sup>917</sup> The lack of space and the frequent relocations negatively impacted the working conditions. Indeed, the library of the Athenaeum was not spacious enough, as the books were stacked up to the ceiling.<sup>918</sup>

A visit to the museum was only possible within limited opening hours – every Thursday from 9 to 11 am, as stipulated in the statutes<sup>919</sup>, and required an appointment. Despite this, visitor numbers grew, which led to fears concerning the state of conservation of the objects.<sup>920</sup> Thus, the main objective, at least in the first period, consisted of collecting and conserving, not facilitating access to the objects for everyone. In his text on the cultural policies of the Luxembourg governments, Paul Spang described the Archaeological Society as “some sort of para-governmental organism to which the government entrusted all the tasks related to the past of the country, including excavations, acquisitions of artworks and the creation of a museum.”<sup>921</sup> Spang positively assessed the activities of the society and stressed that its members were able to wrest the necessary budget for their tasks from the general administrators, who showed an “unimaginable budgetary asceticism”.<sup>922</sup> Spang omitted that either close links existed between members of the society and high officials in the government or that members were in the government, such as Wurth-Paquet, which was a facilitating factor.

Furthermore, in the subsequent decades, the curators repeatedly requested to improve the financial situation, in vain. Whether this was due to a growing disconnect between the members of the society (especially the curators) and the political class is difficult to assess. It is a possible reason nonetheless. In the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, and after Wurth-Paquet’s death in 1885, none of the director generals/ministers was in the executive committee of the society. This does not

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<sup>916</sup> ‘Arrêté royal grand-ducal du 2 septembre 1845, litt. B, autorisant la constitution définitive d’une Société pour la recherche et la conservation des monuments historiques dans le Grand-Duché de Luxembourg’, 458.

<sup>917</sup> Goedert, *De la Société archéologique à la Section historique de l’Institut grand-ducal*, 105.

<sup>918</sup> Goedert, 109.

<sup>919</sup> Tony Kellen, ‘Die Luxemburgische Geschichtsschreibung. Ein Rückblick und ein Ausblick’, *Jong-Hémecht* 7, no. 4, 5, 6 (May 1933): 122.

<sup>920</sup> Goedert, *De la Société archéologique à la Section historique de l’Institut grand-ducal*, 108.

<sup>921</sup> Own translation. “Il ne faut donc pas s’étonner du fait que l’arrêté royal grand-ducal du 2 septembre 1845 en ait fait une sorte d’organisme para-gouvernemental auquel le Gouvernement avait confié tout ce qui était du domaine du passé du pays y compris les fouilles, l’acquisition d’objets d’art et l’installation d’un musée.” (Spang, ‘La politique culturelle des Gouvernements luxembourgeois de 1848 à nos jours’, 595).

<sup>922</sup> Spang, 596.

exclude some of them being members of the society, such as Paul Eyschen.<sup>923</sup> Yet the close ties as exposed in the beginning of the society – which stemmed from the specific efforts to found the society in the first place – were less apparent in the subsequent evolution of the society.

Since its foundation, the society had aimed to reach out to the public, though this “public” remained limited. The Archaeological Society appealed to the authorities to raise teachers’ awareness of its activities and the potential help they could provide in making discoveries. Some of them became corresponding or collaborating members (*membres correspondants*).<sup>924</sup> In 1867, the society distributed more than 2,000 flyers presenting its activities.<sup>925</sup> In addition, it established contacts beyond Luxembourg’s borders with societies in the neighbouring countries.<sup>926</sup> Through these contacts, the society pursued two goals: collecting information that could be useful to its activities and keeping in touch with the progress made in other countries, especially in the field of archaeology.<sup>927</sup> The fact that the members of the society studied abroad and had personal contacts outside of Luxembourg made such transnational relations easier. Nejen, for instance, was honorary member of the Gesellschaft für nützliche Forschung in Trier, and corresponding member of both the Historische Institut in Hesse-Darmstadt and the Académie de Metz. Furthermore, he was member of the Société pour la conservation et la description des monuments historiques de France and of the Académie d’archéologie de Belgique.<sup>928</sup>

At least on one occasion, the society used the information it received from a source abroad to criticise a situation in Luxembourg. In a letter of 1 November 1935 sent to the state minister, the Section historique cited from the minutes of a meeting of the Société des naturalistes et archéologues du Nord de la Meuse, revealing that a certain Kremer-Bertrang presented the progress made in his excavations on the Titelberg in Luxembourg.<sup>929</sup> The society deplored that “individuals do not stop undertaking archaeological excavations”<sup>930</sup> and that “the antiquities

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<sup>923</sup> *Publications de la Section Historique*, vol. XXXVII (Luxembourg: Imprimerie de la Cour Victor Buck, 1885), III.

<sup>924</sup> Goedert, *De la Société archéologique à la Section historique de l’Institut grand-ducal*, 133–134.

<sup>925</sup> Goedert, 134.

<sup>926</sup> Goedert, 123.

<sup>927</sup> Goedert, 124.

<sup>928</sup> Mersch, ‘Le médecin-historien Claude-Auguste Neyen (1809-1882)’, 568.

<sup>929</sup> ANLux, IP-1809a, Letter from the Section historique to the state minister, 01/11/1935.

<sup>930</sup> Own translation. “[...] des particuliers ne cessent de faire des fouilles archéologiques [...].”

found on our territory are too easily exported”<sup>931</sup>. The letter was written less than two years before the law of 1937, aiming to prevent precisely that.

The Archaeological Society would share part of its history with that of another society, i.e. the Société des Sciences naturelles. It was founded in 1850 by a group that, from a socio-demographic perspective, was not differently constituted than the group of founding members of the Archaeological Society. The first committee was composed of the manufacturer Jean-François Boch-Buschmann (president), the Athenaeum teachers François Reuter (secretary), Nicolas Funck (curator) and Alexandre Moris (curator), and the receiver general Auguste Dutreux (treasurer). By studying the natural history of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg and publishing research from 1853 onwards, the society aimed to promote natural sciences.<sup>932</sup> Not unlike the museum of the archaeological society, the Natural Sciences Society created a natural history cabinet in the Athenaeum. It was the early predecessor of the Musée national d’histoire naturelle and opened on 27 April 1854. Whereas the visitor numbers are unknown for the archaeological museum, the natural history cabinet counted 79 visitors on its first day.<sup>933</sup>

The creation of the Royal Grand-Ducal Institute in 1868 originated in an initiative by the Natural Sciences Society, which contacted the Medical Sciences Society and the Archaeological Society.<sup>934</sup> The Society of Natural Sciences was incorporated within the Royal Grand-Ducal Institute. It changed its name to Section des sciences naturelles et mathématiques, later Section des sciences naturelles, physiques et mathématiques.<sup>935</sup> As this section was reserved for a selected group of professionals, several people founded the Société des naturalistes luxembourgeois in 1890: Victor Ferrant (curator at the Natural History Museum and president), Mathias Kraus (teacher and librarian), Nicolas Léonardy (vicar), and the railroad company employees Hubert Mullenberger and Jean Petermann. The society published its research from 1890 onwards.<sup>936</sup> According to Joseph Massard, one of the most important

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<sup>931</sup> Own translation. “[...] les antiquités trouvées sur notre territoire s’exportent trop facilement.”

<sup>932</sup> Joseph A. Massard, ‘La vie scientifique’, in *Memorial 1989: La société luxembourgeoise de 1839 à 1989*, ed. Martin Gerges (Luxembourg: Les publications mosellanes, 1989), 408–409.

<sup>933</sup> Massard, 411.

<sup>934</sup> Joseph A. Massard, ‘La Société des Naturalistes Luxembourgeois du point de vue historique’, in *Livre du Centenaire 1890-1990*, Bulletin de la Société des Naturalistes Luxembourgeois 91 (Luxembourg: Société des Naturalistes Luxembourgeois, 1990), 16. For an updated history of the SNL, see also: Joseph A. Massard, ‘La Société des naturalistes luxembourgeois de 1890 à 2015’, in *Livre du 125e anniversaire 1890-2015*, ed. Joseph A. Massard and Yves Krippel, Bulletin de la Société des naturalistes luxembourgeois 116 (Luxembourg: Société des Naturalistes Luxembourgeois, 2015), 5–302.

<sup>935</sup> Massard, ‘La vie scientifique’, 409.

<sup>936</sup> Massard, 410.

curators of the 19<sup>th</sup> century was Alphonse de la Fontaine (Dicks' brother), the predecessor of Ferrant, responsible for the natural history collection from 1864 to 1896.<sup>937</sup>

With the creation of the Grand-Ducal Institute in 1868, the Archaeological Society, the Society of Natural Sciences and the Society of Medical Sciences formed individual sections within the institute. The royal grand-ducal decree of 24 October 1868 approved the statutes of the newly founded institute. The new structure should promote collaboration between the members of the sections and facilitate access to the collections for the public.<sup>938</sup> The libraries and collections of the three sections were to be conserved in a building at state expenses. Meetings should take place in a shared room.<sup>939</sup> The state has never found such a room, and an intersectional collaboration has never occurred, even though the idea was not completely discarded.<sup>940</sup> Prior to the foundation of the Grand-Ducal Institute, the Archaeological Society had feared that the new body would limit the sections' freedom.<sup>941</sup> However, the decree has not been modified since 1868, and it did not have a noticeable impact on the activities carried out by the Archaeological Society, becoming the Section des sciences historiques (or simply Section historique, SH).

### **III.4.2. Travelling collections and unsuitable spaces**

The collections of the future museum were enriched through excavations in Luxembourg, acquisitions of private collections, or donations. As Sonja Kmec explained, "over time the [Archaeological] Society accumulated an important collection of antiques, coins, medals, seals, arms, armouries and works of art, but housing and funding were problematic."<sup>942</sup> The state could act as a donor, too. In 1870, the SH received a donation of several objects excavated at the Jost bastion,<sup>943</sup> located at the street junction between present day's Prince Henri Boulevard and Marie-Thérèse Avenue. Considering the context, this donation could be linked to the

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<sup>937</sup> Massard, 411.

<sup>938</sup> 'Arrêté royal grand-ducal du 24 octobre 1868 portant approbation du règlement pour l'Institut royal grand-ducal de Luxembourg', in *Mémorial A*, vol. 24 (Luxembourg, 1868), 247, <http://data.legilux.public.lu/file/eli-etat-leg-memorial-1868-24-fr-pdf.pdf>.

<sup>939</sup> 'Arrêté royal grand-ducal du 24 octobre 1868 portant approbation du règlement pour l'Institut royal grand-ducal de Luxembourg', 249.

<sup>940</sup> Goedert, *De la Société archéologique à la Section historique de l'Institut grand-ducal*, 144–145.

<sup>941</sup> Goedert, 142.

<sup>942</sup> Kmec, Sonja, 'Museums: Luxembourg', ed. Joep Leerssen, *Encyclopedia of Romantic Nationalism in Europe* (Amsterdam: Study Platform on Interlocking Nationalisms, 2017), <http://ernie.uva.nl/viewer.p/21/56/object/122-159718>.

<sup>943</sup> ANLux, MEN-1658, Letter from the curator-secretary Eltz to the Director general of Justice, 03/08/1870.

demolition of the bastion, which took place around 1874.<sup>944</sup> In the meantime, the natural history cabinet was enriched with important donations such as from Prince Henry and his wildlife collections originating from the Dutch colonies or from the Luxembourgish explorer and natural scientist Edouard Luja (1875-1953), who travelled to the Belgian Congo and to Brazil, among other places.<sup>945</sup>

The reports of the curators of the history museum and the account by Joseph Goedert provide a general overview of the collections' growth. The earliest discovery Joseph Meyers refers to were small statues found in Dalheim and Altrier around 1895.<sup>946</sup> Between 1895 and 1915, however, Meyers leaves a gap for unknown reasons. Nicolas van Werveke made the next recorded discovery in 1915.<sup>947</sup> Most of the acquisitions originating from excavations listed by Meyers date from the late 1920s onwards. The Titelberg was an important site in this respect, as it recurrently appeared in Meyers' list. The laws of 1927 and 1937, which initiated a period of institutionalisation of archaeological activities and created a legal framework, might have played a role in the growing number of discoveries.

The excavations were not the only source of acquisition. The museum's collection expanded thanks to donations from politicians, museum collaborators and artists. The state minister Joseph Bech gifted a collection of drawings by the Luxembourgish painter Seimetz and a series of engravings and lithographs "related to the history and folklore of the country" in 1932.<sup>948</sup> Bech was a prominent benefactor; in the previous year, he had intervened in favour of acquiring an important arms collection for the museum. A small collection belonging to the late state architect Charles Arendt was donated in 1935.<sup>949</sup> Other notable donors were Joseph Hackin, a French archaeologist with Luxembourgish origins, the bishop of Luxembourg, and Marcel Noppeney. The objects could range from small everyday utensils (plates, pothooks, tin and copper utensils) to more oversized furniture such as beds; from practical objects such as mine lamps to artistic works such as paintings and photographs.<sup>950</sup>

In general, everything related to Luxembourgish history and art was collected, although the systematic acquisition for the creation of a Fine Arts collection was not yet the case. When

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<sup>944</sup> For the map showing the bastion, see: André Bruns, 'Bastion Beck', *Ons Stad*, 1999, 15.

<sup>945</sup> Massard, 'La vie scientifique', 411.

<sup>946</sup> Joseph Meyers, 'Le musée: Rapport du conservateur sur les années 1895-1945', in *Publications de la Section historique de l'Institut g.-d. de Luxembourg*, vol. LXIX (Luxembourg: Section historique de l'Institut grand-ducal, 1949), 19.

<sup>947</sup> Meyers, 18.

<sup>948</sup> Meyers, 21.

<sup>949</sup> Meyers, 23.

<sup>950</sup> Many sources related to these acquisitions and donations can be found in: ANLux, IP-1809.

offered for sale, objects had a higher chance of being bought off by the state for the museum when linked to Luxembourg. For example, in 1937, an engineer, Reuter-Reding, wrote a letter to Joseph Bech and offered to sell a collection of foreign coins. Reuter-Reding addressed Bech personally and did not mention the museum. However, Bech declined the offer, which he assumed was for the museum. He argued that “unfortunately it is not related to the history of our country and, for this reason, cannot be acquired for our museum.”<sup>951</sup>

To further enrich the collections, Wurth-Paquet and Namur launched a public appeal to entrust the society with “the remains of the past”, so that “the national monument we lack” could be built.<sup>952</sup> In the first period, the museum was set up in the school library of the Athenaeum. Over the years, and facing growing collections, the rooms became unsuitable to the needs of the Society. In 1861, the problem of space was voiced for the first time in the curator’s report. Namur’s concerns were, however, not aimed at visitors’ experiences but the proper classification and conservation of the objects:

Pour que nos collections puissent être convenablement utilisées, il est indispensable que tous les objets soient classés et disposés ou étalés de manière à ce qu’ils puissent être vus sans déplacement ; autrement il est difficile d’en assurer la conservation et de garantir la responsabilité du conservateur. Les locaux chez nous ne sont pas et ne peuvent pas être appropriés assez convenablement à un tel arrangement. Economie de place est partout notre devise. Le local, qui au rez-de-chaussée de l’Athénée est destiné à recevoir les grosses pierres antiques, les fragments d’architecture, est surtout insuffisant. Nous devons y entasser les antiques sans ordre, sans possibilité d’adopter une classification. Le tout est qu’elles y sont conservées du moins momentanément de la destruction.<sup>953</sup>

Namur repeated his grievances in the following years, paired with the wish for a representative building. In his annual report of 1863, he expressed his hope that someday, the society would be able to expose the collections in spacious rooms, carefully classified and not only destined to be analysed by scholars, but also accessible to the public, which would instinctively become interested in the “monuments of the past”:

Quand un jour, et il faut espérer que ce jour n’est pas trop éloigné de nous, nous aurons à notre disposition des locaux spacieux, bien meublés, dans lesquels il nous sera permis d’étaler sous verre nos précieux trésors, bien classés d’après un système topographico-ethnographique, alors nos collections ne serviront plus uniquement aux études des savants qui s’occupent de notre

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<sup>951</sup> Own translation. “[...] malheureusement elle n’a pas trait à l’histoire de notre pays et, pour ce motif, ne peut pas être achetée pour notre musée.” (ANLux, IP-1863, Letter from Joseph Bech to Reuter-Reding, 11/05/1937).

<sup>952</sup> Kmec, Sonja, ‘Museums: Luxembourg’.

<sup>953</sup> Antoine Namur, ‘Rapport du conservateur, A. Namur, sur les travaux de la Société pendant l’année 1861’, in *Publications de la Société pour la recherche et la conservation des monuments historiques dans le Grand-Duché de Luxembourg*, vol. XVII (Luxembourg: V. Buck, 1861), XVIII.

histoire, elles pourront avec succès devenir accessibles au public, qui finira par prendre instinctivement intérêt aux monuments du passé [...].<sup>954</sup>

Namur referred to the traditional classification and arrangement of objects in museums at the time – according to specific criteria – to convey a logic behind the objects exposed and for comparative reasons. Namur named museums in other European countries and claimed they understood the importance of well-organised museums. The idea of artworks as sources of inspiration by mere (visual) contact – as exposed by French sociologists Bourdieu and Darbel with the concept of “charismatic ideology”<sup>955</sup> – is apparent in Namur’s report:

En France, en Angleterre, en Autriche on a déjà compris quels merveilleux services un bon musée apporte aux artistes, aux ouvriers qui peuvent s’inspirer aux sources du beau, sans peine, sans frais, sans ennui, en examinant, bien classés et coordonnés, les chefs-d’œuvre de l’art industriel européen à toutes les époques.

While exposing the dominant approach to museums at the time, Namur’s wish was not realised in his lifetime. The stone monuments were first moved to the garden of the Athenaeum,<sup>956</sup> then, in 1873, to the former grain warehouse on the Saint-Esprit plateau,<sup>957</sup> an opportunity enabled by Luxembourg’s neutrality and the withdrawal of the Prussian garrison in 1867. In 1880, the archaeological exhibits and the numismatic collection were moved to the second floor of the Hôtel du Gouvernement (formerly Hôtel de Ville), while the library and the manuscripts remained at the Athenaeum.<sup>958</sup>

Some years later, the historical and political context would again exert an incisive impact on the Historical Section. After the death of William III in 1890, King of the Netherlands and Grand Duke of Luxembourg, his daughter Wilhelmina accessed the Dutch throne, while Luxembourg passed to the branch of Nassau-Weilburg with Grand Duke Adolphe. The Luxembourgish authorities looked for a suitable residence for the new monarch and chose the Hôtel du Gouvernement – to the disadvantage of the Historical Section. Its president, Henri Vannérus, was informed in December 1890, and a new location was found within a month. The collection was moved to the Dagoreau house, a private mansion in Rue Philippe.<sup>959</sup> Yet, it became quickly apparent that the rooms were inadequate to the needs of the museum. In a letter

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<sup>954</sup> Antoine Namur, ‘Rapport du conservateur-secrétaire M. le Dr A. Namur, sur les travaux de la Société archéologique pendant l’année 1963’, in *Publications de la Société pour la recherche et la conservation des monuments historiques dans le Grand-Duché de Luxembourg*, vol. XIX (Luxembourg: Imprimerie-Librarie de V. Buck, 1864), X.

<sup>955</sup> Bourdieu and Darbel, *L’amour de l’art*.

<sup>956</sup> Yegles-Becker, *De Feschmaart: Description*, 112.

<sup>957</sup> Goedert, *De la Société archéologique à la Section historique de l’Institut grand-ducal*, 110.

<sup>958</sup> Goedert, 110.

<sup>959</sup> Goedert, 111.

of 12 January 1891 sent to state architect Charles Arendt, the curator-secretary Nicolas van Werveke complained about the rooms and criticised several aspects. These included the lack of light, low ceilings and the high rent asked by the landlord, Pierre Hastert. As Werveke explained in his letter:

Le prix de location enfin est fort élevé. M. Hastert demande pour les trois salles 700 resp. 500 et 600 francs, et, si les trois salles étaient prises ensemble, 1,600 francs. A ce prix on aurait pu avoir un des plus beaux logements de la ville, non pas ces trois salles obscures et nullement convenables.<sup>960</sup>

Whereas the civil servants sided with the Historical Section, the director general showed less enthusiasm. In a note transmitted to the chief engineer of public works, the state architect wholly agreed with the issues highlighted by Werveke and visited the rooms in question. He stressed that the necessary repairs and improvements should be made as soon as possible. In his reply, the director general Victor Thorn eschewed the main issue and merely enquired why the rent should be paid by his department's budget, as suggested by the state architect.<sup>961</sup> It seems that Thorn was not ready to increase the expenses of his department. In this sense, it is unsurprising that in October 1891, the Historical Section requested an increase in the subsidies as the income did not suffice to cover the rent.<sup>962</sup>

The new rooms and the financial aspects were not the only thorny issues. The delocalisation of the archaeological collection caused problems, too. In a letter dated 27 May 1891 and sent by Werveke to the director general of public works, the secretary criticised the hasty conditions in which the collections were moved and the lack of time to conveniently arrange the collections, especially as he expected the visit of the grand duke and some dignitaries of the Court. Werveke requested financial compensation for the additional work he had carried out. It is worth citing a more extended excerpt of his letter, in which he deplored the working conditions causing him to catch a cold:

Je me vis obligé d'arranger le plus tôt et le plus vite possible les milliers d'objets composant les collections, qui, par manque de temps, avaient dû, dans le nouveau local, être déposés tout simplement sur le plancher. J'ai employé à ce travail toutes mes heures de loisir des mois de janvier, février et mars et d'une grande partie du mois d'avril. Vous savez bien, Monsieur le Directeur-Général, que par suite du grand froid qui régnait à cette époque, il ne pouvait pas être agréable de travailler, surtout au sortir de l'Athenée et après mes heures de classe, dans un local

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<sup>960</sup> ANLux, IP-1800, Letter from Nicolas van Werveke to the state architect Charles Arendt, 12/01/1891.

<sup>961</sup> ANLux, IP-1800, Notes on Van Werveke's letter to the state architect Charles Arendt, undated.

<sup>962</sup> ANLux, IP-1800, Letter from Nicolas van Werveke to the director general of public works, 01/10/1891.

insuffisamment chauffé ; aussi y attrapai-je par trois fois un malaise général qui, chaque fois, m'obligea à garder le lit pendant plusieurs jours et dont je ressens toujours les suites.<sup>963</sup>

The letters and requests by the Historical Section did not seem to affect the budget. In 1892, the ordinary and extraordinary subsidies destined for the section did not increase compared to 1891.<sup>964</sup> In 1892/93, the collections were moved to the Vauban casern in Pfaffenthal, where they stayed until the 1930s. The natural history cabinet remained in the Athenaeum until 1892 before moving to Pfaffenthal. Shortly after that, in 1894, the Sciences Section of the Grand-Ducal Institute hired Victor Ferrant (1856-1942) as an assistant curator. He became chief curator in 1910.<sup>965</sup> In his obituary of 1949, Ernest Feltgen, vice president of the Société des Amis des Musées, described Ferrant as a “good patriot” and Francophile.<sup>966</sup> He spent efforts improving the paleontological section of the natural history museum, which, according to Feltgen, left much to be desired before Ferrant’s nomination.<sup>967</sup> Throughout his career, Ferrant visited museums abroad and was member of the Société Entomologique de Belgique, corresponding member of the Muséum d’Histoire Naturelle de France and associated member of the Société d’Anthropologie de Paris.<sup>968</sup>

The Historical Section’s activities were not limited to conservation and collecting, but it also acted as an interest group. Throughout the years, it paid attention to the protection of historical objects and issues related to excavations and archaeological discoveries. These concerns appear in letters sent to the government and responsible director generals. In 1912, the Section historique urged that discoveries during excavations should be protected, as was done in France and Italy.<sup>969</sup> The following year, the SH recommended promoting history studies and suggested that Luxembourgish students in philology should attend a course on palaeography.<sup>970</sup>

These contacts were not unilateral. In 1914, the director general of treasury asked the SH to compile an inventory with the terminology of every object in the section’s collections. He

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<sup>963</sup> ANLux, IP-1800, Letter from Nicolas van Werveke to the director general of public works, 27/05/1891.

<sup>964</sup> ‘Loi du 15 février 1892 concernant le budget des recettes et des dépenses de l’État pour l’exercice 1892’, in *Mémorial du Grand-Duché de Luxembourg*, vol. 8 (Luxembourg, 1892), 55, <http://legilux.public.lu/eli/etat/leg/loi/1892/02/15/n3/jo>.

<sup>965</sup> Massard, ‘La vie scientifique’, 411.

<sup>966</sup> Ernest Feltgen, ‘Victor Ferrant (1856-1942)’, in *Annuaire 1949*, ed. Société des Amis des Musées (Luxembourg: Imprimerie de la Cour Victor Buck, 1949), 62.

<sup>967</sup> Feltgen, 64.

<sup>968</sup> Feltgen, 67.

<sup>969</sup> ANLux, IP-1800, Letter from the Section historique to the director general of finance, 26/02/1912.

<sup>970</sup> ANLux, IP-1800, Letter from the Section historique to the director general of finance, 16/07/1913.

repeated a request made in the previous year to “bring order in the affairs of the society”,<sup>971</sup> which implies that he must have been dissatisfied with the society’s internal management. Furthermore, he emphatically suggested that the SH could examine whether a part of its archives could be transferred to the Government Archives, “especially the pieces that by their nature should already be there!!”<sup>972</sup> One possible reason for the government’s interest in an inventory could be linked to discussions surrounding the construction of a museum in 1913 and 1914,<sup>973</sup> which would also have needed clarifications of the objects of the collection and their ownership. The SH replied that the previous curator of the “musée historique et archéologique”, Werveke, did not hand over an inventory to his successor, the abbot Blum. The latter did not have time for this task and started compiling a list of the books in the library only in 1906.<sup>974</sup>

The exchange of letters reveals some tensions regarding the protection of objects during visits. The director general enquired about the measures taken by the SH, but the society answered that it would ignore the instructions on hiding the objects during visits given to the concierge by the government. The section also recommended scheduling two afternoons where the curator and the concierge were both present and the museum was accessible to the public. In his response dated 16 February 1916, the director general specifically referred to the question of the instructions given to the concierge and reminded that

la conservation des objets du musée historique rentre exclusivement dans la mission de la société et respectivement de son conservateur. C'est donc à eux de prendre les mesures nécessaires pour qu'à l'occasion des visites qui sont faites au musée aucun des objets ne puisse être soustrait. Il me semble très imprudent de confier à la femme du concierge la conduite des visiteurs, ainsi que la communication des objets que ceux-ci désirent voir de plus près.<sup>975</sup>

If the director general’s account concerning the guided tours led by an external person and the lack of supervision of the objects is true, it shows that the museum had not yet become a professional institution in 1916. Even years later, in 1925, Victor Ferrant reported that an usher

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<sup>971</sup> Own translation. “[...] de mettre de l’ordre dans les affaires de la société” (ANLux, IP-1800, Letter from the director general of finance to the president of the Section historique, 24/01/1914).

<sup>972</sup> Own translation. “[...] surtout les pièces qui par leur nature devraient s’y trouver déjà!!” (ANLux, IP-1800, Letter from director general of finance to the president of the Section historique, 24/01/1914).

<sup>973</sup> Goedert, *De la Société archéologique à la Section historique de l’Institut grand-ducal*, 115.

<sup>974</sup> ANLux, IP-1800, Letter from the Section historique to the director general of finance, 10/02/1914.

<sup>975</sup> ANLux, IP-1800, Letter from the director general of finance to the Section historique, 16/02/1914.

(*huissier de salle*) was not employed at the museum and, therefore, the wife of the concierge Paul Barthel had to guide and supervise visitors.<sup>976</sup>

Over the years, the Section historique had written many letters in which it asked for special subsidies, an increase in the financial compensation for the curator, and criticized the lack of space and adequate rooms. This did not change after the move to the Vauban casern, of which the president of the section, Vannérus, said in 1916 that “it is not a museum, but a junk shop” (“ce n'est pas un musée, mais un magasin de bric-à-brac”).<sup>977</sup>

A plan of 1909 and Vannérus' letter of 1916 provide some information on the composition and distribution of the collections in Pfaffenthal. The rooms encompassed the lapidary collection, the prehistoric and ethnographic objects, the arms collection and the donation from the deceased former prime minister Paul Eyschen. The entire collection was referred to as the archaeological museum and was distributed over two floors. Each section had its library. But even in the plan, the unknown author could not refrain from adding a critical note concerning the situation of the collections: “The objects are piled in every available corner, every wall is covered, and half of the objects are still packed in the attic.”<sup>978</sup>

The First World War did not have any noticeable impact on the evolution of the society and its museum, or at least it is not a subject in the sources. Immediately after the war, Allied troops occupied the Vauban casern for some time. Though the museum stayed there, the archives and the library had to be transferred partly to a building in Beaumont Street, partly to an old Jesuit cloister on Limpertsberg.<sup>979</sup>

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<sup>976</sup> ANLux, IP-1809, Letter from Victor Ferrant to the director general of finance and public instruction, 27/08/1925.

<sup>977</sup> ANLux, IP-1800, Letter from Henri Vannérus to the director general of the interior and public instruction, 12/04/1916.

<sup>978</sup> Translated by me. “Les objets se trouvent entassés dans tous les coins disponibles, toutes les parois sont couvertes et la moitié se trouve encore emballée au grenier.”

<sup>979</sup> Unfortunately, Goedert does not specify for how long the troops stayed in the museum, but it was probably only for a short period (Goedert, *De la Société archéologique à la Section historique de l'Institut grand-ducal*, 114).

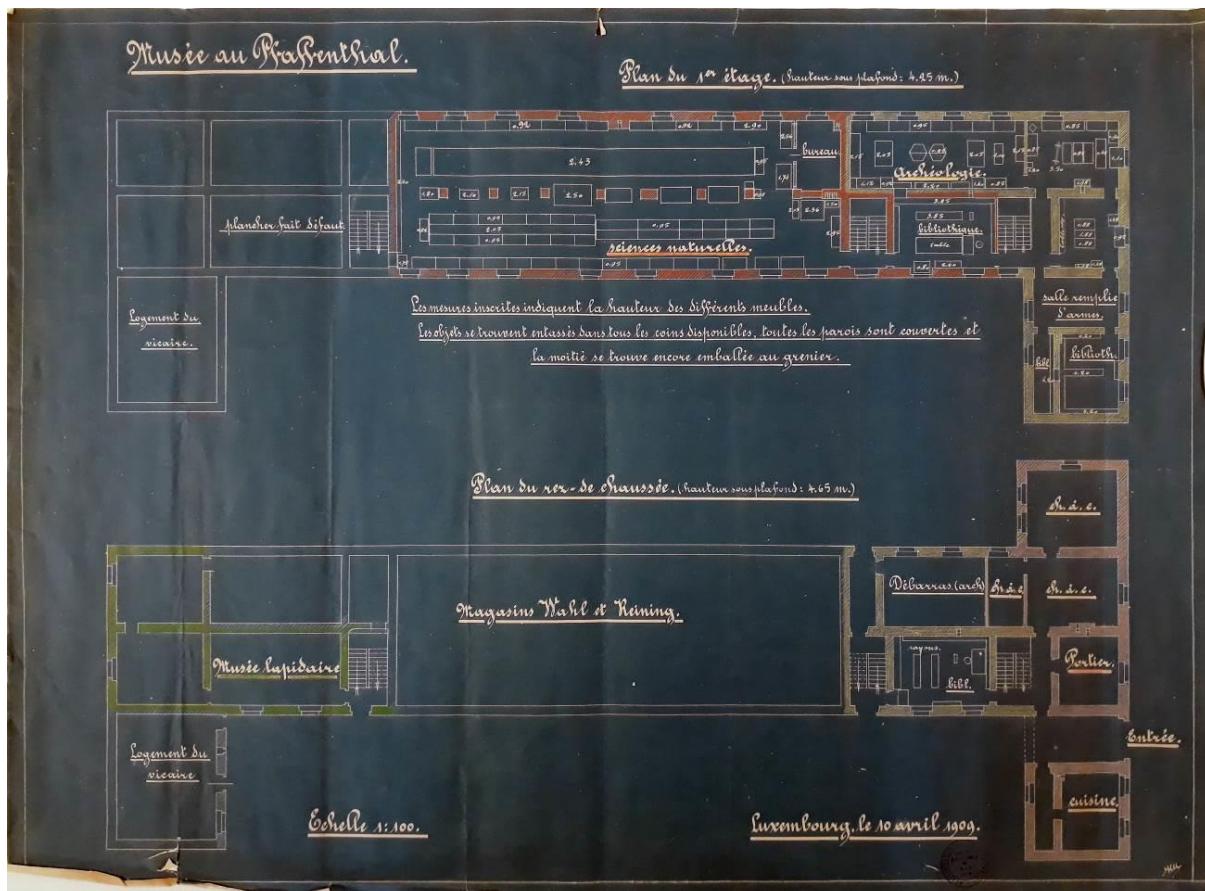


Fig. 36: Plan of the museum in Pfaffenthal of 1909. Source: ANLux, P-272, Musée au Pfaffenthal, 1909.

As the sources related to the museum in Pfaffenthal are very sparse, it is impossible to comprehend the museum's situation fully. However, an extensive description of the museum was published by Emile Mark in the *Tageblatt* in February 1920. Mark was a socialist politician, at the time mayor of Differdange, and served several years as a member of parliament.<sup>980</sup> He was also co-founder of the local section of the Alliance Française in Differdange.<sup>981</sup> In the article, Mark drew a desolate picture of the building, additionally housing an orphanage. A "shabbier and more pathetic" museum would not exist in Europe:

Auf einem Bummel durch die romantischen Vorstädte, stößt man auf einmal auf einen kasernenartigen Bau an dessen eiserner Pforte in Miniaturschrift, ganz verschämt und eingezogen, das Wörtchen "Musée" steht. Es gehört dem Staat, aber niemand soll es wissen, und mit Recht. Etwas Schäbigeres und Erbärmlicheres gibt es in ganz Europa nicht mehr.<sup>982</sup>

<sup>980</sup> Mark was member of parliament from 1909 to 1919 and from 1922 until his death in 1935. Hence, at the time the article was published, Mark was not parliamentarian.

<sup>981</sup> J. Audigé, 'L'Alliance Française à Differdange', in *L'Alliance Française en Luxembourg 1905-1930* (Imprimerie de la Cour Victor Buck, 1930), 85.

<sup>982</sup> Emile Mark, 'Das National-Museum', *Escher Tageblatt*, February 1920.

In opposition to the aspect of the building, Mark's account was very positive concerning the curator Victor Ferrant and the natural history collection; the archaeological collection was not mentioned. Ferrant was depicted as a very motivated, enthusiastic, and passionate guide whose explanations were easy to understand; the tour, however, took place in a “long, low-ceilinged, scantily lighted hall” (“lange, niedrige, spärlich erleuchtete Halle”). The collection was rich and splendid, but only part of it was exposed. The available space was too small. Mark used the opportunity to criticise the succeeding governments that had not been able to improve the situation. The situation of the museum would equal vandalism:

Und das alles liegt buchstäblich begraben, denn wer vermutet in dieser trostlosen Ruine solch unermeßlichen Schätze, wer verirrt sich in diese von Gott verlassene Scheune. Nicht allein in der Verschandelung der Natur mit unästhetischen Denkmälern, sondern auch in der systematischen Verbergung u. Unzugänglichmachung seiner Schätze und Wunder, liegt Vandalismus.<sup>983</sup>

Mark criticised the waste of public money for “demagogical” reasons and the government’s refusal to invest in a new museum building, despite a population that “craves for knowledge”. The author saw a solution in increasing the population’s consciousness by talking about the museum and attracting as many people as possible to it; the resulting impact on public opinion would cause a change in politics. Mark suggested creating a museum association (which would happen six years later, but without his participation). Though his piece is politically framed – at the time of the publication, Luxembourg was governed by a rightist-liberal government – it provides a glimpse of the museum from a visitor’s viewpoint, even if this visitor was part of the political elite.

As for the requests to receive subsidies, they were not always granted. In 1931, when the economic crisis reached Luxembourg, the government did not grant additional funds. It did not even accept to intervene in the allowance of the concierge. “Concerning the remuneration of the concierge, this question relates to the internal affairs of your society, so that the Government is not required to intervene,” the authorities dismissively replied.<sup>984</sup> Unsurprisingly, the society did not share this view. Its president Arthur Herchen accused the government indirectly of violating the convention of 1927, which regulated, among other things, the ownership of the collection, the coverage of financial costs and the maintenance of the building. Herchen

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<sup>983</sup> Mark.

<sup>984</sup> Own translation. “Quant à la rémunération du concierge, cette question concerne le ménage intérieur de votre société, de sorte que le Gouvernement n'a pas à y intervenir.” (ANLux, IP-1809, Letter from the government official Louis Simmer in the name of the state minister to the president of the Historical Society, 16/07/1931).

highlighted that the Natural History Society had not been paying the concierge since the state assumed the conservation of the collection.<sup>985</sup> As it seems, the following years would not bring about a change. In the state budget, the curator (not specified, but probably Victor Ferrant) was the only one directly paid by the state or for whom a separate budget line existed (“Musée. — Rémunération du conservateur”). Only in 1939 did the situation change, with a new article (replacing the old one), labelled “Musée. — Rémunération du personnel”.<sup>986</sup>

Until the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, the curators of the Archaeological Society were not professionals or specifically chosen for their skills. The first curator with an academic background in human sciences was the historian and teacher Nicolas van Werveke, who studied at the University of Bonn and earned a doctor’s degree in 1874. Strictly speaking, though, he was not a trained historian, despite his contributions to Luxembourgish historiography.<sup>987</sup> A professionalisation unfolded progressively and slowly during the interwar period, even if on the eve of the invasion in 1939, the curators were still not working full-time for the museum. The curator of the archaeological section did not receive official financial compensation. The financial compensation for Ferrant increased over the years, but it was only an allowance (*indemnité*). A letter in 1914 from the director general of the treasury to the president of the Chamber of Deputies referred to a parliamentary debate about increasing Ferrant’s allowance to at least that of a government chief clerk (*chef de bureau*).<sup>988</sup> Ferrant’s example illustrates how the professionalisation of curatorship at the time evolved. Ferrant was not a trained scientist, but through his interests, private collections, and visits to natural history museums and congresses abroad, he acquired competencies and skills. When he became the leading curator in 1894, he had been directing the phytopathological station since 1890, an employment he still occupied forty years later. Shortly before the Great War, his allowance as curator was raised from 300 to 1,500 francs, and he became a *fonctionnaire d’Etat* with a pension right. Only from the 1920s onwards had newly employed custodians an academic background in their respective fields. Marcel Heuertz (1904-1981), who started working in the 1930s, was the first custodian of his section with a natural sciences diploma. Joseph Meyers, also hired in the 1930s, was among the first with a diploma in history.

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<sup>985</sup> ANLux, IP-1809, Letter from Arthur Herchen to the state minister, 03/08/1931.

<sup>986</sup> ‘Loi du 20 avril 1939, concernant le Budget des recettes et des dépenses de l’Etat pour l’exercice 1939’, 334.

<sup>987</sup> ‘M. Nicolas van Werveke est mort’, *L’Indépendance luxembourgeoise*, February 1926.

<sup>988</sup> ANLux, IP-1809, Letter from the director general of finance to the president of the Chamber of Deputies, 05/11/1914.

Though a precise regulation and legislation of the custodians' positions in the museum had never happened during the interwar period, the state, and more specifically Joseph Bech, did not ignore the situation and, as with the museum itself, became more interested in the matter. In December 1930, Bech submitted to the State Council a draft law on creating two curating positions for the future national museum, one per section. However, the position in the natural history collection was deemed more urgent: Ferrant had reached since long the retirement age and was waiting for a suitable successor. The observations of the State Council were reported in the press a year later; the State Council modified the law so that only a position for the curator of the natural history collection would be created. In this case, the ownership of the collection had been clarified. The situation was different in the case of the historical collection, which a teacher curated without any allowance. The State Council added that there was not enough work at the museum for full-time employment. According to the *Luxemburger Wort*, the government was still insisting on the creation of two positions.<sup>989</sup>

In 1930, Joseph Tockert, secretary of the Friends of the Museums, produced a note in which he described the tasks of the custodians in the national museum. It is not clear if this note related to the draft law of the government, but it certainly would not be surprising, Bech being involved in the society and having submitted the text. Tockert described the position of the natural history curator as follows:

The curator of the natural history museum (and a fortiori the curator of the national museum) occupies a prominent position in our intellectual life. He is the head of service in his domain. He must be available to the public, receive foreign scientists or correspond with them, represent the country at congresses, etc. He must know more than the professor who sticks to his speciality, because the entire domain of natural history is represented in his museum. This shows how difficult his position is and how much, once a man with the required skills is found, it is necessary to attract him and remove all the obstacles for him, as Mr Eyschen did back then.<sup>990</sup>

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<sup>989</sup> Both the *Tageblatt* and the *Luxemburger Wort* published an identical article ('Kammerarbeiten: Konservatorposten am staatlichen Museum', *Luxemburger Wort*, December 1931; 'Kammerarbeiten: Konservatorposten am staatlichen Museum', *Escher Tageblatt*, December 1931).

<sup>990</sup> Own translation. "Le conservateur du musée d'histoire naturelle (et a fortiori celui du musée national) occupe une position éminente dans notre vie intellectuelle. Il est chef de service dans sa sphère. Il doit être à la disposition du public, recevoir des savants étrangers ou correspondre avec eux, représenter le pays à des congrès, etc. Il doit savoir plus que le professeur qui se borne à sa spécialité, car tout le domaine de l'histoire naturelle est représenté dans son musée. Ceci montre combien sa position est difficile, et combien, quand on a trouvé un homme qui a les qualités requises, il faut, comme M. Eyschen a fait dans le temps, l'attirer et lui aplatis tous les obstacles." (ANLux, IP-1809, Mémoire sur la nomination de deux conservateurs au Musée de l'Etat by Joseph Tockert, 25/02/1930).

The position of curator of the archaeological and folklore museum was regarded by Tockert with at least the same importance, even “surpass him in importance”. The secretary exposes that

The curator as such would have the direction and the administration of all the collections and, additionally, would be specialised in everything that would not enter the areas of the two specialists mentioned above [numismatics specialist and specialist of prehistory]. It would concern three main areas: 1) The history and archaeology of the country since Siegfried. 2) The history of the fortress of Luxembourg. 3) The folklore of the country in all its aspects.<sup>991</sup>

Both descriptions have in common the necessity of being well acquainted with the whole collection instead of being specialised in one domain. The task of the curator would also consist in guiding the public. Tockert, however, did not explicitly mention education and research or even the conception of exhibitions. His assessment is typical of the interwar period when the role of the curators was strictly limited to overseeing the collections and receiving visitors.

It is unclear how many hours the custodians worked at the museum per week, but the lack of professionalisation was also visible in the issues surrounding accessibility and time management, at least partly a consequence of the part-time positions. In July 1918, the press reported that the museum of the Historical Section remained closed. The curator at the time, the architect Alphonse Kemp (nominated in 1916), had instructed the concierge not to let anyone in. The critiques falsely targeted Victor Ferrant, who defended himself in his writings to the director general for public instruction. Ferrant explained that the natural sciences museum was open every workday. He was not granted access to the archaeological museum on the formal order of the, as he said rather deprecatingly, “so-called” (“soi-disant”) curator.<sup>992</sup> In the 1930s, when the collections were being installed in the Collart-de Scherff building, the question of time management became an issue for the custodians. Marcel Heuertz, the second curator of the natural history section, wished to spend more time at the museum. In 1937, he requested to be discharged from his teaching hours at the Athenaeum, as he would like to avoid being distracted from his work in the museum and his scientific research:

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<sup>991</sup> Own translation. “Le conservateur proprement dit aurait donc la direction et l’administration de toutes les collections et en outre il serait spécialisé dans tout ce qui ne rentrerait pas dans le domaine des deux spécialistes précités [spécialiste numismate and spécialiste de préhistoire]. Il s’agirait de trois groupes principaux: 1) l’histoire et l’archéologie du pays depuis Sigefroi. 2) L’histoire de la forteresse de Luxembourg. 3) Le folklore du pays dans tous ses domaines.” (ANLux, IP-1809, Mémoire sur la nomination de deux conservateurs au Musée de l’Etat by Joseph Tockert, 25/02/1930).

<sup>992</sup> ANLux, IP-1800, Note from Victor Ferrant to the director general of justice and public instruction, 04/07/1918.

Je ne puis ni organiser des fouilles continues demandant ma présence, ni faire une étude de matériel quelque peu sérieuse, ne pouvant jamais m'absenter quelques jours de suite pour la documentation à l'étranger, indispensable dans nos modestes conditions de travail.<sup>993</sup>

The minister possibly solicited Ferrant's opinion. Ferrant opined that he could not understand how the few teaching hours could prevent Heuertz from consciously doing his work at the museum. Ferrant used the opportunity to complain about Heuertz's conduct, whom he would not see for weeks at the museum. He shared that Heuertz, who was supposed to become Ferrant's successor, avoided him and lacked passion for his work. "Mr Heuertz expresses his wish to be able to consult curators abroad, while he would have every day the opportunity to enquire on the spot [...]," reproachfully remarked Ferrant.<sup>994</sup> Whether Ferrant and Heuertz, both members of the Société des naturalistes luxembourgeois, had a strained personal relationship cannot be assessed from the report. It is not clear how much Ferrant's negative assessment can be trusted. Unlike Ferrant, Heuertz studied medicine and natural sciences, succeeded him as the main curator of the natural history section and directed the State Museums from 1964 to 1969. Tockert did not envisage the possibility of a natural history curator directing the whole museum in his report quoted above. The lack of time, however, was not only a concern to Heuertz. A week after his request and two days before Ferrant's report, Joseph Meyers complained about the issues concerning time management, especially when considering the urgent work to do until the planned opening of the museum in 1939. He requested that the curators limit the work to conservation, as they would otherwise not be able to participate in archaeological excavations during the school year of 1938-1939.<sup>995</sup>

The Historical Section decided in February 1923, after the acquisition of the Collart-de Scherff house, to nominate a second curator, the teacher Paul Medinger (1883-1939), who had some basic skills in palaeography, epigraphy, numismatics and sigillography. In this context, the nomination of Medinger was part of a slow progress towards professionalisation. Kemp, for example, did not possess similar skills.<sup>996</sup> In 1924, Medinger was sent to France to study the organisation of the museum in Saint-Germain-en-Laye and inquire about "the value of an archaeological collection."<sup>997</sup> It was not the first time that a curator of the society was sent

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<sup>993</sup> ANLux, IP-1809, Letter from Marcel Heuertz to Nicolas Margue, 05/09/1938.

<sup>994</sup> Own translation. "Monsieur Heuertz exprime le désir de pouvoir aller consulter des conservateurs à l'étranger, alors qu'il aurait chaque jour l'occasion de se renseigner sur place [...]." (ANLux, IP-1809, Report by Victor Ferrant, 14/09/1938).

<sup>995</sup> ANLux, IP-1809, Letter from Joseph Meyers to Joseph Bech, 12/09/1938.

<sup>996</sup> ANLux, IP-1800, Letter from the Section historique to the director general of public instruction, 21/05/1923.

<sup>997</sup> ANLux, IP-1800, *Recommandation - Gouvernement, Instruction Publique no. 2999*, 05/08/1924.

abroad. In 1881, Nicolas van Werveke visited several museums in Germany.<sup>998</sup> In 1949, Nicolas Margue described Medinger as someone who was not interested in most museums in general but cared deeply about the archaeological museum:

Si jamais quelqu'un a mérité d'être appelé ami du Musée, c'était bien Paul Medinger. Non pas ami des musées: il y avait beaucoup de musées qui ne l'intéressaient pas, qu'il considérait de façon dédaigneuse et railleuse plutôt. Mais il y avait un Musée auquel il vouait tout son enthousiasme et tous ses soins, ses pensées et ses actes: le sien, le Musée d'histoire et d'archéologie de Luxembourg. Ce musée, c'était pour lui la science et la vie.<sup>999</sup>

According to Margue, Medinger had invested efforts in valorising the “archaeological treasures” and visited with tourists and residents the “historical curiosities” of the city of Luxembourg. He organized guided tours and showed the capital’s constructions, monuments and buildings to scholarly societies and individuals.<sup>1000</sup> It is difficult to assess how many guided tours had been organized, and it is unknown whether other museum curators had organized them, too. Medinger assembled these guided tours in the illustrated volume *Historischer Rundgang durch Luxemburg*, published in 1934, including a map of the locations of former fortifications. His activities are certainly an example of bringing history to a broad public outside the museum walls and an academic environment. In this sense, he could be regarded as an example of the “pre-history of public history” (Chris Hilliard).

When the government acquired the Collart-de Scherff house in 1923, the Historical Section used the opportunity to move its library and archives to the new abode. Shortly afterwards, as the curator Joseph Meyers recounted in his report on the years 1895 to 1945, the SH had to leave the building again because of construction works.<sup>1001</sup> The library was divided between Rue Beaumont and the Ecole des Artisans. Victor Ferrant moved the natural history collection from Pfaffenthal to the Marché-aux-Poissons. Apparently, he reacted to threats that the government might use the Collart-de Scherff house not for a museum, but for administrative purposes.<sup>1002</sup> In 1937, Meyers and Medinger filled some rooms of the mezzanine floor with parts of the collections. The working conditions were difficult. These rooms were, according to Meyers, “the obscurest and coldest part of the new Museum, a basement partly drilled into rocks and quite humid.”<sup>1003</sup> But, as the curator conceded, he preferred working there for a

<sup>998</sup> ANLux, IP-1801, Letter from the Section historique to the director general of finance, 19/09/1881.

<sup>999</sup> Nicolas Margue, ‘Paul Medinger (1883-1939)’, in *Annuaire 1949*, ed. Société des Amis des Musées (Luxembourg: Imprimerie de la Cour Victor Buck, 1949), 96.

<sup>1000</sup> Margue, 99.

<sup>1001</sup> Meyers, ‘Le musée: Rapport du conservateur sur les années 1895-1945’, 2.

<sup>1002</sup> It seems that Meyers does not know for certain that this was actually the case (Meyers, 2).

<sup>1003</sup> Own translation. “[...] la partie la plus obscure et la plus froide du nouveau Musée, un souterrain taillé en partie dans le roc et assez humide.”

couple of hours in the cold and humid rooms with artificial light than in the even worse conditions in Pfaffenthal,<sup>1004</sup> which were described in more detail in September 1936 by the curators. In a letter to Joseph Bech, they stressed the urgency of moving a large part of the collection to the new building. Many glass cases were broken, doors of cupboards could not be closed, iron objects were rusted, and stone objects were covered with moss.<sup>1005</sup> Paul Wigreux had a different opinion, though. In his view, the damages to the objects were not recent, as he had never received any complaints. Thus, there would be no urgency to move the objects, and they could stay in Pfaffenthal until their final installation in the new museum.<sup>1006</sup> Notwithstanding the endured damages, the acquisition of the Collart-de Scherff building marked an essential step in the museum's history.

### III.4.3. The imagined museum

The emergence of the national museum in the 1920s and 1930s is inseparably linked to the history of the Archaeological Society/Historical Section. At some moments, it was also intertwined with the history of the Pescatore museum. The latter was the predecessor of today's Villa Vauban, a municipal museum in Luxembourg City. The origins of this museum are rooted in a collection bequeathed to the city by the tobacco producer and banker Jean-Pierre Pescatore after his death in November 1855. In his testament, Pescatore offered his collections of paintings, artistic objects and books to his birthplace, Luxembourg. However, two conditions were linked to this donation: it should only happen after his residences in France, where the collections were located, left the hands of his legatees; and the objects should be appropriately stored. The paintings and books were moved from France to Luxembourg only in 1871 after Pescatore's wife officially ceded them to the city. The Pescatore Museum was inaugurated on 10 February 1872 in the Hôtel de Ville.<sup>1007</sup> Part of the book collection was offered to the SH in 1875.<sup>1008</sup> The search for a definitive building for the Pescatore collection was a lengthy process. Eventually, after WWII, the Pescatore collection was transferred to the Villa Vauban.

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<sup>1004</sup> Meyers, 'Le musée: Rapport du conservateur sur les années 1895-1945', 3.

<sup>1005</sup> ANLux, IP-1809a, Letter from the curators of the archaeological museum to Joseph Bech, 29/09/1936.

<sup>1006</sup> ANLux, IP-1809a, Note from Paul Wigreux to the minister of public works, 12/10/1936.

<sup>1007</sup> Jules Mersch, 'Jean-Pierre Pescatore', in *Biographie nationale du pays de Luxembourg depuis ses origines jusqu'à nos jours*, ed. Jules Mersch, vol. 2 (Luxembourg, 1949), 489–490, [http://www.luxemburgensia.bnl.lu/cgi/luxonline1\\_2.pl?action=fv&sid=luxbio&vol=02&page=480&zom=3](http://www.luxemburgensia.bnl.lu/cgi/luxonline1_2.pl?action=fv&sid=luxbio&vol=02&page=480&zoom=3).

<sup>1008</sup> Mersch, 491; Marcel Noppeney, 'Les collections d'art de la Ville de Luxembourg', in *Annuaire 1949*, ed. Société des amis des musées (Luxembourg: Société des amis des musées, 1949), 1.

Not unlike the history of the Pescatore museum, the planning and construction of the national museum demanded a lot of patience. Many decades had gone by, from the first ideas in the 19th century to the official opening in 1949. Since its early years, the Archaeological Society had defended the idea of a museum. In 1863, Namur wished to create a vast national museum, organised like the museums in the neighbouring countries.<sup>1009</sup> Namur's suggestion indicated that the elite followed developments abroad. According to Goedert, the first official document about the construction of a national museum dates from 29 December 1892. In this text, prime minister Paul Eyschen assumed that the time had come to conduct preliminary studies.<sup>1010</sup> Eyschen was interested in the construction of a representative museum to educate and sensitize the masses to history and art.<sup>1011</sup> Yet, the first state initiatives predated this document, and Goedert's statement should be relativized in this context.

The museum's origins in the 19<sup>th</sup> century are inscribed in the broader international context of the history of museums. Museums attempted to fulfil a double role, i.e., a place of research and an institution for disseminating knowledge.<sup>1012</sup> If some scholars consider the 19<sup>th</sup> century as the "century of museums"<sup>1013</sup>, it was during this period that three main categories appeared: art museums, natural history museums (or *muséums* in France), and history museums. Indeed, in the latter case, it was the archaeological museum as a type that had first appeared in the context of nationalism and the museums' purpose to represent national identity.<sup>1014</sup>

In Luxembourg, the foundation of the Archaeological Society and the term "archaeological museum" reflect this international evolution. However, unlike other countries such as France (Louvre) or Great Britain (British Museum), Luxembourg lacked a museum whose collections originated in the 18<sup>th</sup> century and became publicly accessible in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Despite developments in Luxembourg occurring with some delay and the difficult comparison to capitals of large nation-states and imperial countries, even the British Museum had very limited opening hours throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> century and visitors were guided by a custodian. Only from 1896 onwards was the British Museum open every day.<sup>1015</sup>

The interest of the Luxembourg government in the national museum – not necessarily labelled as such at the time and reuniting at least the archaeological and the natural history

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<sup>1009</sup> Goedert, *De la Société archéologique à la Section historique de l'Institut grand-ducal*, 114.

<sup>1010</sup> Goedert, 115.

<sup>1011</sup> Yegles-Becker, *De Feschmaart: Description*, 122.

<sup>1012</sup> Noordegraaf, *Strategies of Display*, 42.

<sup>1013</sup> Gob and Drouquet, *La muséologie*, 27.

<sup>1014</sup> Gob and Drouquet, 27–28.

<sup>1015</sup> Noordegraaf, *Strategies of Display*, 50.

collections – dates back to the late 1870s. On 1 July 1878, the director general of treasury created a “commission chargée d’examiner la proposition de l’Administration communale de la ville de Luxembourg de construire un bâtiment destiné à recevoir le Musée J.P. Pescatore, la bibliothèque de l’Etat et les collections et Musées publics”.<sup>1016</sup> The description of the commission highlights that the city made the initial request and that the government accepted to examine it. The members of the commission were the politician and lawyer Emmanuel Servais (1811-1890, mayor of Luxembourg), A. Pescatore<sup>1017</sup>, J. Sivering (chief engineer at the Public Works Administration) and Schoetter (1823-1881, librarian at the Athenaeum).<sup>1018</sup> This first commission did not produce any results. Three members (Pescatore, Sivering and Schoetter) died in the following years.<sup>1019</sup>

In 1889, a second commission was formed after a bequest by the couple Dutreux-Pescatore of 80,000 francs to Luxembourg City in 1886. The collection should be housed in a local museum according to their will. The city committed itself to building it within three years while consulting the architect Tony Dutreux, son of the deceased couple and curator of the collection. The commission was composed of de la Fontaine (district commissioner), Charles Arendt, Antoine Luja (city architect of Luxembourg), Muller (teacher and librarian), Wittenauer (civil engineer and city councillor) and Worré (chief engineer of the Public Works Administration). However, it merely decided that a national museum should be constructed.<sup>1020</sup> This outcome was probably not reassuring to the impatient Historical Section. Already in 1888, it had reminded the director of the Athenaeum of the poor storage conditions of its collections, the fire hazard, and the possibility of being forced to leave the Hôtel du Gouvernement at any

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<sup>1016</sup> Though Yegles-Becker seems to be quoting the same document, the designation used in the document she was consulting differed. In her version, it is “commission pour la construction d’un bâtiment destiné à recevoir le musée Pescatore, la bibliothèque de l’Etat et les collections des musées d’histoire naturelle et d’histoire et d’art.” (Yegles-Becker, *De Fëschmaart: Description*, 114). The collection number in the National Archives she is referring to (TP 481) is also different to the one in which I found the document (TP 540). According to the archives catalogue, TP 481 is not even related to museums.

<sup>1017</sup> Unfortunately, Yegles-Becker did not indicate the first name. It might be Dominique-Antoine Pescatore (1842-1916), the only Pescatore who was called Antoine by his first name and in the right age to have participated in the commission. He was the cousin of Tony Dutreux, and at the time vice president of the Chamber of Deputies (Jules Mersch, ‘Dominique-Antoine Pescatore’, in *Biographie nationale du pays de Luxembourg depuis ses origines jusqu’à nos jours*, ed. Jules Mersch, vol. 2 [Luxembourg, 1949], 533–539).

[http://www.luxemburgensia.bn1.lu/cgi/luxonline1\\_2.pl?action=fv&sid=luxbio&vol=02&page=533&zom=3](http://www.luxemburgensia.bn1.lu/cgi/luxonline1_2.pl?action=fv&sid=luxbio&vol=02&page=533&zom=3).

<sup>1018</sup> Yegles-Becker, *De Fëschmaart: Description*, 114.

<sup>1019</sup> ANLux, TP-540/TRP-04039, Letter from the director general of justice to the director general of finance, 23/10/1886.

<sup>1020</sup> Yegles-Becker, *De Fëschmaart: Description*, 115.

moment. The section supported the decision of Luxembourg City to accommodate all collections in one building while rejecting the alternative of moving to a planned building for the industrial school, which would not be an improvement over the situation at the Athénée.<sup>1021</sup>

The 1890s marked a surge in the efforts to plan and construct a national museum. In 1891, an article in the *Echternacher Anzeiger* (initially published in the *Echo*, an official newspaper of the National-Democratic Party), written in the context of the collection's move in 1891, criticized that the museum was going to be housed in a private building. The article stressed the value of the Historical Section's collection to the country:

Da diese Sammlungen wahre Schätze enthalten, die sogar manchen weltstädtschen Museen alle Ehre machen würden; besonders aber weil sie für die Geschichte des Luxemburger Landes, als deren einzige Augenzeugen sie mit verständnisvollem Sinn und Wissen und durch langjährige Arbeit und Mühe der Vergessenheit entrissen und hier zusammengestellt worden sind, einen für uns unschätzbar Werth haben, kann von einer andauernden Bergung derselben in einem ganz gewöhnlichen, abgelegenen Wohnhause keine Rede sein.<sup>1022</sup>

The Eyschen government took the first concrete steps toward a national museum. In 1892, the curators were solicited to draft a programme and provide information about the surface needed for exhibition and storage. In January 1893, a third commission was established to examine the question of a national museum and its construction. It was composed of Arendt, Kemp (architect, city councillor and future curator of the Historical Section), Luja, Albert Rodange<sup>1023</sup> (chief engineer from 1891 to 1926), Wittenauer (civil engineer and *échevin* of Luxembourg) and Sivering (chief clerk and secretary of the commission).<sup>1024</sup> At least some of them had collaborated in previous years in other contexts. Kemp and Luja had been involved in the construction of the primary school in Limpertsberg, and Dutreux and Luja had travelled together to Brussels once.<sup>1025</sup> Unlike the first two attempts, the third commission developed a project presented in 1894. The selected site was Constitution Square, and Sivering drew a plan of the museum. Yet, in a letter of 3 January 1895, Dutreux formally opposed this project and the agreement between city and state to reunite all collections. It would violate the convention promising the construction of a local Pescatore museum.<sup>1026</sup> A new project elaborated in February 1895 kept the idea of one single museum but with a smaller surface – a reduction

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<sup>1021</sup> ANLux, TP-540/TRP-04039, Letter from the Section Historique to the director of the Athenaeum, 18/12/1888.

<sup>1022</sup> ‘Ein luxemburger Nationalmuseum’, *Echternacher Anzeiger*, January 1891, 5 edition.

<sup>1023</sup> He was the son of Michel Rodange.

<sup>1024</sup> Yegles-Becker, *De Fëschmaart: Description*, 115.

<sup>1025</sup> Philippart, *Luxembourg: Historicisme et identité visuelle d'une capitale*, 96.

<sup>1026</sup> Yegles-Becker, *De Fëschmaart: Description*, 116.

probably due to the exclusion of the Pescatore collection.<sup>1027</sup> In May 1895, Sivering modified the plan again, with a larger surface of up to 3,000 m<sup>2</sup>.<sup>1028</sup> The plan, however, was not realised.

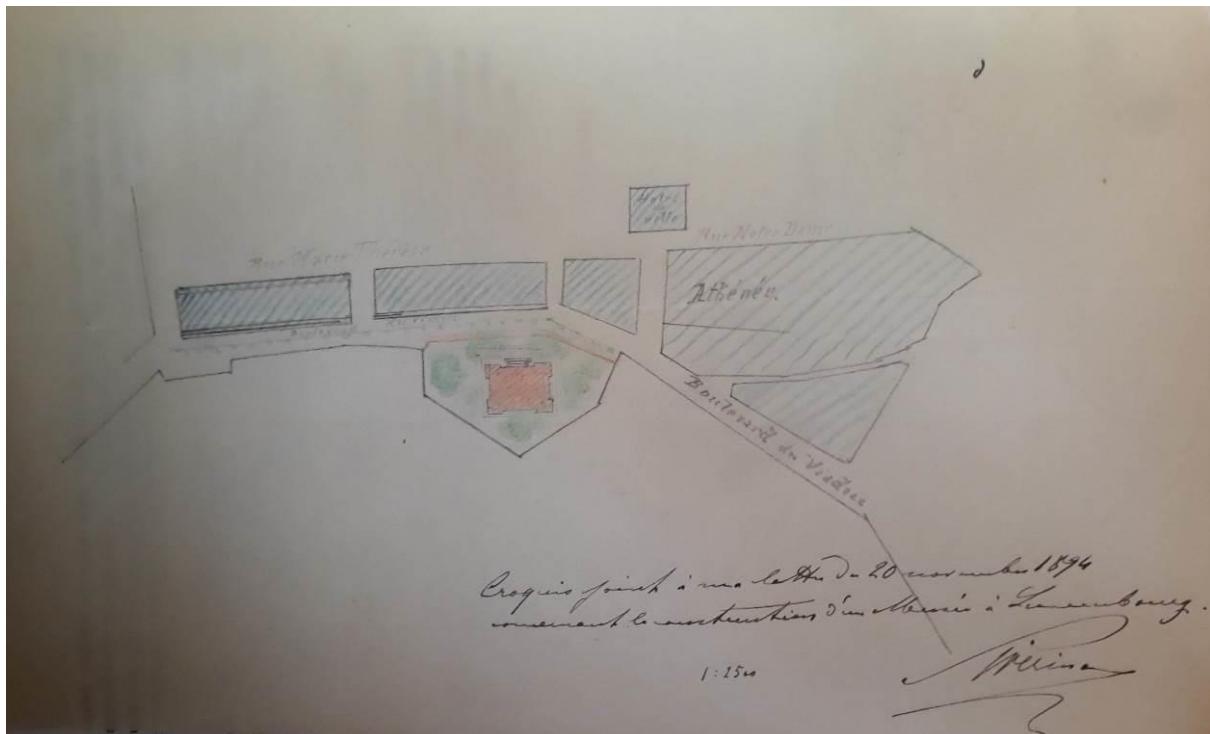


Fig. 37: Sivering's plan of the museum (in red) on the constitution square in 1894. Source: ANLux, TP-540/TRP-04039, Letter from Sivering to the State Minister, 20/11/1894.

Some years later, the question of the Pescatore museum was no longer an obstacle. Tony Dutreux had been a member of the museum commission since November 1896. Maybe it was a calculated move to implicate him directly in the process and avoid potential complications like those in 1894/95. Whatever the reason, Dutreux was more forthcoming. Though he still considered the Pescatore Museum a distinct museum, he reckoned that it could be built in proximity to the national museum.<sup>1029</sup>

In the meantime, the government sent the state architect Charles Arendt (1825-1910) on a study trip to several museums in German cities in March 1895. He collected information on their construction, exhibition programmes and the competitions launched before their construction.<sup>1030</sup> As we have seen, Arendt was a member of two commissions for a national museum and the Historical Section of the Grand-Ducal Institute. He studied in Munich and Brussels and was a state architect from 1858 to 1898. He supervised the restoration of castles and churches, held lectures in Luxembourg and abroad, published articles about national

<sup>1027</sup> Yegles-Becker, 116.

<sup>1028</sup> Yegles-Becker, 117.

<sup>1029</sup> Yegles-Becker, 119.

<sup>1030</sup> Yegles-Becker, 117.

heritage and defended the idea that restoration should give a “soul” to the historical monument.<sup>1031</sup> Arendt was not the first one to visit museums abroad. The Historical Section had sent Nicolas van Werveke to Germany in the early 1880s, but the results of this travel remain unknown.

In his report about the visits, Arendt shared practical suggestions from the architect of the museum in Cologne (Heymann), Professor Haupt of the museum in Hanover, and the architect of the museum in Osnabrück. According to their experiences, it would be best to organise a competition between a limited number of experienced architects without requiring detailed plans for the submissions.<sup>1032</sup> In April 1895, the state minister contacted Henri Havart, general inspector of fine arts (*Beaux-Arts*) in Paris and asked him to either send plans of recently constructed museums in France or indicate publications with helpful information.<sup>1033</sup> Whether Havart followed suit cannot be assessed. In August 1896, Arendt submitted the competition programmes he had collected during his visits to the museums in Krefeld, Cassel, Cologne and Berlin.<sup>1034</sup>

As many times before and after, Luxembourg looked for inspiration abroad. Indeed, in a nationalised *Zwischenraum*, cultural and political actors sought models beyond the borders, preferably in cultures with which they identified most. When destined to fit within the monumental architecture of existing constructions in cities (such as palaces or official buildings), the museums of the 19<sup>th</sup> century were erected in a neo-classical or neo-Renaissance style; this was the case in Berlin, for instance.<sup>1035</sup> These architectural styles – which can be subsumed under historicism – were inspired by older architectural models and often based on a combination of these. The museum that Arendt visited in Krefeld was probably the Kaiser Wilhelm Museum, which opened in 1897. In Cassel, it might have been the Fridericianum (1779), the Neue Galerie (1877), or both. European models inspired the historicist styles in the plans for the national museum in Luxembourg.

The conception of the museum architecture was only one dimension. Another dimension concerned the search for a site predestined to a monumental building. Like the Luxembourg City Council<sup>1036</sup>, the commission discussed potential locations while paying attention to a set

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<sup>1031</sup> Philippart, *Luxembourg: Historicisme et identité visuelle d'une capitale*, 84.

<sup>1032</sup> Yegles-Becker, *De Fëschmaart: Description*, 117; ANLux, TP-540/TRP-04039, Report by Charles Arendt, 23/04/1895.

<sup>1033</sup> Yegles-Becker, 117.

<sup>1034</sup> Yegles-Becker, 119.

<sup>1035</sup> Noordegraaf, *Strategies of Display*, 49–50.

<sup>1036</sup> Yegles-Becker, *De Fëschmaart: Description*, 117–118.

of recurrent criteria in the reports. The location should be easily accessible, especially for tourists. It should also encompass a terrain suitable for a monumental building.<sup>1037</sup> The question of the centrality of the museum was not limited to Luxembourg. Museums had to attract visitors from different neighbourhoods, from the rest of the country and abroad. They were usually close to other services and offers, such as hotels, shops and cultural institutions. The proximity to public transport (in Berlin, the urban railway network; in London or Paris, the underground) facilitated the access.<sup>1038</sup> Such aspects were also apparent in the discussions of the commission when Sivering welcomed the proximity of Constitution Square to the central axes of the city:

M. Sivering estime que cette place conviendrait très bien [...], située dans la ville même à quelques pas du centre, au carrefour de 4 grandes routes, par suite à portée de tous les habitants de la ville haute, du plateau de la gare et des faubourgs, près d'une station de tramway, donc également à portée des habitants du plat pays et des étrangers [...].<sup>1039</sup>

For the reasons discussed above, Constitution Square figured among the recommended sites. The Athenaeum was on the opposite side of the avenue. Another lot behind the Fondation Pescatore was discarded because it was too distanced from the city centre and not easy to reach, especially for foreigners. Other recommended locations were the Saint Esprit Plateau, the Avenue de la Porte Neuve and the Avenue Monterey.<sup>1040</sup> Among the locations not recommended at this stage but which gained importance later on, as we will see, were the Bourbon Plateau and the Altmunster Plateau.<sup>1041</sup>

Simultaneously to the commission's work, Jean-Pierre Knepper<sup>1042</sup>, Funck, and Arendt, submitted each a draft project in the context of a national competition. Unfortunately, not every submission appears to have been conserved. Funck's project is entirely missing. From the

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<sup>1037</sup> ANLux, TP-540/TRP-04039, Meeting of the Commission pour la construction d'un musée national (04/04/1898).

<sup>1038</sup> Véronique Tarasco-Long, ‘Capitales culturelles et patrimoine artistique: Musée de l'ancien et du nouveau monde (1850-1940)’, in *Le temps des capitales culturelles XVIIIe-XXe siècles*, ed. Christophe Charle (Seyssel: Champ Vallon, 2009), 146.

<sup>1039</sup> ANLux, TP-540/TRP-04039, Report of the meeting of 25 April 1898 of the Commission pour la construction d'un Musée national, 28/04/1898.

<sup>1040</sup> ANLux, TP-540/TRP-04039, Report of the meeting of 4 April 1898 of the Commission pour la construction d'un musée national, 25/04/1898.

<sup>1041</sup> Yegles-Becker, *De Fëschmaart: Description*, 119–120.

<sup>1042</sup> Knepper was member of the Cercle artistique de Luxembourg, alumni of the Athenaeum and had studied in Aachen. While working on a draft project of the national museum, he visited museums in many cities such as Augsburg, Munich, Stuttgart, Bern, Paris, London, Brussels, Antwerp and Trier (Philippart, *Luxembourg: Historicisme et identité visuelle d'une capitale*, 106). Knepper had issues delivering the plans on time, as the letters sent to the director general of public works reveal. One reason he provided was his travel to Brussels and Antwerp to visit the museums in these cities (ANLux, TP-540/TRP-04039, Letter from Knepper to the director general of public works, 19/08/1897).

remaining plans, at least Knepper projected his museum on the lawn next to the Avenue de la Porte Neuve. Both Arendt and Knepper devised their museums in a historicist style. In April 1898, the projects were examined by the commission, and all three were criticised for various aspects, such as the number of staircases, the inconsistent styles, or the distribution of the rooms.<sup>1043</sup> Knepper's project was deemed too expensive, breaking the limit of 300,000 francs. Funck's plan was criticised for not having a monumental façade and so many unclarities that it was difficult to assess whether the budget could be respected. Following Yegles-Becker, the projects were drafted after an agreement was struck concerning the Pescatore Museum. The latter would be constructed next to the Pescatore Foundation, while the lawn on the other side of the Avenue de la Porte-Neuve would be reserved for the national museum.<sup>1044</sup> However, even as late as 1898, the government had not decided on the location<sup>1045</sup>, which begs the question whether these plans were explicitly drafted for the lot in question.

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<sup>1043</sup> ANLux, TP-540/TRP-04039, Report of the meeting of 25 April 1898 of the Commission pour la construction d'un Musée national, 28/04/1898.

<sup>1044</sup> Yegles-Becker, *De Fèschmaart: Description*, 119.

<sup>1045</sup> This was clearly voiced in the meeting of 25 April 1898.

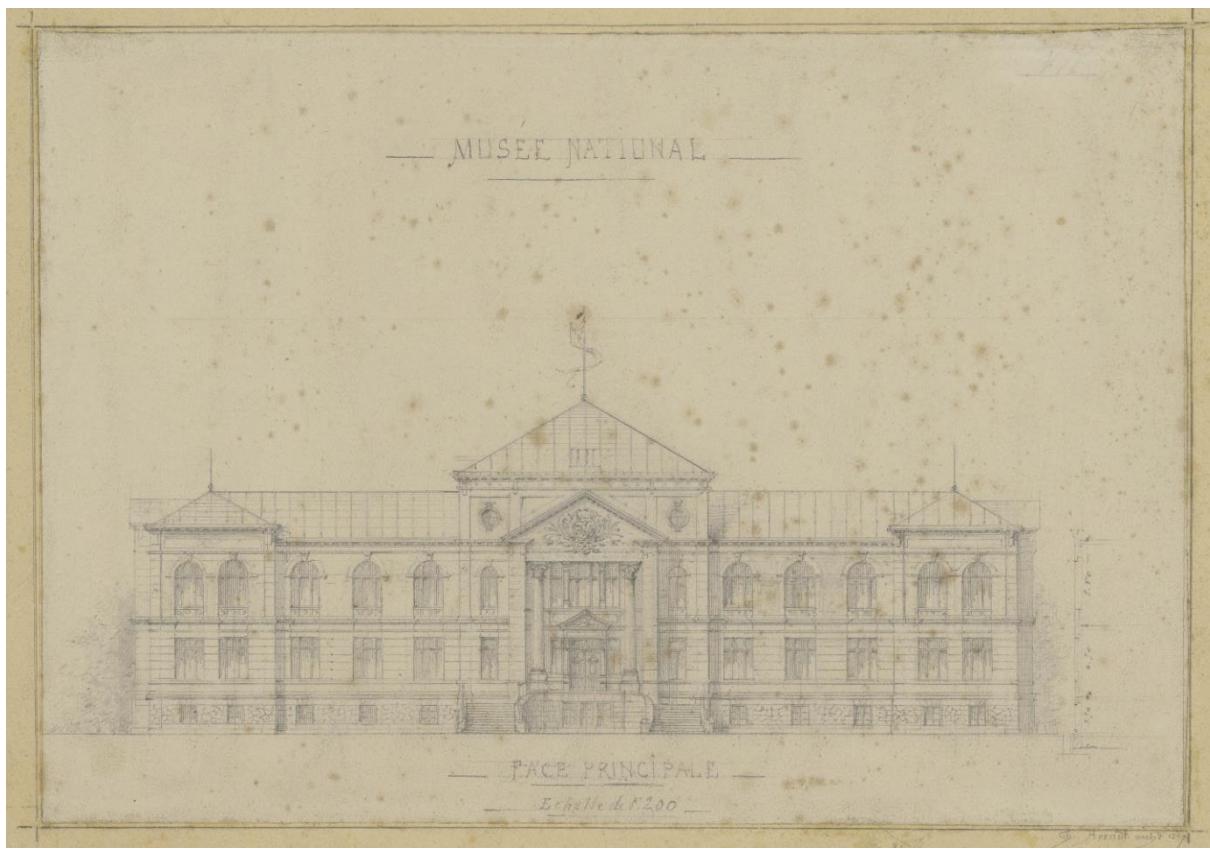


Fig. 38: Front view of Charles Arendt's project. Source: ANLux, BP-45-0038, Musée national - Façade principale, Charles Arendt, 1897.



Fig. 39: Perspective of Arendt's museum. Source: ANLux, BP-45-0041, Perspective, Charles Arendt, 1897.



Fig. 40: Interior view of Arendt's museum. Source: ANLux, BP-45-0040, Vestibule, Charles Arendt,

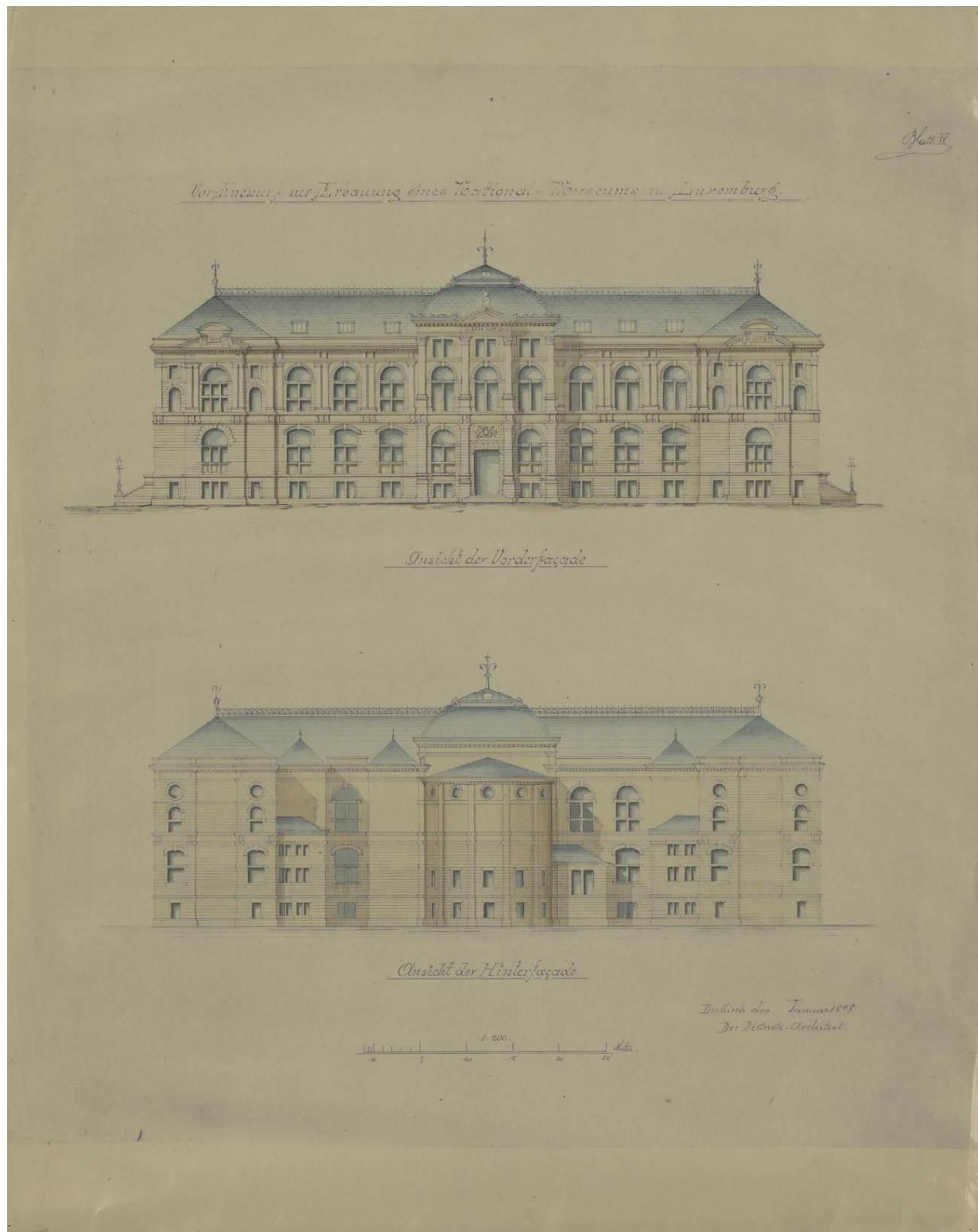


Fig. 41: Front and rear views of Knepper's museum and its historicist style. Source: ANLux, BP-45-0037, Façades, Jean-Pierre Knepper, 1898.

The architects reacted to the commission's criticisms, as letters from Arendt and Knepper demonstrate. Knepper's writing of 29 July 1898 to the director general quoted a series of examples in Belgium, France and Germany to underpin his architectural choices. He had visited museums in Brussels and Antwerp, which he had once mentioned in a letter to the director general of public works in August 1897.<sup>1046</sup> Knepper highlighted, for instance, that the circular staircase was copied from the staircase in the museum of Sèvres near Paris, which also inspired the staircase in the Provincial Museum in Hanover, Germany (today's Niedersächsisches Landesmuseum Hannover). As for the library staircase, he referred to the National Library in Paris and the Royal Library in Brussels. Furthermore, for the façade, the architect referred to buildings in Stuttgart, Brussels and Paris.<sup>1047</sup> In Knepper's case, the quotation of foreign models served to legitimise the architectural choices while showing the extent to which Luxembourgish architects could rely on European examples when designing buildings.

Like Knepper, Arendt did not agree with the commission's observations and contacted foreign colleagues who compiled favourable assessments of his plan. These colleagues, some of them he had met during his visit to Germany, were van Massenhové in Brussels, A. Kisa in Cologne, Haupt in Hanover and Heimann, chief architect of Cologne (*Stadtbaurath*).<sup>1048</sup> The commission requested a counter-examination by an architect from Brussels, Gédéon Bordiau, who issued a negative assessment on 21 December 1898. According to Yegles-Becker, Bordiau had personal disagreements with Arendt dating back to the early 1890s, when the latter criticised Bordiau's project of the Grand-Ducal Palace extension.<sup>1049</sup> Whether personal disagreements played a role is difficult to assess, especially as it was not the only time Bordiau issued a negative assessment. Indeed, Bordiau also evaluated the projects submitted to the government in the context of the international competition of 1899. In this document, dated 6 May 1899, he criticised all of them for not being representative enough:

[Les projets] doivent avoir un aspect plus simple et plus monumental. Il est indispensable, dans tous les pays, de profiter de toutes les occasions qui se présentent pour édifier des Monuments qui peuvent intéresser les nationaux et les étrangers et ces occasions sont déjà bien rares dans le Grand-Duché pour ne pas utiliser celle du Musée national projeté.<sup>1050</sup>

<sup>1046</sup> ANLux, TP-540/TRP-04039, Letter from Knepper to the director general of public works, 19/08/1897.

<sup>1047</sup> ANLux, TP-540/TRP-04039, Letter from Knepper to the director general of public works, 29/07/1898.

<sup>1048</sup> Yegles-Becker, *De Fëschmaart: Description*, 120.

<sup>1049</sup> Yegles-Becker, 120–121.

<sup>1050</sup> ANLux, TP-540/TRP-04038, *Construction d'un Musée national à Luxembourg: Rapport sur les projets remis au Gouvernement du Grand-Duché*, 06/05/1899.

Unlike the projects submitted in the national competition, the outcome of the international competition in 1899 was more fruitful. The commission favourably assessed the project submitted by Viennese architect Karl (or Carl) Seidl. According to Seidl's concept, the museum would be located on the Bourbon Plateau, one of the locations discussed but not recommended in the previous year by the commission. The architecture of the building was modelled after the *Hofmuseen* in Vienna and, with its historicist style, evocative of the Renaissance. It seemed that the national museum project would make significant progress for the first time. Seidl's museum was integrated into the 1901 urbanistic plans of the Bourbon Plateau by the German architect Josef Stübben and approved by the Chamber of Deputies on 25 February 1902.<sup>1051</sup> According to Stübben's plan, which included two squares, Place Monumentale and Place de l'Eventail (later Place de Paris), the museum would be located at one end of the new Avenue de l'Eglise, traversing the Plateau from east to west.<sup>1052</sup> The choice of Seidl's concept was not well received by Luxembourgish architects, as it supposedly surpassed the budget imposed by the government in the national competition. However, the government appreciated the project as a monumental building. Its architectural structure with four wings was not atypical for a museum building at the time, like the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam, the Palais des Beaux-Arts in Lille, the Alte Museum in Berlin, or precisely the *Hofmuseen* in Vienna.<sup>1053</sup>

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<sup>1051</sup> Yegles-Becker, *De Fëschmaart: Description*, 121.

<sup>1052</sup> Antoinette Lorang, *Plateau Bourbon und Avenue de la Liberté: späthistorische Architekturen in Luxemburg*, vol. 103 (Luxemburg: Section historique de l'Institut grand-ducal, 1988), 37.

<sup>1053</sup> Lorang, 103:53.



*Fig. 42: Concept of the museum and its environment. Source: ANLux, BP-45-0003, Musée national - Vue d'ensemble, Carl Seidl, 1899. Photo: Christian Mosar.*



*Fig. 43: Front view of Seidl's museum. Source: ANLux, BP-45-0001, Carl Seidl, Musée national - Façade principale, Carl Seidl, 1899. Photo: Christian Mosar.*

Yet, the national museum imagined by Seidl has never been constructed for at least three possible reasons. First, several modifications were made to Seidl's project, such as the suppression of ballrooms to reduce costs. The city, however, desired such rooms and, as a result, constructed the Cercle Cité on the Place d'Armes in 1907. According to Yegles-Becker, the old power relations between city and state became visible when the city decided to install the Pescatore collection in the Cercle. As a result, the local authorities lost their interest in the construction of a museum for the Pescatore collection.<sup>1054</sup> The historian Antoinette Lorang indicated a similar reason, writing about disagreements between city and state and adding the First World War as a second reason:

Wenn das Museum schließlich doch nicht gebaut wurde, so waren dafür Staat und Gemeinde verantwortlich, da sie sich nicht über die Ausführung einigen konnten. Der Ausbruch des Weltkrieges ließ das Vorhaben gänzlich untergehen.<sup>1055</sup>

In addition to the power relations and the war, there might be a third reason. In fact, from around 1900 onwards, only public services implicated in the country's economic development were provided with new buildings adapted to their needs; the other services were located in existing buildings.<sup>1056</sup> Though the museum was not constructed, the envisaged site did not remain unused. In 1920, another monumental building filled the space previously destined for the erection of the national museum: the headquarters of the steel company ARBED. The urbanistic plans by Stübben have never been entirely realised, even if they influenced the subsequent urbanistic development of the Bourbon Plateau.<sup>1057</sup> The plan by architect Edouard André for the Bourbon Plateau still reserved a space for the museum, even in the allotment plan based on André's concept adopted by the government in July 1906.<sup>1058</sup>

The project of a national museum attracted a renewed interest around the years 1907-1913. The two architects Dutreux and Funck developed a draft project in 1907. The former artillery casern in Rue Aldringen, which was used by the Ecole d'artisans, would encompass not only the museum but also the National Library.<sup>1059</sup> This idea was not new, as it seemed to be discussed around 1877.<sup>1060</sup> According to a letter from the director general of the treasury,

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<sup>1054</sup> Yegles-Becker, *De Fëschmaart: Description*, 122.

<sup>1055</sup> Lorang, *Plateau Bourbon und Avenue de la Liberté*, 103:54.

<sup>1056</sup> Philippart, *Luxembourg: Historicisme et identité visuelle d'une capitale*, 85.

<sup>1057</sup> Alain Linster and Corina Mersch, 'L'architecture au XXe siècle: un modernisme bien tempéré', in *L'art au Luxembourg: de la Renaissance au début du XXIe siècle*, ed. Alex Langini (Bruxelles: Fonds Mercator, 2006), 121.

<sup>1058</sup> Lorang, *Plateau Bourbon und Avenue de la Liberté*, 103:39.

<sup>1059</sup> Yegles-Becker, *De Fëschmaart: Description*, 122.

<sup>1060</sup> In a letter of 11 April 1877, the director of the Athenaeum shared his concerns about a project to demolish the depot of the casern on the St. Esprit plateau and to construct a building for the

Mathias Mongenast, to the director general of Public Works, Charles de Waha, the considered building became available around 1911 as the school moved to Limpertsberg. Mongenast suggested resuming negotiations with the city administration and finding a new agreement.<sup>1061</sup> In December 1913, the Natural Sciences Section of the Grand-Ducal Institute proposed to create an internal commission to study and collect information on the necessary conditions to conserve the collections in the future museum. In addition, Mongenast had already planned to nominate a special commission to lay the preparatory ground for a draft programme of the future museum.<sup>1062</sup> However, like previous attempts, the initiatives were halted for undisclosed reasons. The outbreak of the First World War and the ensuing military occupation of Luxembourg could have been one important factor. Managing the difficult situation during the occupation (food shortages, higher costs of living, social unrest) was more urgent than constructing a museum.

After WWI, a new attempt was launched with a national competition in 1919 for a museum on the Altmunster Plateau.<sup>1063</sup> The jury was composed of Victor Ferrant, Rodange (chief engineer), Vannérus, Dumont (government official), Hirsch (director of the Ecole d'artisans), d'Huart (teacher and librarian) and Sosthène Weis (acting state architect).<sup>1064</sup> The architects were required to design a building accommodating the Natural History Museum and the Archaeological Museum. The Pescatore Museum would receive a separate building. Each division would have its separate administration. In the case of the Archaeological Museum, the programmes provide an insight into the composition of the collections at the time: lapidary collection, prehistoric room, Antiquity, numismatic collection, weapons, applied arts, furniture (18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries), ceramics, ethnography. There would also have been rooms dedicated

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archaeological museum, the natural history museum, and the state library. He reminded the director general of treasury, Victor de Roebé, that the curators were teachers at the Athenaeum and that the school covered the fees and the compensations for the librarians. A delocalization of the collections would deter teachers to continue their tasks and lead to a deterioration of the objects' conservation state. Moreover, the financial compensations and fees would need to be entirely covered by the state (ANLux, TP-540/TRP-04039, Letter from the director of the Athenaeum to the director general of finance, 11/04/1877).

<sup>1061</sup> ANLux, FIN-03748, Letter from the director general of finance to the director general of public works, 04/08/1911.

<sup>1062</sup> ANLux, TP-540/TRP-04038, Letter from the natural sciences section of the IGD to the director general of finance, 18/12/1913. Unfortunately, no documents have been found that relate to the activities of this commission. Whether it really met, cannot be determined. On the other hand, the natural sciences section nominated three members for its own internal commission.

<sup>1063</sup> ANLux, TP-540/TRP-04036, Letter from the acting state architect to the director general of public works, 20/01/1912.

<sup>1064</sup> ANLux, TP-491/TRP-03769, *Programme du concours public pour la construction d'un musée et d'une bibliothèque à Luxembourg*, 1919.

to Paul Eyschen (probably for his bequeathed collection), the sovereigns, the fortress of Luxembourg and the City of Luxembourg.<sup>1065</sup>

The first prize was awarded to both Jean-Pierre Koenig and Paul Wigreux, the latter working for the administration of Esch-sur-Alzette; Auguste van Werveke, an architect from Diekirch and brother of Nicolas van Werveke, received the second prize.<sup>1066</sup> Koenig and van Werveke were founding members of the Cercle artistique de Luxembourg (CAL), Paul Wigreux had worked as an intern for Jean-Pierre Koenig. The latter conceived the building of the State Bank (Banque et Caisse d'Epargne de l'Etat) on the Bourbon Plateau. Knepper, another founding member of the CAL, also participated, though he did not figure among the winners.<sup>1067</sup> Besides the plans of the three winners, there are other anonymous plans of an architect. Yet, these plans might very well belong to Knepper. A comparison with the handwriting on his 1898 plans does not allow a conclusion, but the two museums have a similar style.

The projects reunited all the collections on one site, but not necessarily in the same building.<sup>1068</sup> Unlike the 19<sup>th</sup> century plans, those of 1919 include floor plans showing the arrangement of the rooms. Van Werveke and Koenig had even inscribed the path visitors should take in the museum with dotted lines or arrows. In his comments, van Werveke explained that the disposition of the rooms would allow an uninterrupted visit of all three sections (archaeology, natural history, Pescatore collection), as well as a visit of only one section.<sup>1069</sup> Unfortunately, the architects did not provide details on the models they used for designing their museums. In the end, the organisation of the 1919 competition was in vain. The projects have never become a reality. The reasons are unclear, though the financial situation might have played a role, considering the difficult post-war situation.

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<sup>1065</sup> ANLux, TP-491/TRP-03769, *Programme du concours public pour la construction d'un musée et d'une bibliothèque à Luxembourg*, 1919.

<sup>1066</sup> Yegles-Becker, *De Fëschmaart: Description*, 122.

<sup>1067</sup> Philippart, *Luxembourg: Historicisme et identité visuelle d'une capitale*, 106.

<sup>1068</sup> Yegles-Becker, *De Fëschmaart: Description*, 123.

<sup>1069</sup> ANLux, BP-45-0009, *Mémoire explicatif*, Auguste van Werveke, 1919.

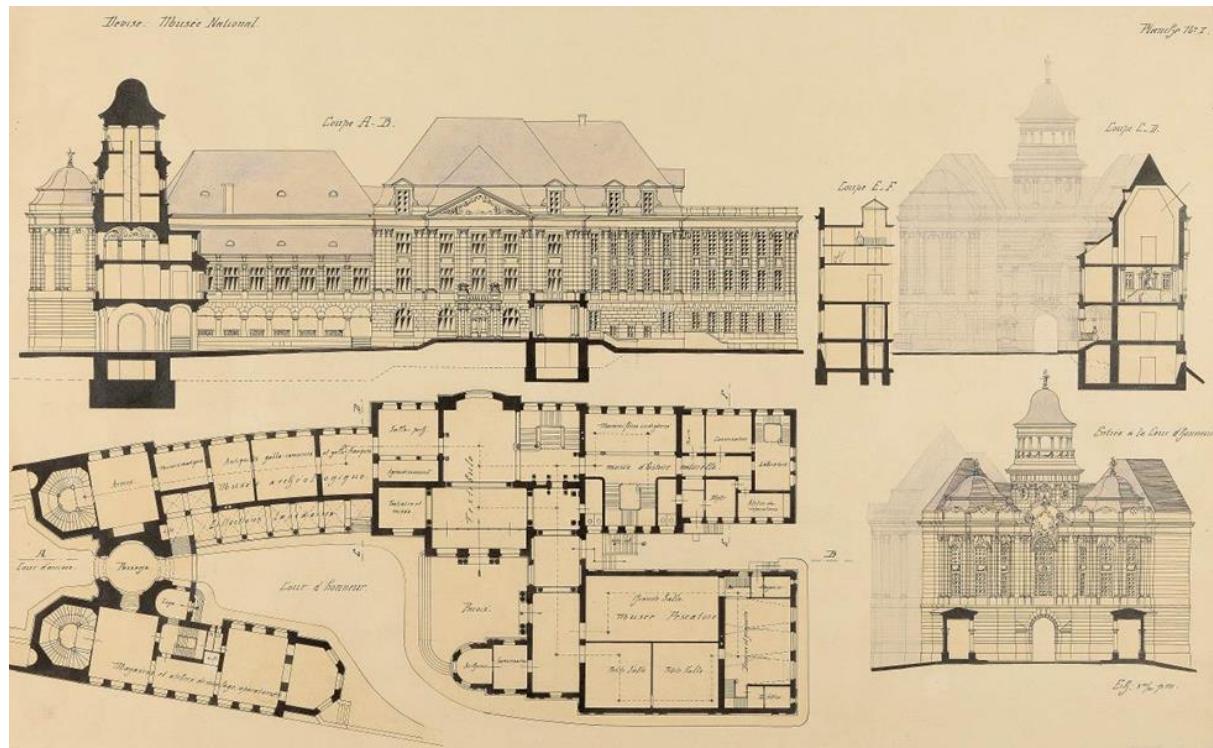


Fig. 44: Auguste van Werveke's project with the floor plan showing the disposition of the rooms. Source: ANLux, BP-45-0010, Plan du rez-de-chaussée avec diverses coupes et façades, Auguste van Werveke, 1919. Photo: Christian Mosar.

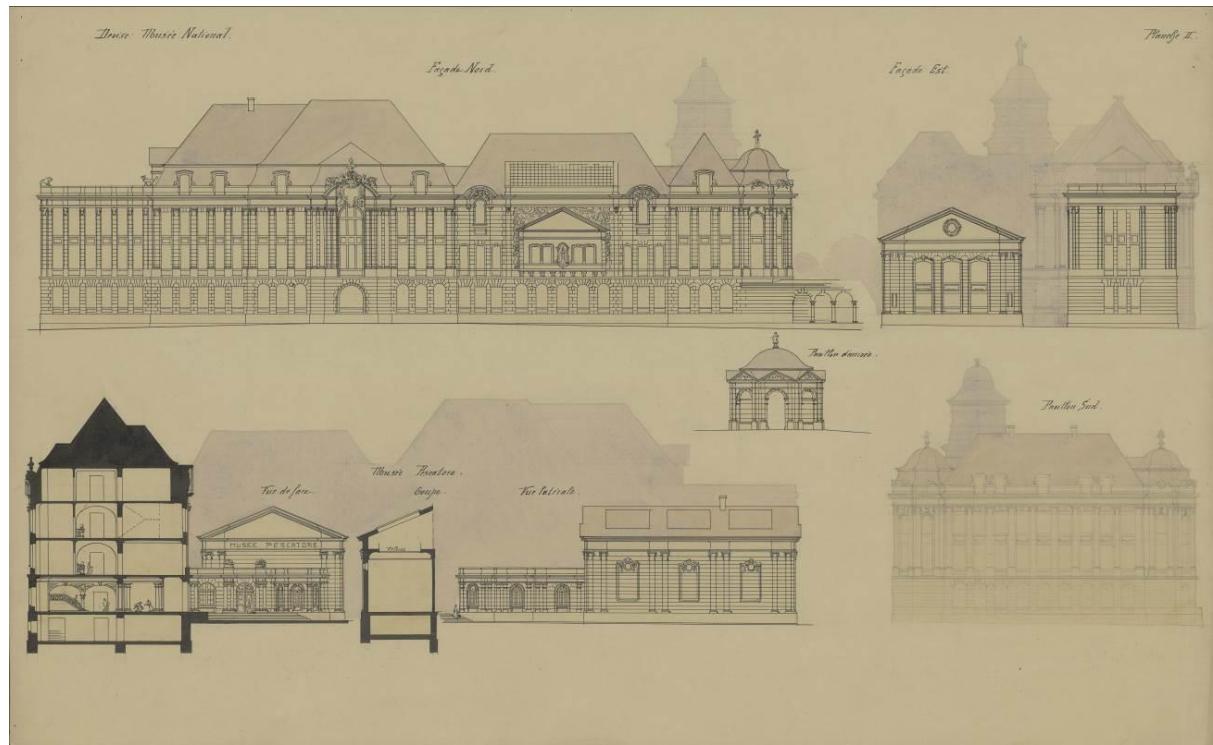


Fig. 45: Auguste van Werveke's project. Source: ANLux, BP-45-0011, *Diverses coupes et façades*, Auguste van Werveke, 1919

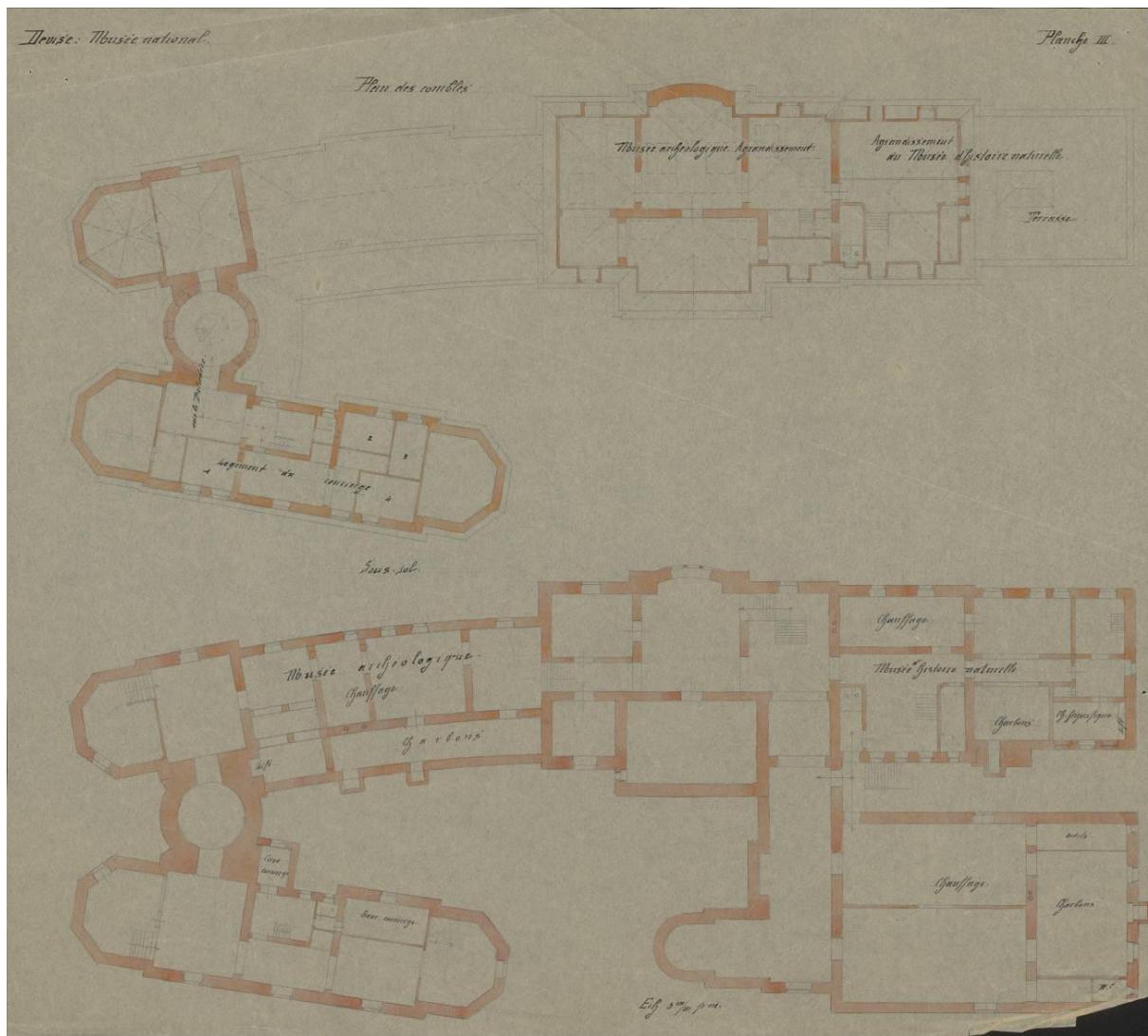


Fig. 46: Floor plans of Auguste van Werveke's project (basement). Source: ANLux, BP-45-0012, Plan des combles et du sous-sol, Auguste van Werveke, 1919.

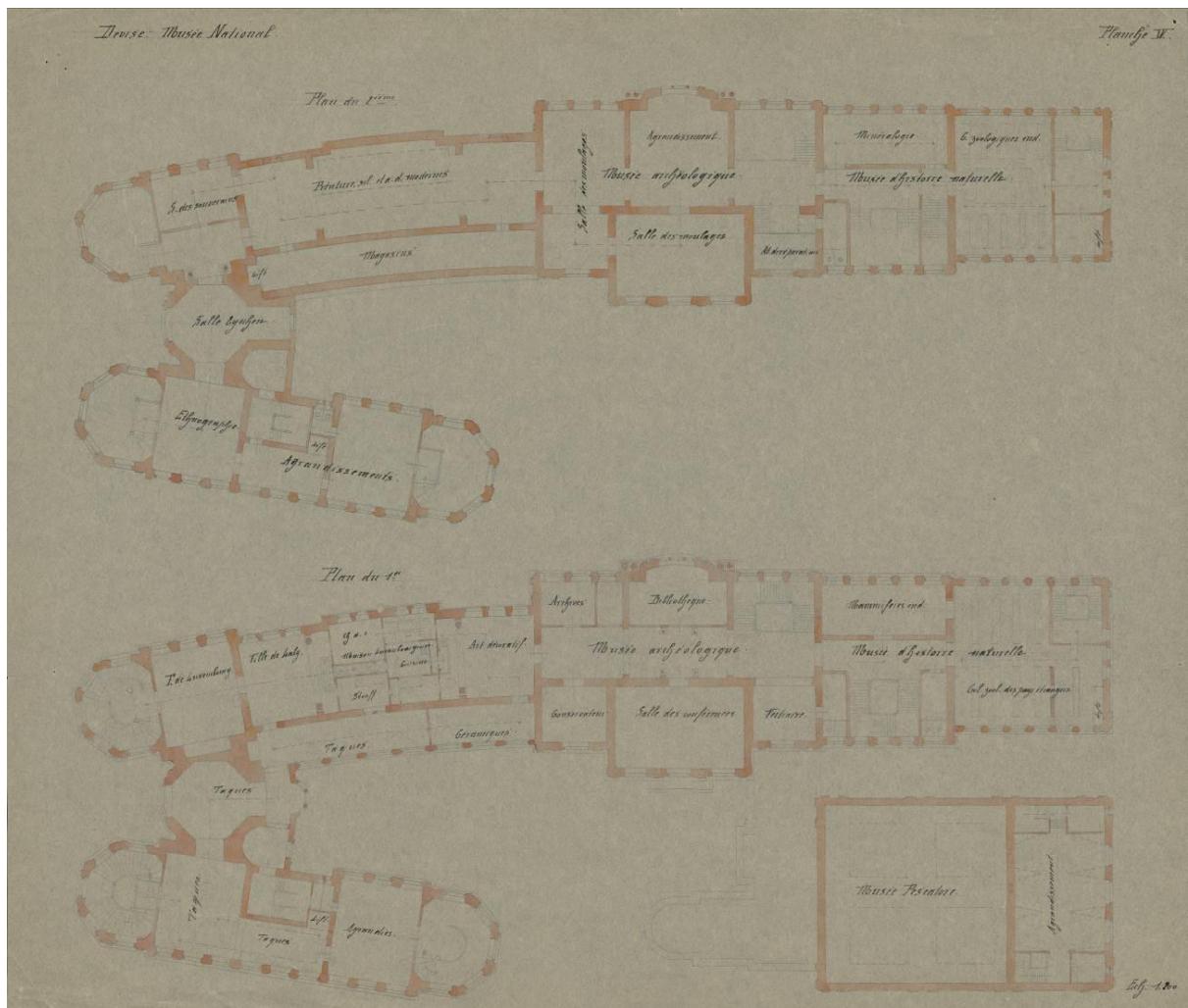


Fig. 47: Floor plan of Auguste van Werveke's project (first and second floors). Source: ANLux, BP-45-0013, Plan des deux étages, Auguste van Werveke, 1919.

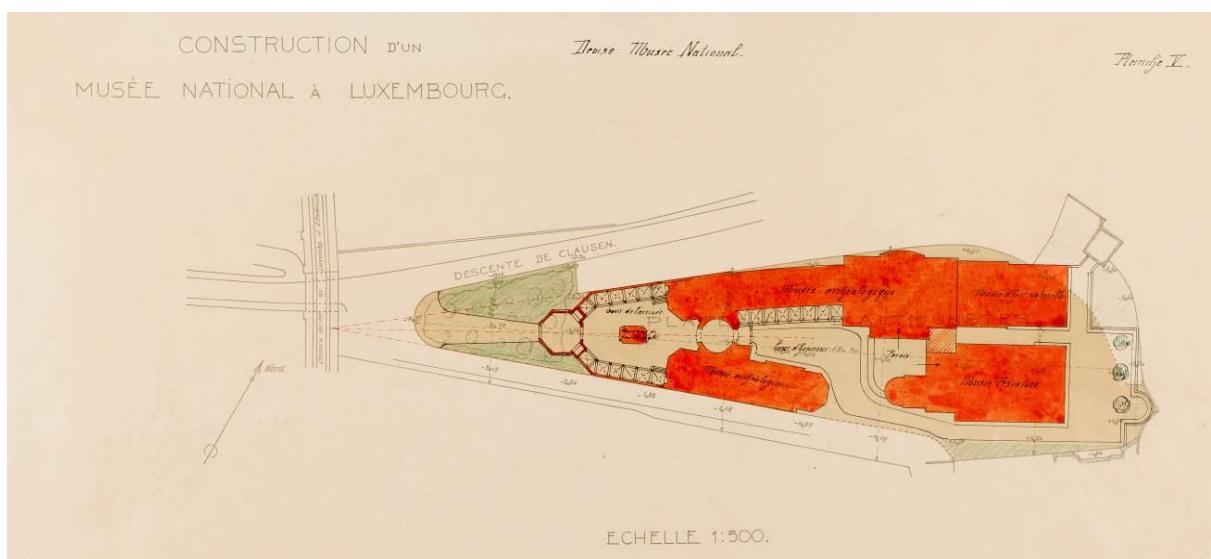


Fig. 48: Situation plan of Auguste van Werveke's project. Source: ANLux, BP-45-0014, Plan de situation, Auguste van Werveke, 1919. Photo: Christian Mosar.

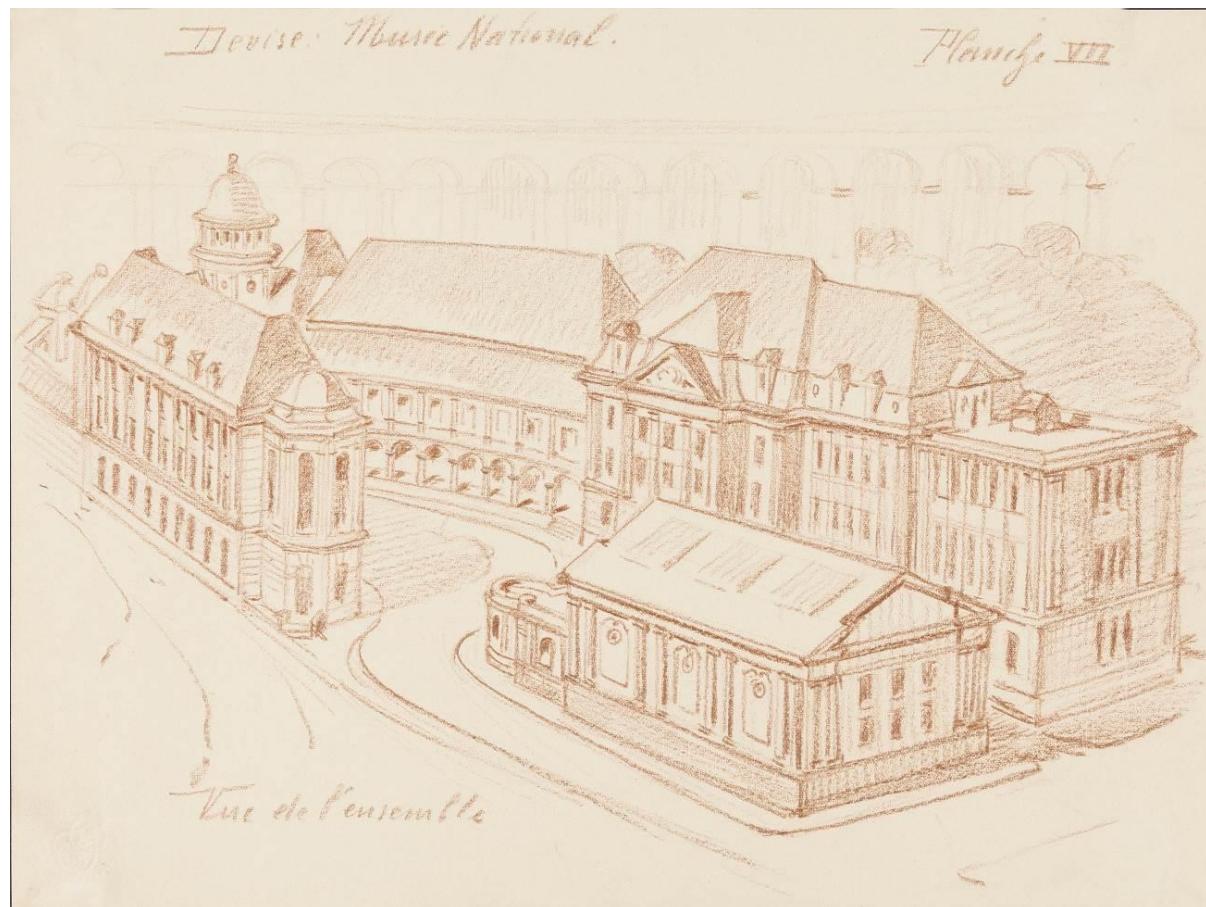


Fig. 49: Drawing of Auguste van Werveke's project. Source: ANLux, BP-45-0016, *Vue d'ensemble*, Auguste van Werveke, 1919. Photo: Christian Mosar.



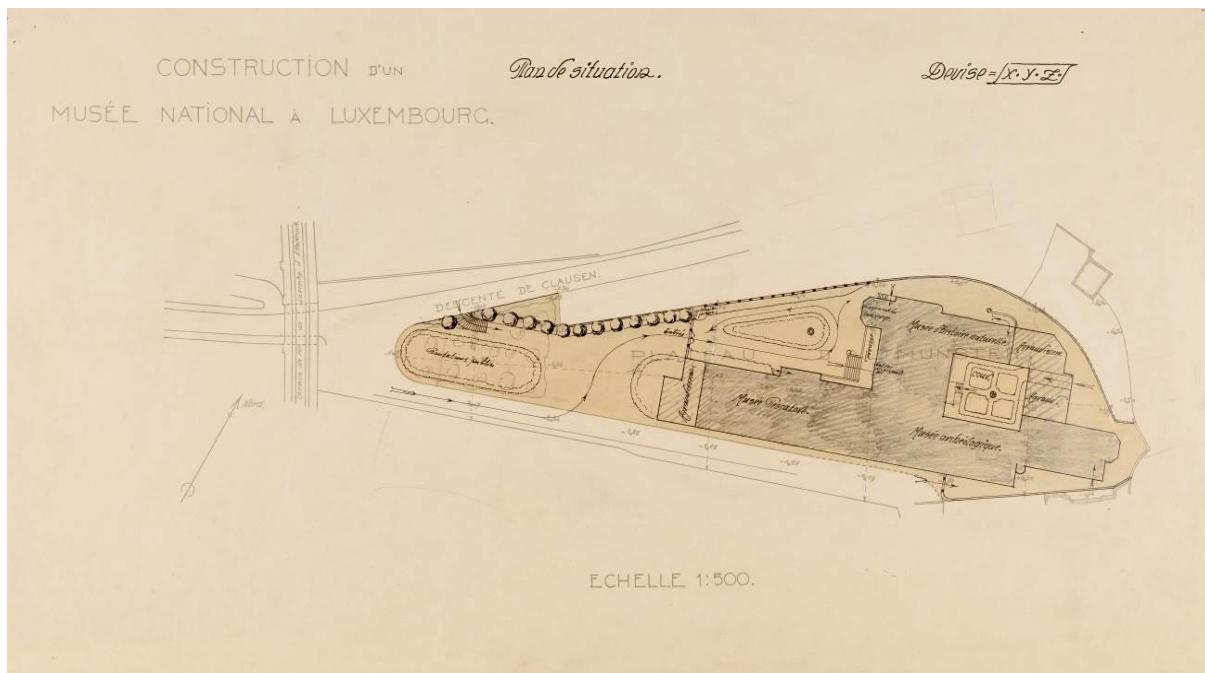
Fig. 50: Ground floor plan of Paul Wigreux' project. Source: ANLux, BP-45-0019, *Plan du rez-de-chaussée*, Paul Wigreux, 1919.



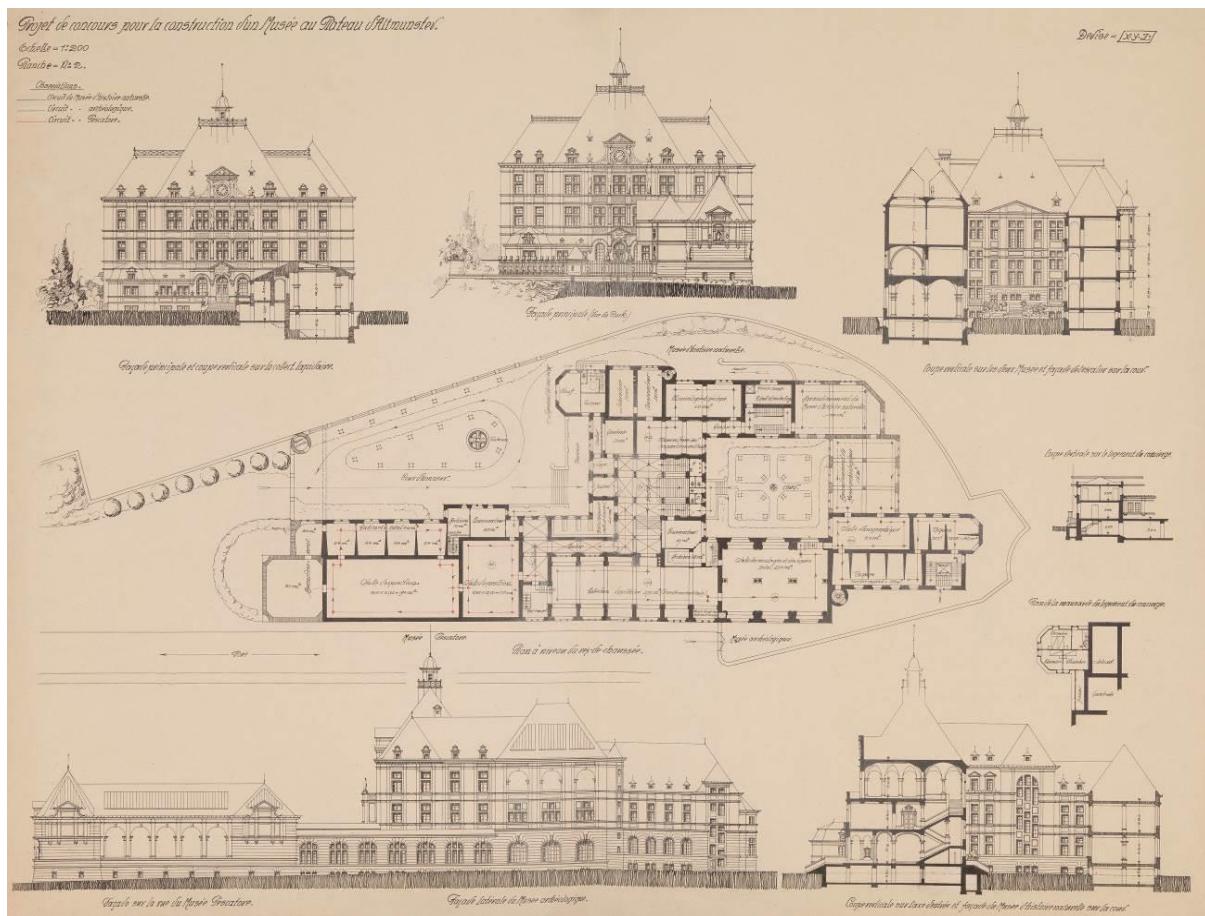
Fig. 51: Drawing of Paul Wigreux' museum on the side facing the road to Clausen. Source: ANLux, BP-45-0027, Façade sur la descente de Clausen, Paul Wigreux, 1919.



Fig. 52: Drawing of Paul Wigreux' building. Source: ANLux, BP-45-0028, Perspective, Paul Wigreux, 1919.



*Fig. 53: Situation plan of Jean-Pierre Koenig's project. Source: ANLux, BP-45-0031, Plan de situation, Jean-Pierre Koenig, 1919. Photo: Christian Mosar.*



*Fig. 54: Drawings and ground floor plan of Jean-Pierre Koenig's project. Note the arrows that he inscribed in his floor plan. Source: ANLux, BP-45-0032, Divers plans, coupes et façades, Jean-Pierre Koenig, 1919. Photo: Christian Mosar.*

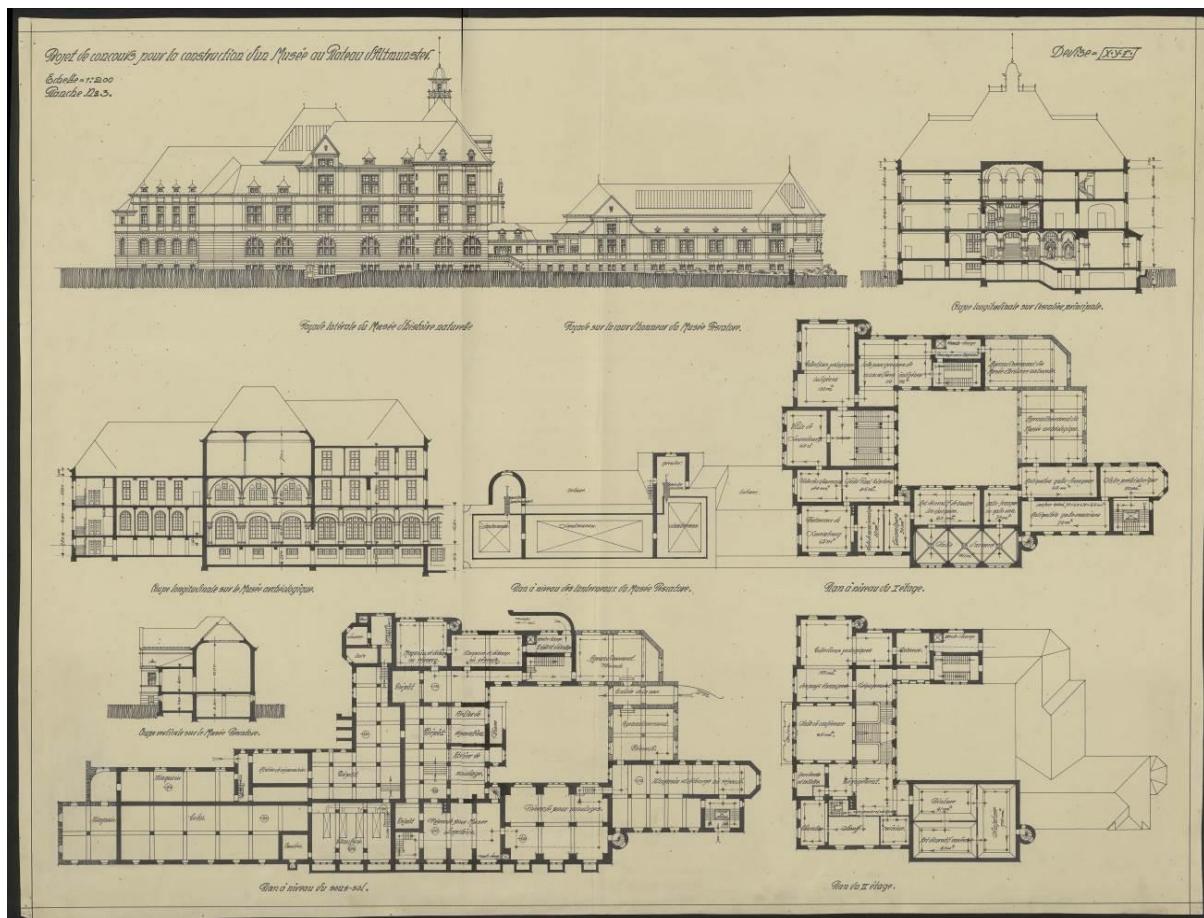
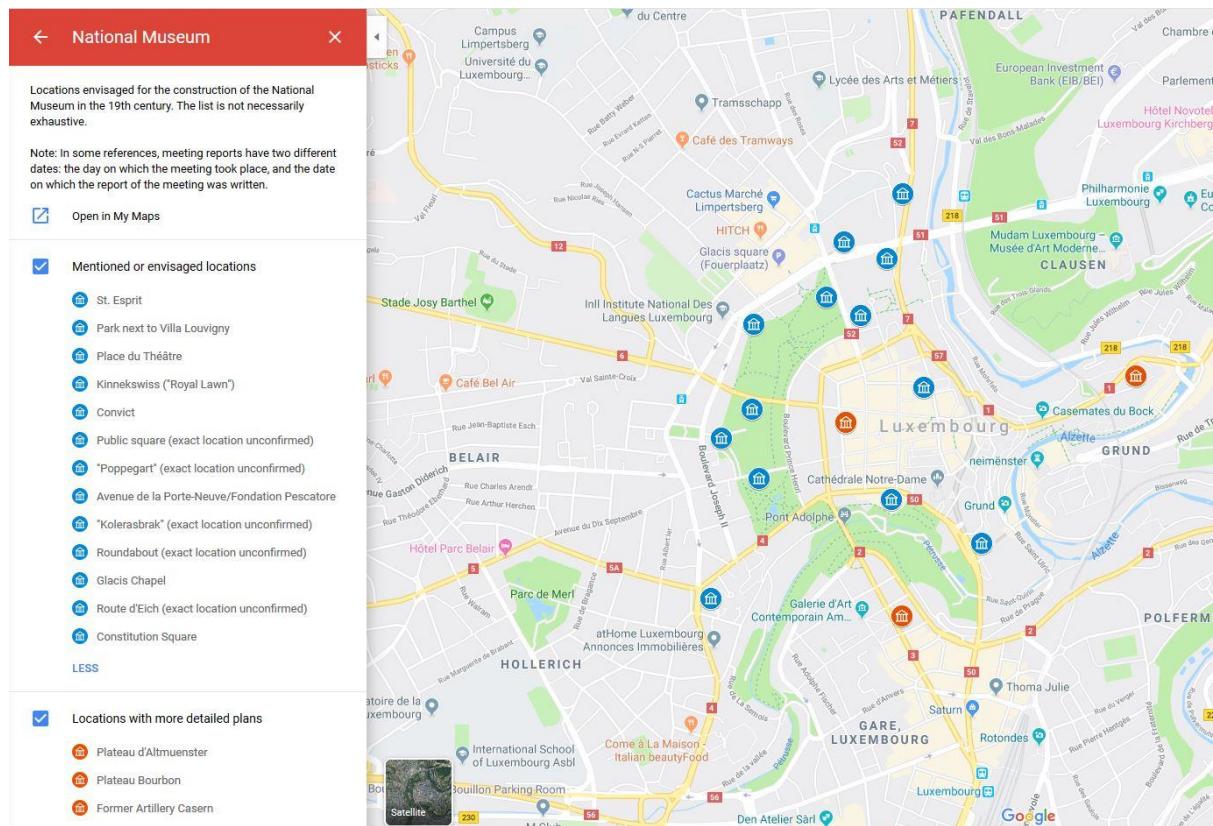


Fig. 55: Drawings and floor plans (first and second floors, and basement) of Jean-Pierre Koenig's project. Source: ANLux, BP-45-0033, Divers plans, coupes et façades, Jean-Pierre Koenig, 1919.



Fig. 56: Drawing of Jean-Pierre Koenig's museum. Source: ANLux, BP-45-0034, Perspective, Jean-Pierre Koenig, 1919.

A distant reading of the locations discussed and envisaged for the national museum since the 1890s reveals certain geographical patterns. As shown on the map<sup>1070</sup>, most potential locations were in the western part of Luxembourg City, now dominated by the municipal park and the Pescatore Foundation. Indeed, the city centre did not provide enough space for a monumental building. Hence, most potential sites are situated in an area that, at the time, became progressively available with the dismantling of the fortifications. It should be noted, however, that this map is not necessarily exhaustive.



*Fig. 57: Map showing the different sites mentioned in the sources, among them three sites for which plans were drafted. Made with Google Maps. The pins in orange indicate the locations for which advanced plans existed.*

<sup>1070</sup> The map can also be visualised at: <https://goo.gl/4nhH6c> or by scanning the QR code below with a mobile device.



Meanwhile, associations defended the construction of a museum, adding claims tributary of their overall objectives. In 1916, the Verein für Volks- und Schulhygiene launched a petition to construct a national museum, including not only arts and sciences but also the theme of hygiene, especially in the interest of the “working classes” (*arbeitende Klassen*).<sup>1071</sup> Sections on tuberculosis, STDs and alcoholism (“social diseases”) could be created. In October 1920, the Verein Luxemburger Naturfreunde bemoaned the state of the museum in Pfaffenthal. Moving the museum to the city centre would attract more visitors and tourists. These associations contributed to keeping debates surrounding the museum alive. The press did not ignore the subject, too. An article in the *Die Volkstribüne* on 11 August 1917 was dedicated to the national museum. In an extensive quote of a lecture organised by the Verein für Volks- und Schulhygiene, the First World War was explicitly mentioned as a reason for the lack of interest in the construction of the museum.<sup>1072</sup>

An in-depth comparison of the museum’s history in Luxembourg with that of museums in other countries is difficult to accomplish. Literature about the history of museums has barely covered or mentioned developments during the interwar period, as if nothing of importance had happened. This might be true for some countries, such as France, where, according to André Gob and Noémie Drouget, only a slow development was taking place before the 1960s, followed by criticisms of traditional museology in the 1970s<sup>1073</sup> and the New Museology consolidated in the 1980s. In Luxembourg, the importance of the interwar period for the development of the museum should not be underestimated, even more so when considering the larger cultural policy context of nation-building, nationalism, and conservation of the past.

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<sup>1071</sup> ANLux, TP-540/TRP-04038, Letter from the Verein für Volks- und Schulhygiene to the Chamber of Deputies, 09/04/1916.

<sup>1072</sup> ‘Unser Nationalmuseum’, *Die Volkstribüne*, August 1917.

<sup>1073</sup> Gob and Drouget, *La muséologie*, 30. But even then, there were developments taking place concerning, for instance, folklore museums.

### III.4.4. The construction of the national museum

All of us don't want to die before the museum is constructed, for instance.<sup>1074</sup>

Batty Weber (1860-1940)

After decades of pipe dreams, it was a fire that literally sparked a new process. On 19 April 1921, flames consumed the roof of the Collart-de Scherff building, situated on the Marché-aux-Poissons. The state acquired the building that belonged to Joseph Bech's family<sup>1075</sup> for 520,000 francs in late 1922/early 1923<sup>1076</sup>. The government decided that the collections should be conserved and exhibited in this building. The peculiar twist resided in the fact that an institution promoted by the bourgeoisie was going to move into a building that had belonged to a bourgeois family. Its location in the old city centre was close to the (mythical) origin of Luxembourg City, the Bock promontory.

Moreover, the building was in the same neighbourhood as the symbols of political power: the Grand-Ducal Palace and the Chamber of Deputies to the south, the commercial heart and the main squares to the west. This was not different in other European capitals. The Louvre was established in a former royal palace in the heart of Paris and the political power of a centralised state. The National Gallery in London is close to the Parliament and Buckingham Palace.<sup>1077</sup> Paul Wigreux, state architect from 1921 to 1941, conceived plans for the museum in the Collart-de Scherff house.<sup>1078</sup> Several drafts were produced, but only the version of 1933 was executed. It reunited the archaeological and natural history collections under the same roof. The Pescatore collection was not included in the plans.<sup>1079</sup>

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<sup>1074</sup> Own translation. "Wir möchten alle nicht sterben, ehe z.B. das Museum gebaut ist." (ANLux, BW-AK-007-0710, 08/06/1916, <https://battyweber.uni.lu/images/original/BW-AK-004/BW-AK-004-0710.pdf>, last access 23/03/2018).

<sup>1075</sup> Reinert, "Inter arma silent Musae". Les musées d'Etat pendant la guerre', 64.

<sup>1076</sup> 'Loi du 5 janvier 1923, concernant l'acquisition par l'Etat de l'immeuble des héritiers Collart-de Scherff, situé à Luxembourg, Marché-aux-Poissons.'

<sup>1077</sup> Tarasco-Long, 'Capitales culturelles et patrimoine artistique', 147.

<sup>1078</sup> Yegles-Becker, *De Fëschmaart: Description*, 102.

<sup>1079</sup> Yegles-Becker, 124.



*Fig. 58: View of the Collart-de-Scherff building and its destroyed roof. Source : Unknown author, 1921, Photothèque de la Ville de Luxembourg, no. 1921/1/2005. Originally, the roof had dormer windows – recognisable among the burnt remnants on this picture – which were removed during the transformation works in the 1930s.*

In the meantime, interest groups and societies promoted the idea of the museum or attempted to ensure its realisation. In January 1924, Arthur Herchen, president of the Historical Section, announced the symbolic appropriation of the rooms reserved for the archaeological collection.<sup>1080</sup> A couple of years later, a new society specifically dedicated to the cause of the museum was founded: the Société des Amis des Musées. In the first meeting between Pierre Blanc, Joseph Tockert, Poutty Stein, Batty Weber and Paul Wigreux on 25 February 1926, the participants agreed to “assemble a certain number of people who are interested in the question of our museums and public collections”, thus using their social capital and personal networks. Furthermore, the group decided to “ask them if they would consent to create a provisional committee to establish a society of the friends of the museums in Luxembourg.”<sup>1081</sup> In the meeting of 3 March, eleven people participated, the initial five people, plus Bech, Edouard Oster (teacher), Nicolas Ries, Armand Stumper (keeper of the minutes at the Chamber of

<sup>1080</sup> Goedert, *De la Société archéologique à la Section historique de l’Institut grand-ducal*, 124.

<sup>1081</sup> Own translation. “[...] convoquer un certain nombre des personnes qui s’intéressent à la question de nos musées et collections publiques, et de leur demander si elles consentaient à former un comité provisoire pour fonder une société des amis des musées à Luxembourg.” (MNHA archives, *Séances du Comité (Registre)* by Joseph Tockert, 1926-1939, p. 1). This volume includes handwritten notes by Joseph Tockert, covering the meetings of the years 1926 to 1939. Some were not written by Tockert (when he could not attend the meetings).

Deputies), Bernard Wolff (chief clerk), and Alphonse Nickels. It was an eclectic convention of individuals whose links were personal and cultural. Among the objectives they fixed, one concerned the “nationalisation of our archaeological museum”, which disappeared in the statutes adopted in June 1929.<sup>1082</sup> The fourteen signatories of these statutes were partly the same who participated in the committee of 1926. As a heterogeneous group of teachers, artists, state officials, politicians, or representatives of the industrial sector, they belonged to the political, economic and cultural spheres, such as Joseph Bech, Pierre Blanc, Marcel Cahen, Tony Dutreux, Victor Ferrant, Alphonse Nickels (director of ARBED), Nicolas Ries, Joseph Tockert, Batty Weber or Paul Wigreux. The representation of the steel industry as the only economic sector hints at its importance and the economic structure of Luxembourg at the time.<sup>1083</sup> The objectives of the society as defined in the statutes were fourfold: to campaign for the museum’s construction, to pursue the creation of a Luxembourgish folklore museum (*Le Musée Luxembourgeois*), to support the use of all public collections as means of education, as places of artistic or scientific life and national consciousness, and to contribute to the continuous development of the museum’s collection.<sup>1084</sup> Whereas the Historical Section’s aims were mainly scientific, the Amis des Musées focused on accessibility of the collections and private sponsorship (*mécénat*). Sponsorship was already well established in other countries and cities, where private donors made up an essential share of donations to museums.<sup>1085</sup> Unlike there, the Amis des Musées in Luxembourg was founded prior to the existence of a publicly accessible museum, which explains some of the society’s missions.

The appearance of the new society elicited reactions from contemporaries. Using the opportunity of the society’s foundation, Batty Weber pleaded in his *Abreißkalender* for the construction of a national museum. He regarded it as an important project for the history and

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<sup>1082</sup> A reason for this modification is not provided. It is possible that the changing context simply made it redundant. As for the disparity between the foundation and the approval of statutes: the legal framework of private non-profit associations was defined and organised in 1928 with the “Loi du 21 avril 1928 sur les associations sans but lucratif et les établissements d’utilité publique”. Thus, the Friends of the Museum were bound by law to adopt statutes, which happened in 1929.

<sup>1083</sup> ANLux, IP-1809, *Société des Amis des Musées: Extrait de l’Annuaire 1931*, p. 1.

<sup>1084</sup> « Art. 2. La société a pour objet :

d’intervenir auprès de l’Etat ou de la Municipalité pour faire aboutir la construction, resp. l’aménagement d’immeubles appropriés pour loger les collections publiques du pays ; de poursuivre la création d’un musée de Folklore Luxembourgeois, à appeler « Le Musée Luxembourgeois » ;  
d’aider à faire utiliser toutes les collections publiques comme moyens d’instruction et d’éducation, comme foyers de vie artistique ou scientifique et de sentiment national ;  
d’aider à enrichir les collections publiques. »

(ANLux, IP-1809, *Société des Amis des Musées: Extrait de l’Annuaire 1931*, p. 2).

<sup>1085</sup> Tarasco-Long, ‘Capitales culturelles et patrimoine artistique’, 163–165.

the culture of a people (*Volk*) and, similar to Vannérus' critique twenty years earlier, condemned the situation of the museum, which was nothing more than a “junk room”:

Unser Museum war und ist zum Teil, zu einem großen Teil [noch] heute nichts mehr, als eine Rumpelkammer. [Eine] Rumpelkammer mit kostbarem Inhalt, der versta[ut], unerschlossen, ungeordnet, unverdaut und [unreadable] beiseite gestapelt wurde, ein Opfer des nation[alen] Dilettantismus.<sup>1086</sup>

The members of the Historical Section were worried that the new society could appropriate the rooms occupied by the section (meeting room and archives). Joseph Bech, president of the Friends of the Museums, had to appease the section in June 1929.<sup>1087</sup>

Until 1941, the Friends of the Museums received donations from individuals, societies or the City of Luxembourg, and donated to the future national museum. In 1931, the CAL gave the society six notebooks with drawings by Jean-Pierre Huberty (1870-1897).<sup>1088</sup> This transfer between the CAL and the Amis des Musées was not surprising, considering that some individuals were members of both societies. In 1936, a collection by Caroline Baldauff-Rothermel (1867-1936) was bequeathed to the society, encompassing paintings, but also medals found in Egypt and Tunisia.<sup>1089</sup> Her husband, Ferdinand-Edmond-Joseph Baldauff (1858-1924), was an engineer who constructed railways in Tunis. Other donors were Joseph Bech, Pierre Blanc, Emile Mayrisch or Marcel Noppeneij. In 1941, during the Nazi occupation and following the consolidation of the institutional powers (*Gleichschaltung*), the Société des Amis des Musées was dissolved and its property transferred to the Chef der Zivilverwaltung, more precisely the Verwaltung der höheren Kommunalverbandsangelegenheiten (administration for intercommunal affairs) for “purposes pertaining to the national museum” (“für Zwecke des Nationalmuseums”).<sup>1090</sup> The Baldauff-Rothermel bequest is one documented example of this transfer.<sup>1091</sup>

The construction of the national museum raised another important issue, i.e. the status of the property rights of the historical and archaeological collections. This issue was probably not new, but it became urgent in the 1920s. In March 1924, Joseph Bech contacted the Historical

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<sup>1086</sup> ANLux, BW-AK-014-3166, 28/04/1926, <https://battyweber.uni.lu/images/original/BW-AK-014/BW-AK-014-3166.pdf>, last access 19/02/2019.

<sup>1087</sup> ANLux, IP-1809a, Letter from Joseph Bech to Arthur Herchen, 08/06/1929.

<sup>1088</sup> ANLux, IP-1809, Letter from the CAL to Joseph Bech, president of the Société des Amis des Musées, 08/09/1931.

<sup>1089</sup> ANLux, IP-1809, Letter from the notary François Altwies to Joseph Tockert, secretary of the Société des Amis des Musées, 17/02/1936.

<sup>1090</sup> ANLux, IP-1809, *Verfügung. Betrifft: Verein der Museumsfreunde*, Luxemburg, 28/08/1941.

<sup>1091</sup> ANLux, IP-1809, Letter from the head of department to Georg Schmitt (Landesmuseum), 21/11/1941.

Section to inquire whether it would be ready to decide on the issue of property rights. For Bech, it was clear that the future museum could only exhibit objects belonging to the SH.<sup>1092</sup> The Institute's Natural Sciences Section had already decided to transfer its collection, mainly constituted by public funds, to the state. The matter was less clear for the SH, which insisted on the differences between both sections.<sup>1093</sup> The government, through Antoine Funck, government councillor representing Bech, assured that the transfer of the property rights to the state would not affect the internal administration. Yet, being confronted with the section's reservation, Bech decided not to pursue the question further. He merely suggested solving the issues linked to the position of the curator. The candidates would be presented to and approved by the government before being nominated by the society. The SH agreed to these modalities.<sup>1094</sup>

Nevertheless, the question of property rights resurfaced in 1926. According to Goedert, Bech submitted a new proposal: The Historical Section would transfer the state-owned collection and lend the collections that are owned by it. Herchen stressed the incompatibilities of Bech's offer with the initial mission of the society (collection and conservation of historical monuments) and the charter of the section. It stipulated that the SH chooses the curator, and the collection could only be transferred to the state in case of liquidation of the society.<sup>1095</sup> What Goedert failed to notice, and what can only be recovered thanks to a manuscript by Joseph Tockert, is that the Société des amis des musées intervened. On 3 March 1926, during its first meeting, the provisional committee<sup>1096</sup> decided to contact Etienne Schmit, director general of education, to discuss the transfer of the collections to the state.<sup>1097</sup> Bech, the society's president, and the secretary Tockert met with Schmit, who promised to talk to the section's president.<sup>1098</sup> Hence, the issue was more complex than suggested by Goedert. In December 1926, while negotiations were ongoing, the Friends of the Museums urged Schmit to refuse a couple of conditions formulated by the SH: a meeting room for the section in the museum building and rooms reserved for the archives and the library of the section. "Considering the smallness of the de Scherff-house," the draft text for the letter in Tockert's notebook argued, "the Committee of the Society of the Friends of the Museums takes the liberty to suggest to His Excellency the

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<sup>1092</sup> Goedert, *De la Société archéologique à la Section historique de l'Institut grand-ducal*, 41.

<sup>1093</sup> Goedert, 118.

<sup>1094</sup> Goedert, 119.

<sup>1095</sup> Goedert, 120.

<sup>1096</sup> The society was officially constituted at the general assembly of 24 April 1926.

<sup>1097</sup> MNHA archives, *Séances du Comité (Registre)* by Joseph Tockert, 1926-1939, p. 4.

<sup>1098</sup> MNHA archives, *Séances du Comité (Registre)* by Joseph Tockert, 1926-1939, p. 5.

creation of special premises for the installation of a meeting room and the archives and the libraries of all sections of the Institute.”<sup>1099</sup> For Bech, this might have been an uneasy situation. He had become the competent director general in the meantime and needed to negotiate with the Institute while being president of the Friends of the Museums. The meeting notes do not reveal details in this respect. In the meeting of 25 March 1927, Bech promised to hasten the process.<sup>1100</sup>

The Historical Section eventually accepted the offer submitted by Bech in 1926. A special commission elaborated the modalities of the transfer.<sup>1101</sup> On 11 October 1927, the new convention was adopted.<sup>1102</sup> Bech also communicated the content of this convention to his fellow members of the Friends of the Museums at the meeting on 14 November 1927. The SH agreed to cede the collections as a loan to the museum. The government had the right to nominate a custodian, for which the Grand-Ducal Institute was to be consulted. The convention also stipulated the institution of a surveillance commission for the collections.<sup>1103</sup> According to Paul Spang, the solution was only possible thanks to the efforts of Bech and Nicolas Margue. About Margue, Spang wrote in 1993 that

It was thanks to the pragmatism, the prudence and the dedication of Nicolas Margue that the convention adopted on 11 October 1927 was finally made, still determining the regime of the collections deposited at the History and Art Museum and constituting the basis of the relations of the Government with the Historical Section of the Grand-Ducal Institute.<sup>1104</sup>

However, Spang’s positive assessment of Margue’s role should be considered with reservation. Margue, a colleague of Bech, might have invested personal efforts, but he was not the only implicated actor in the process. Despite his ambiguous role, Bech was the director general for arts and sciences and, hence, the main contact person. Furthermore, it remains

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<sup>1099</sup> Own translation. “Vu l’exiguité des locaux d[an]s la maison de Scherff, le Comité de la S[ociété] des A[mis] des M[usées] prend la liberté de proposer à Votre Excellence l’aménagement d’un local spécial pour l’installation des salles de séances ainsi que des archives et bibliothèques de toutes les sections de l’Institut.” (MNHA archives, *Séances du Comité (Registre)* by Joseph Tockert, 1926-1939, p. 86). The draft text is included in the notes of the meeting of 17 December 1926. The notes were written by Oster, who replaced Tockert. A note informs that the letter was expedited on 21 December 1926.

<sup>1100</sup> MNHA archives, *Séances du Comité (Registre)* by Joseph Tockert, 1926-1939, p. 115.

<sup>1101</sup> Goedert, *De la Société archéologique à la Section historique de l’Institut grand-ducal*, 121.

<sup>1102</sup> Goedert, 121.

<sup>1103</sup> MNHA archives, *Séances du Comité (Registre)* by Joseph Tockert, 1926-1939, p. 147-148.

<sup>1104</sup> Own translation. “C’était grâce au sens des réalités, à la pondération et au dévouement de Nicolas Margue qu’on était arrivé finalement à la convention adoptée le 11 octobre 1927 qui détermine toujours le régime des collections en dépôt au Musée d’Histoire et d’Art et qui est à la base des relations du Gouvernement avec la Section historique de l’Institut grand-ducal.” (Spang, ‘La politique culturelle des Gouvernements luxembourgeois de 1848 à nos jours’, 586).

unclear on what basis Spang made his claim. Margue is not even mentioned in Tockert's meeting notes.

The construction of the museum was a lengthy process, also perceived as such by actors at the time. Though the Collart-de Scherff building had been in the state's possession for several years, the state architect Wigreux deplored the lack of progress of his work in 1927. In this respect, Tockert reported in his meeting notes of the Friends of the Museums of 14 November 1927 that Wigreux "could not continue with the works because he did not have a clear programme. This programme is lacking because there is no custodian. The natural history museum will be finished soon." For the archaeological museum, the association considered "consulting M. Haquin [Hackin], curator at the Musée Guimet."<sup>1105</sup> The idea to refer to a skilled, foreign expert was certainly not new. The choice of Joseph Hackin (1886-1941) was not deliberate either. Hackin was a French archaeologist with Luxembourgish origins. Born in Boevange-sur-Attert (Luxembourg), he studied at the Ecole pratique des hautes études and at the Ecole du Louvre. However, another foreign expert with links to Luxembourg was eventually contacted. In January 1928, Jules Vannérus, a member of the Historical Section, was asked by Bech to assess the suitability of the Collart-de Scherff house for the collections. J. Vannérus was born in Diekirch in 1874.<sup>1106</sup> Vannérus' uncle, Henri (1833-1921), presided over the Historical Section from 1888 to 1894 and 1915 to 1921. J. Vannérus, who worked as an archivist in Belgium (Mons, Antwerp and Brussels), visited the collections in Pfaffenthal and in the Collart-de Scherff house. He drew positive conclusions concerning the latter but called attention to the importance of potential future extensions.<sup>1107</sup>

In 1929-1930, Paul Wigreux drew the first plan of the museum, but it was not the final version. As Yegles-Becker stressed, this happened shortly after the inauguration of the Palais des Beaux-Arts in Brussels; both buildings bore similarities in their architecture.<sup>1108</sup> The subject was regularly voiced in the Chamber of Deputies, especially in the context of the budget debates. In 1926, the deputy and mayor of Luxembourg Gaston Diderich insisted that the

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<sup>1105</sup> Own translation. "M. Wigreux informe le Comité de l'état des travaux au bâtiment du Marché aux Poissons. Il n'a pas pu faire avancer les travaux parce qu'il n'avait pas de programme fixe. Ce programme manque parce qu'il n'y a pas de conservateur. Le musée d'histoire naturelle sera bientôt fini. On propose, pour l'arrangement du musée archéologique, de consulter M. Haquin [Hackin], conservateur au Musée Guimet." (MNHA archives, *Séances du Comité (Registre)* by Joseph Tockert, 1926-1939, p. 148-149).

<sup>1106</sup> Joseph Goedert, *Bio-bibliographie de Jules Vannérus* (Luxembourg: Bibliothèque nationale, 1970).

<sup>1107</sup> ANLux, IP-1809a, Letter from Jules Vannérus to Joseph Bech, 07/01/1928.

<sup>1108</sup> Yegles-Becker, *De Fëschmaart: Description*, 132.

finalisation of the museum should be hastened. The director general of public works replied that the “state architect is actively working on the question”. Diderich was not satisfied with the reply, who dismissed it as a stereotypical answer he had been hearing for two years.<sup>1109</sup> On 1 April 1926, the newspaper *Luxemburger Zeitung* published an April Fool’s Day hoax on the opening of the museum. It was not only a satirical take on the situation at the time but expressed wishful thinking:

The preparations were made in complete silence; one probably wanted to create a pleasing surprise for the citizens instead of raising more dust than had already been filling the air [...]. The Grand-Ducal Institute, nearly completely present, received the guests on the ceremonial stairs of the de Scherff-house. [...] Then, a visit to the different museum sections took place under the guidance of the custodian. In the process, it was generally noticed how well-arranged the rooms were and how much work had been silently invested over the last weeks. Only then could one see the number of treasures that had until then been rotting unnoticed in the old casern in Pfaffenthal, and a murmur of satisfaction went through the crowd as it saw these riches in bright, airy rooms, well arranged, equipped, labelled and pleasingly exhibited.<sup>1110</sup>

In 1928, members of the Labour Party deposited a motion requesting to include a new article in the budget related to the construction of a museum and a theatre in Esch-sur-Alzette. Joseph Bech was categorically opposed to a new museum and dismissed the idea of creating other regional museums as “megalomania”. Bech implied that there were not even enough objects to fill the national museum adequately. “Let’s not forget that our National Museum in Luxembourg is and will be a regional museum only,” he argued.<sup>1111</sup> During the same plenary, the first section of the Chamber reiterated a request of the previous years to accelerate the construction of the museum.<sup>1112</sup>

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<sup>1109</sup> Chambre des Députés, Session ordinaire 1925-1926, 36<sup>e</sup> séance (05/05/1926), p. 1181.

<sup>1110</sup> Own translation. “Zu aller Stille waren die Vorbereitungen getroffen worden, man wollte wahrscheinlich nicht noch mehr Staub aufwirbeln, als schon in der Luft herumflog, aber den Bürgern eine frohe Überraschung machen [...]. An der feierlichen Treppe des Hauses de Scherff empfing das Institut Grand-Ducal, fast vollzählig, die Gäste. [...] Unter Führung des Kustos’ fand dann ein Rundgang durch die verschiedenen Sektionen des Museums statt. Dabei fiel allgemein auf, wie übersichtlich die Räume geordnet sind und welche Summe Arbeit in den letzten Wochen im Stillen geleistet wurde. Man sah erst, wieviele Schätze bisher unbeachtet in der alten Kaserne im Pfaffenthal vermoderten, und es ging ein Murmeln des Wohlgefallens durch die Versammlung, als sie diese Reichtümer in hellen luftigen Sälen, wohl disponiert, staffiert, etikettiert und gefällig exponiert sah” (‘Unser National-Museum’, *Luxemburger Zeitung*, April 1926). The article is also in the chronicle on the National Natural History Museum (MNHA archives, unnumbered box (*Historique Musée national d’histoire naturelle*), *Musée d’Histoire Naturelle de l’Etat. Chronique*, [Marcel Heuertz *et alii*], undated, p. 17).

<sup>1111</sup> Own translation. “N’oublions donc pas que notre Musée National à Luxembourg n’est et ne sera qu’un musée régional que nous aurons de la peine à meubler dignement.” (Chambre des Députés, *Session ordinaire 1927-1928*, ‘47e & 48e séances’, 31/03/1928 and 01/04/1928, p. 1389).

<sup>1112</sup> Chambre des Députés, *Session ordinaire 1927-1928*, ‘47e & 48e séances’, 31/03/1928 and 01/04/1928, p. 1393.

For the 1937 budget, the first section of the Chamber visited the construction site. Neither the exact date nor the author of the report of this visit are known. The section qualified the construction of the museum as a “real scandal” (“véritable scandale”) and highlighted reproachfully that the construction had begun in 1923. It raised questions about the amount of money invested, the reasons for the roof partially collapsing or why there were never more than three or four workers at the same time on the site.<sup>1113</sup> The critiques were refuted in a reply written by an anonymous author, possibly the state architect. The amount of money invested until then was modest compared to other projects. The document stressed that the construction, executed under challenging conditions, started in 1929 when the examination of the projects had been concluded, and it was possible to relocate the services and societies occupying the building in question. Adjacent buildings, i.e. the Schmitz house and the old Gendarmerie (also known as Lucas Bosch house), were occupied by private owners until 1932.<sup>1114</sup> The account of the collapsing roof was rejected for being too exaggerated, as there was merely a small part detached from the ceiling due to bad weather conditions. The report explained that in other countries, the planning and construction of a museum were also time-consuming.<sup>1115</sup> Examples were not provided, though this claim was not far-fetched.<sup>1116</sup>

The situation and the construction of the museum were also a topic in the newspapers, even if debates were scarce. The situation of the Pfaffenthal museum was described as deplorable, as much by the curators as by outsiders (Emile Mark). In the context of the Collart-de Scherff building, the same themes reappeared. A satiric depiction in *De Gukuk* shows Victor Ferrant standing amidst a deteriorated natural history collection in the unfinished museum building. His pose suggests that he is waiting – for the works to finish, for his successor to be nominated, or both is a matter of interpretation. The cobwebs and the bird’s nest should allude to the slow or nonexistent progress of the construction. The text beneath the picture refers to the draft law on creating two positions in the museum. Less satiric is a text published in the *Tageblatt* in June 1933. The unknown author deplored the protracted works, despite the coming and passing

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<sup>1113</sup> ANLux, IP-1809a, *Budget de 1937: Les observations des sections*, undated.

<sup>1114</sup> It should be noted, though, that the Schmitz house was not completely acquired in one shot, but between 1922 and 1930, after which the state was the exclusive owner of the whole building. The Old Gendarmerie, the Collart-de Scherff house and the Schmitz house henceforth formed the main bloc of the museum (Yegles-Becker, *De Feschmaart: Description*, 108).

<sup>1115</sup> ANLux, IP-1809a, *Budget de 1937: Les observations des sections – Réponse*, undated.

<sup>1116</sup> One example is the building for the Ethnological Museum in Berlin, directed by Adolf Bastian, which opened in 1900 after fifteen years of construction work. The result was “a catastrophe”. (H. Glenn Penny, *Im Schatten Humboldts: Eine tragische Geschichte der deutschen Ethnologie* [München: C.H.Beck, 2019], 99).

of “rich” years, despite the amount of available work to do, especially in “meagre” times. In addition, the author reported an aspect that has been neglected until now: the necessity of good connections to gain access to the museum. The collection was described very positively, as was Ferrant’s work, “the soul of the nascent museum” (“die Seele dieses werdenden Museums”) and “its creator” (“sein Schöpfer”). However, it seems that access was not granted to everyone and only to specific groups of people:

Vielelleicht kann man, wenn man sehr gute Beziehungen hat, aber jetzt schon in unser Museum hineinkommen. [...] Mit den guten Beziehungen ist das aber so ‘ne Sache und wer nicht stark ist, muss listig sein. Da schliesst man sich, um ins Museum hineinzukommen, am besten Leuten an, die Beziehungen haben, etwa der Gesellschaft “Fauna”, tut als ob man mit von der Gesellschaft sei und schlüpft so hinein.<sup>1117</sup>

The museum was far from being accessible to everyone. This observation also begs the question of whether the author of the article – who described part of the exhibited collection – made use of specific connections or posed as a member of the society mentioned in the quotation above.

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<sup>1117</sup> ‘Am Rande. Besuch im Museum’, *Tageblatt*, June 1933.

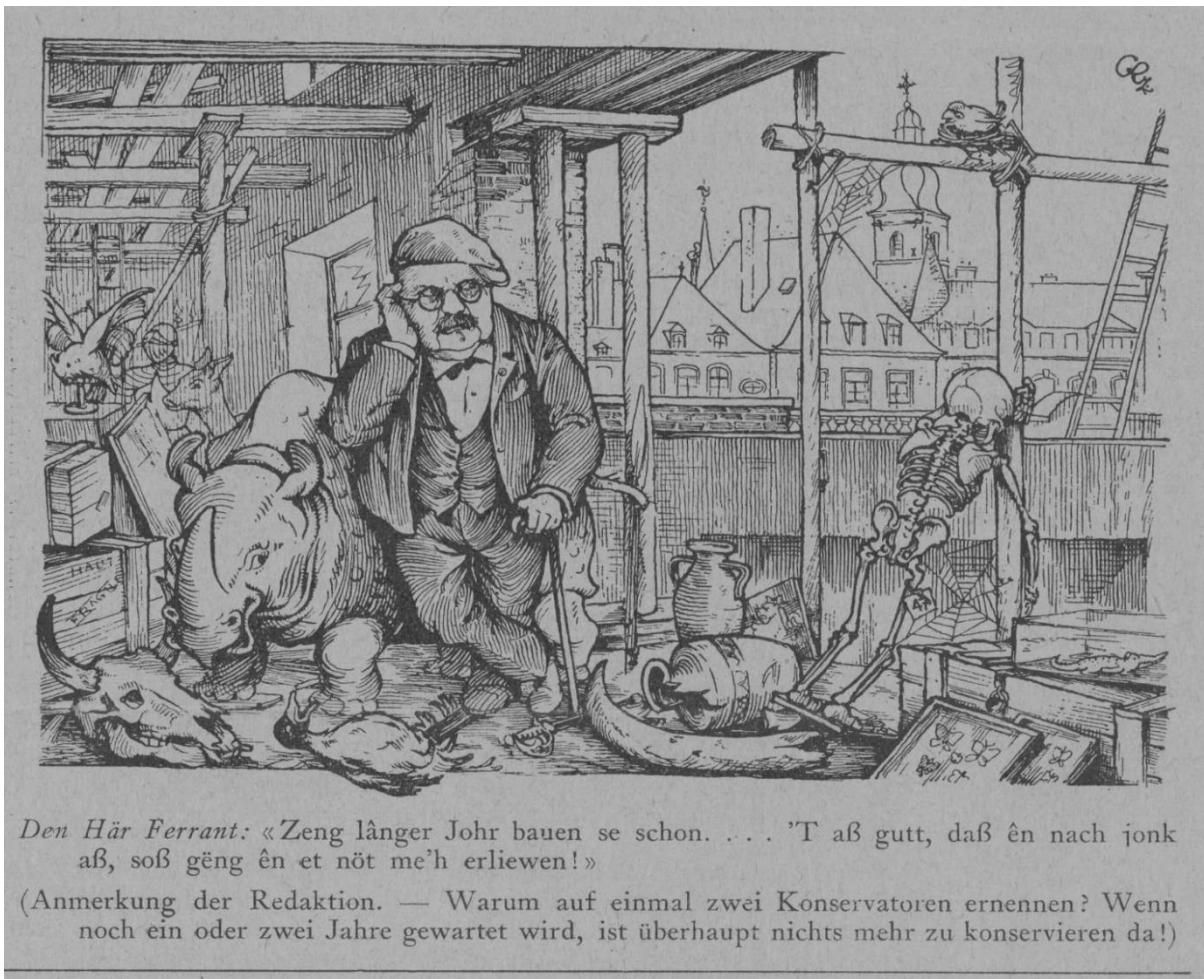


Fig. 59: A drawing depicting Victor Ferrant among the dispersed and degraded natural history collection in the unfinished Collart-de Scherff building (in: *De Gukuk* no. 2 [09/01/1932]). Translation of the text below the drawing: "Mister Ferrant: 'For ten long years they have been constructing...how good it is to be still young, otherwise one could not witness it anymore!' (Note by the editors. – Why suddenly nominating two curators? In one or two years, there won't be anything left to curate!)."

Besides parliamentary documents and newspaper articles, the slow progress of the construction is also confirmed in other sources. According to the *Annuaire 1937* of the Friends of the Museums, which included similar information about the transformations, these were unlike any previous constructions and more difficult to accomplish. Only since March 1935, as the text reported, had the building been protected against bad weather conditions, allowing works in the interior.<sup>1118</sup> In 1949, the curator Joseph Meyers recalled that in summer 1937, only some mezzanine rooms had been ready, but they had been the “obscurer and the coldest” part of the museum, partly built into the rock and quite humid.<sup>1119</sup> The working conditions in the 1930s were reminiscent of the custodians’ accounts in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and their complaints. Indeed, they did not elicit a professionalisation of the institution. Even a draft law on the

<sup>1118</sup> Société des Amis des Musées, *Annuaire 1937* (Luxembourg: V. Buck, 1937), 199–200.

<sup>1119</sup> Meyers, ‘Le musée: Rapport du conservateur sur les années 1895–1945’, 111.

nomination of two curators was not voted during the interwar period, rejected by the State Council. A custodian for the archaeological museum could only be nominated once the ownership issue was solved.<sup>1120</sup> The state merely detached high school teachers as custodians to the museum.

In order to supervise the installation of the collections and the organisation of the State Museums, Joseph Bech created a technical committee (*comité technique*) in May/June 1935. He probably followed a recommendation by Tockert and Nothumb, who visited the archaeological museum in Nancy.<sup>1121</sup> The composition of the commission encompassed people more or less implicated in the affairs of the museum: Victor Ferrant (honorary curator), Joseph Hess (teacher and member of the SH), Marcel Heuertz, Paul Medinger (teacher and member of the SH), Joseph Meyers, Albert Nothumb (close collaborator of Bech and teacher detached to the Government), Joseph Tockert and Paul Wigreux.<sup>1122</sup> Nothumb was nominated president and Wigreux secretary in the first meeting on 2 July 1935. This meeting fixed several general principles. The members discussed the delimitation of the different sections of the museum. Some disagreements existed, for instance, on Ferrant's suggestion to separate the Palaeolithic (in his opinion closer to natural sciences) from the Neolithic collection. Medinger and Hess held a different view, suggesting that the Historical Section should become as homogeneous and complete as possible. Finally, the committee agreed on a pragmatic solution. The prehistory rooms should be organised so that the visitor would smoothly move between the natural sciences and the historical collection.

Another issue concerned the question of whether the museum should accept foreign collections. Ferrant and Heuertz approved such an approach for comparative reasons, referring to the director of the Natural History Museum in Brussels. "Considering the universality of the sciences, it is important to present in our museum a foreign collection that certainly does not need to be complete, but that has to encompass typical representatives of the main groups," they argued from a natural history perspective and its taxonomy.<sup>1123</sup> Whereas the final decision on this matter was not shared in the report, it was decided that the museum would not accept

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<sup>1120</sup> MNHA archives, *Séances du Comité (Registre)* by Joseph Tockert, 1926-1939, p. 242.

<sup>1121</sup> MNHA archives, *Séances du Comité (Registre)* by Joseph Tockert, 1926-1939, p. 299.

<sup>1122</sup> MNHA archives, separate shelf, folder no. 27, Report of the meeting of the Comité technique, 02/07/1935.

<sup>1123</sup> Own translation. "Vu l'universalité des sciences, il importe donc de présenter dans notre musée une collection étrangère qui n'a certes pas besoin d'être complète, mais qui doit comporter les représentants typiques des principaux groupes." (MNHA archives, separate shelf, folder no. 27, Report of the meeting of the Comité technique, 02/07/1935).

donations linked to specific conditions. The curators should pursue their tasks without impediments.<sup>1124</sup>

A week later, the committee and Wigreux visited the museum. As a result, it issued a favourable opinion, convinced that the “dispositions taken by the [state] architect satisfy entirely the need of our collections, which will be placed in a perfect architectural and technical environment.”<sup>1125</sup> In its sessions of 11 and 12 December 1935, it agreed on the distribution of the rooms in the museum: archaeology, folklore museum, numismatics, Luxembourgish dynasty (*salle de la dynastie luxembourgeoise*), collection of chimney plaques.<sup>1126</sup> Unfortunately, not many committee reports exist, nor is it possible to determine how often it met over the years. In November 1936, it criticised the lack of space in the museum. There would be no possibility to add a conference room, libraries for the sections of the Grand-Ducal Institute, and the archives with a reading room. Though Wigreux and the committee suggested the acquisition and subsequent demolition of the Gëlle Klack (“Golden Bell”) building on the Fish Market to extend the museum, it did not happen.<sup>1127</sup> For the committee members, the museum should become a substitute for a university. “It would be interesting to be able to concentrate all the existing scientific organisations of our country in the National Museum so that it becomes a real place of study,” the report observed.<sup>1128</sup>

The idea to establish the folklore museum in another building, as will be discussed in the following sub-section, might also have been linked to the space issue in the Collart-de Scherff house. How the state reacted to the committee’s criticisms is a question that cannot be answered at least with the available sources. When the construction of the museum was discussed,

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<sup>1124</sup> Original text: “Les conservateurs doivent pouvoir disposer des objets dans l’unique intérêt du musée, soit en les exposant, soit en les classant dans la collection d’étude, soit en les échangeant contre d’autres pièces plus utiles, quittes à reconnaître la générosité des donateurs par plaquettes à côté des objets ou par mention sur le tableau d’honneur.” (MNHA archives, separate shelf, folder no. 27, Report of the meeting of the Comité technique, 02/07/1935).

<sup>1125</sup> “[...] les membres sont unanimes à reconnaître que les dispositions prises par l’architecte satisferont entièrement les besoins de nos collections qui trouveront un cadre architectural et technique parfait.” (MNHA archives, separate shelf, folder no. 27, Report of the meeting of the Comité technique, 09/07/1935).

<sup>1126</sup> ANLux, IP-1809, Report of the technical committee of 11 and 12 December 1935.

<sup>1127</sup> In fact, the committee argued in its report that the house lost its architectural character due to the changes it was exposed to. Following Yegles-Becker’s account, until 1983 the building belonged to a succession of various private owners, among others the architect Georges Traus and his family at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. In 1983, the house was acquired by the state; cf.: Yegles-Becker, *De Feschmaart: Description*, 52.

<sup>1128</sup> Original text: “Il serait très intéressant de pouvoir concentrer dans le Musée national toutes les organisations scientifiques de notre pays, de façon à en faire un vrai foyer d’études, remplaçant quelque peu l’université qui nous fait défaut.” (ANLux, IP-1809, Letter from the Comité technique du Musée to Joseph Bech, 04/11/1936).

authors merely referred to Wigreux's plans devised in the late 1920s/early 1930s. Throughout the 1930s, the curators of the archaeological museum, the technical committee and the Historical Section requested specific modifications to the plans. This interference led to tensions between the state architect and the curators. The latter were exerting pressure to move the collection as soon as possible to the new building. Joseph Meyers met with Joseph Bech, who then wrote a letter to Wigreux on 15 October 1938 inviting him to make the necessary arrangements for the move and imposed 1 December as a deadline.<sup>1129</sup> According to Wigreux, it was impossible to comply due to the delays, and he was waiting for detailed information from Meyers on the cabinets needed for the museum.<sup>1130</sup>

As seen in the case study of the Centenary of Independence, the opening of the museum was one objective defined by the central commission in 1938/1939. In this context, the State Museum's political objectives did not differ from those in other countries at the time. Following Benjamin Filene, "museums disseminated concepts and encouraged behaviours that reinforced visions of a stable and enduring nation."<sup>1131</sup> In a letter of 16 January 1939, the state architect Wigreux referred to the common wish of government and parliament that the museum should open in 1939. Wigreux had to request an increase in the budget to complete the museum construction in spring. Though he had requested 800,000 francs, the 1939 budget allocated 500,000 francs, deemed insufficient by Wigreux. "There is no possibility to inaugurate the building this year when we celebrate the anniversary of our independence," he noted with a hint of accusation, "if the Government cannot allocate to my administration the minimum budget of 800,000 francs that I have requested in my budget suggestions."<sup>1132</sup> At the time, the 1939 budget was still being drafted. In the final version, Wigreux was granted the requested amount. The state architect was convinced that the museum could be inaugurated in 1939, around Easter. He was not the only one. The same conviction was shared by his fellow members of the Friends of the Museum, such as Victor Ferrant.<sup>1133</sup>

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<sup>1129</sup> ANLux, IP-1809a, Letter from Joseph Bech to Paul Wigreux, 15/10/1938..

<sup>1130</sup> ANLux, IP-1809a, Note from Paul Wigreux to Joseph Bech, 28/10/1938.

<sup>1131</sup> Benjamin Filene, 'History Museums and Identity. Finding "Them", "Me", and "Us" in the Gallery', in *The Oxford Handbook of Public History*, ed. James B. Gardner and Paula Hamilton (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), 327.

<sup>1132</sup> Own translation. "Point ne sera donc possible d'inaugurer le bâtiment en cette année où nous fêtons l'anniversaire de notre indépendance, si le Gouvernement ne peut mettre à la disposition de mon service le crédit minimum de 800.000 .- fr. que j'avais demandé dans mes propositions budgétaires." (ANLux, IP-1809, Letter from Paul Wigreux to the minister of public works, 16/01/1939).

<sup>1133</sup> Own translation. "[...] rehausser par tous les moyens en son pouvoir la fête de l'inauguration du Musée National" (MNHA archives, *Séances du Comité (Registre)* by Joseph Tockert, 1926-1939, p. 348).

According to Joseph Meyers, the works made good progress in 1939. The remaining collections in Pfaffenthal were moved to the new destination: the lapidary collection (after twenty years in Pfaffenthal), the arms collection, and the art and folklore collections. Many problems, however, had not been solved. Reflections on how to arrange the objects in the museum were time-consuming. According to Meyers, the artificial light and clair-obscur in many rooms were problematic.<sup>1134</sup> The transformation works to refurbish the house for its new purpose took years but did not result in a professional museological environment. The old glass cabinets in Pfaffenthal were in bad shape and “could not be used to exhibit objects to the broad public anymore.”<sup>1135</sup> New ones were needed. The budget included extraordinary expenses for furniture. When the war in Europe broke out, these efforts were abandoned.

As Meyers’ report implies, technical limits complicated the work of the custodians. At the same time, the government did not seem to intervene directly or indirectly. When Meyers recounted how he and his colleague Medinger, who had passed away in September 1939, had arranged the objects (which implies choosing what to show), he did not mention any involvement of the government or any other actor. Then again, his account dates from 1945, i.e. after the war. Whether Meyers omitted information or did not remember all of it remains unclear. He could have addressed a public composed at least partly of politicians and government officials and might have adapted his narrative accordingly.

The museum was scheduled to open in September 1939. The state budget included an article for the publication of a catalogue of the collections, article 405bis entitled “Publication d’un catalogue des collections du Musée et dépenses diverses relatives à l’inauguration du nouveau Musée”.<sup>1136</sup> In September, Meyers was ordered to make last preparations for the upcoming opening. Yet, when arranging the first glass cabinets, he received a counter-order by the government. He was prompted to remove all objects and store them in the cellar to be protected against possible damages caused by the war. In 1945, he remembered the political uncertainties at the time:

Indeed, we did not know if the Grand-Duchy would experience military operations playing out on its territory from the first days of September onwards, and the capital would become an important strategic position to either of the belligerent powers.<sup>1137</sup>

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<sup>1134</sup> Meyers, ‘Le musée: Rapport du conservateur sur les années 1895-1945’, 3.

<sup>1135</sup> Own translation. “[...] ne pouvaient plus servir pour l’exposition des objets devant le grand public.” (Meyers, 3).

<sup>1136</sup> ‘Loi du 20 avril 1939, concernant le Budget des recettes et des dépenses de l’Etat pour l’exercice 1939’, 334.

<sup>1137</sup> Own translation. “On ne savait pas, en effet, si le Grand-Duché ne verrait pas dès les premiers jours de septembre des opérations militaires se dérouler sur son sol, et la capitale devenir une

A letter from Joseph Bech to the donor Maurice Schmitz in October 1939 reveals that the museum was still not open. Nevertheless, the minister informed that the donated object, a statue by the Italian sculptor Canova, would be exhibited in the museum with the donor's name. Furthermore, Bech promised to ensure that the statue would be kept safe from "any possible risk of deterioration".<sup>1138</sup>

If the outbreak of war certainly played a role in the cancellation of the opening, other reasons have been invoked in the sources, too. In fact, in a letter of March 1946, Heuertz and Meyers did not even mention the war. The custodians indicated the lack of money to buy display cabinets and the lack of staff. They had to prepare the exhibition, clean and transport the objects by themselves.<sup>1139</sup> In any case, the inauguration did not occur in 1939, despite the convictions and wishes of the implicated actors, and despite what has been stated in some literature on the museum. Indeed, according to a book published by the MNHA in 1989, the museum opened on the eve of the Second World War with rooms mainly dedicated to archaeology and natural sciences.<sup>1140</sup> Yet, newspapers reported – in November 1939 – that the museum, planned to open on 1 October, was to remain closed as long as the war was waging on.<sup>1141</sup>

From September onwards, Meyers focused on administrative work, organised the library, and participated in several excavations.<sup>1142</sup> The planned catalogue has never been published. The situation of the collection in the months following the outbreak of war was difficult. Though it is not clear if the government's order was a reaction to concerns voiced by the curators, they explained in a letter of March 1940 that after the start of the hostilities, the museum asked the state architect to install anti-theft measures in the building. Objects were moved to other rooms, better protected against humidity and bombardments. The state architect, however, rejected the suggestions, such as grates in front of windows, for esthetical-architectural reasons.<sup>1143</sup> Another letter sent two days later to the director of the state police reveals that during good weather, children used the museum as a playground:

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importante position stratégique de l'une ou de l'autre des puissances belligérantes." (Meyers, 'Le musée: Rapport du conservateur sur les années 1895-1945', 4).

<sup>1138</sup> ANLux, IP-1809a, Letter from Joseph Bech to Maurice Schmitz, 07/10/1939.

<sup>1139</sup> MNHA archives, separate shelf, unnumbered folder (Correspondance administrative. Lettres envoyées), Letter from Marcel Heuertz and Joseph Meyers to Nicolas Margue, 21/03/1946.

<sup>1140</sup> Jean Luc Koltz and Musée national d'histoire et d'art, *150 ans d'art luxembourgeois au Musée national d'histoire et d'art* (Luxembourg: Musée national d'histoire et d'art, 1989), 12.

<sup>1141</sup> 'Aus der Hauptstadt', *Obermosel-Zeitung*, November 1939.

<sup>1142</sup> Meyers, 'Le musée: Rapport du conservateur sur les années 1895-1945', 5.

<sup>1143</sup> MNHA archives, separate shelf, folder no. 29, Letter from the curators of the museum to Joseph Bech (13/03/1940).

Since the resumption of good weather allowing children to play outdoors, the State Museum building has become the target for the exploits of the youth of the Fish Market. We have turned a blind eye to the common, if already unpleasant, childishness for a long time. But we cannot keep quiet about a new abuse that puts children's lives at stake, and that engages our responsibility as well as that of the concierge: the kids climb the terraces and the glass roofs, sometimes with the help of a rope, and indulge in all sorts of depredations. As these terraces are difficult to access from the inside with a ladder, the caretaker arrives too late to intervene effectively.<sup>1144</sup>

The museum had to replace a broken window of the main entrance door. The second one was destroyed by a stone thrown at it. Unfortunately, there are not enough documents to explore whether this happened more often. Also, it is unclear if measures were taken against theft as well as against vandalism.

Around April 1939, the Pescatore collection, or at least parts of it, was relocated to the Collart-de Scherff building to be temporarily exhibited for the museum's opening. The technical committee discussed the issue, where two opposite positions were voiced. On the one hand, Paul Wigreux, defending the move, presented several arguments. The original plans of the museum included rooms for the collection, the paintings of the Musée de l'Etat were of less international value than those of the Pescatore collection, and, for touristic reasons, they should be made accessible to the public. On the other hand, all other members were opposed, mainly for financial and administrative-hierarchical reasons.<sup>1145</sup> These motives illustrate the power

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<sup>1144</sup> Translated from French. “Depuis la reprise du beau temps permettant aux enfants de jouer en plein air, le bâtiment du Musée de l'Etat est devenu la cible des exploits de la jeunesse du Marché-aux-poissons. Nous avons longtemps fermé les yeux sur des gamineries courantes, quoique déjà bien désagréables. Mais nous ne pouvons pas nous taire sur un nouvel abus qui met en jeu la vie des enfants et qui engage notre responsabilité ainsi que celle du concierge : les gamins escaladent les terrasses et les toits vitrés, parfois à l'aide d'une corde, et se livrent à toutes sortes de déprédations. Comme ces terrasses ne sont que difficilement accessibles de l'intérieur à l'aide d'une échelle, le concierge arrive nécessairement trop tard pour intervenir efficacement.” (MNHA archives, separate shelf, folder no. 29, Letter from the curators to the director of the State Police, 15/03/1940).

<sup>1145</sup> The arguments of the opponents were as follows : 1. “Si des salles étaient prévues dans les bâtiments de l'Etat pour la collection Pescatore, la ville aurait dû contribuer financièrement à la construction ; elle ne l'a pas fait.” ; 2. “Tout est arrangé et les crédits sont prévus pour la construction d'un musée Pescatore qui n'est retardée que pour des questions en rapport avec la construction du nouvel athenée, qui doit être érigé dans le voisinage de l'hospice Pescatore.”; 3. “La ville n'a pas rempli jusqu'ici les obligations que lui imposent les conditions de la donation Pescatore et tout porte à admettre que l'exposition “temporaire” risquerait de devenir une occupation définitive et abusive de locaux appartenant à l'Etat et nécessaires pour les collections de celui-ci. Le jour où la ville aura fait un pas décisif pour la réalisation de ses obligations en posant la première pierre du Musée Pescatore, on pourra éventuellement envisager une exposition temporaire dans le genre de celle qui est demandée ; car seulement dans ce cas-là elle a des chances de rester vraiment temporaire.”; 4. “Il est dangereux de greffer une administration communale, comme elle serait nécessitée par la présence des tableaux Pescatore au Musée de l'Etat, sur l'administration de l'Etat qui y existe ; il y aurait là une cause d'inévitables conflits de compétence qui ne pourraient que nuire au bon développement des deux institutions.” ; 5. “Si la ville veut, pour des raisons touristiques ou autres, exposer ses tableaux,

relations between local and national authorities. If the city would like to exhibit the Pescatore collection, it should use its infrastructure instead of doing it at the state's expense. The reports did not clarify why Wigreux defended a position more favouring Luxembourg City than the state. A possible explanation might be linked to the fact that he was a member of the Société des Amis des Musées, which regularly discussed the Pescatore museum. The decision of the committee to reject the request possibly did not please the state architect. When the members moved on to the next point on the meeting agenda and nominated a candidate for the position of concierge at the museum, the report observed that "Mr Wigreux left the room before the vote."<sup>1146</sup> In a letter to the mayor of Luxembourg City, Joseph Bech clarified that the state would decline responsibility for any possible damages to the objects in the unachieved building.<sup>1147</sup> On the same day as Bech's writing, four members of the technical committee – the architect Joseph Kemp and the curators Ferrant, Heuertz and Medinger – protested: the undertaking was not based on a written authorisation and disregarded the committee's decision against housing the Pescatore collection, even temporarily, in the museum.<sup>1148</sup> Though no sources document the subsequent exchanges, the Pescatore collection must have left the museum at some point. It was not mentioned again.

Throughout the museum's history, until its opening, the inconsistencies concerning its official name are striking. Though *musée national* was the most common name until the 1930s, and to some extent after the Second World War, *Musées de l'Etat* would eventually replace it in the 1960s. As such, *musée national* and *Musées de l'Etat* designated the same idea: a museum reuniting national collections. This museum was subdivided into a natural history museum, on the one hand, and an archaeological and folklore museum, on the other hand. The existence of the Musée National d'Histoire et d'Art and the Musée National d'Histoire Naturelle today is the result of this historical development. The label *musée d'histoire et d'art* is not even new, as the first museum commission in the 1870s used it. The lack of an official denomination for the museum and the absence of any legal text created a confusing situation in which different names were used. The notion of *muséum*, a French version of the Latin

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qu'elle le fasse dans des locaux lui appartenant, p.ex. dans la Halle d'Exposition au Limpertsberg." (MNHA archives, separate shelf, folder no. 27, Report of the meeting of the Comité technique, 13/07/1939).

<sup>1146</sup> Own translation. "M. Wigreux avait quitté la salle avant le vote." (MNHA archives, separate shelf, folder no. 27, Report of the meeting of the Comité technique, 13/07/1939).

<sup>1147</sup> ANLux, IP-1809a, Letter from Joseph Bech to the mayor of Luxembourg City, 22/08/1939.

<sup>1148</sup> ANLux, IP-1809a, Letter from members of the technical committee to Joseph Bech, 22/08/1939.

*museum*, which came to designate natural history museums in France from the 19th century onwards, did not appear in discourses or official documents in Luxembourg.

The Historical Section usually referred to its collection as the *musée archéologique*. Still, the nomenclature can differ in some of its letters, with alternative names such as *Musée des antiquités*<sup>1149</sup> or *Musée historique et archéologique*<sup>1150</sup>. Public authorities mostly used *musée national* or *musée de l'Etat* when referring to the project of a building reuniting all collections. Some exceptions exist, for instance, in 1924, when a document by the director general of treasury referred to the *Musée grand-ducal de Luxembourg*<sup>1151</sup>. *Musée de Luxembourg* appeared in a letter from Joseph Bech in 1935.<sup>1152</sup> The state budgets changed the designation of the museum over time, too. It could even vary within the same budget law. Until 1938, the section *arts et sciences* included an article related to the museum without precise specification. In the public works section, the name *Musée national* appeared for the first time in the budget of 1923. It disappeared in the following years, reappearing again in 1931 as *Musée*. Afterwards, it disappeared a second time and resurfaced as *musée national* in 1934. In 1939, the state budget mentioned for the first time in the *arts et sciences* section the *Musée archéologique* and *Musée folklorique* (article 405), and the *Musée d'histoire naturelle* (article 404).

Another question to be shortly discussed is the number of visitors. Unfortunately, no records are available, and even letters from the curators provide sparse information. One assumption could be that the visitors were mainly researchers, teachers and members of the society, possibly from Luxembourg City in most cases. Due to constraints, the museum was not meant to be a cultural institution open to a broad public. Considering that the collections were in the Athenaeum and then in Pfaffenthal until the 1930s, it could be assumed that the number of visitors was limited. It should be recalled that at least in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, a visit to the archaeological museum required an appointment. For the interwar period, it is more difficult to assess. It might still have been the case if it operated similarly to the natural history section described in the *Tageblatt* article of 1933 mentioned above. Yet, considering the criticisms in the press about the closed archaeological museum in July 1918, an appointment might not have

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<sup>1149</sup> ANLux, IP-1801, Letter from the Section Historique to the president of the Commission des Prisons, 13/12/1881.

<sup>1150</sup> ANLux, IP-1800, Letter from the Section Historique to the director general of finance, 10/02/1914.

<sup>1151</sup> ANLux, IP-1800, Recommendation concerning Paul Medinger by the director general of finance, 05/08/1924.

<sup>1152</sup> ANLux, IP-1809a, Letter from Joseph Bech to Joseph Hackin, 24/04/1935.

been necessary by that time anymore. The concierge was asked not to let any visitors in, which is one hint that people visited the institution without previous formal notice.

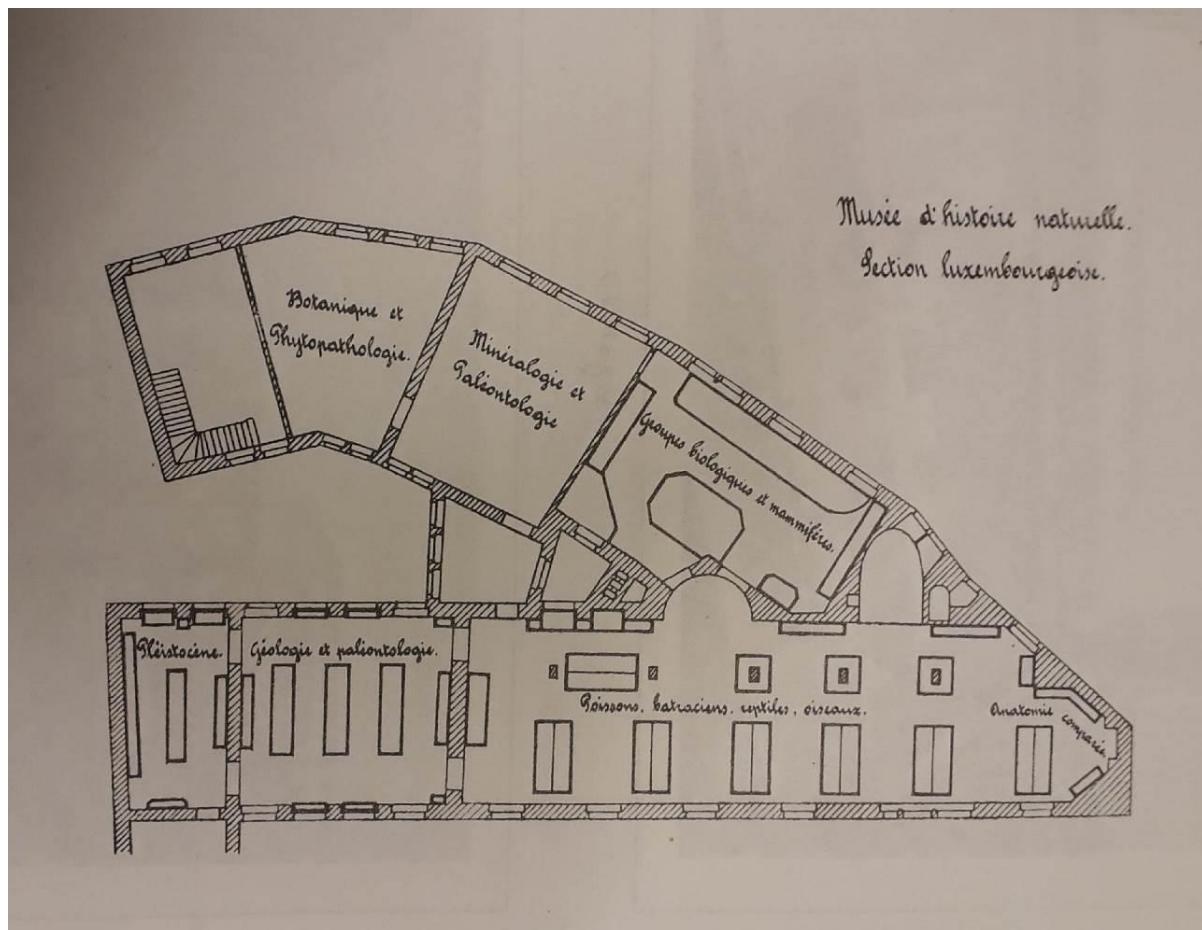
Restricted opening hours, difficulties related to conservation and a slow professionalisation did not promote accessibility to a broad public, even less to the working classes, which were the main target audience of the *Volksbildungvereine*. On the one hand, it could be argued that Luxembourg was trailing behind the evolution in other countries, such as Great Britain, where museums, as Tony Bennett described, were “gradually opening themselves up to public audiences”. For example, the Kensington Museum implemented a policy to attract as many visitors as possible without differentiation from 1857 onwards.<sup>1153</sup> On the other hand, it might also be argued that the museum in Luxembourg, which was not located in a dedicated building until the late 1930s, could not be compared to large museums abroad already working as fully functional cultural institutions. The situation in Luxembourg is much more comparable to Peter Davis’ assessment of British museums in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, different to that of Bennett. For Davis, museums “evolved into elitist establishments in which curators pursued their academic interests without public interference or accountability.”<sup>1154</sup> Here, we could refer to the letters written by curators complaining about working conditions. They lamented much less the visiting conditions. We could also, as an example, refer to Heuertz’s request to have more time for excavations and study at the museum. The visitors did not play a role in his motivation.

The museum was still closed when the Germans invaded Luxembourg in May 1940. Batty Weber, quoted in the incipit of the present sub-section, did not live long enough to see the museum’s inauguration. He died on 15 December 1940.

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<sup>1153</sup> Filene, ‘History Museums and Identity. Finding “Them”, “Me”, and “Us” in the Gallery’, 328.

<sup>1154</sup> Filene, 329.



*Fig. 60: The plan of a part of the natural history section in the museum (Collart-de Scherff building, 1930s). The shape of the building can still be recognised today. Source: MNHA Archives, unnumbered box (Historique Musée national d'histoire naturelle), Musée d'Histoire Naturelle de l'Etat. Chronique (undated), p. 34.*

### **III.4.5. The project of a folklore museum**

Folklore, or *Volkskunde*, was seemingly a popular topic in Luxembourg in the 1930s. This was not only the case in the literary production at the time – Joseph Hess, for instance, published the book *Luxemburger Volkskunde* in 1929 – but also through other initiatives. An exhibition in Arlon (Belgium) in 1935, *Le Visage du Luxembourg*, included folklore artworks and documents originating from collections of the Grand Duchy.<sup>1155</sup> The Société des Amis des Musées included the opening of the folklore museum in its objectives. The Centenary Commission suggested it as one of the projects for 1939. In 1935, the Grand-Ducal Institute was enlarged with a new section for linguistics, folklore and toponymy (Section de linguistique,

<sup>1155</sup> The exhibition *Le Visage du Luxembourg* could be considered in hindsight as a transnational exhibition. As the mission statement written by the organisers illustrate, it was embedded in the tourism and the landscape tropes: “*Attirer et retenir l’attention du monde des touristes sur les beautés naturelles et les sites merveilleux des deux Luxembourg actuels, belge et grand-ducal, ainsi que des régions françaises limitrophes autrefois rattachées au Duché (Carignan, Montmédy, Damvillers, Thionville), tel est le résultat qu’elle doit atteindre.*” (ANLux, IP-1863, *Le Visage du Luxembourg (Belgique et Grand-Duché). But et Programme de l’Exposition*, undated).

de folklore et de toponymie). The association Landwûol campaigned against urbanisation, promoted rural life and sought to strengthen rural areas. In 1935, it organised a folklore exhibition in Diekirch. Thus, the folklore museum had many potential and actual proponents.

Around the same time, the Luxembourg government took an interest in this project. Its efforts were not only a sign of the national context and a consequence of the efforts of the cultural society. The Grand Duchy was paying attention to similar initiatives in its neighbouring countries. The fact that National Socialists ruled Germany did not play a role. The Ministry of Public Instruction (headed until 1937 by Bech) collected at least two articles related to other folklore museums in 1936: one on the Haus der Rheinischen Heimat in Cologne, inaugurated that year,<sup>1156</sup> and one on the Musée français des arts et traditions populaires in Paris, opened in 1937 and promoted by Georges Henri Rivière.<sup>1157</sup> According to the first article, the museum on the Rhenish homeland would display the development of the “Rhenish character” with its “immutable characteristics”. This approach, adapted to a *völkisch* ideology, showed similarities with the grand-ducal government’s cultural policy of legitimising the nation-state.

Folklore museums have existed since the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. In Germany, the Museum für Völkerkunde (dedicated to extra-European civilisations and following a colonial interest) and the Museum für Deutsche Volkskunde (dedicated to the German-speaking rural population and representing a national interest) opened both in 1873. In 1889 the Museum für deutsche Volkstrachten und Erzeugnisse des Hausgewerbes (Museum of Popular German Costumes and Domestic Production) was founded. It was nationalised in 1904 and changed its statute in 1934 to become the Staatliches Museum für Deutsche Volkskunde (State Museum of German Folklore), gaining prestige under the Nazi regime.<sup>1158</sup> In Germany, *Volkskunde* was tied to questions of national identity in search of the *Volksseele* and the *Volksgeist*. After the Second World War, a critical approach to *Volkskunde*, as well as to the notion of *Volk*, was adopted.<sup>1159</sup> In France, the 1930s marked the rise of folklore and open-air museums, exhibiting rural life inscribed in regional contexts. The museum in Paris created by Rivière and André Varagnac

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<sup>1156</sup> ANLux, IP-1809, ‘Inauguration d’un nouveau Musée à Cologne’, article in *Mouseion*, 1936.

<sup>1157</sup> ANLux, IP-1809, ‘Un musée français des arts et traditions populaires’, article in *Mouseion*, April 1936, pp. 5-7.

<sup>1158</sup> Camille Mazé, *La fabrique de l’identité européenne: dans les coulisses des musées de l’Europe* (Paris: Belin, 2014), 41–42.

<sup>1159</sup> Mazé, 32–34.

and inspired by the Skansen open-air museum in Sweden marked an important step in this evolution.<sup>1160</sup>

The efforts of the Luxembourg government were simultaneous to those of the French government of the Popular Front (1935-1938), which institutionalised the expression of *arts et traditions populaires*. Unfortunately, the sources do not mention any direct inspirations from France, where the interest in folklore increased and was renewed after the First World War.<sup>1161</sup> Rivière's museum mentioned above had official backing from the government that also promoted folklore through various administrative changes, such as the creation of a Commission nationale des arts et traditions populaires in 1938 and initially suggested by Rivière.<sup>1162</sup> Following Pascal Ory, the Musée national des Arts et traditions populaires was the most notable achievement of the Popular Front in this field.<sup>1163</sup>

Though an open-air museum did not seem to be considered by public authorities in the Grand Duchy, a museum focusing on the characteristics of a specific people and traditional life matched the national aggrandizement and nation-building policy of Luxembourg, as well as the historiography and the increasingly ethnocultural narratives. This was especially pertinent in view of 1939, when the whole *dispositif* of national legitimisation was mobilised. In an undated document (possibly from 1936), the government councillor Albert Nothumb summarised the discussions about creating a folklore museum. Initially, it would become a section within the State Museum. Considering the lack of space in the future museum, the technical committee of the State Museum suggested installing it in a separate building. In this committee, the Folklore and Linguistics Section of the Grand-Ducal Institute was represented by the ethnographer Joseph Hess. He was going to participate some years later in the historic pageant committee for the Centenary and contribute to the *Livre du Centenaire*. In Nothumb's note, an old house in the Rue Large was considered a potential museum building. The house would become available as soon as the children's day-care centre in the building was transferred to the Altmünster plateau. Nothumb was not short on vaunting the building, one of the oldest in the city and acquired by the state to preserve its historical features:

It would be difficult to find a house in Luxembourg that would be better suited to house the facilities of the Folklore Museum. Located fifty metres from the main entrance of the State Museum, in the picturesque setting of Rue Large, it is one of the oldest houses in the city. The

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<sup>1160</sup> Poulot, *Une histoire des musées de France*, 147.

<sup>1161</sup> Ory, *La belle illusion*, 499–500.

<sup>1162</sup> Pascal Ory noted that the commission had ambitious goals, but it was oversized and created too late. (Ory, 501–502).

<sup>1163</sup> Ory, 502.

State purchased it in order to preserve its historical character. The back façade overlooks the Corniche, so that the windows allow the eye to discover this vision of the past that is the Rham plateau.<sup>1164</sup>

The Friends of the Museums printed the same text in the *Annuaire 1937*. In general, Nothumb was optimistic.<sup>1165</sup> This yearbook also indicated that the society visited the *Musée archéologique et folklorique* in Arlon in March 1936.<sup>1166</sup>

The technical committee issued a favourable assessment of the building in its meeting on 3 November 1936. The house was considered a fitting décor for the folklore museum, featuring “all typical architectural characteristics of an old bourgeois housing”<sup>1167</sup>. The available surface would be at least twice the size of the Collart-de Scherff house. In May 1937, the city councillor Lambert Schaus (CSV) urged the municipal executive to use all means necessary to preserve the building.<sup>1168</sup> Joseph Bech initiated procedures to free the building from all tenants and make the necessary preparations for the Folklore Museum. Bech’s involvement was not surprising in a double fashion. He was minister for arts and sciences and president of the Société des Amis des Musées. His resolute behaviour could not be explained otherwise. Bech requested that all rents be cancelled before 1 November in June. Though the technical committee did not allude to the installation of the museum being an urgent matter, Bech had a different opinion, as the building would need to be renovated.<sup>1169</sup> The notes added to the letter and exchanged between the minister of the treasury, the director of the Tax Records Administration, the receiver of the tax records and Bech reveal a process that took nearly seven months, from Bech’s request in June 1937 to the news on 7 January 1938 that the building was completely evacuated. Even the expulsion of the tenants was discussed but quickly discarded.

A second phase started with discussions about the budget for the renovation of the building. In January 1938, the Ministry of Public Instruction asked the Ministry of Public Works whether

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<sup>1164</sup> Translated from French. “Il serait difficile de trouver à Luxembourg une maison qui fût mieux indiquée pour recevoir les installations du Musée de folklore. Située à cinquante mètres de l’entrée principale du Musée de l’Etat, dans le cadre pittoresque de la rue Large, elle est une des plus vieilles maisons de la ville. L’Etat en a fait l’acquisition, jadis, pour lui conserver son caractère historique. La façade de derrière donne sur la Corniche de sorte que les fenêtres permettent au regard de découvrir cette vision du passé qu’est le plateau du Rham.” (ANLux, IP-1809, Note *Le Musée de folklore* by Albert Nothumb, undated [1936]).

<sup>1165</sup> Société des Amis des Musées, *Annuaire 1937*, 187.

<sup>1166</sup> Société des Amis des Musées, 193.

<sup>1167</sup> Own translation. “[...] tous les caractères architecturaux typiques d’une ancienne habitation bourgeoise.” (ANLux, IP-1809, Letter from the Comité technique du Musée to Joseph Bech, 04/11/1936).

<sup>1168</sup> ANLux, IP-1809, Letter from Lambert Schaus to the executive council of Luxembourg City, 25/05/1937.

<sup>1169</sup> ANLux, IP-1809, Letter from Joseph Bech to the minister of finance, 24/06/1937.

the renovation of the building could be financed through an extraordinary budget. Waiting for the 1939 state budget would entail an unnecessary delay. Not only was it considered a pressing matter, but the touristic argument was invoked, too.<sup>1170</sup> The pressure exerted by the Ministry of Public Instruction and by Bech's ministry could also be linked to the plans for the Centenary of Independence, though not explicitly mentioned. Furthermore, though the museum was not the Ministry of Public Instruction's responsibility (since November 1937), the latter was still involved in the discussions. Despite the pressure, the state architect Paul Wigreux advised the Ministry of Public Works (headed by the socialist Victor Bodson) in February against the Ministry of Public Instruction's request. Due to budget cuts and the challenging estimation of the actual costs, the renovation could not be initiated before 1939.<sup>1171</sup> In March 1938, the minister of public works was about to accept the request for an extraordinary budget in a letter to Bech but had to refrain due to the Ministry of Treasury's disapproval.<sup>1172</sup>

A gap of two years followed in which the project made no apparent progress. This considerable gap might stem from the fact that the renovation did not take place because of the financial situation. On 12 March 1940, Wigreux received a writing from Bech's ministry that funding was allocated to installing the folklore museum, which should begin as soon as possible.<sup>1173</sup> On 20 March, the technical committee met for the last time and discussed the question of the folklore museum. Nothumb informed the members that a budget was available to renovate the building. Half of the roof had already been overhauled.<sup>1174</sup> Two months later, Luxembourg was invaded by Nazi Germany. Thus, the project of a folklore museum in a separate building has never been realized. According to Meyers' account, the folklore collection was placed in the Collart-de Scherff house in 1939. It might be possible that within those two years, it was decided that the folklore collection would not be exhibited in a separate building. After WWII, the archaeological and folklore museums were merged into the history and art museum.

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<sup>1170</sup> "Non seulement elle risquerait d'en être détériorée davantage mais la réalisation du Musée de folklore, si désirable au point de vue de notre tourisme et d'ailleurs si peu coûteuse, subirait un retard inutile." (ANLux, IP-1809, Letter from the Ministry of Public Instruction to the Ministry of Public Works, 19/01/1938).

<sup>1171</sup> ANLux, IP-1809, Letter from Paul Wigreux to the Ministry of Public Works, 24/02/1938.

<sup>1172</sup> ANLux, IP-1809, Letter from the Minister of Public Works to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, 02/03/1938.

<sup>1173</sup> ANLux, IP-1809, Letter from the Ministry of Arts and Sciences to the state architect, 12/03/1940.

<sup>1174</sup> MNHA archives, separate shelf, folder no. 27, Report of the meeting of the Comité technique, 20/03/1940.

### III.5. Preliminary Conclusions

From the 19<sup>th</sup> century onwards and with the discovery of the iron ore deposits in the south, Luxembourg's economic structure changed from mainly rural to predominantly industrial. Meanwhile, the state apparatus was expanding. As soon as an autonomous state was created in 1839, one of its first preoccupations was the organisation of the public education system. The young state was anxious to secure its future by ensuring the training of an elite, the development of the economy, and the creation of an “imagined community” (Benedict Anderson). At least in the first decades of the autonomous state, the national authorities did not consider cultural policy a high priority on their agenda and devolved responsibilities to local authorities or private associations. The interest in conserving monuments and archaeological artefacts was a private matter through the foundation of the Archaeological Society, the predecessor of the Historical Section of the Grand-Ducal Institute.

Though cultural policy existed as a concept, it was used differently than today. The expression *arts et sciences* was not an administrative category until 1874. Indeed, the liberal state of the 19<sup>th</sup> century did not pursue an interventionist policy. The category of arts and sciences was used in discourses, in the ministerial distribution of tasks, in the state budget, and in the administrative apparatus. However, it did not encompass all matters related to culture or what would be regarded today as part of it. Hence, the difficulty in assessing what other expenses exerted an impact on culture.

Around the turn of the century, cultural policy became part of the larger context of nation-building. Paul Eyschen's influence as head of government was undoubtedly one factor in this process. It was not a coincidence that precisely during his period, interest in constructing a national museum intensified, even if the plans were not realised. Until the eve of the invasion in May 1940, national aggrandizement was the primary goal of cultural policy initiatives. The interwar period especially marked a strengthening in this respect, with the dawn of a conservative era and Joseph Bech as prime minister and head of arts and sciences. The concept of nation was extended to all classes, whereas foreigners were progressively excluded. Culture was not the sole preoccupation or leisure of the bourgeoisie and the political elite anymore, but of the whole nation. Even the monuments promoted by the educated classes, such as the Dicks-Lentz monument, represented a national idea. Though the proponents defended a culture with which they identified themselves, they considered this culture to be representing the “people”. Meanwhile, foreigners were either considered with suspicion or reduced to the role of visitors, sojourning in Luxembourg to contemplate the beauty of the landscapes. While these landscapes

were romanticised and considered through a pre-industrial lens reminiscent of a glorified medieval period, the government invested in tourist propaganda, as illustrated by Luxembourg's participation at the international exhibition in Paris in 1937.

Thus, cultural policy was put at the service of the national idea with an increasingly interventionist state. This approach was composed of a couple of defining aspects. First, it was that of a monumental policy focused on the conservation and protection of the past, of monuments, and of landscapes. Though subsidies and grants still represented a significant part of state expenses, direct investments – of which most would benefit the protection and conservation of monuments and landscapes and the acquisition of cultural goods – significantly increased. The state invested efforts in safeguarding national treasures. In this respect, both laws of 1927 and 1937 provided a legal framework. The law of 1927 was the first cultural policy law of the 20<sup>th</sup> century if we exclude previous laws that merely aimed at approving a budget for the construction of local cultural institutions. Yet, the monumental policy was not limited to the protection and conservation of monuments. It was also about constructing monuments. For the national museum, the architects conceived monumental buildings. Monuments were erected to remember events or honour personalities from Luxembourg's past and culture. The Monument of Remembrance in 1923 was one example, inseparably linked to the larger political context. The monuments dedicated to Michel Lentz, Michel Rodange and Edmond de la Fontaine should honour not only the actual writers but also national culture.

Besides the national idea set in stone, constituting the second dimension of cultural policy, the interwar period was marked by celebrations and consecrations of national and high culture. Bech's initiative of a literature prize was an attempt at consecrating Luxembourgian literary production and heightening its symbolic value. Political debates reflected the main cultural policy themes: tourism, conservation, theatre, music, and museums. The promotion of Luxembourgish gained momentum, even if it was not an official language. The political and socio-cultural elite regarded French and German as being at least as important as Luxembourgish. The initiatives favouring the Moselle-Franconian dialect spoken in everyday life should heighten it to a level playing field with French and German at most. Despite the experience of the First World War, German did not lose its significance; the consciousness of being a bilingual country was firmly anchored in the minds, even if, among the elites, preferences existed for either one of both languages. The concept of *Mischkultur* ("mixed culture"), coined by the liberals and writers Batty Weber and Frantz Clément in 1907, is a good example of how the elite perceived itself as part of an intermediate *Zwischenraum*. According to their theory, Luxembourg had its own culture at the crossroads of the German and the French

cultures. Thanks to its bilingualism, Luxembourg would be predestined for its role as a mediator between its two neighbours.<sup>1175</sup> In a text of 1909 titled *Über Mischkultur in Luxemburg*, Weber used the concept to react against a negative opinion of Luxembourg's bilingualism in a piece by a Swiss journalist. The concept might have reflected Weber's biography and work. As the researcher Anne-Marie Millim pointed out, Weber was an amateur of German, French and other cultures, and his production was interculturally oriented.<sup>1176</sup> *Mischkultur* referred, however, not simply to bilingualism, as Weber decidedly stressed the importance of Luxembourgish. Many years later, the idea of *Mischkultur* still resonated in Joseph Hess' *Luxemburger Volkskunde* (1929), highlighting the capability of Luxembourg, "thanks to its bilingualism and its intermediate position between two most advanced cultures", to "acquire foreign achievements and transform them into its own".<sup>1177</sup>

The primary cultures of reference were those of the neighbouring countries for historical, social and cultural reasons. Most of the elite in Luxembourg studied in Belgium, France, or Germany and brought contacts, influences, and ideas from these countries to Luxembourg. Intellectual and cultural societies in Luxembourg, such as the Section historique, built contacts with homologous societies abroad. When commissions, committees or juries discussed initiatives, such as the historical pageant of 1939, they sought examples and inspirations from neighbouring countries. The law of 1927 on national monuments and sites was primarily based on the text of the French law of 1913. In the case of the museum, the government consulted foreign experts or sent the state architect to visit museums in Germany. In the case of the folklore museum, authorities paid attention to developments in France and Germany. During the interwar period, Luxembourg's geographical horizon was mostly limited to its direct neighbours. Transnational contacts, exchanges, and transfers were strongly influenced by Luxembourg's status as a nationalised intermediate space.

After the First World War, resulting from German military occupation, and even more with the rise of National Socialism in the 1930s, cultural diplomacy leaned more towards the Francophone neighbours. Germany was not invited to the inauguration of the Monument du

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<sup>1175</sup> Claude Conter, 'Mischkultur', in *Lieux de mémoire au Luxembourg: Usages du passé et construction nationale*, ed. Sonja Kmec et al., vol. 1, 2 vols (Luxembourg: Ed. Saint-Paul, 2007), 23–28.

<sup>1176</sup> Anne-Marie Millim, 'Batty Weber - Werk und Wirkung: Einleitung', in *Batty Weber: Werk und Wirkung*, ed. Anne-Marie Millim (Mersch: Centre national de littérature, 2017), 11.

<sup>1177</sup> "Zum kulturellen Genießen findet sich der Luxemburger glücklichsterweise befähigt, weil es ihm gegeben ist, dank seiner Zweisprachigkeit und wegen seiner Einschiebstellung zwischen zwei höchstentwickelten Kulturen, sich fremde Errungenschaft anzueignen und sie zu Eigenbesitz zu verarbeiten." (Joseph Hess, *Luxemburger Volkskunde* [Grevenmacher: Paul Faber, 1929], 3).

Souvenir. A cultural agreement was signed with Belgium and France but not with Germany. Yet, even the Nazi dictatorship and fears of annexationism did not cause a fatal blow to the perception of German culture. Bilingualism was not discarded because of an aggressive regime in a neighbouring country. The lack of official agreements paired with a pragmatic approach pushed German authorities of the border regions to promote National Socialism via unofficial channels and with meticulous attention not to cause negative publicity. The GEDELIT became an unofficial propaganda platform for *völkisch* ideas, while the *Westforscher* were exchanging with Luxembourgian researchers, such as Joseph Meyers. German authorities organised travels with young Luxembourgers as a cover to make them acquainted with National Socialism. Hence, cultural exchanges with France and Belgium were a mixture of official channels and private initiatives (Alliance Française). Cultural exchanges with Germany were largely private (GEDELIT) or unofficial and unilateral. The Germans considered themselves in intense competition with French cultural influences, thus implicitly acknowledging, from their perspective, Luxembourg as an intermediate space. Yet, they did not recognise a distinct Luxembourgish culture. For Nazis, the true essence of Luxembourg was German.

Most of the actors engaged in the cultural policy field were from the political or socio-cultural fields. As has been observed in previous sections, many actors were teachers. With their education and studies abroad, they belonged to the socio-cultural elites. The high concentration of alums of or teachers at the Athenaeum resides in the special status that the school enjoyed until the 1890s. Furthermore, the Athenaeum's privileged status also transpired in the case study due to the strong link between the Historical Section and the school until the late 19<sup>th</sup> century at least. In many cases, boundaries between political and socio-cultural actors were blurred. Joseph Bech is probably the most prominent example. Not only was he heading the arts and sciences department and thus involved in the creation of the national museum, but he was also president of the Société des Amis des Musées, an association that sought to enrich the museum's collection through donations. This was not considered as a conflict of interests. However, non-political actors could also influence cultural policy. The Historical Section, for instance, wrote reports and letters complaining about the situation of excavations in Luxembourg and the lack of supervision. Though they did not have an immediate impact, they contributed to the sensitization of issues concerning the museum.

The answer is less clear when tending to the question of what concept of culture dominated. On the one hand, and like in other countries, commemorations, celebrations, acquisitions and initiatives referred to a high culture promoted by the political and socio-cultural elites. This high culture partly overlapped with a defined national culture. On the other hand, high culture

and popular culture were not used in clear opposition. In fact, these notions were not used in the sources, and the only expression closest to popular culture was *arts populaires*, inspired by the French example. In retrospect, it is therefore difficult to draw a clear line between both concepts. The folklore museum project, the organisation of the historical procession in 1939, the participation of Luxembourg in the International Commission of Popular Arts and Traditions or the subsidies to music societies could also be popular culture initiatives. No reason allows us to conclude that the government would have despised popular culture, as it did not actively reflect on the concept and its promotion. Yet, the idea of national culture undeniably referred to a specific canon, encompassing writers such as Dicks, Lentz, Rodange, or composers like Zinnen, and disseminated through public education. The master narrative was part of this canon with historical figures such as Ermesinde or John the Blind. Historians such as Arthur Herchen and Joseph Meyers wrote school manuals, thus disseminating the master narrative.

If one event represented interwar cultural policy in a concentrated form, it was undoubtedly the Centenary Celebration in 1939 with its national aggrandizement, the cultivation of the national idea and the political performance. It was a fitting illustration of the strong interrelationship between actors, discourses and structures between the national and the international context. The celebration was organised against the backdrop of political tensions in Europe. The government used every means to exhibit Luxembourg's legitimacy as an independent nation-state and highlight its cultural specificity. Luxembourgish communities abroad were invited to participate in the celebration and organise their events, while foreign communities in Luxembourg were barely considered. When non-Luxembourgers made themselves visible, they were regarded with scepticism or disdain. There was, indeed, no place for foreigners in the national aggrandizement.

For the celebration of 1939, national symbols were used in abundance, Luxembourgish was promoted, and sub-committees were created. These organised specific aspects of the Centenary, such as tourism (including sports), the construction of a monument, the question of the national flag, or the historical procession. Over 60 people participated in these committees. Many had already been involved in previous cultural policy initiatives or were members of societies such as the Cercle artistique or the Section historique. The list of these people equalled a who's who of the political and socio-cultural elites at the time, specifically chosen for their skills, achievements, and probably also thanks to social capital. Their skills determined the type of sub-committee to which they were assigned. While the linguistic committee was composed

of linguists and historians, the monument committee assembled architects, engineers and artists.

For the Centenary, the government planned a series of initiatives and productions, such as the publication of a book highlighting the specificity of Luxembourg's culture, history and society. A movie was commissioned to record the main celebration in Luxembourg City and was destined to be shown in the Grand Duchy and abroad. The historical procession staged the master narrative, explained in an illustrated brochure. Mostly native Luxembourgers were shown, while rulers reminiscent of the "foreign dominations" were excluded. The historian Joseph Meyers was involved in the organisation of the pageant.

The plans for a national museum were intertwined with the cultural policy context. The museum was part of the cultural policy context of conservation, protection and exhibition of national culture. The failed project of a separate building for the folklore museum was based on the same premises and responded to an increasing interest in folklore. The project of a national museum originated in the early years of the autonomous state when a group of people from the bourgeoisie founded the Archaeological Society. The first sign of the government's interest in a national museum only appeared at the end of the 1870s with the creation of a committee. However, it was the third committee in the 1890s that produced tangible results. The plan by Vienna architect Carl Seidl came close to being realised, but it remained a pipe dream.

Meanwhile, the Historical Section and its curators wrote letters of complaint, criticising the conditions in which the collections were conserved, the unsuitable locations, the lack of space and the difficult working conditions. Professionalisation was not possible. The accessibility of the collections was not a given, and the curators were detached to the museum in part-time occupations. The curators' view of visitors was somewhat ambiguous. On the one hand, they feared that too many visitors might lead to a deterioration of the exhibits; on the other hand, their missions encompassed, among other tasks, the reception and guidance of visitors, which they did. In their letters, the curators seldom expressed concerns about visitors' experiences. They were more concerned about the state of conservation. At the same time, the debates about potential locations revealed a particular interest in choosing an accessible site for Luxembourgish and foreign visitors.

Visible progress was only made after the First World War. In 1922, the state bought the Collart-de Scherff building, where the future national museum was to be installed. However, the construction works did not advance as planned, eliciting criticisms and debates in the Chamber of Deputies and the press. The curators grew impatient and exerted pressure on the

government. Ferrant deliberately moved parts of the natural history collection to the Marché-aux-Poissons, only to ensure that the government would not change its mind as to the purpose of the building. When everything was finally set for the official opening in 1939, the outbreak of the war in Europe impeded this. By then, custodianship in the museum had slightly professionalised as the curators had received (basic) training better adapted to their tasks, but they remained detached high school teachers.

A series of actors were involved in promoting and constructing the national museum; among them, of course, the Historical Section and the Natural History Section of the Grand-Ducal Institute. In 1926, the Amis des Musées was founded by a group involved in other socio-cultural or cultural policy initiatives. The museum's history also includes tensions between actors, especially when many stakeholders were involved. The Historical Section feared possible competition from the newly founded society. Tensions arose between curators and ministers in the letters of complaint and among curators. Unfortunately, as the analysis of such tension is based exclusively on written sources, it is difficult to assess the informal tensions between actors. Luxembourg is a small country, and much can happen without being recorded.

In the present chapter, cultural policy actors have sometimes been circumscribed with terms such as bourgeoisie or elite. Indeed, not every member of the elite was part of the bourgeoisie and vice-versa. Also, both concepts presume a hierarchy: in one case economic and based on lifestyle (bourgeoisie), in the other case based on skills, achievements and symbolic capital (elite). Using notions pertaining to economic, socio-cultural and political actors does not imply a hierarchy. Indeed, any member of a local music association is a socio-cultural actor without being bourgeois. However, participation in cultural activities might necessitate a certain amount of financial capital that the less endowed citizens do not necessarily possess.

As we have seen in the case of the Centenary, the literature prize or the participation in the international fairs, the cultural society was mobilised and with it the three functions defined by Ory. For the Centenary, for instance, production (literature, movie, procession), mediation (master narrative), and reception (in the press and abroad) were present. However, the cultural society, though a useful concept in some cases, does not cover all actors involved in the cultural policy field. Indeed, Ory did not coin the concept from a cultural policy perspective but from the viewpoint of describing the practice of culture. Political actors (including civil servants) do not necessarily belong to the cultural society. Still, they might become part of it, for instance, when they disseminate the master narrative through their speeches or writings and therefore fulfil a function as described above.

If cultural policy until the 1930s aimed at national aggrandizement and consolidation of the national idea, it did not prevent Luxembourg from being invaded by Germany in May 1940. The Second World War and the German occupation ended many planned initiatives but did not entail an interruption at every level. Conservation and acquisition work at the museum continued during the occupation. Yet, the structures of cultural society and public authorities were reshuffled during the occupation. Societies such as the Section historique interrupted their activities. The Société des Amis des Musées was disbanded. Many individuals mentioned above stayed in the country (Joseph Meyers, Albert Wehrer), fled (Joseph Bech), were persecuted by the Nazi regime (Frantz Clément), or died of natural causes (Batty Weber, Victor Ferrant).

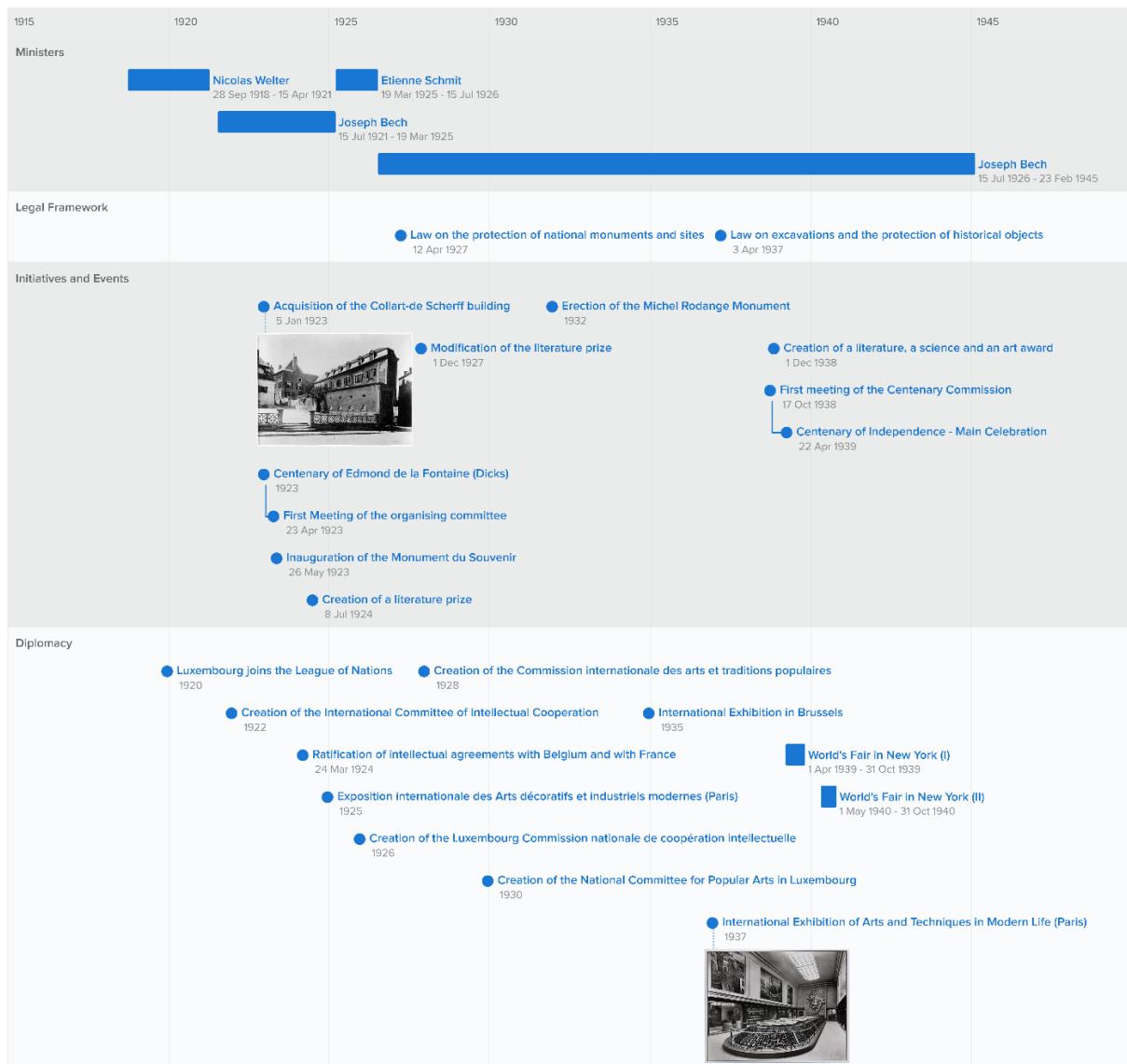


Fig. 61: Timeline of cultural policy in Luxembourg, 1918-1940. Created with Preceden.

## CHAPTER IV. NEUTRALISING THE NATION: LUXEMBOURG DURING NAZI OCCUPATION (1940-1944)

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On 8 August 1942, roughly two years after the creation of the German Civil Administration in Luxembourg, an anonymous article in the *Berliner Börsenzeitung* praised the cultural policy implemented in Luxembourg since then. It mentioned a “renaissance” and a “new birth” of German culture and language in Luxembourg. It welcomed the use of cultural infrastructures at the service of the “cultural German reconstruction”. It mentioned the fight against French influence and culture, illustrating the objective to neutralise an intermediate space.<sup>1178</sup> According to this article, Luxembourgish artists were represented at the Moselländische Kulturtage<sup>1179</sup> in Berlin. The theatre in Luxembourg and German performances had experienced a resurgence. With the support of the Gaufilmstelle (Movie Service of the Gau), German movies were shown at least once a month in rural areas and small towns that did not have a cinema. The “reconstruction” of the German library system put an end to the “one-sided” support of “French cultural propaganda”, which had resulted in libraries containing mainly French volumes – or so it was claimed. In 1939, when the same news outlet reported on the Centenary in Luxembourg, its text was more balanced: “While a part of the great powers is anxiously turning their attention to the worries of the future, a small European country is fully engaged with the pleasures of the present.”<sup>1180</sup> The example of the *Berliner Börsenzeitung* shows how the tone changes according to the context.

The *Berliner Börsenzeitung* was not the only foreign newspaper that published an article about Luxembourg’s cultural life and policy during the occupation. Similar praise is found in an article by Eduard Gerlach in the NSDAP newspaper *Völkischer Beobachter* on 4 July 1942. *Künstlerkameradschaften* were founded to strengthen the community feeling among artists; the

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<sup>1178</sup> Original text: “Das deutsche Volkstum in Luxemburg, das vor allem auf dem Lande den sichersten Hort seines angestammten Reichstums besaß, hat bald nach den Ereignissen des 10. Mai 1940 seine große kulturelle Neu- und Wiedergeburt erlebt. Die deutsche Sprache wurde wieder alleingültige Amts- und Schulsprache. Die kulturellen Einrichtungen im ehemaligen Großherzogtum, die einschließlich des bekannten Hetzsenders Luxemburg in deutschfeindlichen und ausländischen bzw. in klerikal katholischen oder parteipolitischen Händen waren, wurden sofort in den Dienst des kulturellen deutschen Neuaufbaues gestellt. Man konnte ferner auch an die wertvolle Vorarbeit anknüpfen, die die Gesellschaft für deutsche Literatur und Kunst (“Gedelit”) geleistet hatte [...].” (BArch Berlin, R 4902/1483, ‘Neues kulturelles Leben in Luxemburg’, in *Berliner Börsenzeitung* no. 372, 08/08/1942, no. 5).

<sup>1179</sup> “Cultural days” dedicated to the Moselle region.

<sup>1180</sup> Own translation. “Während ein Teil der Großmächte bedenklich auf die Sorgen der Zukunft ihr Augenmerk richtet, ist ein kleines europäisches Land ganz mit den Freuden der Gegenwart beschäftigt.” (BArch Berlin, R 4902/1483, ‘Frohen Mutes feiert ganz Luxemburg’, in *Berliner Börsenzeitung*, 25/07/1939).

Luxemburger Beethoven-Festtage were organised in May 1942. The GEDELIT, the Reichspropagandaamt (RPA, propaganda service of the Reich), and the KdF (Kraft durch Freude, “strength through joy”) organised lectures, literary evenings, and musical events.<sup>1181</sup>

When these articles were published, it happened in a year that marked a turning point in cultural policy, especially for the traditional cultural institutions. The current chapter will focus on three aspects: the administrative structures, the ideological foundations, the control and coercion, and the traditional cultural institutions with a focus on the case study.

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<sup>1181</sup> BArch Berlin, R 4902/1483, ‘Das deutsche Kulturleben in Luxemburg’, in *Völkischer Beobachter* (Berlin) no. 334/335, 04/07/1942, no. 13.

## IV.1. The Implementation of Cultural Policy

### **IV.1.1. The administration of culture: Aufbauarbeit, Deutschtumpflege, Kulturpflege**

From the first months of the occupation onwards, the Nazis were remodelling the political structures, reorganising the administration, and introducing new policies. These steps were taken per the concept of *Aufbauarbeit* (“reconstruction work”), which encompassed efforts related to culture and other areas. Another leading principle was *Deutschtumpflege* (promoting and conserving German culture), which had clear ethnic and spiritual connotations. *Deutschtum* referred to the “Germanness” and the legitimisation of living in a unified state. The third concept specifically targeted cultural policy as such: *Kulturpflege* (promotion and preservation of culture). Despite differences in the meanings of these concepts, they were deeply connected and reinforced each other.

The occasional use of the term *Kulturpolitik* in administrative documents might be surprising in this context.<sup>1182</sup> Its visibility was possibly reduced due to the presence of the other concepts mentioned above. Furthermore, it did not represent an administrative category in the budget of the Chef der Zivilverwaltung (head of civil administration, CdZ)<sup>1183</sup>. Yet, it was a political and propagandistic term, appearing in newspapers with a more specific meaning than during the interwar period. Indeed, considering the areas it encompassed, *Kulturpolitik* bore similarities with its use in the post-war period, in many cases related to performing arts, cinema, literature and cultural creation in general. This newer meaning of cultural policy undergirded claims, for instance, that the support of culture experienced an “unprecedented boost” caused by the Nazi cultural policy.<sup>1184</sup> In June 1941, the *Luxemburger Wort* praised the cultural investments:

If one would add the investments of the German people in art entertainment – including cinema – one received an astounding sum that has even increased throughout the war. Precisely this fact might stand for the success of the active cultural policy of the Third Reich.<sup>1185</sup>

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<sup>1182</sup> According to the results in the online newspaper archive *eLuxemburgensia*, the term “Kulturpolitik” appeared first in 1941, and was used for the last time in 1943

<sup>1183</sup> “Chef der Zivilverwaltung” referred and to the title of Gustav Simon (for Luxembourg) and to the German administration in Luxembourg as a whole.

<sup>1184</sup> ‘Die deutsche Malerei der Gegenwart: Dr. Werner Rittich sprach in Esch’, *Tageblatt*, February 1941.

<sup>1185</sup> Own translation. “Wenn man die Aufwendungen des deutschen Volkes für künstlerische Unterhaltung – das Kino dabei eingerechnet – addieren würde, man käme auf eine erstaunliche Summe, die im Laufe des Krieges noch zugenommen hat. Gerade in dieser Tatsache mag man auch einen Erfolg der aktiven Kulturpolitik des Dritten Reiches sehen” (‘Kulturelle Hochleistung: Im Zeichen des künstlerischen Austausches’, *Luxemburger Wort*, June 1941).

*Kulturpolitik* was perceived as a legitimate political category. In April 1941, the *Obermosel-Zeitung* (April 1941) highlighted the “Führer’s creative power” in various domains and mentioned cultural policy alongside social policy, economic policy, foreign affairs and “the military problems”.<sup>1186</sup>

Cultural policy was not clearly defined, but its meaning was implied. It was a distinct political category, included traditional areas and was linked to the support of artists and cultural creation/production. In some cases, a *völkisch* tone underscored the understanding of cultural policy, for instance, when the *Tageblatt* quoted Gaupropagandaleiter Urmes’ declaration that “in a hundred years”, a *Volkstum* could not disappear even if it were influenced and afflicted by a “haphazard, alienating cultural policy”<sup>1187</sup> (alluding to French influences in Luxembourg). Whether the notion of cultural policy in newspapers was linked to high or popular culture, or both, is difficult to assess, though sometimes its understanding seemed to tip towards high culture. When reporting on the ownership transfer of castle Fischbach to the Goebbels Foundation, an article considered this an opportunity to “take pleasure from the beautiful fruits of National-Socialist cultural policy” by contemplating the “most beautiful achievements in all areas of culture”.<sup>1188</sup> Considering that the regime controlled the press, the administration must have promoted a similar understanding of cultural policy.

Beyond reflections on the meaning of cultural policy and culture, the administrative structures were transformed by the Nazis. This ultimately impacted cultural policy as an area of political intervention. The former districts and cantons were replaced with the German division of *Landkreise* (rural districts) and *Stadtkreise* (urban districts). This decentralisation was guided by the principles of strict hierarchical organisation and top-down authority. The civil administration in Luxembourg was divided into several departments: the main department, five *Abteilungen* (departments), and *Sonderstellen* (special divisions).<sup>1189</sup> The explanations attached to an organisational plan leave no doubt that Luxembourg was to be wholly incorporated into the Third Reich, even if not immediately. The Gauleiter Gustav

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<sup>1186</sup> Excerpt in original language: “Es gibt kein Gebiet unseres öffentlichen Lebens, auf dem nicht in den letzten acht Jahren ein tiefgreifender, ja geradezu revolutionärer Wandel Platz gegriffen hat. Mögen wir die Innen- oder Außenpolitik, die Wirtschafts- und Sozialpolitik, die Kulturpolitik und nicht zuletzt die militärischen Probleme betrachten – überall hat die schöpferische Kraft des Führers ihren Niederschlag gefunden, überall zeigt sich das Große und Geniale, überall werden neue Wege gegangen [...].” (‘Der Führer – der größte Staatsmann und Feldherr’, *Obermosel-Zeitung*, April 1941).

<sup>1187</sup> ‘Das deutsche Gesicht Luxemburgs: Rundfunkansprache des Gaupropagandaleiters Urmes’, *Tageblatt*, January 1941.

<sup>1188</sup> ‘Dank der Gemeinschaft an die Kunstschaaffenden’, *Tageblatt*, July 1942.

<sup>1189</sup> ANLux, CdZ-A-1551, *Geschäftsverteilungsplan*, undated, no. 74-75.

Simon, whose powers extended to all policy areas, was directly subordinated to Hitler.<sup>1190</sup> Simon ensured that any other authority in Luxembourg would not challenge him. The separation of powers was removed; the constitutional institutions dissolved. However, appearances can fool the observer. Despite its efforts to appear as a monolithic seat of power, the administration was more complex in its internal structures.

Researchers tackling the subject of Nazi cultural policy in the Third Reich have insisted on the progressively complex construction of the Nazi bureaucracy. In fact, instead of one ministry and clear areas of competencies, the Third Reich was characterised by a complex system of administrations and organisations with overlapping powers, thus causing power struggles and competitions between actors. As Jonathan Petropoulos, in *Art as Politics in the Third Reich* (1996), exposed:

In addition to Hitler, three ministers clearly had legitimate claims to the supervision of culture: Joseph Goebbels, in his capacity as Reich minister for propaganda and public enlightenment; Bernhard Rust, the Reich minister for science, education, and public instruction, who occupied the position that traditionally oversaw museums, art schools, and other cultural institutions; and Alfred Rosenberg, who held the Party post supervising ideology, the Führer's delegate for the entire intellectual and philosophical education and instruction of the National Socialist Party.<sup>1191</sup>

Though this description concerns the highest political offices in the Third Reich, the principle of multiplication of actors is also observable at lower administrative levels in occupied or annexed countries. In Luxembourg, several departments were directly, indirectly or potentially involved in cultural policy. Within the civil administration, the area of responsibility of the Abteilung II encompassed everything related to education in Luxembourg, including libraries. The Abteilung IV was, among others, responsible for the management of Jewish and emigrants' possessions (*IV a, Juden- und Emigrantenvormögen*). The Abteilung V was dedicated to publications, propaganda, media, and tourism ("Schriftwesen, Volkstumswesen, Gaufilmstelle, Aktive Propaganda, Gemeinschaftsrundfunk, Fremdenverkehr").<sup>1192</sup> The Verwaltung der höheren Kommunalverbandsangelegenheiten

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<sup>1190</sup> "Der Chef der Zivilverwaltung führt auf Grund des Führererlasses vom 2.8.1940 die gesamte Verwaltung im zivilen Bereich, ist dem Führer unmittelbar unterstellt und nach dem Führererlaß vom 18.10.1940 ihm allein für die Verwaltung in Luxemburg verantwortlich. Gemäß Erlaß des Reichsministers des Innern vom 10.8.1940 [...] ist er allein befugt, für Luxemburg durch Verordnung Recht zu setzen" (ANLux, CdZ-A-0632, *Erläuterungen zum Stellenplan des CdZ in Luxemburg für das Rechnungsjahr 1942*, undated [around 1941/1942], no. 5-12).

<sup>1191</sup> Jonathan Petropoulos, *Art as Politics in the Third Reich* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1996), 8–9.

<sup>1192</sup> ANLux, CdZ-A-0632, *Geschäftsverteilungsplan des Chefs der Zivilverwaltung in Luxemburg*, undated [around 1941/1942], no. 1-4.

(administration of intercommunal affairs, VHKVA) existed alongside the *Abteilungen* and ran its own *Kulturabteilung* (cultural department).<sup>1193</sup>

According to an undated document breaking down the attributions of the VHKVA, *Kulturpflege*<sup>1194</sup> included museums, monuments, excavations, environmental protection, arts and sciences, libraries, the Grand-Ducal Institute, and archives.<sup>1195</sup> In this sense, the area of responsibility of the VHKVA in cultural matters did not differ much from the *arts et sciences* of the interwar period. It was even extended to libraries and environmental protection. Considering the *Gleichschaltung*, the mention of the IGD might be surprising. However, the institute's future was linked to that of the Landesbibliothek. Alex Röder, who became provisional director of the Landesbibliothek in late 1942/early 1943, wrote in November 1942 that the library's mission consisted in reuniting the necessary people and sparking further interest among the population to expand its impact beyond Luxembourg City. The Grand-Ducal Institute was not disbanded. As Röder explained, it had ceased its activities.<sup>1196</sup> Several months later, he revealed the aim to transform it into an institute for applied geography

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<sup>1193</sup> The role of the VHKVA has not yet been fully analysed in Luxembourgish historiography. When the administration is mentioned in the literature, it happens in the context of the museum. When Paul Dostert broke down the structure of the Chef der Zivilverwaltung with the different Abteilungen, the VHKVA is ignored, although it was dependent on the CdZ (Paul Dostert, *Luxemburg zwischen Selbstbehauptung und nationaler Selbstaufgabe: Die deutsche Besatzungspolitik und die Volksdeutsche Bewegung 1940-1945* [Luxembourg: Saint-Paul, 1985], 80–81). Here is the structure as presented by Paul Dostert :

Hauptabteilung	Dr. Münzel
Abteilung I (Allgem. Abt.)	Dr. Münzel
Abteilung II (Erziehung und Volksbildung)	Dr. Münzel
Abteilung III (Wirtschaft)	Dr. Simmer
Abteilung IV (Juden- und Emigrantenvermögen)	Ackermann
Abteilung V (Volksaufklärung und Propaganda)	Urmes
Sonderstelle für Forst- und Holzwirtschaft	Wegener
Sonderstelle für Arbeitseinsatz	Dr. Jacobs
Sonderstelle für Personalangelegenheiten	Dr. Unger

A *Sonderstelle: Politisches Sachegebiet* was added later on, under supervision of the head of the *Einsatzkommando der Sicherheitspolizei und des Sicherheitsdienstes* (SD).

<sup>1194</sup> An English equivalent to *Kulturpflege* does not exist. The literal translation would be “care of culture”.

<sup>1195</sup> “Kulturpflege, insbesondere Landesmuseum (einschl. Volkskundemuseum) in Luxemburg. Betreuung der Heimatmussen, Denkmalpflege, Denkmälerinventarisierung und Ausgrabungen, Förderung des Naturschutzes, der Heimatpflege und der Heimatvereine, allgemeine Förderung von Kunst und Wissenschaft einschl. Der Gewährung von Stipendien, die Landesbibliothek und die übrigen staatlichen Büchereien, das Grossherzogliche Institut mit den angeschlossenen Bibliotheken und sonstigen Beständen; Archivberatung und Archivpflege, soweit es sich nicht um staatliche Archive handelt.” (ANLux, CdZ-A-1551, *Geschäftsverteilungsplan*, undated, no. 74-75).

<sup>1196</sup> BArch Berlin, R 4901/13703, Letter from Alex Röder to Ministerialrat Kummer (Reichsministerium für Wissenschaft, Erziehung und Volksbildung), 21/11/1942, no. 31-32.

(*landeskundliches Institut*) with missions in neighbouring, *volksfremde* (ethnically foreign) spaces, especially Wallonia.<sup>1197</sup>

The administrative structures, or certain guiding principles (multiplication of actors, decentralisation), were copied from the *Altreich*. From 2 August 1940 onwards, when Hitler suspended the occupation status of Luxembourg, Gustav Simon answered directly to the Führer and the Reichsleiter (Reich leaders). The position of Gauleiter was not only a political office (the second highest rank in the NSDAP), but it was also at the top of the administration of a delimited region, the *Reichsgau*. As Gauleiter, Simon enjoyed a certain margin of personal decision-making. However, he was also acting as an intermediary of the ministries. Simon implemented orders and decrees but could adapt them to the regional context and choose the time of implementation. The highest administrative levels of the Reich were not excluded from Nazi cultural policy in Luxembourg, though. On the contrary, they were directly involved in some areas and cases. In the present study, the two main implicated Reich ministries were Bernhard Rust's Reichsministerium für Wissenschaft, Erziehung und Volksbildung (Reich Ministry of Science, Education and National Culture) and Joseph Goebbels' Reichministerium für Volksaufklärung und Propaganda (Reich Ministry of Public Enlightenment and Propaganda, RMVP). The former was involved in matters concerning libraries, and the latter in the area of theatre. The administrative division introduced by the Germans was based on a diversity of potential actors taking decisions concerning cultural policy. Other studies have also observed the existence of these "polycratic power structures"<sup>1198</sup> in the Nazi regime. The opposite end of the administrative chain involved local authorities as cultural policy stakeholders. In the present study, the mayor of Luxembourg City, Richard Hengst, is a recurrent actor.

Within the administrative Nazi apparatus, Simon was not the only important figure. He had representatives (such as Friedrich Münzel or Regierungspräsident Heinrich-Christian Siekmeier) and many other collaborators who were heading different departments and regularly exchanged letters related to cultural matters, in addition to individuals who worked in the administration without occupying leading positions. Secondly, and most importantly, the civil administration was not the only power structure in Luxembourg, which fuelled internal struggles, even though the records did not always reveal them. The Reichspropagandaamt

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<sup>1197</sup> BArch Berlin, R 4901/13703, Letter from Alex Röder to Ministerialrat Kummer, 21/01/1943, no. 35.

<sup>1198</sup> Sebastian Farnung, *Kulturpolitik im Dritten Reich am Beispiel Frankfurter Museen* (Frankfurt am Main: Henrich Editionen, 2015), 25.

(Reich Propaganda Service, RPA), the Sicherheitsdienst (Security Service, SD), and the Ahnenerbe, a research community of the SS, were actors in Luxembourg (partly) outside of Simon's power sphere. The Außenstelle (branch office) of the RPA in Luxembourg was created by the Reich Propaganda Ministry in August 1940 and installed in the building of the former Chamber of Deputies. However, it was subordinated to the German administration. Albert Perizonius headed the branch office. His direct superior was Albert Urmes, who managed the Reich Propaganda Service in Koblenz. The overlaps were not only of administrative but also of personal nature. Perizonius is a case in point: he was deputy supervisor/president of the Landeskulturkammer, he was Urmes' deputy at the Landeskulturwaltung (regional cultural supervision office) of the Gau Moselland and, at the request of Simon, he became director of Radio Luxembourg in June 1942. Meanwhile, Urmes was officially heading the Abteilung V of the CdZ.<sup>1199</sup>

The staff of the civil administration was composed either of Germans (detached from the central administrations in the Third Reich or from neighbouring administrative districts, especially Trier) or of Luxembourgers who had worked for the Luxembourgish state apparatus before the invasion. Whereas Germans usually occupied higher positions, Luxembourgers were mainly employed in middle or lower administration positions. According to an internal document, some Luxembourgers in high positions before the occupation were not needed anymore and would be detached to Germany if they could not retire or be dispensed from their service.<sup>1200</sup>

The implementation of the new administrative organisation caused issues within the bureaucracy, as the Luxembourgish state officials who continued to be employed during the occupation were not used to the German system. Some policy areas elicited problems due to the specific case of Luxembourg and the implementation of the Reich decrees.<sup>1201</sup> A document about the administrative organisation acknowledged that some measures, not further specified,

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<sup>1199</sup> For more information, see: Marc Limpach, 'Die Kulturpolitik im besetzten Luxemburg (1940–1944) und die NS-Intellektuellen Albert Perizonius und Richard Hengst', in *Luxemburg und der Zweite Weltkrieg: Literarisch-intellektuelles Leben zwischen Machtergreifung und Epuration* (Mersch: Centre national de l'audiovisuel, 2020), 100–143.

<sup>1200</sup> ANLux, CdZ-A-0632, *Erläuterungen zum Stellenplan des CdZ in Luxemburg für das Rechnungsjahr 1942*, undated (around 1941/1942), no. 5-12.

<sup>1201</sup> "Auf anderen Arbeitsgebieten verursacht die Durchführung der bereits eingeführten grundsätzlichen reichsdeutschen Vorschriften gegenüber dem Altreich, weil es sich in Luxemburg zunächst um die erstmalige Inangriffnahme unter ganz besonderen Umständen handelt, ein Vielfaches an Arbeit, so z.B. der Finanzausgleich mit den Gemeinden, die Regelung der Wehr- und Arbeitsdienstplicht, der Staatsangehörigkeitsverhältnisse u.a.m." (ANLux, CdZ-A-0632, *Erläuterungen zum Stellenplan des CdZ. in Luxemburg für das Rechnungsjahr 1942*, undated [around 1941/1942], no. 5-12).

needed to be carefully implemented considering the “general attitude” (“allgemeine Haltung”) of the population; especially as these measures were already causing troubles in the *Altreich*:

Finally, the work of the CdZ administration, in its extraordinarily close link with the political offices led by the head of the Civil Administration in his capacity as Gauleiter, must always be carefully planned to ensure that even such measures that could, as experience has shown, lead to non-neglectable difficulties in the Altreich, do not elicit unpleasantness in Luxembourg concerning their political effect on the general attitude of the local population.<sup>1202</sup>

Thus, the radical change of administration and legal framework in the image of the Third Reich was not a straightforward process. The Nazis did not ignore that, beyond administrative issues, the general attitude of the population, except for a small yet significant group, was not well-disposed to the occupation forces. Hence, the de-nationalisation of a country did not only pass through the modification of administrative structures. In order to ideologically shape the population, cultural policy was one of the tools used by the German administration.

#### **IV.1.2. Budget aspects of Nazi cultural policy**

A systematic examination and categorisation of the budget will not be presented here.<sup>1203</sup> However, several aspects need to be discussed. The sections, categories and concepts used in the budgets reflected the division of tasks within the administration. The chapter *Allgemeine CdZ.-Verwaltung* of the *Haushaltsplan* for 1941 included the budgetary items *Deutschtempflege (I Volk.)* (p. 11), *Förderung des Fremdenverkehrs (I Prop.)* (promotion of tourism, p. 15) and *Ankauf von Gebäuden zur Erweiterung des Landesmuseums in Luxembourg (höh. KVA.)* (acquisition of buildings for the expansion of the Landesmuseum in Luxembourg, p. 17). The museum’s expansion project was classified under sub-section *b. Einmalige Ausgaben* (non-recurring expenses). Furthermore, a sub-section was devoted to the *Aussenstelle des Reichspropagandaamtes Moselland in Luxemburg einschl. Pressedienst* (p. 18). In this sub-section, the most significant chunk of the expenses (RM 600,000 of RM 699,500 in total) was allocated to *Propaganda u. Presse (I Prop.)*, “Propaganda and Press”.

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<sup>1202</sup> Translated from German. “Schließlich muss die Arbeit der CdZ.-Verwaltung bei der außerordentlich engen Verbindung mit den vom Chef der Zivilverwaltung in seiner Eigenschaft als Gauleiter geführten politischen Stellen stets in sorgfältiger Planung ganz besonders darauf abgestellt werden, daß auch solche Maßnahmen, die im Altreich erfahrungsgemäß nicht zu den geringsten Schwierigkeiten führen, in Luxemburg bei der allgemeinen Haltung der einheimischen Bevölkerung im Hinblick auf ihre politische Auswirkung nicht zu Unzuträglichkeiten führen.” (ANLux, CdZ-A-0632, *Erläuterungen zum Stellenplan des CdZ. in Luxemburg für das Rechnungsjahr 1942*, undated [around 1941/1942], no. 5-12).

<sup>1203</sup> This is due to problems related to the sources (the layout of the budgets was not coherent from one year to the next; some budgets were more detailed than others; etc.) and the comparably short period of the German occupation.

Another sub-section of the general CdZ administration concerned the *Archivwesen* (pp. 30-32). The administration of intercommunal affairs, the VHKVA, had its distinct chapter (p. 122), including the subsection *V. Kulturpflege*. Unfortunately, the budget for the year 1941 did not include details concerning the VHKVA sub-sections and merely presented a general overview.<sup>1204</sup>

The budget for 1942 displayed some changes compared to 1941. The structure applied the logic of administrative divisions into *Abteilungen* or *Verwaltungen*. Hence, instead of two large chapters as in 1941, the budget of 1942 dedicated a chapter to each *Abteilung*. The budget section *Aussenstelle des Reichspropagandaamtes Moselland in Luxemburg* was included in a distinct chapter (pp. 89-90), encompassing an article related to tourism and subsidies distributed to young artists. A *Staatsarchiv* section (pp. 101-102) was subsumed under the chapter *Verschiedenes* (various). The article related to *Deutschtempflege* was moved to another section (*Allgemeine Fonds*, section 3 under chapter I). It was renamed *Deutschtempflegefonds* and endowed with a budget of RM 1,750,000. The remaining expenses related to culture were subsumed under the chapter dedicated to the VHKVA (pp. 109-153). This chapter included the section *Kulturpflege* that encompassed three sub-sections: *Kulturpflege aussch. Landesmuseum und Landesbibliothek* (culture except Landesmuseum and Landesbibliothek, pp. 147-148), *Museum* (pp. 149-150), and *Landesbibliothek* (pp. 151-152). The sub-section *Kulturpflege* included budget lines related to monuments (*Denkmalpflege*), environmental protection, *Heimatmuseen*, *Archivberatungsstelle*, and subsidies.<sup>1205</sup> The budgets for the years 1943 and 1944 copied the structure of the 1942 budget.

Secondly, expenses might have surpassed the amount initially inscribed in the budgets. These adaptations required special authorisations from the administration. In some cases, changes in the amount allocated to budget articles from one year to the next were a reaction to an unprecedented increase and thus an adaptation to the actual level of spending.<sup>1206</sup>

Thirdly, what is calculated as the budget for culture in this sub-section does not necessarily encompass all items (indirectly) related to culture. For example, the *Landesbildstelle*, a movie

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<sup>1204</sup> For the details, see: ANLux, CdZ-A-0048, *Haushaltsplan des Chefs der Zivilverwaltung in Luxemburg für das Rechnungsjahr 1941*, 12/04/1941, no. 1-96.

<sup>1205</sup> For the details, see: ANLux, CdZ-A-0053, *Haushaltsplan des Chefs der Zivilverwaltung in Luxemburg für das Rechnungsjahr 1942*, 04/04/1942, no. 1-160.

<sup>1206</sup> One example of such a case is the article *Neuerwerbung, Druckschriften, Abonnements* of the sub-section *Landesbibliothek*. According to the explanations provided in the draft for 1943, the increase from RM 25,000 to RM 40,000 was a reaction to the actual amount of RM 40,000 spent in 1942 and thus surpassing the initially planned budget for the article in that year.

loan service for schools and organisations (like the Office du Film scolaire of the post-war period), is not considered in the calculation of the cultural budget.

With these three observations in mind, we can examine the evolution of the administration's spending on culture. The budget of 1941 showed the following financial situation:

<i>Deutschtmpflege</i> (item)	RM 2,500,000
<i>Förderung des Fremdenverkehrs</i> (item)	RM 50,000
<i>Ankauf von Gebäuden zur Erweiterung des Landesmuseums in Luxemburg</i> (item)	RM 125,000
<i>Aussenstelle des Reichspropagandaamtes Moselland in Luxemburg einsch. Pressedienst</i> (sub-section)	RM 699,500
<i>Archivwesen</i> (sub-section)	RM 34,900
<i>Kulturpflege</i> (sub-section of the VHKVA)	RM 667,800

The expenses, including tourism and propaganda, amounted to RM 4,047,200, or 4.5% of the total budget for 1941 (RM 89,429,309). Even when removing sections such as propaganda and tourism, it still represented 3.5% of the total budget. The importance of the budget allocated to *Deutschtmpflege* was also quite considerable, reflecting the policies of the German occupiers to de-romanise and germanise Luxembourg. It included efforts to create and expand the network of the *Volksbüchereien*.<sup>1207</sup>

For the year 1942, the cultural budget looked as follows:

<i>Fonds für Deutschtmpflege</i> (item)	RM 1,750,000
<i>Aussenstelle Reichspropagandaamt Moselland</i> (section)	RM 817,000
<i>Staatsarchiv</i> (section)	RM 50,050
<i>Kulturpflege ausschl. Landesmuseum und Landesbibliothek</i> (sub-section)	RM 111,350
<i>Museum</i> (sub-section)	RM 348,850
<i>Landesbibliothek</i> (sub-section)	RM 177,600

In total, RM 3,254,850 were allocated to culture and propaganda. Compared to 1941, it marked a decrease. However, the cultural expenses listed above represented 4% of the total budget of 1942 (RM 79,691,029). It should be noted that the numbers for 1941 and 1942 did not include expenses such as education and science, which might have indirectly impacted culture. Furthermore, the theatre in Luxembourg City was missing, as it was considered a municipal responsibility.

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<sup>1207</sup> See for instance: ANLux, CdZ-A-4692.

In 1943<sup>1208</sup>, the spending on culture was divided as follows:

<i>Deutschtumpflegefonds</i> (item)	RM 1,200,000
<i>Aussenstelle des Reichspropagandaamtes in Luxemburg</i> (section)	RM 772,450
<i>Staatsarchiv</i> (section)	RM 37,050
<i>Kulturflege ausschl. Landesmuseum und Landesbibliothek</i> (sub-section)	RM 62,100
<i>Landesmuseum</i> (sub-section)	RM 344,500
<i>Landesbibliothek</i> (sub-section)	RM 195,900

Though the numbers for 1943 are based on a draft budget, it was approved by the Reich Ministry of Treasury with two minor modifications that did not affect the budget analysed in the current context.<sup>1209</sup> Except for the Landesbibliothek, all budgetary items experienced cuts. In total, RM 2,612,000 were allocated to cultural matters and institutions in 1943, less than in 1942 but still significantly above the level of spending in 1941. The total budget of the CdZ amounted to RM 64,947,710<sup>1210</sup>, which was below the levels in 1941 and 1942. The context of war is certainly one potential explanation.

Comparisons of the German occupation budget with the budget of the interwar years are always tricky as the administrative structures changed. Nevertheless, from an intermediate budget (*Zwischenhaushaltsplan*) for 1 January to 31 March 1941, it can be deduced that the category *arts et sciences* roughly equalled, for the Germans, to *Deutschtumpflege, Kunst und Wissenschaft*. Indeed, the intermediate budget was a translation of the interwar budgets and reused the same structure and categories.<sup>1211</sup>

In spite of comparative issues, the percentage of the budget allocated to culture experienced a staggering increase compared to before the invasion. The arts and sciences section represented 0.29% of the total state budget in 1939. This amount is relatively low compared to what the Germans invested in 1941 and 1942. Using the conversion rate applied by the

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<sup>1208</sup> ANLux, CdZ-A-0054, *Haushaltsplan des Chefs der Zivilverwaltung (Verwaltung der Höheren Kommunalverbandsangelegenheiten) in Luxemburg für das Rechnungsjahr 1943*, undated, no. 138-199 ; ANLux, CdZ-A-0060, *Hauhsaltsplan des Chefs der Zivilverwaltung in Luxemburg für das Rechnungsjahr 1943*, undated, no. 1-97.

<sup>1209</sup> ANLux, CdZ-B-0493-02, Circular from the Verwaltung der höheren Kommunalverbandsangelegenheiten to the departments, 14/01/1944, no. 122.

<sup>1210</sup> ANLux, CdZ-B-0492-02, *Zusammenstellung der Kapitalsummen des Haushalts des Chefs der Zivilverwaltung in Luxemburg für das Rechnungsjahr 1943*, no. 310-313.

<sup>1211</sup> ANLux, CdZ-A-1441, *Zwischenhaushaltsplan, Abschnitt B, des Chefs der Zivilverwaltung in Luxemburg für die Zeit vom 1. Januar bis 31. März 1941*, 29/01/1941, no. 125-141. Indeed, section 56, *Deutschtumpflege, Kunst und Wissenschaft*, replaced section 44 (*Arts et sciences*) of 1940.

Germans when they introduced the Reichsmark to Luxembourg (LUF 1 = RM 0.10)<sup>1212</sup>, the German administration invested LUF 15,048,500 in 1942. Notwithstanding the problem of comparing these numbers due to the missing adaptation to inflation, this was 14.7 times higher than what the government allocated in 1939 and 27.88 times higher than in 1940. For 1941, the numbers would be even more impressive. The investments made by the Germans in the cultural field reflected the ideological importance they conceded to *Kulturpflege* and *Deutschtrumpflege*. Of course, the budget merely provides categories and numbers. Motivations, ideologies and goals need to be examined on the basis of other sources.

#### **IV.1.3. The dispositif of control in Nazi cultural policy**

The Nazis did not officially annex Luxembourg. The regime considered the occupation as an intermediate phase.<sup>1213</sup> Yet, in many ways, the measures implemented by the Nazis during the first months of the occupation entailed nothing less than what Vincent Artuso called a de facto annexation.<sup>1214</sup> At least from 1941 onwards, and with the creation of the Gau Moselland, no distinction was made between Luxembourg and the Reich at the Nazi Party-level.<sup>1215</sup> From a Nazi perspective, Luxembourg was German national territory and should be populated solely by “ethnic Germans” (“Menschen deutscher Volkszugehörigkeit”). Foreign ethnicities or nationals (“das fremde Volkstum”) were to be “neutralised” (“ausgeschaltet”).<sup>1216</sup>

The political leaders were aware of the challenging task that undergirded the incorporation of Luxembourg into the Reich. Indeed, defenders of the annexation could not base their claims on any broad public manifestation by Luxembourgers to subordinate themselves to the *völkisch* and political security of Germany. This does not mean that no one in Luxembourg welcomed the Germans. On the contrary, the nearly 10,000 members of the Volksdeutsche Bewegung (VdB) who joined the *völkisch* movement until October 1940 did so of their own free will, and it is among them that the most convinced pro-Germans can be found. Furthermore, an appeal signed by 32 Luxembourgers from various backgrounds, including the actor René Deltgen, was published in the press on 31 August 1940. It stressed the German essence of Luxembourgers.<sup>1217</sup> However, despite pro-Nazi groups and movements, Luxembourgers were

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<sup>1212</sup> BArch Berlin, R 4902/1483, ‘RM-Währung in Luxemburg’, in *Die Zeit*, 01/02/1941.

<sup>1213</sup> This has, for instance, also been explained in an internal document of the German *Sicherheitsdienst* (LHA Ko, 662,006-340, Letter to the SS Hauptsturmführer Traub (SD section Koblenz), 03/02/1941).

<sup>1214</sup> Artuso, *La collaboration au Luxembourg durant la Seconde Guerre mondiale* (1940-1945), 85.

<sup>1215</sup> Artuso, 180.

<sup>1216</sup> BArch Berlin, NS 19/1163, *Richtlinien für die Behandlung der Volkstumsverhältnisse in Luxemburg*, [1941], no. 23-25.

<sup>1217</sup> It stated, among other things: “Der Luxemburger fühlt deutsch. Er ist Deutscher nach seiner ganzen Wesensart, nach Geschichte, nach Abstammung, Sprache und dem Raum, in den er

not a national minority living in another country.<sup>1218</sup> If necessary, the politics of *heim ins Reich* would be implemented against the will of a majority of the population. To achieve this totalitarian goal, the regime constructed a *dispositif* of control.

To analyse the cultural policy during the occupation, this study relies on the concept of *dispositif* (or apparatus) coined by the French historian Michel Foucault and used in several of his works. According to Foucault, it designates

a thoroughly heterogeneous ensemble consisting of discourses, institutions, architectural forms, regulatory decisions, laws, administrative measures, scientific statements, philosophical, moral and philanthropic propositions – in short, the said as much as the unsaid.<sup>1219</sup>

The *dispositif* is “the system of relations” of this vast range of elements that exert and maintain power structures in society. The advantage of Foucault’s concept resides in the fact that it encompasses visible institutions and structures and immaterial aspects such as discourses and laws. In addition, the *dispositif* relates not only to explicit mechanisms to maintain power but also to the “unsaid”, such as architectural design – the panopticon analysed in his book *Discipline and Punish* (1975) figures among these examples. While relating to a heterogeneous system of practices, the *dispositif* also responds to an urgent need.

In the case of the Nazi regime and its cultural policy, the *dispositif* is a suitable concept for referring to the measures implemented by the CdZ to ideologically shape the population, exert power, and control cultural activities. The administration relied on a legal framework, surveillance and coercion, and the cooperation of a significant minority. Indeed, the *dispositif* of control constituted the pillar of Nazi cultural policy in Luxembourg. Of course, it was not entirely working as planned and did not always produce the desired results.

Due to the geographical situation of Luxembourg – until the German invasion a nationalised intermediate space – the designated enemy of Germany was France. The Germans aimed not to merely de-nationalise an intermediate space. Furthermore, their policies should contribute to neutralising the “intermediateness” of the former sovereign state. German culture itself was not to deviate from official ideology. This systematic ideological and structural reorientation

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hineingeboren ist. Auch seine lebenswichtigen Interessen weisen nach Deutschland. Darum wird und muß er den Weg nach dem Reiche aller Deutschen gehen.” (BArch Berlin, R 43-II/1350, ‘Männer und Frauen Luxemburgs’, in *Nationalblatt* no. 207, 31/08/1940).

<sup>1218</sup> Hans-Erich Volkmann, *Luxemburg im Zeichen des Hakenkreuzes: Eine politische Wirtschaftsgeschichte 1933 - 1944* (Paderborn: Schöningh, 2010), 178–179.

<sup>1219</sup> Michel Foucault, ‘The Confession of the Flesh: A Conversation with Alain Grosrichard, Gerard Wajeman, Jaques-Alain Miller, Guy Le Gaufey, Dominique Celas, Gerard Miller, Catherine Millot, Joce Lyne Livi and Judith Miller’, in *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews & Other Writings 1972-1977* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1980), 194.

of the cultural (policy) field was unprecedented in Luxembourg. During the Centenary of 1939, the participation of the cultural society in the national aggrandizement was not the result of a top-down policy or any dispositif of control, though strongly promoted by the authorities. Instead, the discourses disseminated by the cultural elite converged with those produced by the political class. This changed after May 1940, except for some cases. Damian Kratzenberg, head of the VdB, stands out as the most notable example of a cultural actor voluntarily participating in the *völkisch* project.

Nazi cultural policy in Luxembourg was guided by a combination of general Nazi ideology, Gustav Simon's personal views and interests, and the views and interests of his collaborators. Nazis considered Luxembourg a national German territory, a *Volksgebiet*, which should return to the *völkisch* community. The *Westforschung* provided the necessary ideological arguments coated in a scientific language and had contributed, alongside the activities of the SD, to prepare the terrain for political actions and ideological demands. For the *völkisch*-nationalist circles in Germany, it was the Reich's legitimate claim to take responsibility for Luxembourg's fate; the grand duchy was a mere product of historical coincidence.<sup>1220</sup> The Luxembourgish nation had to disappear; one of many symbolic steps was renaming the National Library into the Landesbibliothek. Why call a library in Luxembourg national when there was no independent nation-state that it would serve?

Another example of the Nazi view on Luxembourg is a report by Richard Csaki (1886-1943), head of the Deutsches Ausland-Institut (German Foreign Institute) from 1933 to 1941. Among his travels throughout Europe, he visited Luxembourg in 1940, shortly after the invasion (his report is dated 12 July 1940). For Csaki, the Luxembourgers had an “arrogant self-confidence as some sort of mediator between Germany and France, between German and French culture and language”<sup>1221</sup>. For the Nazis, this attitude constituted a mere perversion of the true essence of Luxembourg. An adjective in the title of Csaki's report illustrates the author's view of Luxembourg and surrounding areas: *deutsch-besiedelt* (German-populated or populated by Germans). Despite the efforts to “imitate” Western (in other words, French) culture and civilisation, “a healthy and natural German Volkstum was the stable basis of Luxembourg”.<sup>1222</sup> Csaki described the situation after the invasion, which would have “swept

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<sup>1220</sup> Volkmann, *Luxemburg im Zeichen des Hakenkreuzes*, 175.

<sup>1221</sup> BArch Berlin, R 57/133, *Volkspolitische Grenzfahrt durch die deutsch-besiedelten Teile der besetzten Gebiete im Westen* by Robert Csaki, 12/07/1940, no. 531-549, p. 11.

<sup>1222</sup> Own translation. “[...] war doch ein gesundes, natürliches deutsches Volkstum die bleibende Grundlage Luxemburgs” (BArch Berlin, R 57/133, *Volkspolitische Grenzfahrt durch die deutsch-besiedelten Teile der besetzten Gebiete im Westen* by Robert Csaki, 12/07/1940, no. 531-549, p. 11).

away” the governing circles, the capitalists, the Freemasons and the Jews. He portrayed various social groups – intellectuals, the clergy, teachers, merchants, and peasants – regarding their stance toward Germany. In Csaki’s opinion, the peasants were “not only the largest and most reliable but also the most pleasant element in the sense of the Neugestaltung [reconstruction]”.<sup>1223</sup>

Though the general ideological basis for Nazi cultural policy, and more specifically for the arts policy, derived from Hitler, he barely supervised its implementation, which he devolved to his Gauleiter.<sup>1224</sup> Luxembourg did not constitute an exception, at least in most cases. Gustav Simon aimed to germanise (or teutonize) and de-romanise (*entwelschen*) Luxembourg. This objective partly stemmed from Simon’s biography. As a Saarländer, he had personally experienced the French presence and considered French cultural policy the most dangerous expression of expansionism towards the Rhine. Above all, and in conformity with the *völkisch* worldview, Luxembourgers were considered Germans, an Aryan people, and Nazi policy should spark a German cultural consciousness.<sup>1225</sup> As Csaki wrote in his report of his travel through Luxembourg:

The absolute toughness of a total victory of the spirit, propaganda and weapons was necessary to forever establish the natural German preponderance in this previous periphery of the German ethnic soil. And the disintegration of the others had to be as total and destructive so that the politically misled Germanic peoples of the West could be finally guided, voluntarily or not, to their original disposition. In this respect, a discussion about the fate of Luxembourg is redundant: It was part of Germany and will have to become a solid brick in the future Germany.<sup>1226</sup>

The process of germanisation was not specific to Luxembourg, as it was also implemented in the Netherlands, for instance, with a visible impact on the art policy.<sup>1227</sup> What distinguishes

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<sup>1223</sup> Own translation. “[...] nicht nur das zahlreichste, tragfähigste, sondern auch erfreulichste Element im Sinne der Neugestaltung” (BArch Berlin, R 57/133, *Volkspolitische Grenzfahrt durch die deutsch-besiedelten Teile der besetzten Gebiete im Westen* by Robert Csaki, 12/07/1940, no. 531-549, p. 14).

<sup>1224</sup> Lorent, *Die nationalsozialistische Kunst- und Kulturpolitik im Großherzogtum Luxemburg 1934-1944*, 100.

<sup>1225</sup> Jungblut, ‘La spoliation des biens culturels au Luxembourg’, 206.

<sup>1226</sup> Own translation. “Es musste die ganze Härte eines totalen Sieges des Geistes, der Propaganda, der Waffen kommen, um für immer das natürliche deutsche Übergewicht in diesem bisherigen Vorfeld des deutschen Volksbodens herzustellen. Und der Zusammenbruch der anderen musste ebenso total und vernichtend sein, damit die politisch irregeleiteten Germanen des Westens endlich dazu geführt werden – willens oder nicht willens – zu ihrer eigentlichen Bestimmung zurückzufinden. In diesem Sinne ist eine Diskussion über das zukünftige Schicksal Luxemburgs überflüssig: Es war ein Teil Deutschlands und wird festgefügt einen kleinen Baustein im Deutschland der Zukunft zu bilden haben.” (BArch Berlin, R 57/133, *Volkspolitische Grenzfahrt durch die deutsch-besiedelten Teile der besetzten Gebiete im Westen* by Robert Csaki, 12/07/1940, no. 531-549, p. 17).

<sup>1227</sup> Petropoulos, *Art as Politics in the Third Reich*, 253.

Luxembourg from a case such as the Netherlands is its geographical location and the status of a CdZ-area. The germanisation programme in Luxembourg should counterbalance the French influence of previous years. The Reichspropagandaamt of Koblenz-Trier reckoned that cultural activities supported by the Reich should at least equal the quality of activities of the “French foreign cultural propaganda” (“französische Auslandskulturpropaganda”). Hence, the Germans saw themselves in direct competition with the French while at the same time plotting to remove their influence. Only high standards in culture could contribute to the germanisation of Luxembourg, which, at least according to the RPA in December 1940, had been a neuralgic centre of French propaganda:

Until the arrival of the German troops, Luxembourg had become a focal point of French foreign cultural propaganda, especially in the last 10-15 years. This propaganda could work with the amplest means and with official support from Paris, and organise significant theatre performances, concerts, lectures, etc. As a result, the overall level of artistic performances was very high. Hence, it is necessary and in the interest of the germanisation of the country to organise cultural events with the support of the Reich, which would achieve at least the same quality and extension of artistic maturity.<sup>1228</sup>

High culture for the masses was the key to germanise Luxembourg. Besides a deliberate exaggeration of French cultural involvement, the account, as we know from the previous chapter, left out crucial information, namely the German propaganda in the interwar period. Yet, this discourse was possibly also part of pragmatic legitimisation narratives. The regional authorities highlighted Luxembourg’s strategic and cultural weight on the western frontier of the Reich. Such discourse should entail more favourable funding. Albert Urmes stressed the importance of Luxembourg as a place of cultural radiation: Luxembourg was “relatively the largest area of tourism in central Europe” (“Luxemburg war nachweisbar das verhältnismässig grösste Fremdenverkehrsgebiet Mitteleuropas.”<sup>1229</sup>).

A mere germanisation of Luxembourg, however, was not enough. Luxembourg should also contribute to a cultural influence toward the west. Accordingly, the RPA report only mentioned

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<sup>1228</sup> Own translation. “Luxemburg war bis zum Einmarsch der deutschen Truppen insbesondere in den letzten 10-15 Jahren zu einem Zentralpunkt französischer Auslandskulturpropaganda geworden. Diese Propaganda hat mit den grosszügigsten Mitteln infolge der staatlichen Unterstützung von Paris arbeiten können und im gesamten Land bedeutsame Theateraufführungen, Konzerte, Vortragsreihen usw. durchgeführt. Hierdurch ist das gesamte Niveau der künstlerischen Darbietungen ein ausserordentlich hohes gewesen. Es ist daher notwendig und im Interesse der Eindeutschung des Landes, Kulturveranstaltungen vom Reich her in Luxemburg aufzuziehen, die in ihrer Qualität und in ihrem Umfange zumindest die gleiche Höhe künstlerischer Reife aufweisen.” (ANLux, CdZ-A-1597, Report from the head of the Reichspropagandaamt Koblenz-Trier, 05/12/1940, no. 2-5).

<sup>1229</sup> Note the use of the concept of “Central Europe” (dominated by Germany), instead of “Western Europe” (dominated by France). ANLux, CdZ-A-1597, Report from the head of the Reichspropagandaamt Koblenz-Trier, 05/12/1940, no. 2-5.

French cities, possibly to avoid competition with German cities such as Trier. A new representative theatre in Luxembourg should be able to compete with much larger cities like Reims, Lille, and even Paris. A further argument advanced by the head of the Propagandaamt in Koblenz concerned the strong presence of the radio: “The emitter in Luxembourg is the strongest in Europe”<sup>1230</sup>. Narratives about Luxembourg’s German essence were paired with narratives about Luxembourg’s significance as a “bulwark” on the western border of the Reich. Luxembourg, then, had a dual essence. Inwards, it belonged to the same cultural sphere and was not different but alike. Outwards, it radiated and protected German culture because of its geographical situation. Such views by regional authorities legitimising Luxembourg’s importance need to be regarded on the backdrop of competition with the other two heads of civil administration Robert Wagner (for Alsace/Elsass) and Josef Bürckel (for Lorraine/Lothringen)<sup>1231</sup>. The Germans declared the city of Strasbourg, located in Wagner’s territory, the western capital of the Reich.<sup>1232</sup>

Since the beginning, ideological premises had been translated into legislation. The cultural “reconstruction”, especially the language policy, was among the first legal steps the Gauleiter took shortly after his arrival. An appeal was published in the newspapers alongside a decree on the use of the German language on 8 August 1940. The appeal, signed by Gustav Simon on 7 October, reminded Luxembourgers of their German culture while denouncing the French “imperialism” and the Luxembourgish “traitors” (the “small class of the so-called intellectuals”) who supported the language of a “verniggerte Nation” (i.e. France). Besides expressing despise for intellectual circles (a recurrent trope in SD reports and other internal documents), the appeal used several techniques of persuasion: It made use of the patriotic feelings of Luxembourgers by turning these sentiments into a pro-German cause; it applied racial vocabulary to denounce French culture (“verniggert”); and it used the German translation “Wir wollen bleiben was wir sind” of the originally Luxembourgish quote, resonating in the ears of Luxembourgers, separated it from its original context and provided a new interpretation. The Nazi regime was, from its viewpoint, simply re-establishing a natural state. Ironically, it ignored the reality of its occupation and its top-down cultural policy while denouncing the “brazen victors” (“übermütige Sieger”) who imposed their language on subordinated

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<sup>1230</sup> ANLux, CdZ-A-1597, Report from the head of the Reichspropagandaamt Koblenz-Trier, 05/12/1940, no. 2-5.

<sup>1231</sup> According to Wolfgang Freund, Simon was an “archrival” of Bürckel, which was visible, for instance, in the context of the reorganisation of the state archives in Germany (Freund, *Volk, Reich und Westgrenze*, 304).

<sup>1232</sup> Taliano-des Garets, *Un siècle d’histoire culturelle en France: de 1914 à nos jours*, 69.

nations.<sup>1233</sup> From the Nazi perspective, it was not an imposition, but a return to the origins, to the true essence, and thus it could not be imposed.

The decree, signed by Gustav Simon on 6 August, declared German the only administrative language, abolishing French. Beyond that, it intervened in every social, political and economic domain. Public education was to be held entirely in German, the press was to publish solely in German, and all signs, private or public, were to bear German inscriptions. Hence, the Gauleiter and his administration clearly stated their viewpoint and were determined to turn it into a new reality.

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<sup>1233</sup> The original text reads as follows: “Männer und Frauen Luxemburgs! Luxemburgische Jugend! Zu allen Zeiten haben übermütige Sieger versucht, unterworfenen Völkern ihre Sprache aufzuzwingen. Besonders oft sind solche Versuche von Frankreich ausgegangen. Sie stießen aber stets auf den Widerstand jener Volkskreise, die beseelt waren von dem Streben: Wir wollen bleiben was wir sind. Getreu diesem haben alle heimatlosen Luxemburger ihre Muttersprache bewahrt. Nur eine dünne Schicht von sogenannten Gebildeten hat sich dazu hergegeben Handlanger des französischen Imperialismus zu sein und den Kampf gegen die althergekommene Muttersprache zu führen. Französisierte Ortsnamen und Straßenbezeichnungen, Firmenschilder und Zeitungsanzeigen sind das schmachvolle Ergebnis der Bemühungen einzelner luxemburgischer Volksverräter. Ihnen wird nunmehr das Handwerk gelegt. Fortan wird keinem Luxemburger mehr zugemutet werden, sich der Sprache einer verniggerten Nation zu bedienen. Luxemburg ist zu stolz auf sein Herkommen und seine Heimatsprache, um der Papagei Frankreichs zu sein und französische Laute nachzuplappern. Luxemburg, seine tüchtigen Bauern, seine fleißigen Arbeiter und sein hochstehendes Bürgertum wollen und dürfen nicht länger der Lakai der kulturell heruntergekommenen Franzosenstums sein. Ich wende mich an den Stolz, an die Einsicht und das gesunde Empfinden aller Volksschichten Luxemburgs, besonders aber an die Jugend. Bleibt was Euere Ahnen waren / Sprecht deutsch wie Euere Vorfahren / Schluß mit dem fremden Kauderwelsch / Eure Sprache sei deutsch und nur deutsch!” (Gustav Simon, ‘Aufruf!’, *Obermosel-Zeitung*, August 1940).



Fig. 62: Front page of the Obermosel-Zeitung, 8 August 1940, reproducing the appeal and the decree on the use of the German language.

The ideology underpinning Nazi cultural policy in Luxembourg had practical consequences. The decree was one example. It highlighted the significance attributed to language as a tool. Yet, it was only one element of a whole dispositif that the Germans introduced to exert control on the cultural society and to bind it to their cause ideologically. In accordance with the denationalisation, symbols remembering Luxembourgish independence were to be erased, such as the *Gëlle Fra*, removed from the pedestal on 21 October 1940.<sup>1234</sup>

During the political reorganisation, the Civil Administration faced underdeveloped institutions and infrastructures in the cultural policy field. The Nazis' plans in this area converged with their ideological assessment of Luxembourg. An article appearing in the *Briësseler Zeitung* on 22 January 1942 bore the programmatic title "Die Stadt soll ein deutsches Kulturbollwerk warden" ("The city shall become a German cultural bulwark"). As the article expanded, Luxembourg had no higher education institution (Hochschule), no significant theatre, no professional ensemble, nearly no old monuments "that could provide this old German city its cultural mark, as all German cities have"<sup>1235</sup>. The article stressed the unprecedented revival of cultural life in Luxembourg since its "historic reorientation in autumn 1940".<sup>1236</sup> According to this propaganda, 1940 marked a break in cultural life by implying that there was barely any of it before, or at least not one deemed worthy of German culture. Though cultural life had already existed in Luxembourg before 1940, it cannot be ignored that the new regime was investing many efforts in promoting it, even if it developed within specific and tightly controlled frames. Conformist artists had new possibilities to expose their works, and cultural infrastructures were expanded or considered for expansion. In fact, Luxembourg was not an exceptional case. In Paris, situated in a territory that was not regarded as ethnically German, the local administration undertook a series of initiatives to revive the cultural life by opening nightclubs, theatres, and cinemas and allowing art exhibitions organised by the French.<sup>1237</sup>

The effects of the dispositif of control on the cultural society were threefold: suppression of undesired culture, redirection of cultural activities towards Nazi aims, and promotion of state-compliant culture. The implementation of mechanisms for the formal control of cultural life in

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<sup>1234</sup> Lorent, *Die nationalsozialistische Kunst- und Kulturpolitik im Großherzogtum Luxemburg 1934-1944*, 124.

<sup>1235</sup> ANLux, AE-03999-157, 'Gemeinschaft der Luxemburger Künstler. „Die Stadt soll ein deutsches Kulturbollwerk werden“', in *Briësseler Zeitung* no. 544-545 (22/01/1942).

<sup>1236</sup> ANLux, AE-03999-157, 'Gemeinschaft der Luxemburger Künstler. „Die Stadt soll ein deutsches Kulturbollwerk werden“', in *Briësseler Zeitung* no. 544-545 (22/01/1942).

<sup>1237</sup> Petropoulos, *Art as Politics in the Third Reich*, 15.

Luxembourg required months or even years. Different structures and societies were exerting control. This new cultural society was marked by the dissolution of societies running parallel to a multiplication of actors controlled by the Nazi apparatus and homogenisation of the worldview under Nazi control due to the *Gleichschaltung*. What had happened in Germany after 1933<sup>1238</sup> now unfolded in Luxembourg: associations and institutions were expected to work towards the ideological goals of the Nazi regime. Support was explicitly directed to artists endorsing the regime and creating conformist artworks. The budget of the CdZ included, for instance, an article dedicated to promoting young artists. The explanations of the budget line leave no doubt as to what kind of artists were to be supported (they had to be “deutschbewußt”), but also that the policy of the previous government was to be continued and strengthened:

In the past, the Luxembourgish artists were quite extensively supported with publicly financed acquisitions. It is planned to continue this in the future and to support German-conscious artists accordingly, not only with acquisitions but also with the distribution of stipends, which should allow individual artists to connect with and promote German artistic creation.<sup>1239</sup>

This was one example of explicit support of regime-compliant culture and implicit exclusion of undesired culture. The dispositif of control, though, was not merely limited to budgets and policies emanating from the administration. It was also anchored in a network of actors created during the occupation period, some of which will be shortly reviewed in the following.

Officially founded on 13 July 1940, the Volksdeutsche Bewegung (VdB) was to contribute to the transformation of Luxembourg into German territory.<sup>1240</sup> It figured among the German plans to reorganise political life in Luxembourg and should be the only allowed political movement besides a youth organisation attached to the VdB, the Luxemburgische Volksjugend. The Germans had drawn a list of known people and experts who would be able to contribute to the reorganisation in advance. Despite the ideological frame, the Germans were also pragmatic: Nazi convictions or pro-German attitudes were an advantage but not necessary.

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<sup>1238</sup> See for instance: Höpel, *Kulturpolitik in Europa im 20. Jahrhundert*, 108.

<sup>1239</sup> Own translation. “Die luxemburgischen Künstler sind in der vergangenen Zeit durch Ankäufe aus öffentlichen Mitteln in ziemlich weitgehendem Maße unterstützt worden. Es ist beabsichtigt, dieses auch in Zukunft zu tun und die deutschbewußten Künstler entsprechend zu fördern, und zwar nicht allein durch Ankäufe, sondern auch durch Verteilung von Stipendien, die den einzelnen Künstlern ermöglichen sollen, die Verbindung mit dem deutschen Kunstschaffen aufzunehmen und zu fördern.” (ANLux, CdZ-B-0406, *Erläuterungen zum Haushaltsplan der Verwaltung der höheren Kommunalverbandsangelegenheiten für das Rechnungsjahr 1941 vom 1. April 1941 bis 31. März 1942: Entwurf*, undated, p. 34).

<sup>1240</sup> Lorent, *Die nationalsozialistische Kunst- und Kulturpolitik im Großherzogtum Luxemburg 1934-1944*, 109.

It seems that even potential, previously pro-French collaborators could be consulted.<sup>1241</sup> The main reason was the lack of skilled labour.<sup>1242</sup>

The VdB, not working exclusively in the cultural field, was by far not the only actor in the new state-controlled cultural society. The Kulturverband Gau Moselland worked towards the objective of protecting and strengthening the German *Volkstum*.<sup>1243</sup> From 1941 onwards, it encompassed the thirteen *Kunstkreise* derived from the GEDELIT. The Kunstkreis Luxembourg was presided by the mayor Richard Hengst, Hanns Divo was its director.<sup>1244</sup> Already established in the *Altreich* and introduced to Luxembourg was the *Kraft durch Freude* movement (KdF, Strength through Joy), mainly active in the areas of music and theatre.<sup>1245</sup> The Landeskultkammer (LKK), instituted on 17 June 1941 and presided by Josef Recker, was a regional version of the Reichskultkammer (RKK), created by Joseph Goebbels on 22 September 1933. Presided by the propaganda minister, the RKK was divided into seven chambers (art, music, literature, film, press, radio, and theatre).<sup>1246</sup> The LKK, not directly related to the Reichskultkammer, was a creation of the CdZ. Furthermore, the LKK was divided into six disciplinary branches instead of seven.<sup>1247</sup> The LKK was a compromise, as the RKK-related law (*Reichskultkammer- und Schriftleitergesetz*) could not be formally introduced in Luxembourg as long as the country was not officially annexed. Ironically, whereas in other areas, the regime did not hesitate to introduce regulations that aimed to attach Luxembourg to the Third Reich, in this case, the unaccomplished official annexation posed a hindrance. According to an undated internal document (possibly from April 1941), an arrangement to reduce this difference to a mere formality should be found.<sup>1248</sup> In this context, negotiations took place between the Reich Propaganda Office (Perizonius) branch office and

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<sup>1241</sup> LHA Ko, 662,006-917, Report on the activities of the Volksdeutsche Mittelstelle in Luxembourg by the SD-informant LH 7887, 01/07/1940.

<sup>1242</sup> Original text: "Bei Mangel an geeigneten Leuten sollen politisch farblose Fachleute zur Mitarbeit bewogen werden. Ausserdem können ausgesprochene Gegner, wenn sie überragende Fachkräfte sind, in Einzelfällen hinzugezogen werden!" (LHA Ko, 662,006-917, SD report on the Volksdeutsche Bewegung, 27/07/1940).

<sup>1243</sup> Lorent, *Die nationalsozialistische Kunst- und Kulturpolitik im Großherzogtum Luxemburg 1934-1944*, 117.

<sup>1244</sup> Limpach, 'Die Kulturpolitik im besetzten Luxemburg (1940-1944) und die NS-Intellektuellen Albert Perizonius und Richard Hengst', 125.

<sup>1245</sup> Lorent, *Die nationalsozialistische Kunst- und Kulturpolitik im Großherzogtum Luxemburg 1934-1944*, 118.

<sup>1246</sup> Petropoulos, *Art as Politics in the Third Reich*, 26.

<sup>1247</sup> In her book, Catherine Lorent claimed that the RKK had the same amount of corporatist divisions than the LKK, which is not correct (Lorent, *Die nationalsozialistische Kunst- und Kulturpolitik im Großherzogtum Luxemburg 1934-1944*, 119).

<sup>1248</sup> BArch Berlin, R 55/219, Copy of an internal document of the Reichspropagandaamt, undated [April 1941], no. 43.

the Civil Administration (Siekmeier). Related internal discussions were still present in November and December 1942. This time, they occurred in Berlin among officials of the Reich Ministry of Public Enlightenment and Propaganda and the RKK in two meetings. While discussing the introduction of RKK laws in Luxembourg, Lorraine and Alsace, the officials considered the Luxembourgish solution the most suitable. Again, it was highlighted that the central chambers of the RKK could not extend their activities to territories that were not annexed.<sup>1249</sup> The existence of the LKK in Luxembourg, whose activities were positively evaluated, would allow a smooth transition of the cultural actors (*Kulturschaffenden*) to the RKK, once the country was incorporated into the Reich.<sup>1250</sup>

In the last year of the occupation period, in March 1944, the civil administration published a decree on the introduction of culture laws in Luxembourg (*Verordnung über die Einführung von Kulturgesetzen in Luxemburg vom 24. März 1944*).<sup>1251</sup> Thus, the administration did not wait for an official annexation but simply created the same legal framework as in Alsace and Lorraine. In detail, the decree introduced three laws from Nazi Germany: the *Reichskulturkammergesetz* of 22 September 1933, the *Schriftleitergesetz* of 4 October 1933 (applying to editors and journalists), and the *Theatergesetz* of 15 May 1934. Their introduction had already been envisaged in the meetings of 1942. Though the RKK law did not replace the LKK decree, it merely stipulated that the missions of the RKK would be assumed by the LKK (§ 2). The first paragraph of the decree stressed that future regulations decreed in the Reich would also apply to Luxembourg when not stipulated otherwise by the Gauleiter. The reasons and motivations for introducing the cultural laws in Luxembourg are unclear. However, they confirmed a situation that had pre-existed and thus did not entail noticeable changes. Previous decrees were neither modified nor abolished. On the contrary, they were confirmed, as corroborated by an internal note of 6 April 1944, written by Leo Müller of the RPA and CdZ press department, and probably sent to the editorial offices of the newspapers. Albert Urmes tasked Müller to inform the addressee(s) that the decree of 24 March had been a formality. The author requested the publication of a notice in the Saturday issue specifying that the LKK would continue to assume its missions. Indeed, the press depicted the decree as an important

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<sup>1249</sup> BArch Berlin, R 55/20464, *Fortsetzung der Besprechung bei Abteilung R wegen Einführung der Reichskulturkammergesetze im Elsaß, Lothringen und Luxemburg*, 12/12/1942, no. 288.

<sup>1250</sup> BArch Berlin, R 55/20464, *Besprechung bei Abteilung R wegen Einführung der Kulturkammergesetze im Elsaß, Lothringen und Luxemburg*, 24/11/1942, no. 286.

<sup>1251</sup> BArch Berlin, R 56-V/55, *Verordnung über die Einführung von Kulturgesetzen in Luxemburg vom 24. März 1944*, in: *Verordnungsblatt für Luxemburg* no. 12, 31/03/1944, p. 51-52, no. 15-16.

step, implicating the creation of something new, which was not the administration's view.<sup>1252</sup> Furthermore, the decision to introduce the same laws in Luxembourg possibly emanated from higher levels of the Reich. Indeed, the Gauleiter of Elsaß published the culture laws (without the theatre law) on 21 March, three days before Luxembourg.<sup>1253</sup> Another explanation would consider it as a measure to create equal or quasi-equal frameworks in all western CdZ territories. The introduction might also have been an attempt to clarify the situation and, thus, would have been a reaction to previous attempts at agreements between the various chambers of the LKK and the RKK. The introduction of the *Reichskultkammergesetz* in Luxembourg rendered these efforts redundant, as a letter from a representative of the president of the RKK explained, written in January 1944:

It is communicated that the introduction of the Reichskultkammer legislation in Luxembourg is imminent. The provided agreements between the Reich chambers and the Landeskultkammer Luxembourg on the approval to exercise a Kammer-binding activity would then not be necessary anymore, as the introduction of the Reichkultkammer legislation in Luxembourg would create the same legal situation as currently existing in Alsace and Lothringia.<sup>1254</sup>

Whereas the LKK was a new actor created by the regime, the GEDELIT, which formally disappeared when the Kunstkreise were established in 1941, had already existed before the invasion as a propagandistic platform, mainly without the explicit knowledge of its members. While being criticised from various sides, its activities caused it to fall into a dispute with the government and led to a lawsuit between the association and the *Escher Tageblatt*. After the invasion, such criticisms were silenced.

In June 1940, Damian Kratzenberg organised a meeting to discuss the future of the association, attended, in addition to the future VdB leader, by Divo, Jakob Lichtfuss, Florent Antony, Staar, Eugen Ewert, Nikolaus Dupong, Adolf Winandy, and Major Beck. A note on the meeting, written by Adolf Winandy, drew negative conclusions. The meeting would not

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<sup>1252</sup> BArch Berlin, R 83-Luxemburg/10, *Vertrauliche Informationen* by Leo Müller, 06/04/1944, no. 28.

<sup>1253</sup> BArch Berlin, R 56-V/55, Letter from the president of the Reichskultkammer to the presidents of the corporate chambers, 20/04/1944, no. 25.

<sup>1254</sup> Own translation. "Informatorisch wird mitgeteilt, daß die Einführung der Reichskultkammergesetzgebung in Luxemburg bevorsteht. Die zwischen den Reichskammern und der Landeskultkammer Luxemburg vorgesehenen Vereinbarungen über die Zulassung zur Ausübung einer kammerpflichtigen Tätigkeit wären dann nicht mehr erforderlich, da mit der Einführung der Reichskultkammergesetzgebung in Luxemburg sich der gleiche Rechtszustand ergeben würde, wie er zur Zeit im Elsaß und in Lothringen besteht." (BArch Berlin, R 56-V/55, Letter from a representative of the president of the Reichskultkammer to the presidents of the corporate chambers, 14/01/1944, no. 29).

have produced the expected results. The only decision that the participants agreed on was to continue the activities of the GEDELIT.<sup>1255</sup> The GEDELIT remained active in the following months. In September, the society was instructed by the Gauleiter to tend to the cultural supervision of Luxembourg.<sup>1256</sup> According to Paul Dostert, it organised 181 events in 32 localities until its reorganisation.<sup>1257</sup> In July 1941, local *Kunstkreise* (cultural circles) were founded in cities and towns in Luxembourg, thirteen in total and attached to the Kulturverband.<sup>1258</sup> The Kunstkreise organised various cultural events and supported Luxembourgish cultural actors.

The last actor in the non-exhaustive list drawn in this study is Franz Schmidt, the *Stillhaltekommissar für das Organisationswesen in Luxemburg*. He played a considerable role in the reorganisation of the cultural sector. Schmidt decided which societies could continue their activities and which would be dissolved. His decisions were published in the *Mitteilungsblatt*. The disbanded bodies included Catholic groups, academic and intellectual circles, scouting organisations, the Alliance Française, professional chambers, and artistic and cultural societies.<sup>1259</sup> Though specific criteria were not published, such dissolutions happened in accordance with the plans of the Nazis: in the case where a central organisation existed, such as the Hitlerjugend/Luxemburger Volksjugend, the existence of other youth organisations, an expression of pluralism, was not deemed necessary (or desirable). Other societies were disbanded because of their ideological, political, or religious orientations. Societies that were allowed had to respect certain conditions.<sup>1260</sup> Hence, the Stillhaltekommissar's work accompanied other efforts of *Gleichschaltung* and control invested by the new regime. Within the dispositif of control, even if acting beyond the cultural policy field, Schmidt participated in the suppression of undesired culture and cultural activities.

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<sup>1255</sup> ANLux, CdZ-A-6744, Aktenvermerk: *Gesellschaft für deutsche Literatur und Kunst*, Adolf Winandy, 05/06/1940, no. 155.

<sup>1256</sup> Lorent, *Die nationalsozialistische Kunst- und Kulturpolitik im Großherzogtum Luxemburg 1934-1944*, 123.

<sup>1257</sup> Dostert, *Luxemburg zwischen Selbstbehauptung und nationaler Selbstaufgabe*, 118.

<sup>1258</sup> ‘Hüter deutscher Kultur in Luxemburg: 10 Jahre Gesellschaft für Literatur und Kunst’, *Der Sonntag: Wochenbeilage zum Luxemburger Wort*, March 1944.

<sup>1259</sup> See for instance: LHA Ko, 662,005-123, *Mitteilungsblatt Nr 1* of the Stillhaltekommissar für das Organisationswesen in Luxemburg, 20/01/1941. The position of Stillhaltekommissar was created by decree of 28 August 1940, and Gustav Simon nominated Franz Schmidt. The decree stipulated in § 2.1: “Die Tätigkeit aller Vereine und Organisationen mit und ohne Rechtspersönlichkeit, aller Verbände, Stiftungen und Fonds, vereinsähnlicher Gebilde, die einen Menschenzusammenschluß darstellen sowie aller mit derartigen Organisationen zusammenhängender Einrichtungen und Unternehmungen ist bis auf weiteres von der Genehmigung des Stillhaltekommissars abhängig.”

<sup>1260</sup> Dostert, *Luxemburg zwischen Selbstbehauptung und nationaler Selbstaufgabe*, 90.

At the time of Luxembourg's invasion, the Nazi art policy was already implemented for seven years in the *Altreich*. However, it had undergone notable changes towards radicalisation. As Petropoulos explained:

The gradual radicalization of the Nazi government found expression not only in the realm of foreign policy and in the treatment of Jews but also in the administration of the visual arts. By 1936, the government no longer tolerated modern art or any expression which deviated from that sanctioned by the state, and in 1937 the "degenerate art" exhibition, which travelled throughout the Reich, signalled a more activist posture on the part of the government. Yet 1938 was pivotal due to a more aggressive foreign policy and the increasing repression within Germany. The confiscation of privately owned art began in this year, first in Austria, where many Jews lost their property, and then in November, in the wake of the *Kristallnacht* pogroms, within the *Altreich*.<sup>1261</sup>

As Luxembourg was invaded later, notable evolutions did not occur during the occupation period. In Luxembourg, as elsewhere, artworks considered by the Nazis to be "degenerate" (*entartete Kunst*) were banned, as were the artists who produced them. Among the targeted movements figured Dadaism, Cubism, Expressionism, Fauvism, Neue Sachlichkeit, and Surrealism. In Luxembourg, this did not have much impact, as many artistic movements were not or barely present. Though not allowed to exhibit in Germany after the Nazis came to power in 1933, Joseph Kutter was posthumously rehabilitated in August 1943 (Kutter died in January 1941), when his work was exhibited at a *Kunstausstellung* in Luxembourg City.<sup>1262</sup> Some artists exhibited their artworks during the occupation while being members of resistance groups, such as Foni Tissen.<sup>1263</sup> Themes depicted by artists in the 1930s (such as landscapes) could be accommodated with the artistic tastes of the Nazis.<sup>1264</sup> Other behaviours included the refusal to join the LKK, such as in the case of Michel Stoffel, who was eventually not allowed to paint.<sup>1265</sup> However, it did not keep him from painting in secret, and he was helped by friends who provided him with painting material.<sup>1266</sup> Stoffel's case is one example of the consequences when not complying with the coercive measures of the dispositif.

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<sup>1261</sup> Petropoulos, *Art as Politics in the Third Reich*, 9.

<sup>1262</sup> Lorent, *Die nationalsozialistische Kunst- und Kulturpolitik im Großherzogtum Luxemburg 1934-1944*, 312.

<sup>1263</sup> Lorent, 309.

<sup>1264</sup> Lorent, 331.

<sup>1265</sup> Lorent, 310.

<sup>1266</sup> In 1946, the art gallery Charles Bradtké exhibited Michel Stoffel's works, some of which created during the war (*Michel Stoffel* [Luxembourg: Galerie Charkes Bradtké, 1946]). His paintings from the occupation period alluded to the situation and incorporated themes related to that time (Joseph-Emile Muller and Joseph Funck, *Michel Stoffel* [Luxembourg: Section des arts et des lettres de l'Institut grand-ducal, 1971]).

Writing about the activities of the Stillhaltekommissar, the historian Paul Dostert posited that it had elicited a cultural desert (“eine kulturell-soziale Einöde”).<sup>1267</sup> However, while the regime was unmistakably suppressing and controlling cultural activities, the matter was more complex, if only because of some continuities. Dostert wrote that Luxembourgish artists had been supported if their works had corresponded to the official taste.<sup>1268</sup> In addition to the examples explored in the present section, another case can be provided in this context. The Kulturverband Gau Moselland organised the travelling exhibition *Kunstausstellung 1941* in several Luxembourgish cities (Esch-sur-Alzette, Differdange, Dudelange, Diekirch). The catalogue of the event in Esch-sur-Alzette is quite revealing in terms of the continuities of the artistic elite in Luxembourg. Pierre (Peter) Blanc, Theo Kerg, Josy Meyers, Eugen Mousset, Harry Rabinger, and Michel Stoffel<sup>1269</sup>, to name a few, exhibited their works alongside German artists.<sup>1270</sup>

Particular attention was paid to young artists. In March 1941, Albert Perizonius suggested creating a special fund to pay for the training fees of twelve artists with financial difficulties. He stressed the value of rebuilding cultural life and the projected sixty new theatre buildings that should be constructed after the war.<sup>1271</sup> While this request shows concerns about promoting young artists, it also illustrates the limits. In this case, the German administration declined the suggestion with the argument that the support of artists would need to be homogeneously organised in the Reich and thus derived from the missions of the central Reich offices.<sup>1272</sup>

The dispositif of control also took hold of other cultural areas beyond the restricted arts field. Cultural production and reproduction that did not accommodate the Nazi worldview or appeared inconvenient to the political context were banned.<sup>1273</sup> Cinemas, for instance, were placed under the strict supervision of the CdZ propaganda department and could only include

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<sup>1267</sup> Dostert, *Luxemburg zwischen Selbstbehauptung und nationaler Selbstaufgabe*, 90.

<sup>1268</sup> Indeed, Dosterts evaluation of the “Einöde” stands in contradiction to his own description of cultural activities during the occupation period. He wrote, for instance: “Besonders hofiert wurden die luxemburgischen bildenden Künstler. Voraussetzung war natürlich, daß ihre Werke dem offiziellen Kunstgeschmack entsprachen” (Dostert, 121). He also stressed that the GEDELIT, before it was divided into Kunstkreise, developed quite well and organised 181 events in 32 localities (p. 118).

<sup>1269</sup> As the Landeskulturmutter was founded only after the event, Michel Stoffel was not yet banned from pursuing his artistic occupation.

<sup>1270</sup> ANLux, CdZ-A-6847, *Kunstausstellung vom 25. Mai bis 8. Juni im Rathaus zu Esch Alzig*, undated, no. 9.

<sup>1271</sup> ANLux, CdZ-A-1597, Letter from Albert Perizonius to Siekmeier, 10/03/1941, no. 87.

<sup>1272</sup> ANLux, CdZ-A-1597, Letter from Albert Perizonius to Siekmeier, 10/03/1941, no. 87

<sup>1273</sup> One example of a policy responding to a changing context was the prohibition on performing or presenting works by Russian authors. This ban was ordered by the CdZ on 15 July 1941, only some weeks after the invasion of the Soviet Union had begun (ANLux, CdZ-A-1441, *Allgemeine Anordnungen Nr. 12/41, Chef der Zivilverwaltung H. Org.*, 15/07/1941, no. 105-106).

ideologically acceptable movies in their programmes. In this context, circulars were distributed to cinema owners with instructions on different aspects, such as the composition of programmes or the entrance fees.<sup>1274</sup> The Gaufilmstelle distributed movies to cinemas; these movies were, for instance, anti-Semitic productions such as *Jud Süß* or *Der ewige Jude*. Yet, even the distribution did not work smoothly, as the propaganda department deplored the fact that some owners projected too many movies, whereas other cinemas had not enough movies to show.<sup>1275</sup>

Indeed, the cultural reorganisation of Luxembourg did not progress as expected. The introduction of a polycratic dispositif elicited internal discussions about the competencies and areas of activity of the new actors and, in some cases, power struggles.<sup>1276</sup> Communication issues between the multiple stakeholders in the cultural field were not an exception. Albert Urmes, for instance, had to clarify the missions of the *Kunstkreise* in a circular:

The Kunstkreise of the Kulturverband created by us should elicit and promote local cultural initiatives, reunite the art-interested Kreise for a fruitful collaboration, bring together existing culturally relevant associations and organisations for a reasonable positive collaboration in consultation with the Party, and support local artists of all areas with every means.<sup>1277</sup>

He stressed that this could only be accomplished with high-quality events, which should not lead to competition with the events of the KdF movement. The latter, according to Urmes, organised “general public events” in the evening, such as music hall (*Variété*) and cabaret (*Kabarett*) performances. The KdF also organised representations by the Landestheater Moselland. In his circular, Urmes advised all *Kunstkreise* to announce their events to the propaganda service of the concerned Kreis four weeks in advance to avoid conflicts. Indeed,

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<sup>1274</sup> ANLux, CdZ-A-6703, *Rundschreiben Nr. 3* of the Abteilung Propaganda – Referat Film, 29/08/1940.

<sup>1275</sup> ANLux, CdZ-A-6703, *Rundschreiben Nr. 10/40* of the Abteilung Propaganda – Referat Film, 20/12/1940.

<sup>1276</sup> Recently, Marc Limpach has analysed, among other aspects, the rivalries and struggles between the KdF movement, the Kunstkreis Luxemburg, and the Kreis leadership (Limpach, ‘Die Kulturpolitik im besetzten Luxemburg (1940-1944) und die NS-Intellektuellen Albert Perizonius und Richard Hengst’, 125–126).

<sup>1277</sup> Own translation. “Die von uns geschaffenen Kunstkreise des Kulturverbandes sollen die örtliche kulturelle Initiative wecken und fördern, die kunstinteressierten Kreise zu einer gedeihlichen Zusammenarbeit zusammenführen, die vorhandenen kulturell zu wertenden Vereine und Organisationen zu einer vernünftigen positiven Zusammenarbeit im Einvernehmen mit der Partei bringen und die örtlichen Kunstschaffenden auf allen Gebieten in jeder Weise unterstützen.” (LHA Ko, 662,005-212, *Rundschreiben Nr. 210/70* by Albert Urmes, 26/10/1942).

Urmes referred to previous cases in which the KdF had organised events on the same day as a *Kunstkreis*; the latter had to cancel its event.<sup>1278</sup>

While the new regime was reorganising cultural life, the SD drew a different picture of the situation in Luxembourg than press clippings might suggest. The SD reports were sent to the Reich Main Security Office (Reichssicherheitshauptamt, RSHA) in Berlin, an office subordinated to Heinrich Himmler as Reichsführer-SS (Reich leader of the SS). As pointed out by Vincent Artuso, these reports need to be analysed critically, not only because they inform unequally on the occupation period<sup>1279</sup>, but also because the agents of the SD tended to exaggerate the population's discontent. The agents of the SD had fostered ambiguous relationships with Gustav Simon and were interested in informing his policies in favour of the interests of the RSHA.<sup>1280</sup> Despite these issues, the reports show that changing the mentality, attitudes, and convictions of subjects who were not in favour of the Germans, had a neutral stance, or simply did not wish to be bothered was a daunting task. The authorities were aware of this situation, as they had discussed cultural and propagandistic initiatives since the first day of the invasion. An SD report of 15 May 1940 urged the use of German movies, especially *Wochenschauen* (newsreels).<sup>1281</sup> Another report of early June called attention to broadcasting interferences. As for cinemas, which had reopened in the meantime, the document observed that the movies were not attracting many Luxembourgers, as they were not adapted to their *Volksstimmung* (national spirit or mood). It advised, among other things, the projection of prestigious German productions with famous actors.<sup>1282</sup>

In the days and weeks following the invasion and before the civil administration was created, representatives of the Reich Propaganda Office, in collaboration with the *Staatspolizei* (Stapo), preferred not to undertake any notable changes in the Luxembourgish press, “not to unnerve the Luxembourgers” (“um die Luxemburger nicht kopfscheu zu machen”).<sup>1283</sup> Ensembles of

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<sup>1278</sup> Unfortunately, the sources do not provide more information on why the *Kunstkreis*, and not the KdF, had to cancel the event. It might be linked to the hierarchies within the dispositif. The KdF was a Reich organization. The importance of a *Kunstkreis*, locally active, paled in comparison.

<sup>1279</sup> As Vincent Artuso explains: “Pour les six premiers mois de l’occupation il existe, en moyenne, deux rapports par semaine. Il n’a plus ensuite, jusqu’au printemps 1941, qu’un rapport par mois. Très peu de rapports de l’année 1942 ont été conservés. Un seul date de 1943, aucun de 1944.” (Artuso, *La collaboration au Luxembourg durant la Seconde Guerre mondiale (1940-1945)*, 45).

<sup>1280</sup> Artuso, 45.

<sup>1281</sup> LHA Ko, 662,006-917, Report on the situation in Luxembourg by the SD, 15/05/1940.

<sup>1282</sup> LHA Ko, 662,006-917, Report on Luxembourg, 04/06/1940.

<sup>1283</sup> LHA Ko, 662,006-340, Report on German propaganda in Luxembourg, 29/05/1940. This seemed to be less evident than the authorities might have wished. A note observed that the Wehrmacht had already arrested some editors of newspapers, thus making a non-intervention difficult (LHA Ko, 662,006-340, Note on German propaganda in Luxembourg, 29/05/1940).

the Westmarklandestheater should perform in Luxembourg, and six *Tonfilmwagen*<sup>1284</sup> (film trucks) should be deployed.<sup>1285</sup> Such opinions stood in stark contrast with the hard-line policies of the CdZ in the following years. Already in August 1940, the authorities highlighted the necessity to break the “passive resistance” of Luxembourgers; the Gauleiter introduced measures against the bearers of the “Luxembourg-insignia” (*Luxemburg-Abzeichen*).<sup>1286</sup>

Despite the issues surrounding these reports, they described some of the attitudes during the occupation. In this context, the explicit is as much important as the implicit. Sometimes, these attitudes were reported as minor observations in otherwise “innocuous” documents. One example is a note on a solemn manifestation in August 1940. Its author observed that only a few Luxembourgers raised their hands during the “Sieg Heil” chants and the singing of “national songs”. The exact number of people behind “a few” remains a subjective measure. The SD agent would also have needed to identify all Luxembourgers. Nevertheless, this observation implies that some Luxembourgers did raise their hands and sang along.<sup>1287</sup> Other reports described the situation in Luxembourg regarding the “passive resistance” (“passiver Widerstand”). An internal report of 15 July 1941 related confrontations between members of the VdB or the NSDAP and “anti-German elements” (“deutschfeindliche Elemente”) in some places. In other cases, it was reported that some local leaders of the VdB bemoaned the lack of motivation among their ranks. According to the head of the local VdB in Niederkorn, 40 members out of 1,500 could be counted on.<sup>1288</sup> This indication does not mean that the other members were against the regime or participated in acts of “passive resistance”, yet it shows that attitudes could vary.

This same report also covered the attitudes of the students. Discussing essays of secondary school students, the author observed that out of the 18 essays, 13 were “explicitly anti-German”, and “only four were more or less German-friendly”, while one student did not

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<sup>1284</sup> The use of these film trucks in areas devoid of cinemas was a well-established initiative of the Reich Propaganda Office in Germany.

<sup>1285</sup> LHA Ko, 662,006-340, Report on German propaganda in Luxembourg, 29/05/1940.

<sup>1286</sup> The report most probably referred to the pins that were produced in the context of the Centenary in 1939 (LHA Ko, 662,006-340, Note on the fight against the passive resistance in Luxembourg, 14/08/1940).

<sup>1287</sup> LHA Ko, 662,006-340, Note on an event celebrating the institution of a Verwaltungskommissar for Luxembourg City by Traub (SD Abschnitt Koblenz), 14/08/1940. It should be noted that there were also diverging views on the VdB. The Gauleiter wanted to create a mass movement, but the Sipo-SD disapproved of Simon’s approach (Artuso, *La collaboration au Luxembourg durant la Seconde Guerre mondiale (1940-1945)*, 174–175). The quoted report probably needs to be considered on the background of this disagreement.

<sup>1288</sup> LHA Ko, 662,006-501, *Meldungen aus Luxemburg*, 15/07/1941.

provide an opinion.<sup>1289</sup> In one of the quoted “anti-German” essays, the student conveyed a wish to live in peace:

I always think it is good if the Germans also see what war is. In this war, their country will also be destroyed [...]. But let's hope that Luxembourg will once again become a free and quiet country without any coercion and pressure from other, foreign countries. We were fine, and we see that only now quite well. [...]<sup>1290</sup>

Another student expressed a similar wish:

I wish National Socialism and Communism would disappear and order and peace would return as before the war. We were calm and happy, why shouldn't we be now. [...] I don't care if England or Germany wins the war, but we want to be free, and we are not criminals because they don't treat us any better.<sup>1291</sup>

A third student wanted “to eat as before the war” and the Grand Duchess to return. Such thoughts expressed a wish to live in peace and to return to life before the war more than any explicit ideological motivations. For the author of the report they were “anti-German” (*deutschfeindlich*), as they did not endorse Nazi ideology. Additionally, the report assumed a correlation between the attitudes of the students and those of their parents. It is impossible to confirm or deny this claim, but the private environment could play a role. The report paid less attention to those students who endorsed a pro-German attitude.

The result of Nazi cultural propaganda and cultural policy showed underwhelming results, at least for the SD. The projection of the German propaganda movie *Ohm Krüger* did not meet the authorities’ expectations. Whereas the *Reichsdeutsche* in Luxembourg “showed the most vivid interest”, “a large part of the Luxembourgish population did not watch the movie despite extensive publicity on the radio and in the press”.<sup>1292</sup> Again, the report quoted essays written by students; 15 essays rejected the movie, while 11 conveyed a favourable opinion. According

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<sup>1289</sup> LHA Ko, 662,006-501, *Meldungen aus Luxemburg*, 15/07/1941.

<sup>1290</sup> Translated from German. “Ich denke mir immer dass es gut ist, wenn die Deutschen auch mal sehen, was Krieg ist. In diesem Krieg wird auch ihr Land zertrümmert [...]. Aber, lasst uns hoffen, dass Luxemburg wieder ein freies und ruhiges Ländchen wird ohne jeden Zwang und Druck von andern, fremden Ländern. Wir hatten es gut, und das sehen wir erst jetzt recht gut. [...]” (LHA Ko, 662,006-501, *Meldungen aus Luxemburg*, 15/07/1941).

<sup>1291</sup> Translated from German. “Von mir aus ich wünschte der Nationalsozialismus und der Kommunismus würden verschwinden und es käme wieder die Ordnung und die Ruhe wie vor dem Kriege. Wir waren ruhig und glücklich, warum sollen wir es jetzt nicht sein. [...] Ob England oder Deutschland den Krieg gewinnt ist mir egal, aber wir wollen frei sein und wir sind auch keine Verbrecher, denn man behandelt uns nicht besser.” (LHA Ko, 662,006-501, *Meldungen aus Luxemburg*, 15/07/1941).

<sup>1292</sup> “Die Reichsdeutschen in Luxemburg zeigten das lebhafteste Interesse an der Vorführung, während ein sehr grosser Teil der luxemburgischen Bevölkerung trotz grosser Werbung durch Rundfunk und Presse einen Besuch des Films ablehnte” (LHA Ko, 662,006-501, *Meldungen aus Luxemburg*, 15/07/1941).

to the document, the negative essays accused the movie of exaggerations or deliberate falsifications; yet they did not necessarily reject the ideology behind the movie. One of them could not refrain from commenting sarcastically: “I liked [the movie] so much that I fell asleep afterwards.” (“Er hat mir so gut gefallen, dass ich hernach eingeschlafen bin.”) The report concluded that the propagandistic effects of the movie were barely noticeable.<sup>1293</sup>

The desire to be left in peace expressed by the students was probably representative of a large group in the population, but this group was not the whole population. The regime’s top-down, ideologized and decentralised cultural policy was to remove French influence, activate a German consciousness, and propagate state ideology. The reports of “passive resistance” should not obfuscate the fact that there were collaborators and actors heeding sympathies for the Nazis. They barely appear in the reports as they were doing what the regime expected from them.

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<sup>1293</sup> LHA Ko, 662,006-501, *Meldungen aus Luxemburg*, 15/07/1941.

## IV.2. Cultural Institutions: Instrumentalisation, Innovation, Expansion

Existing institutions were adapted to the new administrative structures and changed their status. The institutions remained in the hands of public authorities, but the political control was tightened. Unlike in cities in Germany, where local institutions were municipalised<sup>1294</sup>, the institutions in Luxembourg were embedded, as we will see, in a complex relationship between local, regional, and Reich authorities. In the case of previously national institutions, such as the National Library and the State Museums, they were directly supervised by the administration for intercommunal affairs, itself part of the German civil administration, and they were to be transformed into institutions of some importance at the Gau level.

In addition to reorganising existing cultural institutions, new ones were created, such as the Kunsthause in Luxembourg in the former department store A la Bourse under Jewish management (on the corner of the Grand-Rue and the Rue du Fossé) in December 1942. Until 1944, three large exhibitions had been organised in the Kunsthause with works by artists from the Moselle region. These exhibitions were also organised in Berlin, Posen and Breslau. The former Grand-Ducal Palace, transferred to the city administration, was repurposed into a café with a cultural centre;<sup>1295</sup> the mayor Richard Hengst allocated some rooms to the Künstlerkameradschaft, founded by some members of the Kunstkreis Luxemburg in December 1942.<sup>1296</sup> In January 1941, 72 paintings were moved to the palace from the castle in Colmar-Berg, the former grand-ducal residence.<sup>1297</sup> However, the project of a gallery in the palace was never realised due to inadequate light conditions.<sup>1298</sup>

The strong interconnectedness between the planned expansion of cultural infrastructures, the reorganisation of cultural life, and its embedment in the ideology and aims of the occupying forces was an unprecedented element in Luxembourg. Traditional cultural institutions – theatres, libraries, archives, museums – constituted a cornerstone of this cultural policy. The current section focuses on initiatives related to the institutions, not only because of their importance but also to better frame the evolution of the State Museum within this context.<sup>1299</sup>

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<sup>1294</sup> This happened, for instance, in Leipzig and Frankfurt on the Main (Höpel, *Kulturpolitik in Europa im 20. Jahrhundert*, 112–114).

<sup>1295</sup> Péporté et al., *Inventing Luxembourg*, 104.

<sup>1296</sup> Limpach, ‘Die Kulturpolitik im besetzten Luxemburg (1940-1944) und die NS-Intellektuellen Albert Perizonius und Richard Hengst’, 125.

<sup>1297</sup> ANLux, CdZ-A-4755-02, Note on a letter from Gustav Simon to the Gaupropagandaleiter Albert Urmes, 21/01/1941, no. 92.

<sup>1298</sup> Dostert, *Luxemburg zwischen Selbstbehauptung und nationaler Selbstaufgabe*, 124.

<sup>1299</sup> Some aspects concerning cultural institutions during the Second World War were mentioned by Paul Dostert, though not in detail. Some assessments remain vague, have no clear evidence or lack

#### IV.2.1. Theatre as a tool for cultural propaganda

As examined in the previous chapter, the German authorities had already promoted guest performances in Luxembourg in the 1930s. In August 1940, the idea to construct a theatre appeared for the first time in the records. A note written by Dr Lang described a discussion with a Luxembourger, a certain “Pivo” (possibly a typo and referring to Hanns Divo), who informed about the situation of theatres in Luxembourg. Though it is not clear why this individual was invited to share his opinion, “Pivo” highlighted the anti-German stance of the majority of the population and the strong presence of French guest performances to the detriment of the German ones. In 1939, performances could not be maintained due to the war.<sup>1300</sup> He recommended the construction of a theatre after the war to impress the “vain” (*eitel*) Luxembourgers and win them over to the German cause.<sup>1301</sup> Pivo’s claims need to be analysed critically. Even Richard Hengst stated that German and French companies did the guest performances.<sup>1302</sup>

Research on the topic has shown that the German authorities extensively invested in the management, expansion and construction of theatres in the Third Reich and occupied territories. Playhouses should support the integration of the German population into the *Volksgemeinschaft* (national or ethnic community).<sup>1303</sup> The role attributed to theatres was anchored in a discourse that regarded German theatre culture as superior and claimed German leadership in this area in Europe since Middle Ages.<sup>1304</sup> In Strasbourg, for instance, the

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references. Dostert claimed that “[a]lle Bemühungen, das Theaterleben in Luxemburg attraktiv zu gestalten, stießen immer wieder auf den Widerstand der Luxemburger, die den „Besuch einer Aufführung in hochdeutscher Sprache als ein Bekenntnis zum Deutschtum“ ansahen und dementsprechend die Vorstellungen boykottierten.” (Dostert, 120). The document Dostert quoted is an SD report of June 1941, though he merely indicated the title in his footnote. If we accept the lack of attendance as a given fact, or at least it being below expectations, the bad shape of the theatre in Luxembourg, repeatedly pointed out in internal documents, might have played a role, too.

<sup>1300</sup> Original text: “Die Stadt Luxemburg besitzt ein städtisches Theater, das aber kein eigenes Ensemble hat. Die Gastspiele wurden von deutschen Theatern, insbesondere von Trier und Köln aber auch von französischen Theatern durchgeführt. Bereits im vorigen Jahr konnten die Gastspiele infolge des Krieges nicht mehr aufrecht erhalten werden” (BArch Berlin, R 55/20537, Copy of a letter from Richard Hengst, mayor of Luxembourg City, to the Reichsministerium für Volksaufklärung und Propaganda, 25/09/1940, no. 23).

<sup>1301</sup> “Herrn Pivo [sic] deutete an, daß die Luxemburger Bevölkerung zum allergrößten Teil (ca. 90%) antideutsch eingestellt sei. Es würde zweifellos auf die als besonders eitel eingestellten Luxemburger einen ausgezeichneten Eindruck machen und mit dazu beitragen, sie für Deutschland zu gewinnen, wenn nach dem Kriege und nach der Neuordnung der politischen Verhältnisse ein Theater gebaut würde.” (BArch Berlin, R 55/219, *Aktenvermerk* by Dr. Lang, 08/08/1940, no. 85).

<sup>1302</sup> BArch Berlin, R 55/20537, Copy of a letter from Richard Hengst, mayor of Luxembourg City, to the Reichsministerium für Volksaufklärung und Propaganda, 25/09/1940, no. 23.

<sup>1303</sup> Höpel, *Kulturpolitik in Europa im 20. Jahrhundert*, 116.

<sup>1304</sup> Anselm Heinrich, *Theatre in Europe Under German Occupation* (London: Routledge, 2018), 225.

Germans invested considerable financial means in musical performances, institutions, and the city's theatre. The latter figured among the best-funded theatres in the Reich, right behind Berlin and Vienna. Such efforts were the expression of a policy that attempted a “germanisation by taming” (“germanisation par l'apprivoisement”).<sup>1305</sup> Furthermore, the construction of theatre buildings converged with Hitler's interests in architecture and theatre.<sup>1306</sup> In his research on theatres under German occupation, Anselm Heinrich showed that subsidies, already at a high level in the “Altreich”, had reached staggering amounts in the occupied territories.<sup>1307</sup> Drawing on a series of case studies, Heinrich argued that the investments in the promotion of German theatre in occupied Europe cannot be separated from the war effort. According to Heinrich,

the claim that culture and National Socialism can somehow be separated - put forward in a number of studies on the arts under National Socialism, and exemplified by books such as Bettina Schültke's *Theater or Propaganda?* - cannot be upheld when discussing German theatre in occupied Europe during the Second World War.<sup>1308</sup>

For the Nazi regime, the theatre was, as the researcher Boguslaw Drewniak claimed, “one of its favorite children”.<sup>1309</sup>

The theatre in Luxembourg was not an exception to those in other territories, including occupied Eastern European countries. From an administrative viewpoint, it remained under municipal authority. Indeed, it suited the German model of the municipal theatre (*Stadttheater*).<sup>1310</sup> From an ideological and discursive perspective, similarities can be drawn, too. If the theatre in Danzig, for instance, was playing a political role in “advancing German culture in the East”<sup>1311</sup>, the playhouse in Luxembourg could be considered its counterpart in the West. This view is illustrated by an RPA report on the cultural importance of Luxembourg. Though it deplored the situation in Luxembourg – the existing theatre building in Luxembourg City was deemed unsuitable – the RPA argued that a representative and suitable theatre was a

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<sup>1305</sup> Sandrine Fuss, ‘Le programme musical et le public du théâtre de Strasbourg à l'ombre de la croix gammée’, in *Villes et culture sous l'occupation: Expériences françaises et perspectives comparées*, ed. Françoise Taliano-des Garets (Paris: Armand Colin, 2012), 262.

<sup>1306</sup> Klaus Backes, *Hitler und die bildenden Künste: Kulturverständnis und Kunstpolitik im Dritten Reich* (Köln: DuMont, 1988), 181.

<sup>1307</sup> Heinrich, *Theatre in Europe Under German Occupation*, 97.

<sup>1308</sup> Heinrich, 239.

<sup>1309</sup> Boguslaw Drewniak, ‘The Foundations of Theatre Policy in Nazi Germany’, in *National Socialist Cultural Policy*, ed. Glenn R. Cuomo (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1995), 68.

<sup>1310</sup> Heinrich, *Theatre in Europe Under German Occupation*, 95.

<sup>1311</sup> Quoted in: Heinrich, 82.

necessity for a city such as Luxembourg because of its population and its geographical situation:

The city lies at the important crossing of the east-west and north-south road connections. Paris can be comfortably reached in five hours by car, Reims in two hours and Lille in four hours, so the possibilities of attraction of an exemplary theatre in Luxembourg are simply unlimited.<sup>1312</sup>

According to the RPA report, the idea of the construction of a theatre was supported by the CdZ, local administrations, and the Reichsministerium für Volksaufklärung und Propaganda (RMVP). A potential, unspecified site was chosen, and a plan was in the making. Besides the interest for propaganda reasons, the fact that the existing theatre building – a former church – was deemed unsafe and did not meet fire safety standards might have played a role, too.<sup>1313</sup> The issues had been known in the interwar period. In 1935, the city administration consulted an engineer, E. Noack, from the Berlin fire brigade. Noack submitted an expertise in which he criticised the poor state of the building. Regarding the report's content, Hengst wrote in June 1941: “On the ground of the observations, Noack concludes that another theatre with similar significant and fundamental deficits concerning fire safety barely exists on the European mainland.”<sup>1314</sup> Hengst criticised the previous Luxembourgish administration for not having made improvements to the building since Noack’s report. The mayor, however, deemed the theatre a necessity, as Luxembourg City was a “cultural centre at the western border of the Reich”<sup>1315</sup>. Of course, the mayor used legitimisation discourses to highlight the importance of a cultural institution in the city he administrated. Still, these discourses did not contradict those of the RPA, for instance. Furthermore, they merely mirrored discourses in other places in occupied territories. Says Heinrich:

Wherever the German authorities took over existing playhouses, they stressed the poor quality of what they had inherited from the previous owners. In Lille the German occupiers claimed that the theatre they had helped establish in 1915 had faced “vandalism” and “neglect” after

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<sup>1312</sup> Own translation. “Die Stadt liegt am grossen Kreuzungspunkt der Ostwest- und Nordsüdstrassen. Paris ist mit dem Wagen bequem in 5 Stunden, Reims in 2 Stunden und Lille in 4 Stunden zu erreichen, sodass die Ausstrahlungsmöglichkeiten eines in Luxemburg entsprechenden vorbildlichen Theaters einfach unbegrenzt sind” (ANLux, CdZ-A-1597, Report from the head of the Reichspropagandaamt Koblenz-Trier, 05/12/1940, no. 2-5).

<sup>1313</sup> This has been expressed in several documents, for instance: BArch Berlin, R 55/20537, *Bericht des Reichspropagandaministerium*, anonymous, 20/11/1940, no. 2-3.

<sup>1314</sup> Own translation. “Noack kommt auf Grund der getroffenen Feststellungen zusammenfassend zu der Behauptung, daß auf dem europäischen Festlande kaum ein Theater zu finden sei, bei dem hinsichtlich der Feuersicherheit ähnlich große und grundsätzliche Mängel bestehen.” (BArch Berlin, R 55/20537, Letter from Richard Hengst, mayor of Luxembourg, to the Reichsministerium für Volksaufklärung und Propaganda, 09/06/1941, no. 41).

<sup>1315</sup> BArch Berlin, R 55/20537, Letter from Richard Hengst, mayor of Luxembourg, to the Reichsministerium für Volksaufklärung und Propaganda, 09/06/1941, no. 41.

1918 and under the subsequent French administration and that it needed German investment and care to rise up again. In Posen the Germans asserted that due to Polish negligence they had to entirely renew the theatre's technical apparatus.<sup>1316</sup>

The project of a new building was seemingly in an advanced stage in December 1940. As Dostert pointed out, the Reichspropagandaamt and the Luxembourg City administration concentrated their efforts on the theatre.<sup>1317</sup> Yet, as in other cases, it entailed a mobilisation of actors at different levels, from the local to the highest levels of the Third Reich. All implicated actors agreed on the importance of the theatre. Power struggles only appeared later. An internal document of the Propaganda Ministry of 7 February 1941 related information provided by Eugen Hadamovsky, Reichssendeleiter (radio production director), who reported on a meeting between Gustav Simon and Hitler, in which the Führer decided that the building in Luxembourg would have to comprise 1,400 seats. The budget to build the theatre should emanate from the “emigrants” money. Hitler himself, as the note stated, would contribute financially.<sup>1318</sup> The veracity of the note’s content is difficult to prove, as it merely related the report of a person, though highly placed in the Propaganda Ministry, who was not present at the referred meeting. However, another source corroborates Hitler’s interest in a theatre in Luxembourg. A report of 24 July 1941 on a meeting with Münzel, despite focusing on the state archives, shortly mentioned the theatre. According to what Münzel stated, a large theatre was planned by the Führer himself. “The Führer has decided that Luxembourg should become a cultural centre in the west; a large theatre has been planned by him,”<sup>1319</sup> Münzel wrote. Beyond the local context and these specific sources, Hitler personally decreed in 1938 that “even in small cities the theaters must be constructed in such a way [...] that they offer space for the broad masses. Theater belongs to the *Volk*.<sup>1320</sup>

The reasons for Hadamovsky’s implication in the Luxembourg theatre remain unclear. Though working for the RMVP, his job title did not directly relate to theatres. The promise of direct funding from Hitler’s office is plausible, as other theatres received funding from the

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<sup>1316</sup> Heinrich, *Theatre in Europe Under German Occupation*, 102.

<sup>1317</sup> Dostert, *Luxemburg zwischen Selbstbehauptung und nationaler Selbstaufgabe*, 119.

<sup>1318</sup> “Der Führer hat bestimmt, daß dieses neue Haus mindestens 1400 Plätze aufweisen solle. Die Finanzierung soll so erfolgen, daß in diesem Bau die Gelder der Emigranten investiert werden; außerdem wird der Führer selbst einen Beitrag beisteuern.” (BArch Berlin, R 55/20537, Internal document of the Reichsministerium für Volksaufklärung und Propaganda, 07/02/1941, no. 5).

<sup>1319</sup> Own translation. “Der Führer habe aber bestimmt, daß Luxemburg ein Kulturzentrum im Westen werden soll, ein großes Theater ist von ihm selbst geplant worden.” (BArch Berlin, R 1506/1048, *Niederschrift über die Besprechung mit Regierungsdirektor Dr. Münzel in Luxemburg am 24. Juli 1941*, unidentifiable signature [Ernst Zipfel], 08/08/1941, no. 16).

<sup>1320</sup> Quoted in: Drewniak, ‘The Foundations of Theatre Policy in Nazi Germany’, 71.

Reich Chancellery, such as the one in Danzig.<sup>1321</sup> In addition, as Anselm Heinrich noted, “the Nazis were keen to demonstrate their commitment not only by taking over existing buildings but also by significantly extending them or building new ones.”<sup>1322</sup>

For the design of the building, the authorities chose an architect named Köhler<sup>1323</sup> to devise the building. The incomplete sources imply that between February and August 1941, Köhler must have done something highly displeasing to the authorities. Martin Bormann, chief of the party chancellery, wrote Hadamovsky on 31 August that Köhler’s further implication would be out of the question. Referring to a letter with annexes, which are not conserved, Bormann highlighted that these “procedures” were not known to him and to Hitler.<sup>1324</sup> Simon was informed of Bormann’s decision. The Propaganda Ministry contacted the architect Albert Speer and a certain Professor Baumgarten to propose other suitable architects for the theatre construction in Luxembourg.<sup>1325</sup>

An anonymous Propaganda Ministry document about a meeting on 12 November 1940 reveals that the authorities chose the Kasernenviertel (Plateau St. Esprit) as the site for the future theatre – alongside party and administration buildings.<sup>1326</sup> Besides the ministry, the meeting participants included Perizonius and Boggemes, a representative of the city administration.<sup>1327</sup> While the discussions for a new building were ongoing, the city administration reopened the existing theatre building. For Hengst, this was a political and cultural necessity. He also argued that the entrance fees needed to be kept low, but the city could not entirely assume the resulting deficit. Thus, he requested financial support from the

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<sup>1321</sup> Heinrich, *Theatre in Europe Under German Occupation*, 82.

<sup>1322</sup> Heinrich, 102.

<sup>1323</sup> It was possibly Hans Köhler, but his whole name is not mentioned in the consulted sources.

<sup>1324</sup> BArch Berlin, R 55/20537, Letter from Reichsleiter Martin Bormann to Reichssendeleiter Eugen Hadamowsky, 31/08/1941, no. 17.

<sup>1325</sup> BArch Berlin, R 55/20537, Letter from Schlosser, theatre department of the Reich Ministry for Public Enlightenment and Propaganda, to Gauleiter Gustav Simon, 11/09/1941, no. 18.

<sup>1326</sup> According to Guy Thewes, the theatre was to be built on the present site of the episcopal seminary of Avenue Marie-Thérèse, as part of a “cultural forum” encompassing, in addition, a concert hall, a library and a music school (Marie-Paule Jungblut, ed., *Looted: Current Questions Regarding the Cultural Looting by the National Socialists in Europe* [Luxembourg: Musée d’histoire de la Ville de Luxembourg, 2008], 19). Thewes does not indicate when this plan was drafted. It is quite possible that several sites were discussed for the theatre, as had been the case with the project of the national museum in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

<sup>1327</sup> BArch Berlin, R 55/20537, *Bericht des Reichspropagandaministerium*, anonymous, 20/11/1940, no. 2-3.

Propaganda Ministry.<sup>1328</sup> In February 1941, it was granted.<sup>1329</sup> Yet, when Hengst wrote his letter about the poor state of the building in June, he informed that the subsidy was insufficient, considering the improvements to be made until the completion of the new building.<sup>1330</sup>

The new theatre building was never constructed due to increasing pressures resulting from the war effort, but possibly also, though not mentioned in the documents, due to the *generelles Bauverbot* (general ban on construction) in February 1942. When Hengst used his arguments of troops, workers, and political propaganda to support the upkeep of the theatre in 1943, he did this in the context of discussions about the creation of a theatre company in Luxembourg. As Hengst's letter of May 1943 shows, guest performances became increasingly difficult to stage because theatres lacked staff. It is unclear whether the idea of a company was a brainchild by Hengst or by Simon (or maybe even another person), but the Gauleiter supported it. Disagreements arose between the German administration in Luxembourg and the Reich Ministry. Schlösser, Ministerialdirigent, refused the idea on the grounds of insufficient personnel, at least for operas and operettas.<sup>1331</sup> Another letter from Schlösser to Hinkel was related to the context of war efforts and why the Ministry could not accept Simon's request. Indeed, the minister ordered the removal of 20% of personnel marked as "indispensable", which would result in the closure of theatres and certainly not allow to create new playhouses.<sup>1332</sup>

The German administration in Luxembourg, then, was confronted with increasing issues related to the war and looked for alternatives which were not deemed suitable. Yet, these

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<sup>1328</sup> BArch Berlin, R 55/20537, Copy of a letter from Richard Hengst, mayor of Luxembourg City, to the Reichsministerium für Volksaufklärung und Propaganda, 25/09/1940, no. 23.

<sup>1329</sup> For instance : BArch Berlin, R 55/20537, Letter from Perizonius, Reichspropagandaamt, to the Reich Minister for Public Enlightenment and Propaganda, 27/02/1941, no. 39.

<sup>1330</sup> BArch Berlin, R 55/20537, Letter from Richard Hengst, mayor of Luxembourg, to the Reichsministerium für Volksaufklärung und Propaganda, 09/06/1941, no. 41.

<sup>1331</sup> Own translation. "Zu der mir durch Ministerialdirektor Hinkel bekanntgegebenen Absicht Gauleiter Simons in dem etwa 600 Personen fassenden Theatergebäude in Luxemburg statt der bisherigen Bespielung einen ständigen Betrieb noch in der kommenden Spielzeit einzurichten, bemerke ich, daß es für die Spielgattungen Oper und Operette gänzlich ausgeschlossen sein dürfte, die notwendige Zahl von männlichen Mitgliedern zu verpflichten" (BArch Berlin, R 55/20537, Letter from *Ministerialdirigent* Schlösser, theatre department, to the Reich Minister for Public Enlightenment and Propaganda, 11/07/1942, no. 53).

<sup>1332</sup> Original text: "Nach gewissenhaftester Überprüfung bin ich freilich zu einem negativen Ergebnis gekommen, weil es mir angesichts des eben ergangenen Befehls des Ministers, aus dem Theaterleben abermals weitere 20% UK.-Gestellter auszukämmen, völlig ausgeschlossen erscheint, angesichts der zweifellos hieraus resultierenden Schließung schon bestehender Theater der Errichtung neuer Bühnen, die doch auch wieder uk. zu stellende Kräfte benötigen würden, zuzustimmen." (BArch Berlin, R 55/20537, Letter from *Ministerialdirigent* Schlösser to *Ministerialdirektor* Hans Hinkel, 13/07/1942, no. 55).

setbacks did not prevent the administration or Simon from promoting theatre performances. In November 1943, Urmes contacted the Propaganda Ministry again with another project. The Gauleiter wished for an intensification of the cultural offer. As a result, Urmes ordered negotiations with some “notable German ensembles and performers”. The aim was to hire these ensembles for guest performances in Luxembourg.<sup>1333</sup> This letter described Luxembourg as a newly added territory to the Reich (which highlights the de facto annexation). Urmes requested an exemption from the travel ban for some German theatre companies and actors. The answer to Urmes’ letter is unknown.<sup>1334</sup>

The theatre in Luxembourg enjoyed a high status in cultural policy for reasons of propaganda and prestige. It included many actors at different levels whose interests converged at least in the first two years. This context might explain why the project of a theatre building made good progress in the beginning. Undisclosed issues with the first architect might have slowed it down. With the war efforts, the priorities of the local and regional authorities eventually diverged from those at the Reich level. Simon, Urmes and Hengst still wanted to promote theatre plays in Luxembourg, if not with a new building, then at least with the existing one, which was improved. However, this was not possible for the Reich Ministry of Public Enlightenment and Propaganda due to constraints. A theatre company in Luxembourg could not be created for the same reasons that the theatres in Germany were understaffed. Soldiers were needed for the war, and even the exemptions (*UK-Stellung*, for *Unabkömmlichkeitsstellung*) did not necessarily mean permanent exclusion from conscription. Similar issues appeared in the case of the Landesmuseum. The wish of the German administration to promote theatre plays and strengthen the position of the existing playhouse can also be read as an attempt to heighten its prestige and express its own cultural interest and status. In cases in other occupied countries, competing interests were also at play. The

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<sup>1333</sup> Original text: “Auf Wunsch meines Gauleiters soll im kommenden Winterhalbjahr in dem neu zum Reich gekommenen Gebiet Luxemburg die kulturelle Betreuung der Bevölkerung nach Möglichkeit erheblich verstärkt werden. Eine Aktivierung der kulturpolitischen Arbeit im Gebiet Luxemburg entspricht der gesamtpolitischen Entwicklung. Ich habe daher veranlasst, dass Verhandlungen mit einer Reihe bedeutender deutscher Bühnen und Bühnenkünstler [...] über den Kunstkreis Luxemburg [...] eingeleitet wurden, mit dem Ziele, diese Bühnen zu Gastspielen im Lauf des Winterhalbjahres in das Gebiet Luxemburg zu verpflichten” (BArch Berlin, R 55/20537, Letter from Albert Urmes, RPA Moselland, to the Reich Minister for Public Enlightenment and Propaganda, 02/11/1943, no. 63).

<sup>1334</sup> There is only an internal document in which Schlösser (theatre department of the Propaganda Ministry) expresses his doubts (BArch Berlin, R 55/20537, Letter from Schlösser, theatre department of the Reichsministerium für Volksaufklärung und Propaganda, to the State Secretary, 09/11/1943, no. 64).

Gauleiter, for instance, “were keen to play their part and display leadership in artistic matters”.<sup>1335</sup> Simon was not an exception.

#### IV.2.2. The State Archives and the Archivpflege

The State Archives were endowed with an important symbolic meaning during the German occupation. According to an anonymous report<sup>1336</sup> of a meeting with Münzel on 24 July 1941, ideas such as merging the archives of Luxembourg and Koblenz, or moving the Luxembourgish archives to Trier, were discarded for political reasons. Furthermore, the reorganisation of the State Archives should follow the Prussian model:

[The director general<sup>1337</sup> suggested] letting the archive stay in Luxembourg and expanding it into a complete State Archive following the Prussian model. The funds are rich enough and it is generally his ambition to avoid too broad competence areas of a state archive. Thus, he also opposes a merger between the state archives in Koblenz and Luxembourg. A transfer from the Luxembourg archive to Trier is also unsuitable, as the State Archive could participate in the strengthening of the Reich idea.<sup>1338</sup>

Münzel agreed with the director general’s view, whose suggestion to keep the archives in Luxembourg was a reaction to Hitler’s wish to turn Luxembourg into a “cultural centre in the West” (“ein Kulturzentrum im Westen”)<sup>1339</sup>. Another illustration of the symbolic and political importance conceded to the archives constitute the numerous requests and reclams of archival funds in Belgium, France, and the Netherlands, formulated by the German authorities.<sup>1340</sup> Though available sources are not explicit in this matter, it equalled, on the one hand, an archival purge from everything that was not German or related to the German *Volkstum*, and, on the other hand, a “return” of everything related to Germany and the Third Reich from abroad. Claims did not target Luxembourg, albeit Alsace and Lorraine were not exempted. Possibly,

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<sup>1335</sup> Heinrich, *Theatre in Europe Under German Occupation*, 170.

<sup>1336</sup> As the author explicitly wrote about a one-on-one meeting, there is no other possibility than the document being written by the Generaldirektor.

<sup>1337</sup> Though the sources frequently mention a *Generaldirektor*, they never add any clear precisions as to who exactly this person was. Indeed, as the document implicitly reveals, it was the head of the Prussian Archive Management (Preußische Archivverwaltung).

<sup>1338</sup> Own translation. “[Der Generaldirektor schlug vor,] das Archiv in Luxemburg zu belassen und es nach preußisches Muster zu einem vollwertigen Staatsarchiv auszubauen. Die Überlieferung sei reich genug und es sei überhaupt sein Bestreben, allzugroße Dienstbereiche eines Staatsarchivs zu vermeiden. Daher sei er auch gegen eine Zusammenlegung der Staatsarchive Koblenz und Luxemburg. Auch eine Verlegung des Luxemburger Archivs nach Trier sei nicht angebracht, da das Staatsarchiv an seinem Teil mithelfen könne, den Reichsgedanken in Luxemburg zu stärken.” (BArch Berlin, R 1506/1048, *Niederschrift über die Besprechung mit Regierungsdirektor Dr. Münzel in Luxemburg am 24. Juli 1941*, unidentifiable signature [Ernst Zipfel], 08/08/1941, no. 16).

<sup>1339</sup> BArch Berlin, R 1506/1048, *Niederschrift über die Besprechung mit Regierungsdirektor Dr. Münzel in Luxemburg am 24. Juli 1941*, unidentifiable signature [Ernst Zipfel], 08/08/1941, no. 16.

<sup>1340</sup> For lists of these requests, see: BArch Berlin, R 1506/1043.

Luxembourg did not possess any archives that were of (sufficient) interest to the Germans. However, the Germans discussed the “return” of archival funds from France to Luxembourg. Staatsarchivrat (state archives councillor) Schmidt was head of the archives service (*Archivwesen - I Arch.*, within Department I of the CdZ) and acting director of the State Archives in Luxembourg. In extensive meetings on 23 and 24 July 1941, several individuals – at least Münzel, Staatsarchivrat Schmidt and Hauptmann Sante<sup>1341</sup> – discussed archival requests. According to the report, archives that would be returned to Luxembourg were conserved in Lille, Metz, Nancy and Paris. As for Belgium, Arlon was targeted, but the exact procedure depended on its future status. Two scenarios were considered. Either “Arlon becomes German”, in which case “the archive there will incur to Luxembourg”. Or “Arlon will not become German”, in which case “Luxembourg will have to address claims to Arlon.”<sup>1342</sup> In the case of archives in Brussels, the State Archives in Luxembourg should “claim everything that belongs to Luxembourg provenience-wise.”<sup>1343</sup> In the Netherlands, several hundreds of acts and records were ready to be “returned” to Luxembourg.<sup>1344</sup>

Besides these requests, the implicated actors discussed the reorganisation of the archives. As in the case of the theatre, the topic appeared early in the occupation period. In September 1940, the head of the archival protection in the occupied countries<sup>1345</sup>, and head of the State Archives in Koblenz and designated commissar of the archives in Luxembourg, Hirschfeld, visited the state archives (Regierungsarchiv), the municipal archives of Luxembourg, the Landesbibliothek, and the municipal archives in Echternach.<sup>1346</sup> The report of these visits included a description of each of these institutions, with aspects such as light and conservation conditions, situation, and room organisation. In a meeting with Münzel, the State Archives in

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<sup>1341</sup> Probably Georg Wilhelm Sante (1896-1984), since 1928 working as an archivist; after the outbreak of the war he was an officer in the Wehrmacht. After May 1940, he headed the archival protection division of the military command in Belgium and Northern France. Personal animosities existed between Sante, and the *Westforscher* Steinbach and Franz Petri (Freund, *Volk, Reich und Westgrenze*, 100).

<sup>1342</sup> Own translation. “Wenn Arel deutsch wird, fällt das dortige Archiv an Luxemburg. Wenn Arel nicht deutsch wird, dann hat Luxemburg Forderungen an Arel zu stellen.”

<sup>1343</sup> Own translation. “[...] alles das fordern, was provenienzmäßig nach Luxemburg gehört.”

<sup>1344</sup> BArch Berlin, R 1506/1048, *Niederschrift über die Besprechungen in Luxemburg am 23. und 24. Juli 1941*, unidentifiable signature [Ernst Zipfel], 07/08/1941, no. 10-15, p. 6-7.

<sup>1345</sup> Though his name is not mentioned, it is quite certainly Ernst Zipfel (1891-1966). Other documents quoted in the present work and related to the State Archives in Luxembourg frequently refer to a *Generaldirektor*. Indeed, Zipfel was *Generaldirektor* (director) of the Prussian State Archives from 1936 to 1945.

<sup>1346</sup> BArch Berlin, R 1506/1048, *Bericht über die Dienstreise nach Luxemburg am 4. und 5. September 1940* by the *Kommissar für den gesamten Archivschutz in den besetzten Gebieten*, anonymous [Ernst Zipfel], undated, no. 1-4.

Luxembourg were discussed, whose future depended on the decision of the Führer concerning the fate of Luxembourg:

The question is whether it remains in Luxembourg or will be transferred to another location. A suitable solution would perhaps consist in transforming it into an annexe of the State Archives in Koblenz while leaving it in Luxembourg under its own scientific employee. Mr Münzel believed that this solution would be very agreeable to the Gauleiter.<sup>1347</sup>

Whereas the aim of the visit of the commissar to Luxembourg was to gain a general overview of the conditions of the archives, the meeting of July 1941 was dedicated to details and practical matters. Hirschfeld, who was not yet commissar for the archives in Luxembourg, was not present for undisclosed reasons. It seems that Staatsarchivrat Schmidt then held his position. The Germans wanted to expand and improve the archives in Luxembourg. Indeed, the administration of the State Archives had only two rooms in the Arbed building at its disposal. Neither the office rooms nor the storage space in the basement were deemed adequate; both would need to be upsized once the top floor of the Arbed building was repaired (a fire damaged the attic).<sup>1348</sup> In addition, the report lamented the non-existent use of the archives by visitors, though it observed an increase in written exchanges.<sup>1349</sup>

According to the report, four people worked in the archives: Kesseler, Beckius, May and Meyer. All of them were evaluated positively – Kesseler and Beckius were described as hardworking, May as possessing sound knowledge of the archives – and were recommended for promotion. A planned increase in staff would result in an administration encompassing one director, one archivist, one assessor, one inspector, and the necessary personnel at the middle and lower levels. It became clear that the archives should work towards the goals of the regime.

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<sup>1347</sup> Own translation. “Die Frage ist, bleibt es in Luxemburg oder wird es an einen anderen Ort gebracht. Eine angemessene Lösung wäre vielleicht, es zwar zu einer Nebenstelle des Staatsarchivs Koblenz zu machen, es jedoch in Luxemburg unter einem eigenen wissenschaftlichen Beamten zu belassen. Herr Münzel glaubte annehmen zu dürfen, daß diese Lösung dem Herrn Gauleiter sehr genehm sein würde.” (BArch Berlin, R 1506/1048, *Bericht über die Dienstreise nach Luxemburg am 4. und 5. September 1940* by the *Kommissar für den gesamten Archivschutz in den besetzten Gebieten*, anonymous [Ernst Zipfel], undated, no. 1-4).

<sup>1348</sup> BArch Berlin, R 1506/1048, *Niederschrift über die Besprechung mit Regierungsdirektor Dr. Münzel in Luxemburg am 24. Juli 1941*, unidentifiable signature [Ernst Zipfel], 08/08/1941, no. 16.

<sup>1349</sup> Original text: “Die persönliche Benutzung, die anfangs aus zwei bis drei Benutzern täglich bestand, hat in letzter Zeit ganz aufgehört. Staatsarchivrat Dr. Schmidt schiebt dies auf die in letzter Zeit zugenommene Verärgerung der luxemburgischen Intelligenz über die Aufhebung der Klöster u.a. Schriftliche Anfragen laufen in stärkerem Maße ein. Zur großherzoglichen Zeit hat es fast nur persönliche Benutzer gegeben.” (BArch Berlin, R 1506/1048, *Niederschrift über die Besprechungen in Luxemburg am 23. und 24. Juli 1941*, unidentifiable signature [Ernst Zipfel], 07/08/1941, no. 10-15, p. 4).

During the meeting, the director general stressed that the head of the archives had to be engaged in the party and display a positive attitude towards “the new times”.<sup>1350</sup>

Yet, the document also reveals some issues concerning the archival funds scattered outside the State Archives. Though the authorities sought to concentrate as many archival funds as possible within one institution, this plan faced many hurdles. The Gauleiter tasked Schmidt with collecting archives from political parties and masons, but the report deplored that barely anything was available due to confiscations by the police. For Jewish archival funds, Schmidt intended to contact the authorities supervising the liquidation of Jewish possessions. In the case of religious archives, he planned to contact the person responsible for affairs related to the Church. The report explained that only the fund of count Tornaco in Sanem existed in the case of archival funds belonging to the nobility. The owner, however, rejected visits. The archives of the cloister in Clervaux were ceded to the Landesbibliothek, with which Schmidt wanted to negotiate. Hence, collecting as many archival funds as possible was already a daunting task because of lacking cooperation, neglect, or involvement of various departments.

Possibly as a reaction to these difficulties, the German administration introduced the *Archivberatungsstelle*, an archives information centre, in 1942. This service was an innovation in the Luxembourgish context. Unfortunately, the sources provide an incomplete picture of the idea’s development. An isolated document entitled *Punkte für St.A.R. Dr. Schmidt (zur Konferenz v. 8.-10.4.1941)*<sup>1351</sup> mentioned “Pflege des nichtstaatl. Archivguts; Verhältnis zur Archivberatungsstelle der Rheinprovinz” (“conservation of non-state archival funds; relation with the archives information centre of the Rhine province”).<sup>1352</sup> It is impossible to know what exactly was discussed under this point. Apparently, in 1942 at the latest, the administration decided to create an *Archivberatungsstelle* in Luxembourg, integrated into the administration for intermunicipal affairs. The matter was discussed in a meeting in September 1942. It involved Schmidt, Kisky (Oberarchivrat) and Wilkes (Archivberatungsstelle Düsseldorf). Wilkes and Kisky, both from Düsseldorf, were working on the practical implementation of archives conservation (*Archivpflege*). As Schmidt was involved, creating such a centre might have offered a way to circumvent issues concerning non-state archives: issues that were

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<sup>1350</sup> Original text: “Der Generaldirektor weist [...] auf die Wichtigkeit der aktiven Beteiligung an den Arbeiten der Partei und ihrer Gliederungen hin. Der Leiter einer Behörde muß in jeder Hinsicht eine positive Einstellung zur neuen Zeit haben.” (BArch Berlin, R 1506/1048, *Niederschrift über die Besprechungen in Luxemburg am 23. und 24. Juli 1941*, unidentifiable signature [Ernst Zipfe], 07/08/1941, no. 10-15, p. 1).

<sup>1351</sup> Topics for Staatsarchivrat Dr. Schmit (for the conference from 8 to 10 April 1941).

<sup>1352</sup> BArch Berlin, R 1506/1048, *Punkte für St.A.R. Dr. Schmidt (zur Konferenz v. 8.-10.4.1941)*, undated, no. 8.

apparent in July 1941 at the latest. In September 1942, it was decided to leave these archives in their respective locations. The model of the *Archivberatungsstelle* was copied from the *Altreich* and introduced to Luxembourg:

Following the model in the Altreich, the Archives Information Centre creates an archives preservation system. The mission of the archive preservationists consists in pointing the Archives Information Centre to the existing municipal, corporate and private archives in the country and notifying possible deficits concerning their conservation, organisation and use.<sup>1353</sup>

The creation of a centre that would supervise and counsel non-statal archives all over the country represented nothing less than a novelty. Among its practical initiatives figured its attempt to create a network of agents with skills and interests in archival matters. These agents would mediate between the Archivberatungsstelle and private and local archives. For this, the VHKVA implicated the GEDELIT, resp. its Kunstkreise, to identify and nominate *Vertrauensleute*.<sup>1354</sup> Unfortunately, it cannot be assessed how much this project was implemented.

#### **IV.2.3. The Landesbibliothek: “A spiritual fortress in the West of the Reich”**

Under the occupation, the former National Library was renamed Landesbibliothek, which the CdZ wanted to transform into the biggest scientific library of the Gau. The authority at the Reich level with which the regional authorities regularly exchanged was Rust's Ministry for Science, Education, and Culture. For the Landesbibliothek, the year 1942 marked a break during the occupation period.

In January 1941, Ministerialrat Rudolf Kummer of the Reich Ministry and contact person for matters related to scientific libraries reached out to Siekmeier to seek information about the situation and eventual projects. Indeed, Luxembourg was assigned to Kummer's area of competence in 1940.<sup>1355</sup> Kummer's letter<sup>1356</sup> was the starting point of an exchange between

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<sup>1353</sup> Own translation. “Nach dem Vorbild im Altreich richtet die Archivberatungsstelle ein Archivpflegesystem ein. Aufgabe dieser Archivpfleger ist es, die Archivberatungsstelle auf die im Lande vorhandenen gemeindlichen, körperschaftlichen und privaten Archive aufmerksam zu machen, und etwaige Mißstände bezüglich ihrer Aufbewahrung, Ordnung und Benutzung zu melden.” (BArch Berlin, R 1506/1048, Copy of a letter from Staatsarchivrat Schmidt to department H. Org. of the CdZ, 24/09/1942, no. 25-26).

<sup>1354</sup> ANLux, CdZ-A-6820, Letter from Landesrat Hilgers (VHKVA) to the Gesellschaft für Literatur und Kunst, 18/06/1942, no. 21-22.

<sup>1355</sup> Jan Pieter Barbian, ‘Die Bibliotheksbürokratie: Politische Kontrolle und Steuerung des wissenschaftlichen Bibliothekswesens durch das Reichsministerium für Wissenschaft, Erziehung und Volksbildung in den Jahren 1934 bis 1945’, in *NS-Raubgut, Reichstauschstelle und Preußische Staatsbibliothek*, ed. Hans Erich Bödeker (München: K.G. Saur, 2008), 20.

<sup>1356</sup> BArch Berlin, R 4901/13703, Letter from Ministerialrat Kummer (Reich Ministry for Science, Education, and Culture) to Regierungspräsident Siekmeier, 25/01/1941, no. 1-2. Not having received

regional and Reich authorities. Siekmeier replied that the scientific libraries had been secured and were provisionally managed by the administration for intermunicipal affairs. The Regierungspräsident further explained that the Gauleiter had ordered to combine every scientific library into a large *Landesbücherei* in Luxembourg.<sup>1357</sup> In June 1942, Kummer visited Luxembourg and Trier, and met Siekmeier and Hilgers.

Unfortunately, the sources do not document the evolution between June 1941 and June 1942. It seems that the Landesbibliothek's collection had dramatically increased in the meantime. According to Kummer's travel report, it encompassed 500,000 volumes, compared to 160,000 in 1940.<sup>1358</sup> Hilgers indicated the same numbers in a letter to the director of the Preussische Staatsbibliothek, Juchoff, in August 1942.<sup>1359</sup> This increase resulted from the confiscation and integration of other libraries, namely private ones and those of religious orders. As a result, storage space, already insufficient in 1940, became an urgent matter. The administration rented a building in the city centre belonging to the Alsatian Bank (Elsässische Bank), which was renovated and could be occupied in September 1942. The rental agreement between the VHKVA and the Landesbibliothek was concluded on 27 March 1942.<sup>1360</sup> At the same time, a new building was planned as part of a *Kulturforum*.<sup>1361</sup> The Athenaeum, where the library was housed before the move, continued to be used as a repository while being examined by the German administration for renovation.<sup>1362</sup>

In June 1942, Kummer, Siekmeier and Hilgers discussed the situation of the staff, which counted nine people, among whom Pierre Frieden, Paula Michel-Weber, and Emil Lefort. They

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an answer for months, Kummer sent a reminder to Siekmeier on 24 May. Siekmeier, in his letter of 9 June, apologized for the delay.

<sup>1357</sup> BArch Berlin, R 4901/13703, Letter from Regierungspräsident Siekmeier to Ministerialrat Kummer (Reich Ministry for Science, Education, and Culture), 09/06/1941, no. 5.

<sup>1358</sup> Though the internal documents mention a number of 500.000 volumes, a newspaper article published in the *Völkischer Beobachter* (Berlin) on 4 July 1942 quotes the number of 800.000 volumes (cf. BArch Berlin, R 4902/1483, *Das deutsche Kulturleben in Luxemburg*, in: *Völkischer Beobachter* (Berlin) no. 334/335, 04/07/1942, no. 13). If we can believe an article published in the *Luxemburger Wort* on 29 May 1943, the library encompassed at that time 600.000 volumes (dt. 'Eine Geistesfestung im Westen des Reiches', *Luxemburger Wort*, May 1943).

<sup>1359</sup> ANLux, CdZ-B-0438, Letter from Landesrat Hilgers to the director of the Preussische Staatsbibliothek Juchoff, 11/08/1942, no. 4-5.

<sup>1360</sup> ANLux, CdZ-B-0435, Letter from the head of the cultural department to the Kommissar für höhere Kommunalverbandsangelegenheiten, 22/09/1942, no. 13. In fact, two lots with buildings were rented by the VHKVA, at the corner of Königsring 14a and Arsenalstraße 6 (ANLux, CdZ-B-0435, *Mietvertrag*, 24/03/1942, no. 37-40).

<sup>1361</sup> BArch Berlin, R 4901/13703, *Bericht des Sachbearbeiters für das wissenschaftliche Bibliothekswesen Ministerialrat Dr. Kummer über die Dienstreise nach Luxemburg und Trier vom 21. bis 25. Juni 1942*, 08/07/1942, no. 10-15, p. 5.

<sup>1362</sup> BArch Berlin, R 4901/13703, Letter from Alex Röder to Ministerialrat Kummer, 21/01/1943, no. 35.

assumed that it would not be possible to manage the extension of the Landesbibliothek with the existing workforce, especially as higher civil servants were needed. The CdZ acknowledged this issue, and the hiring procedures were set to start as soon as possible. Furthermore, the report's author noted that Frieden was not a professional librarian, contrary to Lefort, who worked voluntarily. Therefore, the three German officials discussed the possibility of hiring a professional from the *Altreich*, either Dr Corsten, director of the university library in Cologne or Dr Röder, director of the municipal library in Trier.<sup>1363</sup>

Kummer suggested Alex Röder for practical and administrative reasons (a professional from the same Gau and easy to reach) but also from a political perspective. As a party fellow who joined the NSDAP in 1930, Röder would possess “the best insight into the political needs” (“den besten Blick für die politischen Erfordernisse”).<sup>1364</sup> This suggestion was not surprising considering Kummer’s career, his allegiance to National Socialism and his efforts in politicising libraries.<sup>1365</sup> Hilgers himself had known Röder for many years.<sup>1366</sup> Indeed, Röder shared and disseminated ideologically compliant views, as illustrated by an undated document of the Volksbund für das Deutschtum im Ausland (VDA), certainly written after the invasion, in which Röder presented his views of Luxembourg. Röder deplored the French influence. Despite the stress on the bilingual nature of Luxembourg, intellectual circles would only speak French because of their French wives, as Röder claimed. Besides being an unprovable statement, it might sound preposterous to today’s readers, but even for Röder’s time, it must have seemed a rather unusual argument, as similar claims could not be found in other records. Luxembourgish young men would be drawn to study in Paris with the danger of becoming “completely romanised” (“vollkommen verwelscht”)<sup>1367</sup>. Furthermore, Röder denied the existence of a Luxembourgish language. With a hint of derision, he explained that historians

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<sup>1363</sup> Own translation. “Prof. Frieden besitzt natürlich trotz allen guten Willens nicht die Fähigkeit, den Aufbau dieser wissenschaftlichen Bibliothek allein fachmännisch zu leiten. Hiervon ist auch der Chef der Zivilverwaltung überzeugt. Man denkt daher an fachmännische Beratung aus dem Altreich, z.B. an den Direktor der Universitätsbibliothek Köln, Dr. Corsten, oder an den Leiter der Stadtbibliothek Trier, Dr. Röder.” (BArch Berlin, R 4901/13703, *Bericht des Sachbearbeiters für das wissenschaftliche Bibliothekswesen Ministerialrat Dr. Kummer über die Dienstreise nach Luxemburg und Trier vom 21. bis 25. Juni 1942*, 08/07/1942, no. 10-15, p. 3).

<sup>1364</sup> BArch Berlin, R 4901/13703, *Bericht des Sachbearbeiters für das wissenschaftliche Bibliothekswesen Ministerialrat Dr. Kummer über die Dienstreise nach Luxemburg und Trier vom 21. bis 25. Juni 1942*, 08/07/1942, no. 10-15, p. 4.

<sup>1365</sup> For a short biography on Rudolf Kummer, see: Barbian, ‘Die Bibliotheksbürokratie: Politische Kontrolle und Steuerung des wissenschaftlichen Bibliothekswesens durch das Reichsministerium für Wissenschaft, Erziehung und Volksbildung in den Jahren 1934 bis 1945’, 16–20.

<sup>1366</sup> BArch Berlin, R 4901/13703, Letter from Landesrat Hilgers to Ministerialrat Kummer, 11/01/1943, no. 34.

<sup>1367</sup> BArch Berlin, R 83-Luxemburg/11, *Luxemburg* by Dr. Röder (copy), undated, no. 1-6, p. I.

had tried to prove the existence of national consciousness (Röder used the past tense); the intellectual circles believed that the Luxembourgish language could be developed (here, Röder used the present tense). For Röder, there was no doubt about the essence of Luxembourgers:

But the Luxembourgish poet and writer only writes in German. And the core of the Volk is undoubtedly German. Yet, how does it come that French influence is so strong now? The answer is that we have not sufficiently taken care of Luxembourg.<sup>1368</sup>

The rise of National Socialism, according to Röder, caused panic in Luxembourg, which wanted to be “something similar to Switzerland”. Observing that a Luxembourger cannot be turned into a German overnight, Röder concluded:

An inner tension exists in the German West and must be solved. We can be firmly convinced that, after the war, the danger of Luxembourg turning to France will be eliminated because Germany will prevail. Then, our most challenging task will begin: the inner return to the Reich.<sup>1369</sup>

Besides the prospect of a time after the war from which Germany would emerge victorious, Röder’s document leaves no doubt about his ideological views. However, as the source is undated, it is unclear whether he wrote it before the German administration considered him for heading – at least provisionally – the Landesbibliothek, or afterwards, to prove his loyalty, improve his position, or because he was simply asked to conceive this text.

In many ways, Kummer’s travel to Luxembourg marked a critical moment for the future of the library, even if the authorities were not drawing definite plans. Röder concluded that, with the incorporation of the Landesbibliothek into the Gau, Luxembourg’s position would be favoured to the disadvantage of Trier. Yet, the intrinsic value of the Stadtbibliothek in the German city was much higher due to its valuable manuscripts. Besides a possible formal collaboration between Luxembourg and Trier, the Landesbibliothek was to become the central library of the Gau Moselland, with a clear definition of focus areas:

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<sup>1368</sup> Own translation. “Aber der luxemburgische Dichter und Schriftsteller drückt sich nur in der deutschen Sprache aus. Und der Kern des Volkes ist einwandfrei gut deutsch. Wie kommt es nun, dass trotzdem der französische Einfluss so stark ist? Die Antwort ist, dass wir uns um Luxemburg viel zu wenig gekümmert haben. [...]” (BArch Berlin, R 83-Luxemburg/11, *Luxemburg* by Dr. Röder (copy), undated, no. 1-6, p. III-IV).

<sup>1369</sup> Own translation. “Eine innere Spannung herrscht im deutschen Westen und muss geklärt werden. Wir dürfen fest davon überzeugt sein, dass nach dem Krieg die Gefahr, dass Luxemburg nach Frankreich abwandert, beseitigt ist, denn Deutschland wird siegen. Dann fängt die schwerste Aufgabe für uns an: Die innere Heimführung ins Reich” (BArch Berlin, R 83-Luxemburg/11, *Luxemburg* by Dr. Röder (copy), undated, no. 1-6, p. VI).

The Landesbibliothek Luxembourg becomes the Landesbibliothek of the Reichsgau Moselland; it will preserve, besides general scientific areas, studies about the West [Westfragen] (linguistic, human sciences), Wallonia, Luxembourgish region.<sup>1370</sup>

Hilgers' abovementioned letter of August 1942 needs to be read in the context of the meetings and discussions at the time, especially concerning questions surrounding the workforce. Following a letter from Kummer, who suggested Hilgers send a formal demand to Juchoff, Hilgers asked the director of the Preussische Staatsbibliothek to assign two to four (female) librarians to the Landesbibliothek.<sup>1371</sup> In November 1942, the question of the leadership of the Landesbibliothek was strived in a letter of Hilgers to Kummer. Pierre Frieden returned his VdB membership to protest the introduction of compulsory military service in Luxembourg. Afterwards, he was arrested. At the time of Hilger's writing, Frieden had returned to Luxembourg, but he stayed in bed for two weeks due to an infection. According to what Hilgers was told, Frieden had been arrested because he had been considered "one of the leading intellectuals in Luxembourg". Short on personnel, Hilgers was not pleased when he was informed that Frieden would be removed from office and resettled in Germany. Though the Landesrat thought that the library director could not stay in Luxembourg, he preferred to keep Frieden in a position where he would prove helpful to the Landesbibliothek.<sup>1372</sup> Lemmer, another employee of the Landesbibliothek, also returned his VdB card, but was not reprimanded, filed a new request for membership, and joined the NSV. Hilgers hoped that both could work in Germany, if not in a library, then at least in Düsseldorf at the Provinzialverwaltung (provincial administration), so that they would still be at his disposal for the future move of the Landesbibliothek.<sup>1373</sup>

In his reply to Hilgers, Kummer shared his opinion that Frieden could not be employed in Luxembourg but agreed with his employment in Düsseldorf. Lemmer could be employed as an advisor in the Preussische Staatsbibliothek, and Röder could be appointed provisional director of the Landesbibliothek. The employment of a younger librarian, as requested by Hilgers, was

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<sup>1370</sup> Own translation. "Landesbibliothek Luxemburg wird Landesbibliothek des Reichsgaues Moselland, wird pflegen neben den allgemeinen wissenschaftlichen Fachgebieten Westfragen (sprachwissenschaftlich, geistesgeschichtlich), Wallonien, Luxemburger Land." (BArch Berlin, R 4901/13703, *Bericht des Sachbearbeiters für das wissenschaftliche Bibliothekswesen Ministerialrat Dr. Kummer über die Dienstreise nach Luxemburg und Trier vom 21. bis 25. Juni 1942, 08/07/1942*, no. 10-15, p. 7).

<sup>1371</sup> ANLux, CdZ-B-0438, Letter from Landesrat Hilgers to the director of the Preussische Staatsbibliothek Juchoff, 11/08/1942, no. 4-5.

<sup>1372</sup> BArch Berlin, R 4901/13703, Letter from Landesrat Hilgers to Ministerialrat Kummer, 06/11/1942, no. 28.

<sup>1373</sup> BArch Berlin, R 4901/13703, Letter from Landesrat Hilgers to Ministerialrat Kummer, 06/11/1942, no. 28.

refuted. The conscriptions and the delegations to occupied territories had resulted in a shortage of qualified staff and libraries lacking scientific supervision.<sup>1374</sup>

Eventually, Röder became provisional director and started working at the Landesbibliothek for several days per week in January 1943, simultaneously with the library's move to the new building. The other weekdays were reserved for his position at the Stadtbibliothek in Trier.<sup>1375</sup> By then, the areas of competence and focus of both libraries in Luxembourg and Trier had been defined, together with the creation of a consortium (*Arbeitsgemeinschaft*). As Röder explained in relation to the Landesbibliothek:

The regional historical etc. literature must not remain limited to the Luxembourgish space. It has to be extended to the Trierian, respectively upper Lothringian, lower Lothringian spaces (in the historical sense). The objective has to consist in transforming Luxembourg into the real Landesbibliothek of the Moselle region with the addition of Trier, though in the near future the focus needs to lie especially on Trier, for as long as the Rhenish and other areas will not be completely available in Luxembourg. How far a delimitation between Luxembourg and Trier can be operated concerning the West (the Netherlands-Switzerland), is not yet clear to me. This will be the case once I know the Luxembourgish collections in detail.<sup>1376</sup>

Röder regularly updated Kummer on the progress. The cataloguing of the volumes began in January 1943, inspired by a German system. The libraries of the historical and natural sciences sections of the IGD were being catalogued and integrated into the Landesbibliothek (LB). The move to the new building in Königsring (Boulevard Royal) 14a was accomplished in February 1943. The opening of the library was planned for April but did not happen. A press conference on the LB and the Landesmuseum was organised in late May. For Röder, the related media coverage was a sign that the LB was definitely open.<sup>1377</sup> In its issue of 30 May 1943, the *Luxemburger Wort* described the Landesbibliothek as “a spiritual fortress in the West of the Reich” (“Eine Geistesfestung im Westen des Reiches”) and praised the work carried out since

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<sup>1374</sup> BArch Berlin, R 4901/13703, Letter from Ministerialrat Kummer to Landesrat Hilgers, 11/11/1942, no. 29-30.

<sup>1375</sup> BArch Berlin, R 4901/13703, Letter from Landesrat Hilgers to Ministerialrat Kummer, 11/01/1943, no. 34.

<sup>1376</sup> Own translation. “Das regionale historische landeskundliche usw. Schrifttum darf nicht auf den Luxemburger Raum beschränkt bleiben. Es muss zum Trierischen, bzw. oberlothringischen, niederlothringischen Raum (im geschichtl. Sinne) erweitert werden. Das Ziel muss das sein, dass Luxemburg mit der Ergänzung Trier zur wirklichen Landesbibliothek des Mosellandes wird, wobei für die nahe Zukunft der Akzent noch in besonderem Masse auf Trier ruhen wird, und zwar solange die rheinischen u. sonstigen Gebiete noch nicht in totalem Umfang in Luxemburg vorhanden sind. Inwieweit eine Abgrenzung zwischen Luxemburg und Trier auf dem Westgebiet (Niederlande-Schweiz) erfolgen kann, ist mir jetzt noch nicht ganz klar. Dies wird erst der Fall sein, wenn ich die Luxemburger Bestände im einzelnen kenne.” (BArch Berlin, R 4901/13703, Letter from Alex Röder to Ministerialrat Kummer, 21/11/1942, no. 31-32).

<sup>1377</sup> BArch Berlin, R 4901/13703, Letter from Alex Röder to Ministerialrat Kummer, 06/06/1943, no. 49.

1940.<sup>1378</sup> An official inauguration never took place due to the context of war.<sup>1379</sup> In August, Röder observed that the library service had been normalised:

Since the return to the regular library service, the usage has reached its former level. In fact, I am very pleased that a massive rush did not occur, as the personnel is mainly occupied with internal activity. The new catalogues have been visibly enriched, even though this is still not enough relative to the number of not inventoried collections.<sup>1380</sup>

Throughout his time as the acting director, Röder regularly voiced concerns related to the personnel and bemoaned the lack of employees. The inexperienced young workforce from the *Altreich* was criticised, as Röder deplored their deficits in general knowledge.<sup>1381</sup> Furthermore, Röder expected to be conscripted at any time. Thus, he tried to ensure that the library could continue functioning after his leave.<sup>1382</sup> Frieden was employed under a service contract but had to work on the history of the Landesbibliothek from home. Röder feared that his presence in the institution might sow “confusion” among the staff and constitute an “unnecessary burden”.<sup>1383</sup> In other words, he could be an element of political disturbance. Röder also criticised Frieden’s work of the previous years. “Despite the limited resources, the work could have been done better if one had not proceeded amateurishly,” he reproachfully observed.<sup>1384</sup> As for Lemmer, Röder hoped his planned stay in Berlin would do him well. “Ideologically, he was socialising in the same circles [than Frieden],” Röder noted. “As the Luxembourgers tend to seclude themselves and persist in their stubbornness when they are forcibly transferred, an inconspicuous supervision would be adequate,”<sup>1385</sup> he suggested. Lemmer stayed in

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<sup>1378</sup> dt, ‘Eine Geistesfestung im Westen des Reiches’.

<sup>1379</sup> BArch Berlin, R 4901/13703, Letter from Landesrat Hilgers to Ministerialrat Kummer (copy), 05/07/1943, no. 56.

<sup>1380</sup> Own translation. “Nach der Wiederaufnahme des geregelten Bibliotheksbetriebes hat die Benutzung ungefähr im alten Umfang wieder eingesetzt. Ich bin an sich sehr froh, dass sich kein Massenandrang zeigte, da die interne Tätigkeit das Personal doch hauptsächlich in Anspruch nimmt. Die neuen Kataloge sind inzwischen sichtbar gewachsen, wenn es auch noch wenig ist im Verhältnis zu der Masse nichtaufgenommener Bestände.” (BArch Berlin, R 4901/13703, Letter from Alex Röder to Ministerialrat Kummer, 03/08/1943, no. 54).

<sup>1381</sup> BArch Berlin, R 4901/13703, Letter from Alex Röder to Ministerialrat Kummer, 05/03/1943, no. 43.

<sup>1382</sup> BArch Berlin, R 4901/13703, Letter from Alex Röder to Ministerialrat Kummer, 05/03/1943, no. 43.

<sup>1383</sup> BArch Berlin, R 4901/13703, Letter from Alex Röder to Ministerialrat Kummer, 08/02/1943, no. 39; BArch Berlin, R 4901/13703, Letter from Alex Röder to Ministerialrat Kummer, 05/03/1943, no. 43.

<sup>1384</sup> Own translation. “Es hätte besser, trotz der geringen Mittel, gearbeitet werden können, wenn man nicht dilettantisch verfahren wäre [...].” (BArch Berlin, R 4901/13703, Letter from Alex Röder to Ministerialrat Kummer, 05/03/1943, no. 43).

<sup>1385</sup> Own translation. “Da die Luxemburger, wenn sie zwangsweise versetzt werden, die Neigung haben, sich abzukapseln und in Dickköpfigkeit zu verharren, wäre eine unauffällige Betreuung

Luxembourg at the Landesbibliothek, as long as the library was being reorganised in the new building, before going to Berlin.<sup>1386</sup> However, as he caused some (political) troubles to Röder, he was removed from his position and sent to Düsseldorf in March. For Röder, the loss of Lemmer was bearable, as “he came close to cause troubles among the staff, which would have required my intervention.”<sup>1387</sup> Despite issues raised by Röder, the acting director seemed satisfied with his work and missions:

For years I have not felt as much at ease as now, with the abundance of work to accomplish. [...] We rather want to prove that there is more to achieve than one generally assumes; one only needs the will to do it. The Luxembourgers see this as a symptom of our National Socialist ideology, not yet entirely understandable to them. They are not wrong.<sup>1388</sup>

When a call for applications for the position of director of the LB was published, Röder applied. As late as early September 1944, his application was discussed in an exchange between Kummer and Hilgers.<sup>1389</sup> Yet, the German administration postponed the appointment until after the war. A week after Kummer’s letter, Luxembourg was liberated. The case of the Landesbibliothek is a rare example that illustrates how an administration was vaguely

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angebracht.” (BArch Berlin, R 4901/13703, Letter from Alex Röder to Ministerialrat Kummer, 26/11/1942, no. 37).

<sup>1386</sup> BArch Berlin, R 4901/13703, Letter from Alex Röder to Ministerialrat Kummer, 08/02/1943, no. 39.

<sup>1387</sup> Original text: “Herr Lemmer wurde mit Wirkung vom 1.3. dienstenthoben und zur Provinzialverwaltung nach Düsseldorf dienstverpflichtet. [...] Der Verlust ist für die Bibliothek zu ertragen; mir konnte er bei der Neuordnung nichts mehr nützen, und er war nahe daran, mir unter dem Personal Flurschaden zu machen, sodass ich einschreiten müssen, wenn nicht inzwischen seine Dienstenthebung gekommen wäre” (BArch Berlin, R 4901/13703, Letter from Alex Röder to Ministerialrat Kummer, 05/03/1943, no. 43).

<sup>1388</sup> Own translation. “Ich selbst habe mich seit Jahren nicht mehr innerlich so wohl gefühlt wie jetzt, da die Fülle der Arbeit zu leisten ist. [...] Wir wollen vielmehr den Nachweis erbringen, dass man mehr zu leisten vermag, als man gemeinhin annimmt, man muss nur wollen. Die Luxemburger sehen darin ein ihnen noch nicht ganz verständliches Symptom unserer nationalsozialistischen Weltanschauung. Sie haben nicht fehlgeraten.” (BArch Berlin, R 4901/13703, Letter from Alex Röder to Ministerialrat Kummer, 05/03/1943, no. 43).

<sup>1389</sup> BArch Berlin, R 4901/13703, Letter from Landesrat Hilgers to Ministerialrat Kummer, 12/07/1944, no. 67 and BArch Berlin, R 4901/13703, Letter from Ministerialrat Kummer to Landesrat Hilgers, 02/09/1944, no. 69. In fact, there are uncertainties about when the call was published, or whether it was published several times. There have been disagreements about the publication and the time of appointing a director between Hilgers, Siekmeier and Röder, on the one hand, and Simon, on the other hand (cf. BArch Berlin, R 4901/13703, Letter from Landesrat Hilgers to Ministerialrat Kummer (copy), 05/07/1943, no. 56). The argument ran along the line that a suitable candidate might not apply or not know about the call. Furthermore, depending on the sources, a call was published in early March 1943 at the latest (cf. BArch Berlin, R 4901/13703, Letter from Alex Röder to Ministerialrat Kummer, 05/03/1943, no. 43), or early July 1943 (cf. BArch Berlin, R 4901/13703, Letter from Landesrat Hilgers to Ministerialrat Kummer (copy), 05/07/1943, no. 56). The first time we know of Röder’s application is in May 1944, when Röder mentions it in his letter to Kummer (cf. BArch Berlin, R 4901/13703, Letter from Alex Röder to Ministerialrat Kummer, 26/05/1944, no. 60-61).

envisioning a time after a victorious war, even as late as August/September 1944, when German troops were retreating,

The sources related to the Landesbibliothek do not reveal much about potential power struggles within the administration. One example is an exchange between Hilgers and Kummer in November 1942, shortly before Röder was appointed provisional director. Disagreements arose between the VHKVA and the regional Reichspropagandaamt headed by Urmes. The latter requested the right to intervene independently in identifying and eliminating “undesired and forbidden scientific literature” and creating a vast political reference library. The Gau leadership stopped both projects.<sup>1390</sup> The motives are not mentioned, but the CdZ probably wanted to make sure that it kept control over the library system and saw the intervention of another actor operating outside of its direct power sphere as a transgression of its competencies. Kummer highlighted that, despite the necessity to be rejected, forbidden literature must be conserved, as this was one of the missions of a scientific library. He referred to unspecified decisions of the Reich Ministry for Education.<sup>1391</sup> Indeed, library professionals in Germany largely agreed that undesired literature should not disappear from scientific libraries, and the authorities backed them.<sup>1392</sup>

Röder was conscripted in July 1944, as reported in a letter of an employee of the Landesbibliothek, Gerda Mertz, who wrote to Kummer and retraced the last days of the *Reichsdeutsche* and their evacuation in September 1944. However, even when Mertz was writing her letter from Düsseldorf on 30 September, she still expressed hopes to return to Luxembourg, as well as her fears of what might become of the library: “Now I await the day on which we return to Luxembourg. But what will have happened until then to our beautiful Library, once the Americans dwelled in it!”<sup>1393</sup>

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<sup>1390</sup> BArch Berlin, R 4901/13703, Letter from Landesrat Hilgers to Ministerialrat Kummer, 06/11/1942, no. 28.

<sup>1391</sup> Original text: “Zur Frage des unerwünschten und verbotenen Schrifttums ist zu sagen, daß wohl eine baldige Sekretierung dieses Schrifttums anzustreben ist, keinesfalls aber eine Entfernung dieses Schrifttums aus der Bibl. zugestanden werden darf, da es zu den Aufgaben der wissenschaftl. Bibliotheken gehört, auch dieses Schrifttum zu sammeln. In dieser Angelegenheit sind vom Reichserziehungsministerium Erlasse ergangen, von denen ich Ihnen Abdruck zu Ihrer Unterrichtung befüge.” (BArch Berlin, R 4901/13703, Letter from Ministerialrat Kummer to Landesrat Hilgers, 11/11/1942, no. 29-30).

<sup>1392</sup> Barbian, ‘Die Bibliotheksbürokratie: Politische Kontrolle und Steuerung des wissenschaftlichen Bibliothekswesens durch das Reichsministerium für Wissenschaft, Erziehung und Volksbildung in den Jahren 1934 bis 1945’, 24–25.

<sup>1393</sup> Own translation. “Jetzt hoffe ich auf den Tag, wo wir wieder in Luxemburg einziehen werden. Aber was mag aus unserer schönen Bibliothek geworden sein, nachdem die Amerikaner darin gehaust haben!” (BArch Berlin, R 4901/13703, Letter from Gerda Mertz to Ministerialrat Kummer, 30/09/1944, no. 70).

One last aspect should be mentioned, clearly figuring among the innovations introduced by the Germans. Before the invasion, Luxembourg did not have a legal framework regulating the submission of depositary copies to the National Library (in French *dépôt legal*, in German *Pflichtabgabe*). In July 1942 at the latest, the German administration discussed the project of the *Pflichtabgabe* for the first time during Kummer's visit to Luxembourg. The implicated actors highlighted the lack of a legal framework in this matter. Siekmeier instructed to correct this “error”.<sup>1394</sup> On 30 July 1942, Hilgers sent a letter to Kummer with a copy of the draft decree (*Verordnung über die Abgabe von Freistücken der Druckwerke an die Landesbibliothek in Luxemburg*). Pierre Frieden shared his opinion on the matter and preferred the deposition of two copies instead of one. Hilgers himself was not convinced and asked Kummer for his opinion.<sup>1395</sup> The decree included a large variety of types of objects, including audio productions: “alle durch Buchdruck oder sonstige mechanische oder chemische Mittel vervielfältigten Schriften” and “Landkarten, Ortspläne, Atlanten, Bildwerke und Plakate mit oder ohne Text sowie Tonwerke mit oder ohne Text”.<sup>1396</sup> In his reply, Kummer informed that a change had occurred in the meantime. Due to the war, the Preussische Staatsbibliothek in Berlin had to collect all German written production. Kummer wrote that Frieden was right, only with the difference that one of the two copies needed to be sent to Berlin.<sup>1397</sup> In May 1943, Röder sent a letter to the commissar of the VHKVA and attached a draft of the legal text, which was not only respecting the latest norms, but was also suggested by the Reichsministerium für Wissenschaft, Erziehung und Volksbildung.<sup>1398</sup> The draft that Röder sent included the submission of three copies: one to the Landesbibliothek, one to the Preussische Staatsbibliothek, and one to the Deutsche Bücherei in Leipzig.<sup>1399</sup> The decree came into effect

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<sup>1394</sup> BArch Berlin, R 4901/13703, *Bericht des Sachbearbeiters für das wissenschaftliche Bibliothekswesen Ministerialrat Dr. Kummer über die Dienstreise nach Luxemburg und Trier vom 21. bis 25. Juni 1942*, 08/07/1942, no. 10-15, p. 2.

<sup>1395</sup> BArch Berlin, R 4901/13703, Letter and attached documents from Hilgers (Verwaltung der höheren Kommunalverbandsangelegenheiten) to Ministerialrat Kummer (Reichsministerium für Wissenschaft, Erziehung und Volksbildung), 30/07/1942, no. 19-22.

<sup>1396</sup> BArch Berlin, R 4901/13703, Letter and attached documents from Hilgers (Verwaltung der höheren Kommunalverbandsangelegenheiten) to Ministerialrat Kummer (Reichsministerium für Wissenschaft, Erziehung und Volksbildung), 30/07/1942, no. 19-22.

<sup>1397</sup> BArch Berlin, R 4901/13703, Letter from Ministerialrat Kummer to Landesrat Hilgers, 15/08/1942, no. 23.

<sup>1398</sup> ANLux, CdZ-B-0436, Letter from Alex Röder to the commissar of the Verwaltung der höheren Kommunalverbandsangelegenheiten, 11/05/1943, no. 1.

<sup>1399</sup> ANLux, CdZ-B-0436, *Entwurf. Verordnung über die Abgabe der Freistücke von Druckwerken an die Landesbibliothek Luxemburg*, undated [11/05/1943], no. 2.

on 15 July 1943.<sup>1400</sup> With the end of the occupation, it lost its legal basis. The regime change put an end to this innovation until its re-introduction in 1958.

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<sup>1400</sup> BArch Berlin, R 4901/13703, Letter from Alex Röder to Ministerialrat Kummer, 03/08/1943, no. 54.

#### IV.3. The Ambiguous Institution: the State Museum during the Occupation



Fig. 63: *The Landesmuseum during German occupation. Source: MNHA photo archives, J.P. Helminger, 30/08/1942. The photo is also included in Marcel Heuertz' chronicle on the Natural History Museum.*

The present chapter pays attention to three aspects: the evolution of the museum, the activities and attitudes of the staff, and post-war narratives. I will particularly stress the ambiguous situation of the museum and argue, as other historians have done before me, that we need to move beyond a simplistic dichotomy of resistance/collaboration. The problematic nature of some sources adds to the challenge of analysing the case study. It does not mean, however, that they are not of any value to historians. In this respect, several difficulties should be highlighted. The best-known sources related to the wartime history of the museum are Marcel Heuertz's chronicle of the Natural History Museum<sup>1401</sup>, and the two post-war reports by Heuertz (for the natural history section)<sup>1402</sup> and by Joseph Meyers (for the historical and archaeological section)<sup>1403</sup>. Though these sources include useful information on the museum's activities, they do not offer a complete picture and ignore, deliberately or not, many details that

<sup>1401</sup> MNHA archives, unnumbered box (Historique Musée national d'histoire naturelle), Musée d'Histoire Naturelle de l'Etat. Chronique, [Marcel Heuertz *et alii*], undated.

<sup>1402</sup> Marcel Heuertz, 'Le Musée d'histoire naturelle pendant la guerre mondiale 1939-1945 et dans les années d'après-guerre', in *Annuaire 1949*, ed. Société des Amis des Musées (Luxembourg: Société des amis des musées, 1949), 127–140.

<sup>1403</sup> Joseph Meyers, 'Le musée d'histoire pendant la guerre', in *Annuaire 1949*, ed. Société des Amis des Musées (Luxembourg: Société des amis des musées, 1949), 111–126.

can be partly recovered with the sources produced during the occupation. The post-war reports were written in a specific context in which it was not in the curators' interest to share any piece of information that could have hinted at a voluntary collaboration with the Germans. Other sources are wartime reports by Meyers, Heuertz, and the museum assistant Georges Schmitt, which have been barely considered in the existing literature. Unfortunately, only those between December 1941 and March 1942 are available.<sup>1404</sup>

As for Heuertz's handwritten chronicle<sup>1405</sup>, this (partial) ego-document cannot be precisely dated. A critical analysis of Heuertz's document has not yet been accomplished. For the period between 1935 and 1955, it is written in the first person, with dates indicated for each entry. These dates can be specific days or periods. For the period before 1935, Heuertz provides an overview of the pre-history of the museum narrated in the third person<sup>1406</sup>. After 1955, the volume primarily includes pictures, newspaper clippings and activity reports. The last page shows a picture of 1985 – Heuertz died in 1981. Hence, other people besides Heuertz must have completed or continued the chronicle.

At least two possibilities can be envisaged concerning the circumstances of its creation, if only for the years of the occupation. Either Heuertz penned his chronicle over a more extended period or within a relatively short period. Two minor aspects might hint at the first hypothesis: the different date format he used between 1940 and 1944<sup>1407</sup> and minor differences in his handwriting<sup>1408</sup>. Yet, these are not substantial and certain proofs. Considering the evidence, I argue that his chronicle was neither progressively enriched with notes at the indicated dates nor during the occupation period. In this case, his *Chronique* is a product of the post-war period, potentially to legitimise his actions.<sup>1409</sup> Several indications corroborate this hypothesis. First, Heuertz mistakenly wrote "1939" for every entry that was supposed to be in 1940 (pages 45 to

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<sup>1404</sup> During my research, I could not discover or retrieve any other reports.

<sup>1405</sup> MNHA archives, unnumbered box (Historique Musée national d'histoire naturelle), *Musée d'Histoire Naturelle de l'Etat. Chronique*, [Marcel Heuertz et alii], undated. The chronicle is digitized and can be accessed here: [http://mnhnlu/Chronique\\_MnhnL-small.pdf](http://mnhnlu/Chronique_MnhnL-small.pdf). The original is conserved at the Musée national d'histoire naturelle in Luxembourg, whereas the MNHA possesses a copy.

<sup>1406</sup> There are some exceptions, such as on page 39, entry of 15 September.

<sup>1407</sup> For instance, in his entry about the German invasion, he wrote "10 mai 1940" (p. 45); but for entries in 1941 or 1942, he used Roman numbers for months, such as "1.IX. – 15.IX.1941" (p. 53).

<sup>1408</sup> For instance, a comparison of the word "congé" (leave) shows that it was written slightly differently in the entry of September 1941 (p. 53) than in the entry of August 1942 (p. 57). The letters 'n' and 'g' show slight variations.

<sup>1409</sup> It is possible that it was not only to legitimise his own actions, but also to protect his collaborators at the museum. In the entry of 12 May 1940 (p. 47), he wrote: "Tout le personnel du Musée a aidé de la façon la plus dévouée, ainsi que la famille du concierge Lamberty, réfugiée elle-même de Bettembourg et logée au Musée."

51). He corrected his mistakes by overwriting “39”. Indeed, as there is a gap between September 1939 and May 1940, he might have recorded these entries in one session. In addition, on pages 65 and 67, he jumps back and forth in the dates: the entry following 28 August 1944 relates to his leave in February 1944. Secondly, though he used the present tense to convey an impression of temporal immediacy with the events and facts he related to, he reveals the asynchronous nature of his chronicle by switching from the present to the past tense for the entry of May 1943 (pages 61 and 63):

On 25th [May], the press was summoned to the “Brauer” (Brasseur!) hotel by Landesrat Hilgers to explain the work of the “Verwaltung für höhere Kommunalverbandsangelegenheiten”. This administration, which was always in opposition to the brutal and stupid methods of the “Chef der Zivilverwaltung” and which had often intervened on behalf of persecuted Luxembourgers, seemed to want to justify its activity to strengthen its position.<sup>1410</sup>

The past tense used in the second sentence of this quote conveys the impression that Heuertz was writing about a past situation or a past actor (the VHKVA) and not about a situation contemporary to the text. This aspect also brings us to the third argument. Heuertz wrote in French, which was illegal at the time of the occupation. Furthermore, he made several political statements that would have caused him immense trouble. In the excerpt above, he opposed the administration of intercommunal affairs to the “stupid” and “brutal” methods of the CdZ. This is a bold and, in the occupation period, risky statement. Heuertz certainly did not risk his career or life for this chronicle, especially as he and Meyers did not want to lose their positions at the museum, as I will discuss in another section. Furthermore, Heuertz left considerable gaps, claimed to tend to innocuous tasks, or indicated that he was on leave or sick at crucial moments. Between July and December 1940, he did not leave a single entry. His recorded leave from 1 September to 15 September 1941 coincides with the period in which the German administration planned a population census (*Personenbestandsaufnahme*). Until 1939, Heuertz noted one entry per year to indicate summer holidays (15 July until 15 September). Even then, it merely shows that he did not teach during those months, but not that he was on leave concerning his detachment at the museum. According to his statement in the folder of the post-war administrative purge, he left school in 1941 to work exclusively at the museum.<sup>1411</sup> For the

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<sup>1410</sup> Translated from French. “Le 25 [mai], la presse est convoquée à l’hôtel “Brauer” (Brasseur!) par le Landesrat Hilgers pour lui expliquer les travaux de la “Verwaltung für höhere Kommunalverbandsangelegenheiten”. Cette administration qui était toujours en opposition avec les méthodes brutales et stupides du “Chef der Zivilverwaltung” et qui était intervenue souvent pour des Luxembourgeois persécutés, semblait vouloir justifier son activité pour fortifier ses positions.”

<sup>1411</sup> ANLux, EPU-01-07804, *Enquête administrative prévue par l’arrêté grand-ducal du 30 novembre 1944*, Marcel Heuertz, 24/01/1945, p. 2. “J’ai été mis sous la direction de la Höh. K.V.A. à partir de la

occupation period, the frequency of such entries markedly increased: in 1940 once<sup>1412</sup>, in 1941 three times, in 1942 six times, in 1943 twice, and in 1944 twice. For the entries before 1940, he did not bother to indicate his sick leaves. For the occupation period, he shared comparably more information. He mentioned twice the tense political situation: on 31 October 1941<sup>1413</sup> and for the period from 3 August to 8 August 1942 and from 19 August to 27 August 1942<sup>1414</sup>. After 1944, the frequency decreases again: between 1945 and 1950 only three entries, and after 1950 none. Furthermore, Heuertz did not mention the chronicle in the context of the administrative purge after the liberation. Had he written it during the occupation, why would he not have used it to prove his political allegiance?

Whenever a comparison of the content is possible, the wartime reports and the chronicle confirm each other. The chronicle is, in those cases, a summary of the more detailed reports, which means that Heuertz's ego document does not provide every piece of information. For example, the monthly report by Heuertz of January/February 1942 mentions an accident involving one staff member. This incident is also referred to in the chronicle. Yet, in his report, Heuertz additionally alluded to a future fossil exhibition, which was not the case in the chronicle.<sup>1415</sup>

Among the sources produced during the occupation period, it is worth highlighting two undated reports by Karl Vogler, who was responsible for the museum's extension. They were not written before late 1940/early 1941 and not after January 1942, when Vogler was conscripted. Many parts in both reports are quasi-identical, except for minor differences. Report A is longer than report B. While report A mentions the expropriation of a neighbouring lot, report B merely refers to its future acquisition. Also, while report B uses the future tense to describe the arrangements and connection of the rooms in the museum, report A uses the present tense for the same passage. Both aspects might hint that report A is posterior to report B. Despite these uncertainties, the reports provide a useful insight into how the Germans considered the museum a propagandistic tool. These reports figure among the most important

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fin de l'année scolaire 1941, date à laquelle j'ai quitté l'enseignement pour ne plus rester que conservateur [...].”

<sup>1412</sup> Less clear than in the other instances, Heuertz mentions the Christmas holidays during which he, as he claims, developed a strategy with Meyers to avoid a “political inauguration”.

<sup>1413</sup> “Quelques jours de congé de santé. Je suis extenué de fatigue par tous ces bouleversements intérieurs et les événements politiques” (p. 53).

<sup>1414</sup> “Je suis très fatigué de tous ces travaux qui se font un peu à tort et à travers dans une atmosphère politique intenable” (p. 57).

<sup>1415</sup> ANLux, IP-1809, *Monatsbericht (15.1.1942 bis 15.2.1942) von Dr M. Heuertz, Leiter der Abt. Naturkunde*, 20/02/1942.

sources in the context of the present study. They describe how the museum looked, how it should be transformed, and how the permanent exhibition should be arranged.

To learn more about the custodians' actions during the war and their legitimisation techniques, the *Fonds de l'Epuration* are a valuable resource. After the liberation of Luxembourg, the government launched an administrative purge (*épuration administrative*)<sup>1416</sup>. The *épuration* aimed to identify collaborators in the state apparatus and, if necessary, to take measures against them. As the museum was a state cultural institution, its staff was targeted by the investigations. Concerned individuals were requested to complete a questionnaire with 22 sections. They had to provide information about memberships in Nazi organisations, general attitudes, and behaviour during the occupation. Some questions were directly related to cultural activities. The respondents were required to provide, if applicable, information about their membership in the GEDELIT, the *Kunstkreise*, the Kulturrkammer, the V.D.A. or any other similar organisation after 10 May 1940 (question 5). Section 9 requested information about the involvement in Nazi propaganda and the nature of this propaganda. Section 10 was dedicated to German manifestations, such as participation in cultural or artistic events in the former grand-ducal palace or in travels organised by the Germans. In section 18 about the refusal to collaborate, the respondents were asked whether they stopped practising a cultural or artistic activity during the occupation to avoid morally supporting the occupier, among other aspects.

The answers contribute to a better understanding of what happened during the occupation but were also framed in a specific context. Even the questions use notions that are difficult to define and tend to carry connotations or Manichean visions. For example, the “Luxembourgish attitude” (“attitude luxembourgeoise”, question 21a) equals patriotism and resistance. The term “German” is interchangeably used with “occupier” (sections 14 and 18) and “enemy” (“nationaux ennemis”, question 13a). The concept of resistance is neither clearly defined nor limited to the participation in resistance movements, but includes, as question 17a shows, the indication of the Luxembourgish nationality in the (cancelled) census of October 1941 and the positive attitude towards the “general strike” of 2 September 1942. Indeed, question 17a implies that the respondent should have already answered in a particular manner to the questions under sections 15 and 16. Furthermore, the questionnaire implies that the German

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<sup>1416</sup> ‘Arrêté grand-ducal du 30 novembre 1944 autorisant le Gouvernement à procéder à une enquête administrative’, in *Mémorial A*, vol. 20 (Luxembourg, 1944), 144, <http://legilux.public.lu/eli/etat/leg/agd/1944/11/30/n2/jo>.

laws had no legal value and constructs a continuity between pre-war and post-war legal systems.<sup>1417</sup>

Even if the questions made perfect sense to those who conceived them at the time, they would carry biases and specific narratives and imply the existence of an ideal behaviour, in other terms a “Luxembourgish” behaviour. Also, while strikes flared up in many factories, a “general strike” never occurred. Even Marcel Heuertz, when replying to the question, had to relativise its content, explaining that “[l]a grève prévue n'eut pas lieu à [Luxembourg] sous la forme indiquée au mot d'ordre.”<sup>1418</sup> For these reasons, the folders of the *épuration* need to be critically assessed. However, this does not diminish their historical value. On the contrary, the respondents share some additional insights into the activities of the Landesmuseum, and their answers allow an evaluation of how they perceived and framed their actions. The folders of the administrative purge and the post-war reports highlight the necessity of a constant back and forth between the years of the occupation and the subsequent period.

Literature about the Landesmuseum is limited. The historian Paul Dostert dedicated a couple of pages to the museum in his study on Luxembourg during the occupation. Yet, he relied on the post-war accounts of the custodians and evaluated their behaviour as a “passive resistance” without taking the complexity of the situation into account:

In general, it can be said that plans could hardly be realised, especially in the field of museum care, and here the cultural development work failed due to the passive resistance of the Luxembourgish employees.<sup>1419</sup>

Dostert's assessment poses an additional problem when considering his definition of resistance, which encompasses “all acts and types of behaviour that pursued the aim of re-establishing the country's independence”.<sup>1420</sup> A division between “active” and “passive” resistance is operated in those cases “in which it appeared necessary to accentuate either a

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<sup>1417</sup> Question 18a: “Si malgré les injonctions de l'occupant vous avez refusé de poser des actes que vous jugiez contraires aux lois luxembourgeoises ou à l'intérêt du pays, de quels actes s'agit-il?”

<sup>1418</sup> ANLux, EPU-01-07804, *Enquête administrative prévue par l'arrêté grand-ducal du 30 novembre 1944*, Marcel Heuertz, 24/01/1945.

<sup>1419</sup> Translated from German. “Im allgemeinen lässt sich feststellen, daß gerade auf dem Gebiet der Museumspflege Pläne kaum verwirklicht werden konnten und hier die kulturelle Aufbauarbeit am passiven Widerstand der luxemburgischen Mitarbeiter scheiterte.” (Paul Dostert, *Luxemburg zwischen Selbstbehauptung und nationaler Selbstaufgabe: Die deutsche Besatzungspolitik und die Volksdeutsche Bewegung 1940-1945* [Luxembourg: Saint-Paul, 1985], 124).

<sup>1420</sup> Own translation. “[...] alle Handlungen und Verhaltensformen, die zum Ziel hatten, die Unabhängigkeit des Landes wiederherzustellen.” (Paul Dostert, *Luxemburg zwischen Selbstbehauptung und nationaler Selbstaufgabe: Die deutsche Besatzungspolitik und die Volksdeutsche Bewegung 1940-1945* [Luxembourg: Saint-Paul, 1985], 251).

direct action or an indirect action.”<sup>1421</sup> How custodians should contribute to restoring the “independence of Luxembourg” by avoiding an inauguration of the museum is unclear. In an anthology on the occupation period published in 2002, François Reinert<sup>1422</sup> and Foni Le Brun<sup>1423</sup> each contributed an article on the Landesmuseum without critically assessing the museum’s activities and the sources produced by the custodians. Reinert merely acknowledged – in the bibliography – that his text largely reflects the opinions of the custodians due to the extensive use of their reports. Furthermore, he suspected that some folders had been purged, “especially concerning the personnel and the correspondence”, and others had disappeared.<sup>1424</sup> He highlighted the rather peculiar fact that receipts and acquisitions of tools and technical equipment fill entire folders, whereas others concerning the personnel only contain a few documents.<sup>1425</sup> The most critical study so far was published by Marie-Paule Jungblut in 2007<sup>1426</sup>, two years after an exhibition on the spoliation of art during the war at the Luxembourg City Museum, which elicited the reaction of the National History and Art Museum and the publication of a press release signed by the then director Paul Reiles and custodians (among others Foni Le Brun).<sup>1427</sup> Possibly the most recent piece on the museum during the war was written by Michel Polfer (director of the MNHA since 2006) and published in 2011.<sup>1428</sup> In this contribution to a *Festschrift* in honour of Gilbert Trausch, Polfer focused on acquiring the Reiffers collection. While it is the most detailed account of an acquisition, or rather a set of acquisitions, the contribution is less interested in the activities of the custodians. Polfer also criticised Marie-Paul Jungblut and qualified some of her statements as “misleading” (“irrite Aussagen”).<sup>1429</sup> Though Polfer enriched his analysis with archival sources, he still relied on the existing literature without critical confrontation, except for his criticisms addressed to Jungblut.

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<sup>1421</sup> Own translation. “[...] wo es notwendig schien, den Akzent entweder mehr auf eine direkte Handlung oder mehr auf das indirekte Handeln zu legen.” (Dostert, 251).

<sup>1422</sup> Reinert, “‘Inter arma silent Musae’. Les musées d’Etat pendant la guerre’.

<sup>1423</sup> Le Brun-Ricalens, ‘Le Musée d’Histoire naturelle de Luxembourg sous l’occupation allemande (1940-1945). Un témoignage: le livre-chronique de Marcel Heuertz’.

<sup>1424</sup> Reinert, “‘Inter arma silent Musae’. Les musées d’Etat pendant la guerre’, 77.

<sup>1425</sup> I can confirm François Reinert’s observation. However, I think that Reinert could have at least highlighted the problems of interpretation and the lack of sources in the main text, or included some critical reflections on opinions expressed by the custodians, which would have certainly added a more critical dimension, instead of including the observation on the very last page in the bibliography.

<sup>1426</sup> Jungblut, ‘La spoliation des biens culturels au Luxembourg’.

<sup>1427</sup> Paul Reiles et al., “‘Le grand pillage’ et le Musée national d’histoire et d’art: Prise de position du musée”, *Forum*, no. 252 (December 2005): 64.

<sup>1428</sup> Polfer, ‘Nationalsozialistische Kulturpolitik oder Herrschaftsstabilisierung?’

<sup>1429</sup> “Darüber hinaus haben die in den Beständen des Nationamuseums befindlichen Gemälde aus der ehemaligen Sammlung Reiffers in der rezenten Debatte um Provenienzforschung in Luxemburg besondere Aufmerksamkeit auf sich gezogen. Die in diesem Zusammenhang vorgebrachte Kritik ist

#### IV.3.1. The administration of the museum and the planned expansion

The invasion of Luxembourg on 10 May temporarily ended the State Museum's activities. For the months following the invasion, the present study mainly relies on the post-war records produced by the custodians Marcel Heuertz and Joseph Meyers, for lack of additional sources. During the first days, the museum was used by the Red Cross as a shelter for evacuees (from the Mining Basin, among others from Differdange). According to Meyers, this should avoid that the building would be claimed by the Germans ("l'ennemi");<sup>1430</sup> Heuertz used the same argument in his chronicle.<sup>1431</sup> However, the custodians were not able to keep up with this strategy. From 22 to 28 May 1940, the museum served as a collecting point for up to a thousand Wehrmacht soldiers (*Frontsammelstelle*).<sup>1432</sup> While the museum was entangled in the maelstrom of uncertainties and confusion caused by the invasion, Meyers hid objects and documents in the cellars and emptied the rooms of the history museum.<sup>1433</sup>

Whereas Meyers summarized the months following the invasion by describing his work<sup>1434</sup>, Heuertz explained how a small delegation from Germany – Apffelstaedt<sup>1435</sup>, Wilhelm von Massow (director of the Rheinisches Landesmuseum in Trier) and Hussong (custodian in Trier) – visited the museum in July 1940. They inspected the history and the natural history collections. None of them, as Heuertz noted, communicated the motives. The curator, however, assumed that they were particularly interested in the foreign collections (African, American, Indo-Malaysian). Heuertz reported that during this visit, he argued (successfully) for the whole natural history collection to remain. The project of a *Heimatmuseum*, discussed at the time,

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aber bei näherer Betrachtung oberflächlich geblieben und gründet zudem teilweise auf irrgen Aussagen." In footnote no. 18, Polfer referred explicitly to Jungblut's text and refutes her allegation that the National Museum would refuse a critical assessment of the acquisition policies of the occupation years (Polfer, 329–330).

<sup>1430</sup> Meyers, 'Le musée d'histoire pendant la guerre', 115.

<sup>1431</sup> MNHA archives, unnumbered box (Historique Musée national d'histoire naturelle), Musée d'Histoire Naturelle de l'Etat. Chronique, [Marcel Heuertz et alii], undated, p. 45.

<sup>1432</sup> Reinert, "Inter arma silent Musae". Les musées d'Etat pendant la guerre', 70; Heuertz, 'Le Musée d'histoire naturelle pendant la guerre mondiale 1939-1945 et dans les années d'après-guerre', 128; Meyers, 'Le musée d'histoire pendant la guerre', 116.

<sup>1433</sup> Meyers, 'Le musée d'histoire pendant la guerre', 115.

<sup>1434</sup> Though Meyers dedicated more than a page in his report to the very short period of May and June 1940, he merely wrote two sentences about the months between June and December: "A la même date [June 1940], je fis reprendre le travail dans les services des archives et de la documentation, ainsi que dans la bibliothèque qui s'était accrue de quelques centaines de volumes. Un aide bénévole, excellent connaisseur de la matière, entreprit de reviser une à une les quelque 5000 pièces de notre belle collection d'armes." (Meyers, 117).

<sup>1435</sup> Heuertz did not indicate a first name, but it might be Hanns Joachim Apffelstaedt, art historian and head of the cultural department of the Rhineland provincial administration.

would have meant that parts of it would be taken away.<sup>1436</sup> Due to the lack of other sources related to this event, it is impossible to verify Heuertz' claims, which begs some questions. How the *Heimatmuseum* should have looked like, and whether it would have been built or just replaced the State Museum are open questions.<sup>1437</sup> The project of a folklore museum in the 1930s did not cause similar resistance from either custodian. Did Heuertz frame his argument because of the political context or professional and institutional reasons?

The scarcity of information shared by the custodians for the second half of 1940 stands in stark contrast with the political context, which was far from uneventful. The lives of both custodians were directly affected by the complete dissolution of the Luxembourgish state and by the fates of colleagues and friends within the state apparatus. Yet, in their reports, both do not even strive the political context. Were they afraid of talking about the fact that they joined the VdB, for instance, even though they were pressured? According to his folder in the *Fonds de l'Epuration*, Meyers submitted his membership request with Pierre Frieden and Nicolas Margue. A handwritten note (with a pencil and not by Meyers himself) indicates 17 November 1940. The official date of entry communicated by Meyers is 17 January 1941.<sup>1438</sup> Nevertheless, in both cases, Meyers would have joined after October 1940; before, adherences had been voluntary. Heuertz did not indicate his date of entry but merely noted that he did it together with a certain teacher Lahr, “deported at the moment” (“actuellement déporté”),<sup>1439</sup> though his request was individual and not part of collective adhesions. Georges Schmitt, assistant-curator, did not indicate a date, but only the number of his membership card, no. 65,364, hinting at the fact that he joined after October 1940.<sup>1440</sup>

Once the new administrative apparatus was established, the situation changed for the museum. From the end of 1940 onwards, the institution was placed under the supervision of

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<sup>1436</sup> Heuertz, ‘Le Musée d’histoire naturelle pendant la guerre mondiale 1939-1945 et dans les années d’après-guerre’, 129.

<sup>1437</sup> At least once is the project of a Heimatmuseum in Esch-sur-Alzette mentioned in the sources, but only in February 1943. Heuertz was probably not involved, but his colleague Meyers. Meyers visited with some officials from the Kreis administration, the local administration, and the Landrat, the castle in Bettembourg concerning the *Umsiedlungsgut Collart*. Heinrich Diehl was also present. Apparently, the visit was about identifying what objects would be acquired by the Landemuseum, and what objects would be reserved for a Heimatmuseum or Kreismuseum in Esch (MNHA archives, separate shelf, folder no. 4, Letter from Joseph Meyers to Hilgers, 06/02/1943).

<sup>1438</sup> ANLux, EPU-01-13207, *Enquête administrative prévue par l’arrêté grand-ducal du 30 novembre 1944*, Joseph Meyers, 31/12/1944.

<sup>1439</sup> ANLux, EPU-01-07804, *Enquête administrative prévue par l’arrêté grand-ducal du 30 novembre 1944*, Marcel Heuertz, 24/01/1945.

<sup>1440</sup> ANLux, EPU-01-17501, *Enquête administrative prévue par l’arrêté grand-ducal du 30 novembre 1944*, Georges Schmitt, 31/12/1944.

the Administration for Intermunicipal Affairs (Verwaltung der höheren Kommunalverbandsangelegenheiten beim Chef der Zivilverwaltung, VHKVA). Karl Vogler, state supervisor of the museums of the Rhine province (staatlicher Museumspfleger der Rheinprovinz) was called upon to manage the reorganisation of the museum.<sup>1441</sup> He was, however, only occupying this position until January 1942, when he was conscripted. The VHKVA filed a request to exempt him from military duty. According to a letter sent to the Oberregierungsrat Günther on 15 August 1942, Vogler was the only experienced public officer available to the administration for the required tasks and responsibilities, which did include not only the museum but also the Landesbibliothek. As the letter explained, he was assisted by Luxembourgish officials who had formerly been tasked with the *Kulturpflege* (cultural development) in Luxembourg.<sup>1442</sup> The letter probably referred to people such as Albert Nothomb.

The request to exempt Vogler from military service was not successful. He was replaced with Dr Kornfeld, who was also drafted and succeeded by Dr Wilkes, Reichsbeauftragter für Kunstschutz (Reich delegate for the protection of art), in April 1943.<sup>1443</sup> Besides the administrative supervision, Wilhelm von Massow, heading the Rheinisches Landesmuseum in Trier since 1935, became provisional director (kommissarischer Direktor) of the Luxembourg museum.<sup>1444</sup> As in the case of the Landesbibliothek, relations between Luxembourg and Trier were established. The contact between Trier and Luxembourg even predated the occupation period. As president of the Friends of the Museum, Joseph Bech had been an acquaintance of Massow's predecessor, Dr E. Krüger. The German museum showed a vivid interest in the archaeological discoveries in Luxembourg. In 1929, Krüger held a conference titled *Vom römischen Luxemburg* in Trier, Saarbrücken and Luxembourg.<sup>1445</sup> In 1935, he sent a technician to Luxembourg to assist with excavations near Dalheim.<sup>1446</sup> This interest might have played a role in the decision to let the archaeological service in Trier supervise the excavations in

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<sup>1441</sup> Reinert, ““Inter arma silent Musae”. Les musées d’Etat pendant la guerre”, 70.

<sup>1442</sup> Original text : “Dr. Vogler war der einzige reichsdeutsche fachkundige Beamte, der der Verwaltung für die aufgeführten Arbeiten zur Verfügung stand. Er hat mit großer Initiative und Umsicht gearbeitet. Zur Seite standen ihm einige luxemburgische Beamte, die von früher her mit der Kulturpflege in Luxemburg beauftragt waren.” (ANLux, CdZ-A-1876-24, Letter from the Komissar of the Verwaltung der höheren KVA to Oberregierungsrat Günther, 15/08/1942, no. 82).

<sup>1443</sup> Reinert, ““Inter arma silent Musae”. Les musées d’Etat pendant la guerre”.

<sup>1444</sup> Reinert.

<sup>1445</sup> Reinert, 67.

<sup>1446</sup> Reinert, 67.

Luxembourg, but it was not necessarily the main reason, as cooperation with institutions in Trier was established in other areas, too.

The German Sicherheitsdienst (SD), the intelligence agency of the SS, had also been interested in the museum years before the invasion. The SD collected information on Joseph Meyers, his financial and private situation, and his political orientation. The SD apparently paid close attention when the government was looking to hire people for the museum. Catherine Lorent refers in this context to a report of 15 July 1937, revealing that the SD preferred the sculptor Jungblut to Nosbusch to be employed at the museum. Another report of 27 October of the SD Trier deplored that Jungblut did not receive the job.<sup>1447</sup> It is not clear to what position the SD referred. Sources at the National Archives show that Jungblut applied at least twice for employment at the museum: in 1938 for the position of assistant-curator<sup>1448</sup> and in January 1939 for the job of janitor (*concierge*). In the second case, Jungblut referred to his previous application in 1938 and the explanations he received concerning the difficulties linked to such an occupation. Thus, he applied for the position of janitor, explaining what the tasks and responsibilities of this job should be in his opinion.<sup>1449</sup> Tony Neuman wrote a letter of recommendation to his cousin Joseph Bech, highlighting Jungblut's qualities.<sup>1450</sup> In all the applications the government received, the name Nosbusch figures neither in the documents nor on the list of employees at the museum. Furthermore, the chronology raises issues. The SD report dates from 1937, before the earliest available application of Jungblut. At the same time, the applications that the government received for the position of a janitor are dated as early as 1934.<sup>1451</sup>

According to Reinert, the relationship between Trier and Luxembourg was overall positive. Massow opposed Simon's plans to relocate the Luxembourg museum's collections to a *Großmuseum* in Trier that never came into being.<sup>1452</sup> However, the museum in Trier considered with particular disdain the plans of the administration in Luxembourg to create another Landesmuseum. It received some concessions: the museum in Luxembourg would not be elevated to the rank of a Landesmuseum, and Trier would administrate the Archäologischer

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<sup>1447</sup> Lorent, *Die nationalsozialistische Kunst- und Kulturpolitik im Großherzogtum Luxemburg 1934-1944*, 131.

<sup>1448</sup> ANLux, IP-1809, Letter from Joseph Jungblut to Joseph Bech, 17/01/1939.

<sup>1449</sup> ANLux, IP-1809, Letter from Tony Neuman to Joseph Bech, 19/01/1939.

<sup>1450</sup> ANLux, IP-1809, Letter from Tony Neuman to Joseph Bech, 19/01/1939.

<sup>1451</sup> The earliest available application is from Robert Molling of July 1934.

<sup>1452</sup> Reinert, ““Inter arma silent Musae”. Les musées d’Etat pendant la guerre”, 69.

Landesdienst.<sup>1453</sup> Once these concessions were made, the museum in Trier adopted a moderate stance towards the Luxembourgian colleagues, according to Reinert.<sup>1454</sup> The label *Landesmuseum* was, however, not abandoned on all the documents produced by the museum. While “Museum Luxemburg” was printed on the reports of the history section in 1942, those of the natural history section of the same period show “Landesmuseum Luxemburg” as the header. At this stage, an explanation for such a discrepancy cannot be provided, which hints at an uncertainty as to what name to adopt – an uncertainty which had already existed in preceding decades. The budgets of the CdZ used both *Museum* and *Landesmuseum* as labels.

Massow let Meyers have much liberty in the affairs of the museum; the latter effectively managed the everyday affairs of the museum.<sup>1455</sup> According to the folders of the *épuration*, both Heuertz and Meyers refused the position of director of the Landesmuseum for undisclosed reasons.<sup>1456</sup> Indeed, the custodians did not provide motives for the refusal. According to Heuertz’s chronicle and Meyers’ answers in his *Epuration* folder, both decided during the Christmas holidays of Winter 1940/1941 – after the meeting of 17 December – to avoid a “political” inauguration of the museum. As Heuertz wrote in his entry of 17 December:

During the Christmas holidays, J. Meyers and I drew up our plans with the following basic idea: to carry out as many of these projects as possible in the interests of the Museum and the conservation of the collections, insofar as they did not interfere with our projects, to be carried out after the Germans had left; to avoid the total completion of the work to avoid a "political" inauguration.<sup>1457</sup>

Meyers expressed a similar intention. In his questionnaire, under the section *Observations additionnelles*, he claimed that he had “contributed to a large extent to avoid the museum’s

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<sup>1453</sup> Reinert, 68; Meyers, ‘Le musée d’histoire pendant la guerre’, 123. Unless a result of my own neglect, I was not able to find any sources supporting Reinert’s claim. What complicates the matter is that Marie-Paule Jungblut did not mention this, and merely claimed that the museum became a Landesmuseum (Jungblut, ‘La spoliation des biens culturels au Luxembourg’).

<sup>1454</sup> Reinert, “Inter arma silent Musae”. Les musées d’Etat pendant la guerre”, 68.

<sup>1455</sup> Jungblut, ‘La spoliation des biens culturels au Luxembourg’, 207.

<sup>1456</sup> ANLux, EPU-01-13207, *Enquête administrative prévue par l’arrêté grand-ducal du 30 novembre 1944*, Joseph Meyers, 31 December 1944 ; ANLux, EPU-01-07804, *Enquête administrative prévue par l’arrêté grand-ducal du 30 novembre 1944*, Marcel Heuertz, 24/01/1945. Meyers refused, in addition, the position of Kulturreferent (head of cultural department) of Luxembourg City.

<sup>1457</sup> Translated from French. “Pendant les vacances de Noël, J. Meyers et moi, nous tirons nos plans, avec l’idée fondamentale suivante: réaliser le plus possible, dans l’intérêt du Musée et de la conservation des collections, de ces projets, pour autant qu’ils ne contrecarraient pas les nôtres propres, à réaliser après le départ des Allemands; éviter la terminaison totale des travaux pour échapper à une inauguration “politique”.” (MNHA archives, unnumbered box (Historique Musée national d’histoire naturelle), Musée d’Histoire Naturelle de l’Etat. Chronique, [Marcel Heuertz et alii], undated, p. 49-51).

inauguration".<sup>1458</sup> Of course, both were helped by the circumstances (*Bauverbot* of 1942), and the question remains how far they could have hindered a “political” inauguration (whatever its meaning) without losing their position.

Besides the administrative reorganisation, the language policy of the German administration did not spare the museum. Several circulars illustrate the insistence on removing everything in French, referring to the decree on the use of the German language in Luxemburg.<sup>1459</sup> Two circulars of 31 August on the use of the language and the practical implications led to unusual administrative regulations. Thus, material printed in French or in two languages should be replaced, though some of the existing stock could be spent until depletion, provided that the French print was made unreadable.<sup>1460</sup> The removal of French inscriptions on public buildings should not damage the buildings and respect the artistic aspect.<sup>1461</sup>

In general, the Nazi regime did not develop consistent plans concerning museums. According to Sebastian Farnung, this had several reasons, among others the lesser importance conceded to museums compared to other institutions. As bourgeois institutions (together with opera and theatre), museums had already been in the spotlight of criticism around 1900.<sup>1462</sup> This criticism did not disappear after the First World War. The popular education movement (*Volksbildungsbewegung*) and its demands to democratise cultural policy entailed a museum reform movement. While this contributed to changes in museums, these institutions were also increasingly confronted with new media and leisure activities.<sup>1463</sup> The Nazis preferred to focus on media that could reach the masses. However, some types of museums were deemed important for Nazi ideology (*Heimat* museums, for instance). Efforts by the Nazis to make museums more accessible to the public and transform them into places of popular education

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<sup>1458</sup> Own translation. “[...] j’ai contribué dans une large part à empêcher l’inauguration du Musée [...].” (ANLux, EPU-01-13207, *Enquête administrative prévue par l’arrêté grand-ducal du 30 novembre 1944*, Joseph Meyers, 31 December 1944).

<sup>1459</sup> MNHA archives, separate shelf, folder no. 28, Letter from Gustav Simon to the Landesverwaltungskommission (Wehrer), 06/08/1940.

<sup>1460</sup> Original text: “Doch dürfen aus Sparrücksichten ausnahmsweise gewisse Bestände aufgebraucht werden, unter dem Vorbehalte, dass der französische Vordruck abgetrennt, überdruckt, deutlich durchstrichen oder überklebt wird.” (MNHA archives, separate shelf, folder no. 28, Letter from the Regierungsrat für öffentlichen Unterricht to the curators of the national museum, 31/08/1940).

<sup>1461</sup> MNHA archives, separate shelf, folder no. 28, Circular of the Regierungsrat für öffentlichen Unterricht to the curators of the museum, 31/08/1940.

<sup>1462</sup> As Julia Noordegraaf explains: “The German museums played a leading role in developing a new museum script in the early twentieth century. The ideas of the German museum reformers were published in new journals like *Museumskunde* (founded in 1905) which were widely read by museum officials in the rest of Europe and in North America.” (Noordegraaf, *Strategies of Display*, 88–90).

<sup>1463</sup> Farnung, *Kulturpolitik im Dritten Reich am Beispiel Frankfurter Museen*, 37–38.

(*Volksbildungssstätte*) were not a novelty. They originated at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and especially in the years of the Weimar Republic.<sup>1464</sup>

The museum in Luxembourg was not an exception to the Nazis' efforts to shape every political and social area according to their ideas. Though it is difficult to assess the importance of the Landesmuseum compared to other institutions, it cannot be denied that the German authorities developed plans to extend the museum's space and first communicated the guiding principles to the curators in two important meetings on 16 and 17 December 1940. Meyers, Heuertz, Vogler, the *Westforscher* Matthias Zender, Wigreux (state architect), Hubert Schumacher (assistant state architect<sup>1465</sup>), and Albert Nothumb (head of the *Kulturpflege* department in the VHKVA) assisted at the meeting of 17 December.<sup>1466</sup> Besides administrative questions, the Germans announced the transformation and renovation of the building under Vogler's supervision. Arranged to allow a unidirectional visit to the museum, the sequence of the collections would be the following: geology and palaeontology, pre-history, history, and natural sciences.<sup>1467</sup> Writing about the meeting in his 1949 report, Heuertz used the opportunity to criticise the slow progress of the museum construction during the interwar period. Had the museum been completed before the invasion, the leverage of the occupiers on the development of the institution would have been more limited.<sup>1468</sup> Depending on the view, however, this might not have been the case. As we have seen, and following Lorent's analysis, the lack of infrastructure might have slowed down the process. The German administration deplored the underdeveloped infrastructures. The mayor of Luxembourg, Richard Hengst, observed in a letter that the "question of the museum was stuck in an early phase" ("die Museumsfrage war in den Anfängen steckengeblieben").<sup>1469</sup>

Vogler realised that the available space was insufficient. Following his plans, the Landesmuseum would have incorporated the Palais de Justice, the houses in Rue Wiltheim, the Gëlle Klack building, and several edifices in the Fleischerstraße (Rue de la Boucherie). New buildings should be constructed in the neighbourhood. A connection between the museum and

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<sup>1464</sup> Farnung, 40–42.

<sup>1465</sup> After the Second World War, Schumacher succeeded Wigreux and supervised the reconstruction of buildings destroyed during the war as the director of the Administration des Bâtiments publics.

<sup>1466</sup> MNHA archives, unnumbered box (Historique Musée national d'histoire naturelle), Musée d'Histoire Naturelle de l'Etat. Chronique, [Marcel Heuertz et alii], undated, p. 49.

<sup>1467</sup> MNHA archives, unnumbered box (Historique Musée national d'histoire naturelle), Musée d'Histoire Naturelle de l'Etat. Chronique, [Marcel Heuertz et alii], undated., p. 49.

<sup>1468</sup> Heuertz, 'Le Musée d'histoire naturelle pendant la guerre mondiale 1939-1945 et dans les années d'après-guerre', 130.

<sup>1469</sup> Quoted in: Lorent, *Die nationalsozialistische Kunst- und Kulturpolitik im Großherzogtum Luxemburg 1934-1944*, 111.

the Casemates on the Bock promontory was also considered. According to Reinert, who referred to Meyers' account of 1949, the Landesmuseum "would have eventually encompassed a whole neighbourhood, but not a single aspect of this vast programme has been realised, due to the evolution of the war, unfavourable to the Germans."<sup>1470</sup> The plans were reported in a short note in the *Luxemburger Wort* of 8 May 1941.<sup>1471</sup>

The available sources at least partly document these projects, specifically the planned acquisition of a lot on the western flank of the museum between Gerichtshofstraße (Rue Wiltheim) and Fleischerstraße. The German authorities negotiated with the owners of the buildings. Though material compensations were offered, the owners declined as these compensations were formerly Jewish possessions.<sup>1472</sup> The author of a letter of 14 October 1941 (who might be Vogler or Massow) to the CdZ requested an expropriation, as "in this case, the claimed public interest is clearly given to a great extent."<sup>1473</sup> Around March 1941, the German authorities allocated RM 250,000 to the acquisition of the buildings after Vogler and Hilgers shared their opinion on the matter. These buildings would have paved the way for a considerable transformation with relatively moderate costs. The extension would have enabled a stronger emphasis on exhibitions and improved research conditions, among other aspects. Vogler and Hilgers hoped that "these tasks could considerably advance the Luxembourgish museum at a stroke and contribute to turning it into an essential instrument of active Deutschtumpflege in the border region."<sup>1474</sup>

Around the same period, the buildings of the Freemasons – the lodge in the Logenstraße<sup>1475</sup> and an additional building in the Heilgeiststraße<sup>1476</sup> – were considered for acquisition.<sup>1477</sup> Albert Nothumb advanced two reasons: in addition to compensating for the lack of space in

<sup>1470</sup> Own translation. "Ce Landesmuseum aurait fini par englober tout un quartier de la Ville, mais aucun point de ce vaste programme n'a été réalisé, suite à l'évolution de la guerre, défavorable aux Allemands." (Reinert, "Inter arma silent Musae". Les musées d'Etat pendant la guerre', 70); See also: Meyers, 'Le musée d'histoire pendant la guerre', 119.

<sup>1471</sup> 'Arbeiten im Servaishaus und im Museum: Umgestaltung der räumlichen Anordnung / Vollendung des Landesmuseums', *Luxemburger Wort*, May 1941.

<sup>1472</sup> ANLux, IP-1809a, Letter to the Chef der Zivilverwaltung, 14/10/1941.

<sup>1473</sup> Own translation. "Das geforderte öffentliche Interesse liegt in diesem Falle sehr klar im stärksten Masse vor [...]." (ANLux, IP-1809a, Letter to the Chef der Zivilverwaltung, 14/10/1941).

<sup>1474</sup> Own translation. "Diese Aufgaben könnten das Luxemburgische Museum mit einem Schlag ein bedeutendes Stück vorwärts bringen und könnten dazu mithelfen, es zu einem wesentlichen Instrument aktiver Deutschtumpflege im Grenzland zu machen." (ANLux, IP-1809a, Letter from Dr Vogler and Landesrat Hilgers to the Verwaltung der höheren Kommunalverbandsangelegenheiten, 27/02/1941).

<sup>1475</sup> Rue de la Loge.

<sup>1476</sup> Rue du St Esprit.

<sup>1477</sup> ANLux, CdZ-A-1551, Letter from Albert Nothumb to the Kommissar für höhere Kommunalverbandsangelegenheiten, 24/06/1941, no. 121-122.

the Landesmuseum, the buildings should be preserved. They were managed by the Stillhaltekommisar, and negotiations were already ongoing at the time of Nothumb's writing. The bureaucratic procedure stretched over several months with exchanges between the Stillhaltekommisar, different departments of the CdZ – H. Org. (*Allgemeine Organisation*), I. Preis. (*Preisbildung und Preisüberwachung*), I. Grund. (*Grundstücksverkehr*) –, the VHKA, and the mayor of Luxembourg City. The different departments communicated their approval.<sup>1478</sup> It seems that the lodge was bought indeed, as Meyers explained in his post-war report that from 1941 onwards, the Landesmuseum stored new acquisitions in this building.<sup>1479</sup>

Whereas not the extension project was not realised, the works on the interior were making some progress, but only until 1942. Several weeks after Vogler's conscription, the general construction ban (*Bauverbot*) in 1942 halted these works.<sup>1480</sup> Two floors out of five had been finished by then.<sup>1481</sup> Some details of Vogler's plan were impossible to execute or led to problems. For instance, the parquet floor in the Gothic and Romanic rooms was incompatible with the projected vaults.<sup>1482</sup> With the end of the construction works, the custodians spent less time on internal arrangements of the permanent exhibition and more on the inventory and conservation of the collections. Vogler's successor Kornfeld wanted to focus on internal activities instead of exhibitions,<sup>1483</sup> but this might as well have stemmed from contextual constraints. Furthermore, the custodians were not abandoning work on the rooms altogether. According to his statement, Meyers secretly finished some parts of the museum<sup>1484</sup> while Heuertz was working with a collaborator on the profile of a terrestrial globe and on the geological maps, which were included in the planned permanent exhibition.

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<sup>1478</sup> See documents no. 123-128, in: ANLux, CdZ-A-1551.

<sup>1479</sup> Meyers, ‘Le musée d’histoire pendant la guerre’, 119.

<sup>1480</sup> The *Bauverbot* was, possibly, a mere confirmation of an existing situation. Indeed, a copied note by Landesrat Hilgers of 14 November 1941 pointed out that the construction works at the museum had been stopped (MNHA archives, separate shelf, folder no. 34, Note by *Landesrat Hilgers* (copy), 14/11/1941).

<sup>1481</sup> Reinert, ““Inter arma silent Musae”. Les musées d’Etat pendant la guerre”, 70.

<sup>1482</sup> MNHA archives, separate shelf, folder no. 34, Draft letter from Meyers to Vogler (11/02/1942). Other sources in the same folder mention this issue as well.

<sup>1483</sup> Heuertz, ‘Le Musée d’histoire naturelle pendant la guerre mondiale 1939-1945 et dans les années d’après-guerre’, 132.

<sup>1484</sup> Meyers, ‘Le musée d’histoire pendant la guerre’, 119.



Fig. 64: Plan appended to a letter from Vogler to Landesrat Hilgers, 27/02/1941 (ANLux, IP-1809a). The coloured lots were the ones to be acquired for the extension of the museum.

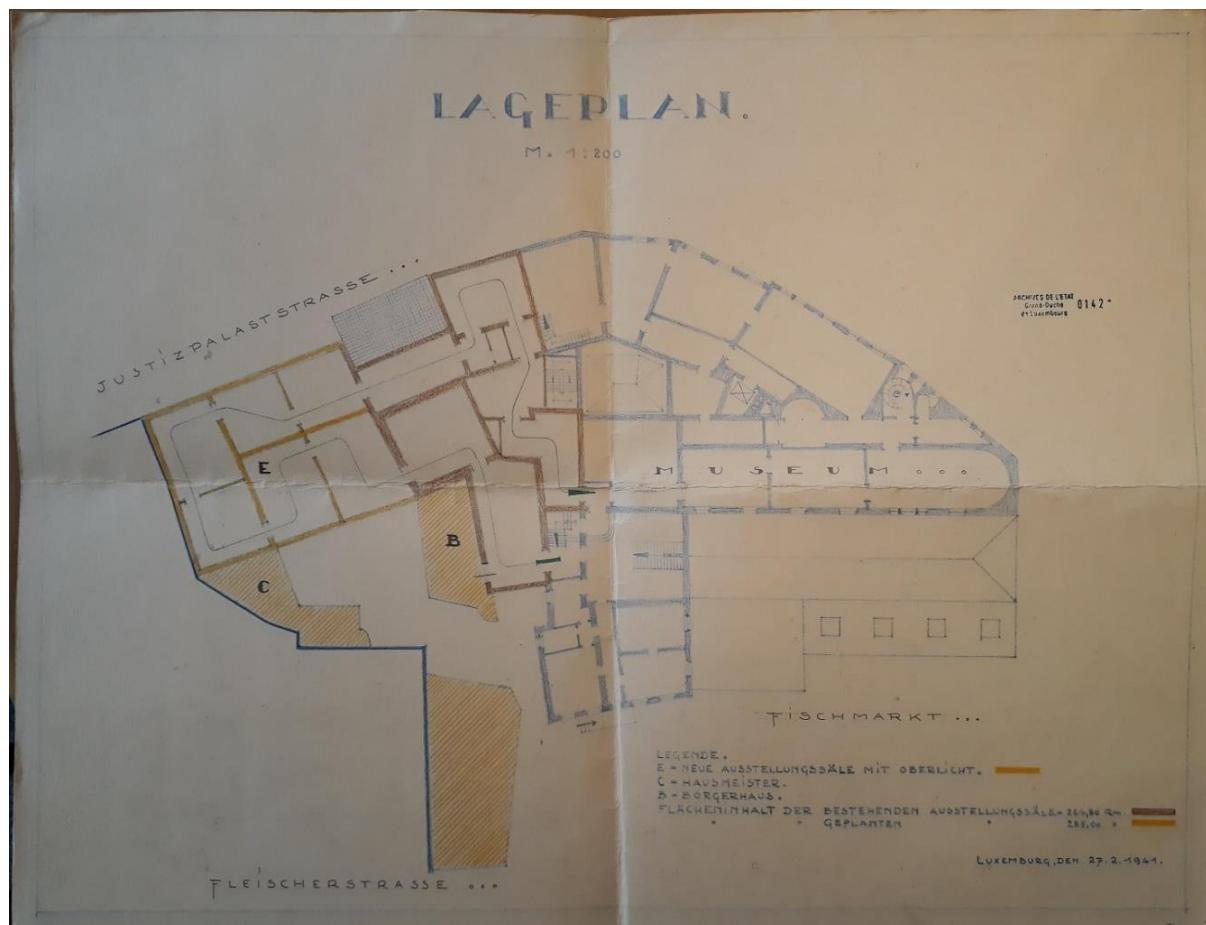


Fig. 65: A more detailed plan of the museum, including the parts (in yellow) to be acquired (ANLux, CdZ-A-4692, Lageplan, author unknown, 27/02/1941, no. 142).

Though every comparison needs to be considered with critical distance, the case of the Landesmuseum may be compared to other museums in occupied territories. Despite being in a different geographical and political context, Cracow was to become a German metropolis. The museums should highlight the German roots of the city. After the invasion, they were closed and should be remade entirely. The National Museum in Cracow should reopen according to new principles – which did not happen – while the German administration was trying to reunite confiscated collections.<sup>1485</sup>

With the *Bauverbot*, the museum could not adapt to the increasing collections and the additional workforce. An old issue of the museum resurfaced. Like his predecessors, Meyers repeatedly criticised the situation. Ironically, he made it worse by collecting as much as possible. In December 1942, some months after the enactment of the *Bauverbot*, Meyers highlighted that the space was insufficient regarding the increasing number of objects entering the museum's collections. This criticism was voiced around the same time as his request to incorporate objects formerly belonging to *Umsiedler* (resettlers). He wanted the museum to be extended northwards, as planned in 1941.<sup>1486</sup> In June 1944, Meyers complained again about the lack of space. His letter was not only reminiscent of the difficulties the museum had experienced since its early years, but he also provided details on who worked at the museum and where. His complaints are worth quoting in extenso:

The museum building is overstaffed. – The Archives Information Centre (Dr Kisky) shares its office with Dr Bodnar, the museum's photo archive and the archive of the Historical Section share the same room (also used as a consultation room); the museum assistant G. Schmitt works in the museum's anteroom, Miss Adam in a small bridge room with inadequate lighting conditions. The managing director [Meyers] has most of his filing cabinets outside of his office because it is too small to include all of them. Part of the preparation workshop is located under the staircase of the mezzanine, while the carpenter and locksmith are forced to share the same room, which is an exhibition room on the city's history. The wood is stored in the exhibition rooms on the urban history and the stone collection; there, folklore material is also kept, for which the other museum rooms are too small. Other folklore objects had to be transferred to the Freemasons' lodge because of the lack of space in the museum building. Stone monuments and the repository of fragments are located in the narrow, open corridors leading to the basement's technical installations. The main part of the museum library is in the rooms containing the study collections of the prehistory section; the arms and ethnographic collections, in addition to a photography lab, an art room, a common room and two workrooms, in the local folklore section; the model collection in a warehouse of the Hansa department store. – Only recently could the

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<sup>1485</sup> Höpel, *Kulturpolitik in Europa im 20. Jahrhundert*, 153.

<sup>1486</sup> MNHA archives, separate shelf, folder no. 34, Letter from Joseph Meyers to Landesoberverwaltungsrat Kornfeld, 17/12/1942.

better part of the previously open rooms encompassing collections, offices and workshops be separated or closed with walls and doors.<sup>1487</sup>

The situation of the museum in 1944, then, was not even close to what Vogler had imagined for its future. The museum remained closed and could not be inaugurated in the near future. Many rooms remained under construction. Besides the rainwater infiltrating the building, the occupation did not change the fact that young people were playing around the museum, climbing on the glass roof and attempting to break into the museum.<sup>1488</sup> Some problems certainly marked a continuity to the pre-war period.

The financial situation of the museum provides a different picture, though. Like the cultural budget, it visibly improved compared to the interwar period. In 1942, the German administration allocated RM 348,850 to the museum. This amount included expenses related to the acquisition of objects (RM 50,000), research and publications, the library, and conservation of the collections. In addition, RM 150,000 were reserved for the acquisition of a lot next to the museum. Without this extraordinary expense, the regular budget of the museum amounted to RM 198,850.<sup>1489</sup> This equalled LUF 19,885,000 and was substantially higher than

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<sup>1487</sup> Own translation. “Das Museumsgebäude ist überbelegt. – Die Archivberatungsstelle (Dr. Kisky) teilt ihr Arbeitszimmer mit Dr. Bodnar, Museumsbildarchiv und Archivalien der Historischen Sektion sind in einem und demselben Raum (der zugleich als Archivbenutzungsraum dient) untergebracht; der Museumsassistent G. Schmitt arbeitet im Museumswartezimmer, Frl. Adam in einem ungünstig belichteten kleinen Brückenzimmer. Der Geschäftsführer hat den grösseren Teil seiner Aktenschränke vor seinem Büro stehen, da dieses letztere zu klein ist, um sie aufzunehmen. Ein Teil der Präparationswerkstatt befindet sich unter einer Treppe des Zwischengeschosses, während Schreiner und Schlosser in einem und demselben Raum, nämlich einem Ausstellungssaal der Stadtgeschichte, arbeiten müssen. Das Holz lagert in den Ausstellungsräumen der Stadtgeschichte und des Lapidariums; dort ist auch volkskundliches Material untergebracht, für das die Übrigen Museumsräume zu klein sind. Andere volkskundliche Gegenstände mussten wegen Raummangels im Museumsgebäude in das Haus der Loge verbracht werden. Steindenkmäler- und Scherbenmagazin befinden sich in den schmalen offenen Durchgängen, die zu den technischen Anlagen des Untergeschosses führen. Die Museumsbücherei ist grösstenteils in den Studiensammlungen der mittleren Ausstellungsgeschosse aufgestellt, ein Grossteil der naturkundlichen Sammlungen in der Abteilung Vorgeschichte; die Waffensammlung und die ethnographischen Sammlungen, desgleichen eine Photowerkstatt, ein Zeichenraum, ein Kameradschaftszimmer sowie zwei Arbeitsräume, inmitten der einheimischen Volkskunde; die Modellsammlung in einem Lagerraum des Hansa-Kaufhauses. – Erst vor kurzem konnte der grössere Teil der bisher offenen Räume, in denen Sammlungen, Büros oder Werkstätten untergebracht sind, durch Wände und Türen abgetrennt bzw. abgeschlossen werden.” (MNHA archives, separate shelf, folder no. 34, Letter from Joseph Meyers to the Verwaltung der höheren Kommunalverbandsangelegenheiten, 09/06/1944).

<sup>1488</sup> Original text: “Die Terrassen sind zu einem Tummelplatz für die Jugend am Fischmarkt geworden, die über die Glasdächer klettert, diese beschädigt und sogar ins Innere der Gebäude einzudringen versucht. So streng die Aufsicht auch ist, immer wieder klettern und arbeiten halbwüchsige Jungen an den Brüstungen und Fenstern herum.” (MNHA archives, separate shelf, folder no. 34, Letter from Joseph Meyers to the commissar for intercommunal affairs (07/10/1942)).

<sup>1489</sup> For details, see: ANLux, CdZ-A-0053, *Haushaltsplan des Chefs der Zivilverwaltung in Luxemburg für das Rechnungsjahr 1942*, 04/04/1942, no. 1-160.

the budget for the museum during the interwar years. In 1939, an extraordinary year in the history of cultural policy, the budget allocated to the museum was LUF 249,297<sup>1490</sup>, representing 24% of the total budget for culture (*arts et sciences*) or 0.07% of the total ordinary state budget. In 1942, the budget for the Landesmuseum (including RM 150,000 for the acquisition of an adjacent lot) made up 10.7% of the total cultural budget, but 0.44% of the global budget. In 1943, the Landesmuseum disposed of a budget amounting to RM 344,500. This was merely a slight decrease compared to 1942. Though the total budget for culture and propaganda decreased in 1942, this reduction was relatively higher. Hence, the Landesmuseum received 13.2% of the total cultural budget (RM 2,616,000) in 1943. Meyers' suggested budget cuts, as exposed in his letter dated 20 February 1943, some explicitly related to the context of war, were disregarded.<sup>1491</sup>

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<sup>1490</sup> The expenses related to the museum are not subsumed under a specifically dedicated chapter, but part of the *arts et sciences* section. The number presented here is the result of an addition of the budgetary articles 403, 403bis, 404, 405 and 405bis. The real expenses might have been higher, but not substantially. For details, see: ‘Loi du 20 avril 1939, concernant le Budget des recettes et des dépenses de l’Etat pour l’exercice 1939’.

<sup>1491</sup> ANLux, CdZ-B-0493-02, Letter from Joseph Meyers to the Verwaltung der höheren Kommunalverbandesangelegenheiten for the attention of Dr Rinkens, 20/02/1943, no. 146.



Fig. 66: Entrance hall of the museum, view from the stairs. The sandbags were part of the aerial defence measures.  
Source: MNHA photo archives, Hall d'entrée avec vue sur porte d'entrée by Bernard Kutter, undated [1941].



Fig. 67: One of the exhibition rooms with the bronze plan-relief of the fortifications created in 1903 and based on a plaster model of the retired captain Guillaume Weydert. Today exhibited in the Musée Dräi Eechelen on Kirchberg. Source: MNHA photo archives, Plan-relief Weydert by Bernard Kutter, undated [1941].

#### **IV.3.2. The (ambiguous) activities of the museum**

During the occupation, the traditional activities of the museum were not discontinued except for the weeks following the invasion. Yet, the new context certainly affected these activities in their intensity and quality, creating an ambiguous situation for the museum, especially concerning the acquisitions. The *Bauverbot* mentioned in the previous sub-section and terminating the construction works did not end other tasks to which the custodians had traditionally been tending, i.e. conservation and inventory. Some priorities might have shifted as further resources were liberated. Meyers' section tended to the protection and documentation of monuments in the country from 1942 onwards. It is unclear if this change was due to the *Bauverbot*, happened at the instigation of Kornfeld, or was the result of concerns about aerial protection. Around 6,000 pictures of monuments were taken. The museum intervened in the restoration of some castles in Luxembourg and in the conservation of "some important ruins". Wilkes and Meyers were instructed to organise a service to protect historical and artistic monuments. In this context, Meyers travelled the country to identify monuments to be protected.<sup>1492</sup>

In addition, the custodians were busy with internal arrangements or providing space and desks to collaborators. Joseph Meyers produced reports commissioned by various administrations, such as the CdZ, the Kulturstelle of the SD, or local authorities.<sup>1493</sup> The custodians undertook travels not only within Luxembourg but also beyond. Meyers visited the archaeological departments of the museums in Bonn and in Cologne in December 1941, for instance.<sup>1494</sup> It is difficult to assess to what extent the internal activities changed under Kornfeld and Wilkes, with whom, it seems, the custodians developed rather friendly relationships. The present sub-section focuses on three dimensions of the museum's activities: acquisitions, exhibitions, and excavations.

##### ***Acquisitions***

The acquisition policy during the occupation period is the most ambiguous facet of the museum. In this respect, the museum took advantage of the occupiers' legal framework. On 17 November 1940, the CdZ passed the *Verordnung über Veränderung oder Veräußerung beweglicher oder unbeweglicher Sachen von geschichtlichem, künstlerischem oder*

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<sup>1492</sup> Meyers, 'Le musée d'histoire pendant la guerre', 121.

<sup>1493</sup> MNHA archives, separate shelf, folder no. 9, *Tätigkeitsbericht für die Zeit vom 15.10.42 – 15.11.42* by Joseph Meyers, undated.

<sup>1494</sup> ANLux, IP-1809, Abt. *Geschichte des Lux. Museums. Tätigkeitsbericht des Abt. Leiters für die Zeit vom 15.11.1941-15.12.1941* by Joseph Meyers, undated.

*wissenschaftlichem Wert.*<sup>1495</sup> This decree stipulated that every person wishing to sell or modify mobile or immobile objects of historical, artistic or scientific nature in Luxembourg needed the authorisation of the CdZ. More precisely, written requests were to be addressed to the culture department of the RPA. This decree was in certain respects an update and extension of the law of 1937, which, in art. 6, subordinated the exportation of objects of historical, prehistorical or paleontological interest to an authorisation of the Department for Public Instruction.<sup>1496</sup> The German decree significantly extended the application area, as the stipulation of the law of 1937 only covered excavations.

The acquisition campaign of the museum started in early 1941 and focused on objects of local character. In that phase, the dealers mostly followed suit, probably because the museum was the best-funded customer, as Georges Schmitt assumed.<sup>1497</sup> Joseph Hess and Schmitt organised the acquisition of objects, according to Meyers.<sup>1498</sup> Yet, the implementation of the decree was quite challenging. A report on its impact, written by Schmitt probably in 1942 and appended to a letter from Meyers to the VHKVA, reveals loopholes and insufficiencies. Despite the positive effects on the museum's collections, the decree was, according to Schmitt, not enough known or understood. Hence, Schmitt did not rule out that objects might have been sold or modified without the museum's awareness. Between November 1940 and September 1941, the museum did not receive a single voluntary request. Furthermore, Schmitt deplored that transactions between private owners were not controlled, as the decree was only limited to officially approved art and antiquity dealers.<sup>1499</sup> The quite negative evaluation is somewhat softened by Meyers' letter. The custodian drew a positive conclusion, as the decree had reached

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<sup>1495</sup> The text of the decree was quite short and part of the third *Durchführungsverordnung zur Verordnung über den Verwaltungsaufbau in Luxemburg* ("implementing regulation for the decree on the administrative organisation in Luxembourg"): "Wer unbewegliche oder bewegliche Sachen von geschichtlichem, künstlerischem oder wissenschaftlichem Wert verändern oder veräußern will, bedarf der Genehmigung des Chefs der Zivilverwaltung." On 16 September 1941, the newspapers printed a reminder of this decree ('Verkauf von Kunstwerken genehmigungspflichtig', *Luxemburger Wort*, September 1941).

<sup>1496</sup> "L'exportation des objets d'intérêt historique, préhistorique ou paléontologique est subordonnée à une autorisation de la part du Département de l'instruction publique." ("Loi du 26 mars 1937, concernant les fouilles et la protection des objets d'intérêt historique, préhistorique et paléontologique", 196).

<sup>1497</sup> ANLux, IP-1809, *Erfahrungsbericht über die Auswirkungen der Verordnung über Veränderung oder Veräußerung beweglicher oder unbeweglicher Sachen von geschichtlichem, kunsthistorischem oder wissenschaftlichem Wert* by Georges Schmitt, undated [1942?].

<sup>1498</sup> Jungblut, *Looted: Current Questions Regarding the Cultural Looting by the National Socialists in Europe*, 25.

<sup>1499</sup> ANLux, IP-1809, *Erfahrungsbericht über die Auswirkungen der Verordnung über Veränderung oder Veräußerung beweglicher oder unbeweglicher Sachen von geschichtlichem, kunsthistorischem oder wissenschaftlichem Wert* by Georges Schmitt, undated [1942?].

its goals, despite some shortcomings (“Unzulänglichkeiten”). The unauthorised alienation and modification could be limited but not completely prevented due to a lack of surveillance measures.<sup>1500</sup> Indeed, the restitution attempts and the related investigations after the war unveiled how many artworks left Luxembourg despite the decree. The antiquarian Lippemeier was one notorious example.<sup>1501</sup>

The civil administration must have been aware of the problems, maybe because of the custodians’ input. More than a week after a reminder of the decree had been published in the newspapers, the administration sent two circulars to the art dealers in Luxembourg City on 25 and 27 September 1941, strengthening the dispositions introduced in the previous year.<sup>1502</sup> Henceforth, the museum had to receive an offer for every object the dealers acquired. The objects could be sold to other buyers with the museum’s permission. Georges Schmitt visited the merchants weekly to examine newly acquired objects and decide on their clearance. As Meyers explained, when the museum could not buy objects, it refrained from a prohibition on selling them outside of the area of jurisdiction of the CdZ. This should ensure better collaboration with the dealers and avoid potential inconveniences.<sup>1503</sup> The circulars of September 1941 had a measurable impact. The letters from art dealers and antiquarians to the museum from the end of September onwards included price offers and lists of newly arrived objects. The dealers in question were J.E. Badu, Kurt Kleint, Josef Lippemeier, Kunsthändlung Michels, and Kunsthändlung Michel Schmitt. Yet, according to Georges Schmitt, the problems were still not solved.<sup>1504</sup> In June 1943, Schmitt had to remind an art dealer of the decree:

As you have an authorisation for art-dealing for some time and as it has come to my knowledge in the meantime that you bought and sold [objects], I need to remind you of the decree mentioned above and urge you to signal either verbally or in written form every new object and

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<sup>1500</sup> ANLux, IP-1809, Letter from Joseph Meyers to the Verwaltung der höheren Kommunalverbandsangelegenheiten, 31/12/1942.

<sup>1501</sup> As Georges Schmitt, who was the delegate for the recovery of artworks after the war, acknowledged in December 1945: “Afin de se soustraire à ce contrôle gênant [instituted by the decree of November 1940] l’antiquaire Lippemeyer usait de plusieurs moyens dont le plus simple était l’émission de la déclaration. Un autre subterfuge était de déclarer qu’il ne voulait pas vendre les objets, bien qu’ils aient été exposés dans son magasin de vente.” (MNHA archives, unnumbered folder (Correspondance), Letter from Georges Schmitt to the OREL, 15/12/1945).

<sup>1502</sup> ‘Verkauf von Kunstwerken genehmigungspflichtig’.

<sup>1503</sup> ANLux, IP-1809, Letter from Joseph Meyers to the Verwaltung der höheren Kommunalverbandsangelegenheiten, 31/12/1942.

<sup>1504</sup> ANLux, IP-1809, *Erfahrungsbericht über die Auswirkungen der Verordnung über Veränderung oder Veräußerung beweglicher oder unbeweglicher Sachen von geschichtlichem, kunsthistorischem oder wissenschaftlichem Wert* by Georges Schmitt, undated [1942?].

wait until the examination by the delegate of the museum, or until the written permission is issued.<sup>1505</sup>

Why the dealers had become more reluctant cannot be explained with certainty. However, a hypothesis focusing on the commercial logic would posit that they preferred doing their business without any controls and selling the objects to anyone they wanted, more precisely to the highest bidder, which was not necessarily the museum. Schmitt bemoaned the competition of German art dealers, who arrived in greater numbers in Luxembourg and offered higher prices.<sup>1506</sup> Possibly due to this competition, Schmitt stressed in the letter mentioned above that the museum “is certainly as well-funded as an art dealer or a private person.”<sup>1507</sup>

According to Joseph Meyers, the art dealers felt increasingly inconvenienced by the dispositions from 1942 onwards. In addition, they experienced that they would barely be confronted with severe consequences for not respecting the decree. Meyers suggested informing them again about the dispositions and especially about the penalties:

Only recently, it seems, have there been signs of fatigue in the implementation of the Ordinance. Individual art dealers are beginning to find the obligations imposed on them burdensome; moreover, they are beginning to realise that they are unlikely to face serious difficulties in the event of infringements. It might therefore be advisable to draw the art dealers' attention once again to Par. 4 of the 3rd Implementing Ordinance to the Ordinance of 14 November 1940 [...].<sup>1508</sup>

The situation did not improve. In a note drafted by Schmitt on 9 August 1943, the museum assistant criticised the lack of collaboration of the art dealers, of which he informed Hilgers. The dealers refused to provide information about objects and told Schmitt that they were not

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<sup>1505</sup> Own translation. “Da Sie nun seit geraumer Zeit eine Ermächtigung zum Kunsthandel besitzen, mir inzwischen auch bekannt wurde, dass Sie kauften u. verkauften, muss ich Sie an die oben erwähnte Verordnung erinnern und Sie bitten, jedes neu hereingekommene Stück entweder schriftlich oder mündlich anzumelden und bis zur Sichtung durch den Beauftragten des Museums, oder bis zur schriftlichen Freigabe zurück zuhalten [sic].” (MNHA archives, separate shelf, folder no. 4, Letter from Georges Schmitt to K. de Muyser [23/06/1943]).

<sup>1506</sup> Jungblut, ‘La spoliation des biens culturels au Luxembourg’, 211.

<sup>1507</sup> My translation. “[...] zudem ist das Museum bestimmt so kaufkräftig wie etwa ein Kunsthändler oder eine Privatperson.” (MNHA archives, separate shelf, folder no. 4, Letter from Georges Schmitt to K. de Muyser [23/06/1943]).

<sup>1508</sup> “Erst in der letzten Zeit haben sich, wie es scheint, Ermüdungserscheinungen in der Durchführung der Verordnung gezeigt. Einzelne Kunsthändler beginnen die ihnen auferlegten Verpflichtungen als lästig zu empfinden; ausserdem beginnen sie einzusehen, dass ihnen bei Zu widerhandlungen kaum ernstliche Schwierigkeiten bereitet werden dürften. Es dürfte sich deshalb empfehlen, die Kunsthändler erneut auf den Par. 4 der 3. Durchführungsverordnung zur Verordnung vom 14. November 1940 [...] aufmerksam zu machen [...].” (ANLux, IP-1809, Letter from Joseph Meyers to the Verwaltung der höheren Kommunalverbandsangelegenheiten, 31/12/1942).

for sale (though listed in the stock inventory) or that they were just temporarily stored in their shops for restoration:

I drew Mr Hilgers' attention to the difficulties that repeatedly arise, which work against the control carried out at the art dealers over newly arrived objects. For example, objects that should be subject to our control and displayed in the art shops are described by the art dealers as not belonging to the shop since they are only in the shop on commission or for the purpose of restoration for a short period. Other objects subject to control are described as not for sale, even though they are on display and bear a consecutive number in the goods-in book; it also happens that such objects are not described as unsellable until I visit them. In the case of other items subject to control, for which the museum might also be a possible buyer, I am stubbornly refused any information about their origin or previous owners, allegedly to avoid violating business secrecy.<sup>1509</sup>

Schmitt asked Hilgers for permission to examine the inventories of the art dealers. Hilgers assured him that the decree could be executed with every means possible.<sup>1510</sup> This was a clear sign that the administration backed the museum. At the same time, the case of the art dealers shows that despite the totalitarian ambitions of an autocratic regime, actors attempted to use loopholes as much as possible.

Another source begs the question of whether something changed in 1943. When Meyers formulated the budget suggestions for the museum for 1943/1944 in February 1943, he suggested reducing the amount allocated to acquisitions by RM 10,000 (from RM 60,000 down to RM 50,000). The motivation provided by the custodian was the “upcoming neutralisation of the private art trade”. The museum would “lose a strenuous competition, which was strongly interested in the excessive increase of the prices for artworks”. Meyers expected a reduction of the prices and the possibility of acquiring objects directly from private owners, which could previously only be bought through antiquarians.<sup>1511</sup> Meyers hinted at a change that cannot be

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<sup>1509</sup> “Ich machte Herrn Hilgers auf die immer wieder von Neuem auftretenden Schwierigkeiten aufmerksam, die der bei den Kunsthändlern durchzuführenden Kontrolle über neuhereingekommene Gegenstände entgegen wirken [sic]. So werden z.B. Gegenstände, auf die sich unsere Kontrolle anwenden müsste und die in den Kunstgeschäften abgestellt sind, von den Kunsthändlern als nicht zum Geschäft gehörig bezeichnet, da sie lediglich als Kommissionsware, oder zu Zwecken der Restaurierung sich auf kurze Zeit im Geschäft befänden. Andere kontrollpflichtige Gegenstände sind als unverkäuflich bezeichnet obwohl sie in der Auslage stehen und eine laufende Nummer des Wareneingangsbuches tragen; auch kommt es vor, dass solche Gegenstände erst bei meinem Besuch als unverkäuflich bezeichnet werden. Von anderen kontrollpflichtigen Stücken, für die das Museum auch event. als Käufer in Frage käme, werden mir hartnäckig jede Auskünfte über Herkunft oder Vorbesitzer verweigert, angeblich um das Geschäftsgeheimnis nicht zu verletzen.” (ANLux, IP-1809, *Aktenvermerk* by Georges Schmitt, 29/08/1943).

<sup>1510</sup> ANLux, IP-1809, *Aktenvermerk* by Georges Schmitt, 29/08/1943.

<sup>1511</sup> “Durch die bevorstehende Ausschaltung des privaten Kunsthändels, wird das Museum eine rührige Konkurrenz verlieren, die an dem masslosen Ansteigen der Preise für Kunstgegenstände stark interessiert war. Es ist anzunehmen, dass die Preise für Kunstgegenstände einer starken Minderung unterworfen werden, und dass manches auf direktem Wege bei Privaten erworben werden kann, das

confirmed with other sources. Did the administration have plans regarding the antiquarians? Were these plans implemented? Was there an evolution in the art trade in Luxembourg disconnected from the administration's policies?

Another report, undated and anonymous but partly based on Schmitt's report of 1942 and appended to a letter to the VHKVA dated 3 June 1943, highlighted the difficulties of controlling art dealers and ensuring the application of the decree. The museum was understaffed, and volunteers were ever more difficult to recruit in the context of war.<sup>1512</sup> Yet, when the museum was asked in 1943 whether the decree should be amended, Meyers responded in July that the museum would not see any necessity. The decree should simply be executed precisely according to its dispositions. Meyers merely deplored that the emergence of officially authorised dealers in the countryside complicated the surveillance as the train connections had been reduced.<sup>1513</sup> This letter implicitly illustrates two aspects. Firstly, the museum was in regular contact with the supervising administration and was consulted on legal dispositions. Secondly, the fact that Meyers wrote about art dealers in the countryside proves that the administration was listening to the criticisms. In the previous year, Schmitt had deplored that only antiquarians in Luxembourg City were officially recognised.

Despite the shortcomings voiced in an institutional logic that pushed actors to seek further advantages, the legal framework placed the museum in an advantageous position. The visible increase of the collections was not only enabled by the considerable budget allocated to this purpose but also by the new prerogatives conceded to the museum. The VHKVA encouraged the museum to buy as many objects as possible from antiquarians. The German authorities supported these efforts by prohibiting the exportation of any historical and art object in Luxembourg without prior authorisation.

As Marie-Paule Jungblut observed, the decree of 1940 set the foundation for increasing the museum's collection.<sup>1514</sup> According to a report from 1943, the museum acquired 5,000 objects between 1941 and 1943.<sup>1515</sup> This number can be verified with a consultation of the yearly inventory lists (*registres d'entrée*) for 1940 to 1944, of which Jungblut made use in her article

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bis jetzt nur durch Vermittlung eines Antiquars angeschafft werden konnte." (ANLux, CdZ-B-0493-02, Letter from Joseph Meyers to the Verwaltung der höheren Kommunalverbandsangelegenheiten for the attention of Dr Rinkens, 20/02/1943, no. 146).

<sup>1512</sup> ANLux, IP-1809, *Erfahrungsbericht* attached to a letter of 03/06/1943, anonymous.

<sup>1513</sup> ANLux, IP-1809, Letter from Joseph Meyers to the Verwaltung der höheren Kommunalverbandsangelegenheiten, 13/07/1943.

<sup>1514</sup> Jungblut, 'La spoliation des biens culturels au Luxembourg', 208.

<sup>1515</sup> ANLux, IP-1809, *Erfahrungsbericht* attached to a letter of 03/06/1943, anonymous.

on the acquisitions of the museum<sup>1516</sup> and to which Michel Polfer referred in 2011.<sup>1517</sup> These inventory lists were drawn in 1956 by Eugénie Wilhelm, hired during the occupation.<sup>1518</sup> Between May 1940 and December 1943, it was possible to calculate a minimum of 4,494 individual objects entering the museum's possession, with no distinction between purchases and donations. It is an absolute possible minimum as the number of acquired objects could not have been less. Hence, despite being written in June 1943, the report's claim is realistic. For the whole period of May 1940 to August 1944, the minimum amount of objects acquired through the acquisitions equals 5,170 items. This number differs from Michel Polfer's estimate of ca. 3,500 objects during the occupation years.<sup>1519</sup> According to the number of acquisitions on the inventory list, the years 1941 (inventory numbers 1941-1 to 1941-130 and 1941-D1 to 1941 D-15) and 1943 (inventory numbers 1943-1 to 1943-140 and 1943-D1 to 1943-D6) were the most fruitful.<sup>1520</sup> Despite the lack of staff and the problems of collaboration with the museum, the decree had an undeniably positive effect on the acquisitions, as shown by sources conserved at the National Archives and related to the acquisition policy of the museum and the

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<sup>1516</sup> Jungblut, 'La spoliation des biens culturels au Luxembourg'.

<sup>1517</sup> Polfer, 'Nationalsozialistische Kulturpolitik oder Herrschaftsstabilisierung?', 328–329.

<sup>1518</sup> The digitized version of the *registres d'entrée* can be downloaded on the page of the Musée national d'histoire et d'art: <https://www.mnha.lu/en/the-mnha/the-museum/the-museum-during-the-second-world-war> (last access on 27 October 2020). The list is divided into four PDF's, one PDF per year. The list was drawn after the occupation period. The first page of the 1941 list indicates, at the bottom, "EW mars-avril 1956", which means that Eugénie Wilhelm created the list in March/April 1956.

<sup>1519</sup> In his article, Polfer does not explain how he obtained this estimate. Furthermore, he does not refer to the report of 1943 (Polfer, 'Nationalsozialistische Kulturpolitik oder Herrschaftsstabilisierung?', 329).

<sup>1520</sup> Every acquisition has one inventory number, but an acquisition can be composed of more than one object. In most cases, the list provides an exact number of objects composing an acquisition. Yet, this is not always the case and the description might just indicate that a collection was acquired, but not the details of the collection's composition. In these cases, I posited that these were composed of one object, as we can deduce that at least one object was acquired, but we cannot say how many items exactly. In other cases, the description provides the exact number of some objects, but not of others that belong to a collection. In those cases, I added the exact numbers, as they represent the absolute minimum we can be certain of. Furthermore, we have to consider the possibility that the registry is itself not complete. Eugénie Wilhelm has constantly made corrections or added objects that were missing in the first version (these corrections were made either dactylographically, or in handwritten form). My calculation does not include the possibility that the museum, in the framework of barter agreements, might have deaccessed more objects than it received in exchange. However, these barter agreements were very rare and thus have practically no impact on the estimate of total acquisitions. For 1943 only two agreements are known, one with the art dealer Jemp Michels, dated 23 October 1943, according to which the museum exchanged four objects for two cupboards.

decree of 1940.<sup>1521</sup> According to Meyers' estimate of October 1945, the total value of the new acquisitions amounted to RM 1,500,000.<sup>1522</sup>

The legal framework of the occupation period mainly regulated transactions between the museum and antiquarians. However, the latter were not the only group of potential partners. Owners and intermediaries who sold or donated objects to the museum covered a vast range of individuals and collective bodies like the International Bank<sup>1523</sup>, the CdZ<sup>1524</sup>, the VHKVA<sup>1525</sup>, the city administration<sup>1526</sup>, the Kunsthäus<sup>1527</sup>, the DUT<sup>1528</sup> (Deutsche Umsiedlungs-Treuhandgesellschaft, German Resettling Trust Organisation), or the Kulturverband Gau Moselland<sup>1529</sup>. One of the most important sources in this respect is the inventory mentioned above.<sup>1530</sup> It is divided into five columns: inventory number (*N° d'inv.*), date of acquisition (*Date*), vendor or donator (*Donateur, Vendeur*), label or name (*Désignation*), and price (*Prix*). In many cases, the reasons behind the acquisitions can only be assessed when considering the larger context. The list itself merely provides hints; the details remain unsaid and unwritten.

Though it has not been possible to disclose the origin of each object, the Nazi policies influenced the amount and nature of objects that entered the museum's collections. The appearance of actors other than official art dealers raises questions about how far the museum took advantage of the Nazi policies: besides the DUT, the Verein der Museumsfreunde<sup>1531</sup>, the Stillhaltekommissar<sup>1532</sup>, the Masonic lodge<sup>1533</sup>, abbeys and cloisters<sup>1534</sup>, and the synagogue<sup>1535</sup> figure among the previous owners. The case of the synagogue is linked to antisemitic policies. When the Nazis demolished it, members of the Jewish community managed to hide some

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<sup>1521</sup> See: ANLux, IP-1809; more specifically the sub-folder "Veränderliche oder veräußerliche bewegliche oder unbewegliche Sachen".

<sup>1522</sup> MNHA archives, separate shelf, unnumbered folder (Correspondance administrative. Lettres envoyées), Letter from Joseph Meyers to the Comité d'études pour les réparations de Guerre (Ministry for Economic Affairs), 16/10/1945.

<sup>1523</sup> Inventory no. 1941-35/1.

<sup>1524</sup> Inventory no. 1942-59/1-50 (50 paintings).

<sup>1525</sup> Inventory no. 1942-59/1, 1943-121 and 1943-124.

<sup>1526</sup> Inventory no. 1943-D1.

<sup>1527</sup> Inventory no. 1943-50.

<sup>1528</sup> Inventory no. 1943-4/1-4, 1943-30/1-5 and 1943-36.

<sup>1529</sup> Inventory no. 1943-D3.

<sup>1530</sup> Jungblut, 'La spoliation des biens culturels au Luxembourg', 212.

<sup>1531</sup> Inventory no. 1941-25/1-, and no. 1942-73. The association was dissolved by the Stillhaltekommissar.

<sup>1532</sup> For instance, inventory no. 1941-122/1.

<sup>1533</sup> Inventory no. 1941-61/1.

<sup>1534</sup> "Redemptoristenkloster" (no. 1941-57), "Dominikanerinnen-Kloster Limpertsberg" (1941-59/1), "Benediktinerabtei, Klerf" (1941-121/1).

<sup>1535</sup> Inventory no. 1941-62/1. According to the description, the museum acquired a container ("Gefäß")

liturgical objects with the help of Christian friends. One of these objects (a “container”, “*Gefäß*”, no. 1941-62/1 according to the list) was put in a safe place in the museum.<sup>1536</sup> Most of these acquisitions were neither mentioned by the custodians in their post-war reports nor by Heuertz in his chronicle, which focused on the natural history section.

The occupation of Luxembourg entailed the confiscation of Jewish and non-Jewish possessions (religious groups, politically suspect families, resistant fighters, families of deserters).<sup>1537</sup> Whether these possessions entered the museum's collection directly or indirectly has been a thorny subject. Purchase contracts analysed by Jungblut include the names of the owners, which could simply be an “unknown Jew” (“*Juif inconnu*”).<sup>1538</sup> In some sources, the Abteilung IV A (*Verwaltung des jüdischen und sonstigen Vermögens*), managing Jewish possession, appears, but never as a direct partner. None of the consulted sources indicated that the museum had acquired objects directly from this department. The Abteilung IV A was created on 12 December 1940, five days before the first official meeting between the curators and the administration. Whether the Abteilung IV A was discussed or mentioned during the meeting cannot be answered at this stage, but it was at least a potential partner of the museum. Jungblut presented a couple of reasons why the museum had not received objects from the Abteilung IV A: the administrative sluggishness and the fact that the curators did not want to know the original owner, which might have been an inconvenient truth. Hess and Schmitt preferred the costlier detour of buying objects from private owners or antiquarians.<sup>1539</sup> Yet, it might be possible that this was only the case for some categories of owners and not for Jews, for instance. Furthermore, we need to acknowledge possible confusions or overlaps between original owners and “private owners” – it is not always clear if, in sources such as Meyers’ letter to Rinkens, “private owners” were meant to be original owners or private collectors.

A draft letter from the VHKA to the head of the Abteilung IV A, Ackermann, corroborates the fact that, at least until April 1941, objects were not directly acquired from the Abteilung, but had to be bought for a high price on the market. The administration wished that the museum should be consulted:

Among the confiscated Jewish, emigrant, and monastery property are art objects, pictures, pieces of furniture, etc., which are of certain interest to the Landesmuseum. [...] It should therefore be expedient to either leave the objects found in the possession of emigrants and

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<sup>1536</sup> Jungblut, *Looted: Current Questions Regarding the Cultural Looting by the National Socialists in Europe*, 28.

<sup>1537</sup> Jungblut, ‘La spoliation des biens culturels au Luxembourg’, 205–206.

<sup>1538</sup> Jungblut, 209.

<sup>1539</sup> Jungblut, 209.

monks to the museum or, if this should not be appropriate, to grant the museum a right of first refusal over these objects.<sup>1540</sup>

It is unclear to what extent the situation and the process changed afterwards and how much the museum collaborated with the Abteilung IV A. In addition, as it is only an exchange between higher hierarchies, it does not prove that the museum collaborators were directly implicated.

According to François Reinert, the question of whether acquisitions were made under constraints, such as the original owner being ruined or forced to leave the country, cannot be answered. As the acquisition budget was rather considerable, spoliations could be avoided.<sup>1541</sup> However, the importance of the budget is not a valid argument, as it is based on an unproven correlation. The present study posits instead that the budget has nothing to do with the intensity of spoliations; the latter are a consequence of Nazi policies, not of the museum's financial situation. Reinert noted right after his hypothesis that it would be necessary to know whether the sellers were owners or just intermediaries. Especially for the latter, it is nearly impossible to identify the original owners of the objects due to a lack of transparency.

Several examples speak in favour of acquisitions resulting from constraints. In 1959, the lawyer Tony Biever wrote to Meyers, explaining that objects from the castle of Ansembourg were given to the museum by the carpenter Milius in 1942.<sup>1542</sup> Other than pure and simple theft, there is no apparent reason that could explain that a carpenter, who was not the original owner, could approach the museum with these objects.<sup>1543</sup> The inventory indicates no price paid for the items in question. Biever stated that this acquisition resulted from spoliation and urged Meyers to negotiate a settlement in this affair. Meyers himself had signed the certificate

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<sup>1540</sup> “Unter dem beschlagnahmten Juden=Emigranten=und Klosterbesitz befinden sich Kunstgegenstände, Bilder, Möbelstücke usw, die für das Landesmuseum ein gewisses Interesse besitzen. [...] Es dürfte daher zweckmäßig sein, die im Emigranten= und Klosterbesitz vorgefundenen Gegenstände entweder dem Museum zu überlassen oder, falls dies nicht angezeigt sein sollte, dem Museum ein Vorkaufsrecht über diese Gegenstände einzuräumen.” (MNHA archives, separate shelf, folder no. 4, Letter from the commissar of the höhere Kommunalverbandsgelegenheiten to the head of the Verwaltung des jüdischen Vermögens, 28/04/1941). It is not clear whether this letter was sent. The second page of the letter includes the word “Konzept” in the left margin. But even if it was a draft, this does not impact the relevance of the content.

<sup>1541</sup> Reinert, “‘Inter arma silent Musae’. Les musées d’Etat pendant la guerre”, 73.

<sup>1542</sup> Inventory no. 1942-75/1-16. The acquisition included objects rather unusual for being sold by a carpenter, such as swords or the barrel of a canon. As a price is not indicated, it is not possible to say whether these objects were sold or “donated” to the museum.

<sup>1543</sup> Neither does the certificate of acquisition issued on 2 October 1942 (MNHA archives, separate shelf, folder no. 5, *Bescheinigung* by Joseph Meyers, 02/10/1942).

of acquisition in 1942.<sup>1544</sup> The fact that the objects were still in possession of the museum in 1959 hints either at ignorance of the origin of the objects or a passive stance and lack of interest in returning them to their original owner.<sup>1545</sup>

The case of Ansembourg is not the only example of constraints or problematic acquisitions. During the occupation, the museum bought two collections, by Constant de Muyser, a notary from Wiltz, and by the lawyer Edmond Reiffers. In the first case, the VHKVA and Vogler appeared as intermediaries in the negotiations stretching over several months, from 1941 until June 1944. Vogler, who inspected the collection, considered it a valuable addition to the collection, as nearly all objects originated in Luxembourg.<sup>1546</sup> The final price paid for the collection, RM 12,078, was less than de Muyser initially asked but more than the amount that the administration initially wanted to pay. The acquisition was financed with the *Aufbaufonds*<sup>1547</sup> of the CdZ.<sup>1548</sup>

The acquisition of the Reiffers collection is another well-documented case. Jungblut observed that the Reiffers collection represents the foundation of the art gallery of the MNHA.<sup>1549</sup> It is not the aim of the present study to analyse the acquisition in detail, as it has already been done by Jungblut and by Polfer. In the interwar period, the government had already thought about acquiring objects from Reiffers. This happened in a context where solicitors who engaged in banking activities (not forbidden by law) got into financial troubles due to the economic crisis of the 1930s. Polfer argued that the plan of the government to acquire Reiffers' collection was not related to any interest in expanding the museum collections. Instead, the intent was to avoid bankruptcy and its consequences for the creditors. The financial problems did not end with the German occupation. Like the Luxembourgish government, the

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<sup>1544</sup> The letter from Tony Biever to Joseph Meyers, dated 19 November 1959, is attached to the inventory list of the year 1942.

<sup>1545</sup> One might also add the lack of any clear, legal framework on the spoliation and restitution of art after the war. There was no disposition that would have pushed the museum to systematically engage in provenience research.

<sup>1546</sup> ANLux, CdZ-B-0429-03, Letter from Karl Vogler to Regierungsrat Münzel, 22/10/1941, no. 199.

<sup>1547</sup> The *Aufbaufonds Moselland*, dedicated to supporting the policy of aryanisation, was closely linked to the activities of the *Abteilung IV A*. Earnings realised on the basis of spoliation were blocked until the liquidation of a Jewish property was accomplished. Only then were the earnings transferred to the *Aufbaufonds* (*Commission spéciale pour l'étude des spoliations des biens juifs au Luxembourg pendant les années de guerre 1940-1945, ‘La spoliation des biens juifs au Luxembourg 1940-1945: Rapport final’*, 28).

<sup>1548</sup> ANLux, CdZ-B-0429-03, Letter from the Verwaltung der höheren Kommunalverbandsangelegenheiten to Regierungspräsident Münzel, 22/06/1942, no. 180. The collection is listed in the inventory with the number 1942-19.

<sup>1549</sup> Jungblut, ‘La spoliation des biens culturels au Luxembourg’.

German administration wanted to avoid financial ruin by supporting concerned notaries in clearing their debts and a propagandistic backlash.<sup>1550</sup>

This context informed the interest in the acquisition of the Reiffers collection. Vogler also advocated the acquisition, though his motives are unknown.<sup>1551</sup> The administration appealed to three German experts to evaluate the objects. Hermann Voss, the director of the museum in Wiesbaden<sup>1552</sup>, Hupp, the director of the municipal art collections in Düsseldorf, and Bammann, the owner of an art gallery in Düsseldorf, had been invited to write an expert report.<sup>1553</sup> Voss deemed the entire collection unsuitable, which would only include a few paintings of “museological quality” (“*musealer Qualität*”). Bammann and Hupp estimated that the collection should be seen from the viewpoint of the future organisation of the Landesmuseum. For both experts, the collection constituted a contemporary document of Luxembourgian art collection activities (“*zeitgeschichtliches Dokument luxemburgischen Sammlertums*”). Hence, the characteristic aspects of the Reiffers collection needed to be defined and preserved, but only if the collection was acquired for precisely this kind of documentation. However, Hupp and Baumann shared Voss’ assessment from the perspective of intrinsic value.<sup>1554</sup>

The collection mostly encompassed paintings, in addition to furniture and archaeological objects. Reiffers had previously attempted to sell them but was blocked by the CdZ. The museum acquired the first part for RM 200,000 in 1942; Reiffers considered the price too low but accepted it anyway and framed it as an honour to his principles and as a sign of respect to the wish of the Gauleiter:

In true appreciation of the Gauleiter’s wish and to safeguard the interests I have to represent, I believe I can reconcile it with my duties and accept the price of two hundred thousand Reichsmarks (200,000 .-).<sup>1555</sup>

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<sup>1550</sup> Polfer, ‘Nationalsozialistische Kulturpolitik oder Herrschaftsstabilisierung?’, 339–340.

<sup>1551</sup> Polfer, 342.

<sup>1552</sup> From March 1943 onwards, Voss was entrusted with the coordination of the “central collection” for the *Führermuseum* in Linz (Hubert Bonin, ‘Pillages nazis et musées virtuels’, in *Villes et culture sous l’occupation: Expériences françaises et perspectives comparées*, ed. Françoise Taliano-des Garets [Paris: Armand Colin, 2012], 282–297).

<sup>1553</sup> ANLux, CdZ-A-1551, Letter from the Verwaltung der höheren

Kommunalverbandsangelegenheiten to Gustav Simon, 31/10/1941, no. 174-175.

<sup>1554</sup> ANLux, CdZ-A-1551, Letter from the Verwaltung der höheren

Kommunalverbandsangelegenheiten to Gustav Simon, 31/10/1941, no. 174-175.

<sup>1555</sup> “In wahrer Würdigung des Wunsches des Gauleiters und Wahrung der Interessen die ich zu vertreten habe, glaube ich es mit meinen Pflichten vereinbaren und den Preis von zweihundert tausend Reichsmark (200.000 .-) annehmen und vertreten zu können.” (ANLux, CdZ-B-0429-02, Letter from Edmond Reiffers to the Verwaltung der höheren Kommunalverbandsangelegenheiten, 09/02/1942, no. 85-87).

Reiffers' official explanation for accepting the price should be considered with scepticism. Indeed, he had debts that amounted to RM 500,000. The transaction's primary purpose was to cover at least part of these debts.<sup>1556</sup> Reiffers, then, was caught in personal constraints. The German administration wished to keep the collection in the country. The objects should be incorporated into the museum's collections if the evaluation is positive. While the evaluations by the experts were somewhat critical of an acquisition and, in principle, could have allowed their alienation, Vogler insisted on the acquisition. For the acquisition of the first part of the collection, cultural policy arguments were only secondary, according to Polfer; for the acquisition of the second part, they were not even advanced.<sup>1557</sup>

Eventually, the first part was acquired with financial resources from the *Aufbaufonds* of the CdZ, which was also used in the de Muyser acquisition. The CdZ could freely dispose of the fund without authorisation from Berlin.<sup>1558</sup> Indeed, the ambiguity of the Reiffers acquisition does not only reside in the reasons that pushed the owner to sell. The *Aufbaufonds* was supplied with financial resources generated by the liquidation and confiscation of Jewish possessions and general financial sanctions imposed on the population. The museum did indirectly take advantage of (racial) Nazi policies. This is not mentioned by the curators in their post-war reports, nor is it discussed by Polfer in his article. The second part of the Reiffers collection was acquired in 1944, again because of "financial commitments" ("finanzielle Verpflichtungen") amounting to RM 600,000, which could only be covered to a large extent by selling paintings to the museum.<sup>1559</sup> This time, the financial resources for the Deutschtumpflege were used to pay the price of RM 631,250 (including fees for the notary).<sup>1560</sup>

Another ambiguous case, encouraged by Meyers and derived from the Nazi policies, concerns the objects of displaced people. The Deutsche Umsiedlungs-Treuhandgesellschaft (DUT, German Resettling Trust Administration), a society of public character that managed the possessions of deported persons, was a confirmed partner of the museum.<sup>1561</sup> On 9 September 1942, the resettlement initiative (*Umsiedlungsaktion*) of the Gauleiter was officially announced in the press. While a decree was not enacted at the time, the announcement was candid on the objectives and procedures of the *Umsiedlungsaktion*. As Luxembourgers were

<sup>1556</sup> ANLux, CdZ-B-0429-02, *Aktennotiz* signed by an unkown author (maybe Blech), 25/09/1941, no. 115.

<sup>1557</sup> Polfer, 'Nationalsozialistische Kulturpolitik oder Herrschaftsstabilisierung?', 344.

<sup>1558</sup> Jungblut, 'La spoliation des biens culturels au Luxembourg', 212.

<sup>1559</sup> ANLux, CdZ-B-0429-02, Letter from an unknown author (maybe Hilgers) to Gustav Simon, 05/04/1943, no. 67.

<sup>1560</sup> Polfer, 'Nationalsozialistische Kulturpolitik oder Herrschaftsstabilisierung?', 346–347.

<sup>1561</sup> Jungblut, 'La spoliation des biens culturels au Luxembourg', 212.

considered *Volksdeutsche*, the administration wanted those who showed disobedience to be settled away from the border area (*Grenzland*) to another location within the Third Reich (*Reichsgebiet*). The concerned families needed their *Volkstum* to be deepened and secured by living in the “großdeutschen Lebensraum” (“greater German living space”). The administration argued that it would be “irresponsible to let *Volksdeutsche* live on the borders of the Reich, who do not unequivocally want to commit to the Reich, which a small part of the population here thinks would be the right thing to do.”<sup>1562</sup> Hence, not only did the Nazis concede a particular significance to Luxembourg as a border area in accordance with the *Blut und Boden* ideology – secured borders were only possible with a population of convinced *Volksdeutsche* – but the resettlement policy was insofar different from the fate that Jews and other undesired groups suffered as it affected people who belonged, in the eyes of the Nazis, to the same *Volk*.<sup>1563</sup>

In this political context, the museum showed interest in acquiring objects from concerned families and individuals. Jungblut pointed out that the DUT ceded some objects to the museum in 1943 when the displacement reached a climax. This was not the case in previous years. However, Jungblut’s analysis ignores that Meyers advocated the acquisition of objects belonging to forcibly resettled individuals and families. The custodian requested that the museum should be actively involved in the inventory of the objects. In his letter to the VHKA of 15 September 1942, some days after the official announcement, he referred to the museum’s mission of safeguarding artistic and historical objects and preventing them from being sold abroad. The implication of the museum and the inventory of farmhouses would provide opportunities to study the working and living conditions of peasants and craftspeople. The museum could choose what objects to acquire without delay:

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<sup>1562</sup> Own translation. “[...] unverantwortlich, wenn man an den Grenzen des Reiches länger Volksdeutsche beließe, die, wie es hier zu Lande ein kleiner Teil von Einwohnern für richtig hält, sich nicht eindeutig zum Reich bekennen wollen.” For the whole announcement, see: ‘Umsiedlungsaktion für Luxemburg’, *Luxemburger Wort*, September 1942.

<sup>1563</sup> It is not my aim to provide a detailed account of the German *Umsiedlung* policy, its implementation and consequences. There is some limited literature in Luxembourg on this subject, most of it several decades old and thus likely to be outdated. I would like to refer to two books on the subject. The first one, by Evy Friedrich and published in 1969, is at least to some extent factually still valid and includes many illustrations and documents (Evy Friedrich, *Als Luxemburg entvölkert werden sollte: Geschichte und Geschichten der Umsiedlung* [Luxembourg: Bourg-Bourger, 1969]). The second publication, by Gilles Kartheiser, is more recent and focuses on a quantitative analysis of resettled families, as well as the transition camps to which they were deported. (Gilles Kartheiser, *Die Umsiedlung Luxemburger Familien 1942-1945: Von der numerischen und namentlichen Erfassung bis zur Beschreibung des Lagerlebens anhand von Zeitzeugenberichten* [Saarbrücken: AV Akademikerverlag, 2013]).

Due to the resettlement initiative and the resulting changes in the proprietorship of the resettled, the museum, as the entrusted agent for cultural matters, must avoid the damage or destruction of artistically or culturally and historically valuable property, without knowledge of their value, or the loss of the museum's control due to the selling of these objects, on the one hand. On the other hand, the museum has the opportunity to study the working and living conditions of the resettled farmers and craftspeople in the sense that, for instance, the inventory of the entire furniture and domestic property of a farm allows for the comprehension of particularly valuable cultural-historical connections. The timely registration of the material also enables the museum to choose the most important objects first-hand without paying a profit-oriented price.<sup>1564</sup>

In October 1942, Meyers requested an increase in the budget allocated to the acquisitions, from RM 40,000 to RM 60,000. As his comments in his letter to the Landesoberverwaltungsrat Kornfeld show, Meyers anticipated an increasing number of acquisitions in the future, especially from displaced people. "As on the one hand more than RM 18,000 have been spent, and on the other hand more acquisitions are to be expected (resettlers!)," the custodian argued, "I suggest an increase of this budget title."<sup>1565</sup> Kornfeld agreed.<sup>1566</sup> In July 1943, the custodian wished that the DUT would implicate the museum further in securing cultural objects of the settlers' properties.<sup>1567</sup> As this letter is an isolated document, it cannot be determined if Meyers was successful in his plea. In December 1943, when he submitted the budget requests for the museum, he noted that the DUT had not approached the museum with offers.<sup>1568</sup> This is quite a surprising statement, considering the three DUT acquisitions in 1943, and begs the

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<sup>1564</sup> Own translation. "Durch die Umsiedlungsaktion und die dadurch bedingte Umstellung der Eigentumsverhältnisse der Umgesiedelten erwächst dem Museum – als dem Beaufragten für Kulturbelange – einerseits die Pflicht zu verhindern, dass Kunst- oder kulturgeschichtlich wertvolles Gut, in Unkenntnis des Wertes beschädigt oder zerstört, oder durch Verkauf der Kontrolle des Museums entzogen werden [sic]. Andererseits bietet sich dem Museum die Gelegenheit die Wohn- und Arbeiterverhältnisse der umgesiedelten Bauern und Handwerker kennen zu lernen in dem Sinne, dass z.Bsp. die Inventarisierung des gesamten Mobiliars und Hausrats eines Bauerngehöftes besonders wertvolle kulturgeschichtliche Zusammenhänge herausstellt. Auch durch die rechtzeitige Kenntnisnahme des Materials wird es dem Museum desweiteren möglich sein eine Auswahl zu treffen und die wichtigsten Gegenstände aus erster Hand ohne Gewinnzuschuss anzukaufen." (ANLux, IP-1809, Letter from Joseph Meyers to the commissar of the Verwaltung der höheren Kommunalverbandsangelegenheiten, 15/09/1942).

<sup>1565</sup> Own translation. "Da einerseits bis heute bereits über 18,000 – RM ausgegeben wurden, und da andererseits grössere Ankäufe immer zu erwarten sind (Umsiedler!) schlage ich eine Erhöhung dieses Titels vor." (ANLux, CdZ-B-0490-01, Letter from Joseph Meyers to Landesoberverwaltungsrat Kornfeld, 26/10/1942, no. 36-37).

<sup>1566</sup> ANLux, CdZ-B-0490-01, Letter from Landesoberverwaltungsrat Kornfeld to Joseph Meyers, 28/10/1942, no. 40.

<sup>1567</sup> ANLux, IP-1809, Letter from Joseph Meyers to the Verwaltung der höheren Kommunalverbandsangelegenheiten, 13/07/1943.

<sup>1568</sup> ANLux, CdZ-B-0493-03, Letter from Joseph Meyers to the cultural department of the Verwaltung der höheren Kommunalverbandsangelegenheiten, 21/12/1943, no. 241-242.

question as to how these acquisitions happened – and whether the museum initially contacted the DUT.

Meyers' letters illustrate the ambiguous situation of the museum and the staff. In addition, they constitute an example of what historians Andreas Fickers and Christoph Brüll call *situativer Opportunismus* (situational opportunism) in an edited volume on the German-speaking region of Belgium during the Second World War.<sup>1569</sup> In their contribution, Fickers and Brüll posit that the inhabitants of Eupen-Malmedy were not passive bystanders, but that individual and collective actors took deliberate decisions within the limits of freedom and self-determination that were conceded to them.<sup>1570</sup> The actions of individuals need to be examined on the background of a specific situation and according to the identity or role adopted. This is a challenge for historians:

Dass biografische Entscheidungen als historische Handlungen angesehen werden können, die lebensweltlich kontextualisiert werden müssen, wenn man sie verstehen und deuten möchte, darf als Allgemeinplatz betrachtet werden. Die Schwierigkeiten, die sich in der Rekonstruktion vergangener Entscheidungs- und Handlungsoptionen für den Historiker ergeben, resultieren aus den multiplen Identitäten und Rollen der historischen Akteure: Je nach Rolle (privat, beruflich, gesellschaftlich) bieten sich dem Handelnden in konkreten Situationen unterschiedliche Freiheitsgrade.<sup>1571</sup>

Even the apparent non-decision for or against something does not mean that an actor is unininvolved:

Auch das Übersehen, Wegschauen, Nichtthematisieren oder Ignorieren von Unrecht, Ausgrenzungen, Verfolgung oder gar Ermordungen im Zuge totalitärer Regime oder während kriegerischer Auseinandersetzungen darf nicht als Nichthandeln gedeutet werden, sondern muss aus ethischer oder moralphilosophischer Perspektive als Akt missbilligender Inkaufnahme oder aber passiver Unterstützung von Unrecht gedeutet werden.<sup>1572</sup>

However, Fickers and Brüll also stress that opportunism, generally designating an action or attitude that adapts the own interests or normative principles to power relations, does not equal egoism. Instead, it relates to the evolution within an individual margin of action resulting from a consideration of what is opportune in a specific situation. The concept of situational opportunism allows moving beyond the notion of collaboration. The authors argue that human

<sup>1569</sup> Andreas Fickers and Christoph Brüll, 'Ein Experiment kollektiver Gewissensprüfung: Situativer Opportunismus und kumulative Heroisierung', in *Staatenwechsel, Identitätskonflikte, Kriegserfahrungen (1919-1945)*, ed. Carlo Lejeune, Christoph Brüll, and Peter M. Quadflieg, Grenzerfahrungen: Eine Geschichte der Deutschsprachigen Gemeinschaft Belgiens 4 (Eupen: Grenz-Echo Verlag, 2019), 8–39.

<sup>1570</sup> Fickers and Brüll, 18.

<sup>1571</sup> Fickers and Brüll, 18.

<sup>1572</sup> Fickers and Brüll, 21.

action is much more complex in extreme situations – such as a dictatorship – and cannot be explained with collaboration or resistance.<sup>1573</sup> This complexity and adaptation to changing political situations have been highlighted by many biographical studies that focus, for instance, on the continuities of elites.

Meyers considered the situation and the possibilities for the museum and took advantage of Nazi policies. Examples of situational opportunism are his criticism of the loopholes of the decree on the exportation of objects and his expectation of the neutralisation of the art trade. Meyers' letter on the objects of the *Umsiedler* is another example. He wrote his letter around the same time he returned his VdB membership card, like other colleagues, friends and acquaintances, to protest the introduction of compulsory military service. Several potential reasons could explain Meyers' interest. First, it could be a possible reaction to the exclusion of the museum from the assessment of confiscated Jewish possessions by the Abteilung IV A, which hired exclusively German experts.<sup>1574</sup> Thus, Meyers would have attempted to seek a different way to acquire objects. Another possible explanation considers that Meyers would have seen fewer (moral) problems in encouraging the acquisition of objects from resettlers than from deported Jews. A third explanation is linked to increasing difficulties encountered in the relationship with art dealers, as explained before. In all cases, Meyers considered what was opportune in the specific situation he faced.

Besides these hypotheses, another question remains open. In November 1942, a sculptor named Schmitz was tasked with the inventory of cultural goods ("Kulturgüter") in Luxembourg belonging to displaced people. The related letters show that the *Ahnenerbe*, an SS sub-organisation that defined itself as a research community, was implicated. An internal SS correspondence on securing cultural objects estimated that 200 to 300 families could be potentially resettled.<sup>1575</sup> Though the museum is not mentioned, these documents beg the question of whether Schmitz's mission was linked to Meyers' suggestion. From a chronological perspective, it could have been possible. Yet, as Meyers wrote letters to the VHKA, it remains unclear how and why the SS became involved and whether there was a coordination between the latter and the administration. In any case, Meyers could count on the support of the administration. In a letter of 25 September 1942, Hilgers stressed the mission of the VHKA

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<sup>1573</sup> Fickers and Brüll, 25.

<sup>1574</sup> Jungblut, 'La spoliation des biens culturels au Luxembourg', 209–210.

<sup>1575</sup> BArch Berlin, NS 21/98, Letter to the higher SS and police head of the Westmark in Metz, 16/11/1942.

to ensure that no objects would leave Luxembourg without a previous assessment of his administration. He referred to the *Umsiedlungsaktion* and the decree of November 1940.<sup>1576</sup>

Meyers wrote his letters in a particular context, illustrating the impact of general policies and the political context on a cultural institution. The registries mention the DUT only three times. Every time, another name is indicated. These names are F. Türk (“DUT für F. Türk”, no. 1943-4), J. Schrader (“DUT für J. Schrader”, no. 1943-30), and Paul Muller (“DUT für Paul Muller”, no. 1943-36). Neither Türk nor Muller appear in the list of resettled people by Gilles Kartheiser in his analysis of the *Umsiedlung* in Luxembourg. Kartheiser’s list includes several displaced individuals with the name Schrader, of which two have the first name Jacques (one died in a resettlement camp).<sup>1577</sup> Marie-Paule Jungblut suspected that Paul Muller was the director of Villeroy & Boch, who arrived in Silesia with the first group of settlers on 19 September 1942.<sup>1578</sup> It cannot be ruled out that the registry is not complete in this respect or that it does not explicitly label all possessions as originally belonging to settlers.

The restitutions after the war prove that the objects were acquired under constraints. In two cases (Muller and Schrader), the museum returned them to their original owners, as additional handwritten notes (“restitué”) on the inventory list show. It is not certain that objects from *Umsiedler* were always acquired by the DUT as an intermediary. Some acquisitions possibly happened in the context of constraints caused by the *Umsiedlungsaktion*. One example may even hint at the latter, though no clear proof exists. On 4 September 1943, Th. Mergen sold a marble bust for RM 2,500 to the Landesmuseum (no. 1943-102). According to a list of settlers drawn in a study by Gilles Kartheiser, the families of Jean Mergen, Charles Mergen and René Mergen were resettled on 1 September 1943.<sup>1579</sup> Jean Mergen, from Mertzig, was deported to a concentration camp; the other two, from Oberfeulen, were draft dodgers (*Refraktäre*). Three Mergen from Mertzig and four Mergen from Oberfeulen were resettled. Against the backdrop of this information and considering the chronology between the resettlement and the transaction, the question arises whether there was a link. According to Kartheiser’s list, Th. Mergen was not resettled.

The German administration entrusted the museum with supervising the objects in the country. The museum seemed to fulfil its missions without visible contestation. It went even

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<sup>1576</sup> MNHA archives, separate shelf, folder no. 4, Letter from Landesrat Hilgers to the Chef der Zivilverwaltung (Referat H. Org.), 25/09/1942.

<sup>1577</sup> Kartheiser, *Die Umsiedlung Luxemburger Familien 1942-1945*, 392.

<sup>1578</sup> Jungblut, *Looted: Current Questions Regarding the Cultural Looting by the National Socialists in Europe*, 25.

<sup>1579</sup> Kartheiser, *Die Umsiedlung Luxemburger Familien 1942-1945*, 472.

further by formulating requests and suggestions.<sup>1580</sup> The activity reports are not very informative regarding questions of spoliation, the acquisition process, or the objects' origins. Of course, they include information about acquisitions in general. Meyers' post-war report shares information on the acquisition policy and the decree that should support the museum's efforts. The custodian observed that the number of items in the collection increased thanks to the extraordinary financial resources.<sup>1581</sup> For the period of 15 November 1941 to 15 December 1941, for instance, Meyers noted that the collections of the museum were enriched with "valuable new acquisitions",<sup>1582</sup> i.e. 103 objects for the period in question (registry numbers 1941-94 to 1941-117). Yet, the custodian did not go into details about the acquisition process. Meyers claimed that the decrees were frequently not implemented. Though there were insufficiencies, the sources relativize this statement: The museum took advantage of the decrees. The reports do not mention the Abteilung IV A nor convey anything about the purchases. As Jungblut pointed out, Schmitt merely strived this question in his report on the effects of the 1940 decree. He highlighted that transactions between private owners and antiquarians were against the law, but none of these transactions was cancelled. The view was that an art dealer should be rewarded for finding an important object.<sup>1583</sup> The stance towards the art dealers, then, was quite ambiguous. On the one hand, the custodians deplored the problematic situation concerning art dealers and the lack of regulation. On the other hand, they (and the German administration) did not want to be too harsh even when the art dealers infringed the law.

### *Exhibitions*

The Landesmuseum was to become a place where all objects related to Luxembourg should be preserved. During the occupation period, the first inventory of the objects was carried out.<sup>1584</sup> As the Nazis considered Luxembourg as a German territory, this mission did not stand

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<sup>1580</sup> This also concerned the staff. In his activity report for the period of 15 October to 15 November 1942, Joseph Meyers highlighted the need of further surveillance personnel in the museum (MNHA archives, separate shelf, folder no. 9, *Tätigkeitsbericht für die Zeit vom 15.10.42 – 15.11.42* by Joseph Meyers, undated).

<sup>1581</sup> Meyers, 'Le musée d'histoire pendant la guerre', 119.

<sup>1582</sup> ANLux, IP-1809, Abt. *Geschichte des Lux. Museums. Tätigkeitsbericht des Abt. Leiters für die Zeit vom 15.11.1941-15.12.1941* by Joseph Meyers, undated. On the nature of the acquired objects, Meyers wrote: "Es handelt sich meist um Stücke, die in die Abteilungen Kunstgewerbe, Volkskunst oder Volkskunde gehören. Auch kleinere Werke namhafter Luxemburger Künstler befinden sich darunter."

<sup>1583</sup> Jungblut, 'La spoliation des biens culturels au Luxembourg', 209.

<sup>1584</sup> Lorent, *Die nationalsozialistische Kunst- und Kulturpolitik im Großherzogtum Luxemburg 1934-1944*, 331.

in contradiction to their ideology. The propagandistic use of the museum is explicitly revealed in the reports written by Vogler.<sup>1585</sup> Vogler did not spare criticisms on the works carried out in the 1930s. Both the building and the interior were not appropriate for museological uses; the quality of the renovation also left much to be desired:

One got the impression that the construction management had not considered the future use of the building and the rooms. In addition, various architectural gimmicks distract the eye and are out of place in a museum building. The exterior of the building has also not been treated very skilfully from the point of view of monument preservation. Strange portals, balustrades, huge glass panels and boring roofs have completely torn apart and destroyed the intimate effect of the fish market, while poor exterior plaster and a monotonous colour scheme of the whole deepen these impressions. Here, fundamental action had to be taken to bring the exterior of the buildings into a tolerable relationship with their surroundings, and then to design the interior appropriately for museum purposes.<sup>1586</sup>

In the permanent exhibition, the different collections should form a narrative unity. The visitors would be smoothly guided from one section to the next. Both reports stressed the importance of sufficient space for visitors: It should be possible to guide groups through the museum without individual visitors standing in the way; every visitor should be able to look at all the important objects. Possibly for the first time in the museum's history, the visitors were explicitly put at the centre of reflections; until then, sources had barely, if ever, paid attention to the visitors' experience in the museum.

As for the historical section, the Germans planned rooms to be dedicated to the period of the Frankish Empire, the Carolingian period, and the period of Ottonian emperors. The exhibition's overarching theme would be "Luxembourg and the Reich" (*Luxemburg und das Reich*). "Again and again will be shown that the Luxembourg region has always been the western border region of a great European central empire," Vogler explained.<sup>1587</sup> The Nazi

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<sup>1585</sup> ANLux, IP-1809a, Reports by Dr Vogler, undated. The reports mention a visit in late summer 1940, which is not the same as the one mentioned by Heuertz in his account.

<sup>1586</sup> "Man gewann den Eindruck, dass die Bauleitung keine Rücksicht auf die künftige Verwendung des Gebäudes und der Räume genommen hatte. Dazu kommen mancherlei architektonische Spielereien, die das Auge ablenken und in einem Museumsbau fehl am Platze sind. Auch das Äussere des Gebäudes ist nach der denkmalpflegerischen Seite nicht gerade geschickt behandelt worden. Seltsame Portale, Balustraden, riesige Glasflächen und langweilige Dächer haben die intime Wirkung des Fischmarktes völlig zerrissen und zerstört, ein schlechter Aussenputz und eine eintönige Farbgebung des Ganzen vertiefen diese Eindrücke. Hier musste grundlegen durchgegriffen werden, um einmal das Äussere der Gebäude in ein erträgliches Verhältnis zu ihrer Umgebung zu bringen, und sodann das Innere für Museumszwecke entsprechend zu gestalten." (ANLux, IP-1809a, Report A by Dr Vogler, undated, p. 3).

<sup>1587</sup> Own translation. "Immer wieder wird gezeigt, wie das Luxemburger Land stets das westliche Grenzland eines grossen europäischen Mittelreiches gewesen ist." (ANLux, IP-1809a, Report A by Dr Vogler, undated, p. 9).

perspective inspired the way the museum would be arranged. The Nazis wished to transform it into a “bulwark of Germandom on the outermost western border of the Reich” (“*Bollwerk des Deutschtums an der äußersten Westgrenze des Reiches*”).<sup>1588</sup>

Following this logic, any ties that link Luxembourg to the history of France (not explicitly mentioned in the report) were to be excluded. Instead, the exhibition should stress the links to the history of the Holy Roman Empire and to the Third Reich. The same would be done for an eventual section on the political history of Luxembourg, but as was noted in report A, it remained open whether the Palace of Justice<sup>1589</sup> was going to be available – report B did not discuss this. That section would need to be separated from and precede the folklore rooms. The political history would constitute the highlight of the museum (“*Diese Abteilung wäre sozusagen die Krönung des ganzen Museumsplanes*”). Even the geological section would be organised in a way as to show that Luxembourg was closely related to the “greater German space”.<sup>1590</sup> A major aspect of the master narrative of Luxembourg, as disseminated in the 1939 celebration, did not even stand in contradiction to Nazi historiography. Vogler’s plan included a “large and worthy room” dedicated to the emperors of the House of Luxembourg: Henry VII, Charles IV, Wenceslas, and Sigismund, “those German Emperors of the House of Luxembourg who shaped European politics during two centuries”.<sup>1591</sup> When referring to the transformation of the museum into a central place for research and culture, the last sentence of report A repeated the ambition of the German authorities: “A new great creation arises from the firm collaboration of all forces; it shows again and again that Luxembourg is a German country.”<sup>1592</sup>

The choice of topics and periods resulted from at least two aspects. From a political perspective, Gustav Simon had already stressed that Luxembourg did not have any close ties with Germany in the recent past. “It could only be connected to a remote past, which was, however, not even known to the average Luxembourger due to the deficient history education

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<sup>1588</sup> Lorent, *Die nationalsozialistische Kunst- und Kulturpolitik im Großherzogtum Luxemburg 1934-1944*, 109.

<sup>1589</sup> The Palais de Justice still exists today, and houses the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

<sup>1590</sup> “Schon in der geologischen Abteilung wird gezeigt, wie das Luxemburger Land mit dem grossdeutschen Raum, also mit dem Osten auf das engste verbunden ist.” (ANLux, IP-1809a, Report A by Dr Vogler, undated, p. 10).

<sup>1591</sup> “Ein grosser würdiger Saal soll der Luxemburgischen Kaisergeschichte gewidmet sein ; Heinrich VII, Karl IV, Wenzel und Sigismund, jenen deutschen Kaiser aus dem Luxemburger Hause, die durch zwei Jahrhunderte hindurch europäische Politik gestaltet haben.” (ANLux, IP-1809a, Report A by Dr Vogler, undated, p. 10).

<sup>1592</sup> Own translation. “Ein neues grosses Werk wächst aus der straffen Zusammenfassung aller Kräfte ; es zeigt immer wieder, dass Luxemburg ein deutsches Land ist.” (ANLux, IP-1809a, Report A by Dr. Vogler, undated, p. 12).

in schools,” the Gauleiter noted.<sup>1593</sup> From a research perspective, a comparison between Vogler’s plans for the permanent exhibition and the research of the *Westforscher* reveals some striking similarities. *Westforscher*, such as Matthias Zender, Franz Petri or Leo Just, adopted without questioning the idea of a dynastical line of “Luxembourgers” in Medieval times, as present in the Luxembourgish master narrative. Petri and Just depicted rulers such as Siegfried, Wenceslas and Sigismond as “the most loyal fighters that the German Empire and the idea of the Reich have ever had” and as “the soul of resistance against the French political expansion”.<sup>1594</sup> A possible difference to the accounts of the *Westforscher* relates to the inclusion of John of Bohemia in the permanent exhibition. Vogler ranges him among the notable personalities to be shown, though in a comparably less glorified setting than the emperors of the House of Luxembourg.<sup>1595</sup>

Vogler possibly drew on the *Westforschung* to develop his ideas for a permanent exhibition. Indeed, as Péporté et al. explained, National-Socialist propaganda used arguments developed by the *Westforschung*:

The Middle Ages played an essential role in this vision [the German counter-discourse to the Luxembourgish national historiography]. During this period, Luxembourg was seen to have been an integral part of the ‘German’ Empire, which in turn was implicitly regarded as a predecessor of the Third Reich.<sup>1596</sup>

The *Westforschung* hypothesis is further strengthened when considering the entry in Heuertz’s chronicle related to the meetings in December 1940. Whereas Vogler did not mention a *Westforscher* in his reports, Matthias Zender (1907-1993) figured among the participants named by Heuertz. Indeed, Zender received a doctor’s degree at the University of Bonn, precisely where the *Westforscher* were most active.<sup>1597</sup> Zender was particularly interested in the area around Luxembourg and Arlon as a historian and folklorist. Zender, conscripted to the Wehrmacht in 1940, was appointed *Kriegsverwaltungsrat* (military

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<sup>1593</sup> Own translation. “Es konnte nur angeknüpft werden an eine ferne Vergangenheit, die jedoch durch den in allen Schulen mangelhaften Geschichtsunterricht dem Durchschnitts-Luxemburger nicht einmal bekannt war.” (Quoted in: Dostert, *Luxemburg zwischen Selbstbehauptung und nationaler Selbstaufgabe*, 117).

<sup>1594</sup> For an analysis of the narratives constructed by the ‘Westforscher’, see: Thomas, *Le Luxembourg dans la ligne de mire de la Westforschung*, 115–116.

<sup>1595</sup> ANLux, IP-1809a, Report A by Dr. Vogler, undated, p. 10.

<sup>1596</sup> Péporté et al., *Inventing Luxembourg*, 104.

<sup>1597</sup> For a general biography and overview, see: Alois Döring, ‘Matthias Zender’, Portal Rheinische Geschichte, accessed 20 July 2019, <https://www.rheinische-geschichte.lvr.de/Persoenlichkeiten/matthias-zender/DE-2086/lido/57c827be1ab6f5.77104033>.

administration counsellor) in Arlon in 1941.<sup>1598</sup> Even though he was not yet holding this position at the time of the meeting, his interest and activities in the region made him a suitable candidate for advising on the permanent exhibition of the museum. While working in Arlon, Zender regularly exchanged with authorities in Luxembourg, specifically those involved in propaganda and folklore.

To what extent the plans presented in the reports were realised – especially as they were based on a scenario in which the Palace of Justice would be incorporated into the institution – cannot be assessed. According to Vogler (report A), the main entrance was relocated to a more “advantageous” place in the Fish Market. The entrance hall was also refurbished to look more “festive” and to convey the main areas of activity of the museum; a bust of Hitler constituted the central piece of it; mural drawings represented the different landscapes of Luxembourg:

This hall, which previously made a sober and cold impression, now appears festive and symbolically reflects the peculiarities of the space over which the museum’s fields of work extend. Four large murals characterise the Luxembourg countryside: the forest area of the Ösling, the agriculture of the Gutland, the Moselle with its viticulture and the heavy industry of the Minette area become symbols and appear impressively.<sup>1599</sup>

Like the Luxembourgish narratives, the German ones included the trope of foreign dominations, with the difference that the Nazis used them as an example of how Luxembourg became alienated from its German essence.<sup>1600</sup> Interestingly, these pro-Nazi narratives were even more short-lived than the Nazi regime. Péporté et al. pointed out that publications reproducing such narratives stopped after 1942; the reasons are unknown.<sup>1601</sup> Even more intriguing, though no correlation can be claimed, it coincided with the period of the *Bauverbot* and Vogler’s conscription, i.e. when the plans for a permanent exhibition were put on hold.

In their post-war texts, Meyers and Heuertz did not explain how the exhibition should be arranged (Meyers only strives the question of the temporary exhibitions). It would be surprising had they not been informed about any details of those plans. The meeting of December 1940

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<sup>1598</sup> For more on his activities and his attitude in Arlon during the occupation, see: Carlo Lejeune, ‘Matthias Zender als Kriegsverwaltungsrat und seine Akte: ein Helfer Hitlers oder aufrechter Humanist?’, *Rheinische Vierteljahrsblätter* 77 (2013): 130–157.

<sup>1599</sup> “Diese Halle, die bisher einen nüchternen und kalten Eindruck machte, wirkt nunmehr festlich und spiegelt symbolhaft die Eigenheiten des Raumes wieder, auf den die Arbeitsgebiete des Museums sich erstrecken. Vier grosse Wandbilder charakterisieren das Luxemburger Land: das Waldgebiet des Öslings, die Landwirtschaft des Gutlandes, die Mosel mit ihrem Weinbau und die Schwerindustrie des Minettegebiets wirken zu Symbolen gesteigert eindrucksvoll.” (ANLux, IP-1809a, Report A by Dr. Vogler, undated, p. 5).

<sup>1600</sup> Péporté et al., *Inventing Luxembourg*, 105.

<sup>1601</sup> Péporté et al., 106.

was not the only one.<sup>1602</sup> From Heuertz's chronicle we can infer that more meetings had taken place over the years – such as in January 1943 with Kornfeld on the budget and on the temporary exhibitions.<sup>1603</sup> Heuertz and Meyers preferred writing about their conservation and inventory activities. On the aspect of the rearrangement of the rooms, they remained tacit. They limited their accounts to more general aspects, such as what floors were finished or how the museum should be extended. Nevertheless, the activity reports of 1941 and 1942 prove that they were involved in the organisation of the permanent exhibition.<sup>1604</sup>

According to Reinert, the museum did not organise official exhibitions thanks to the “politics of passive resistance”. Yet, he mentioned some exhibitions of which traces are left in the archives of the museum: *Aus den Schätzen des Museums* (“From the treasures of the Museum”) in April/May 1943, an exhibition on the occasion of the regional party congress of the NSDAP organised outside of the museum in September 1943, and an exhibition on art prints in 1944.<sup>1605</sup> It is difficult to draw a line between official and unofficial exhibitions, especially to evaluate when an exhibition was avoided due to a “passive resistance”. *Aus den Schätzen des Museums* is also mentioned in Heuertz's chronicle. It was organised twice as a private or special exhibition (“*exposition particulière*”). About the second edition in May, Heuertz wrote that it was “non-public”.<sup>1606</sup> In April, it was organised in honour of Landeshauptmann Haake<sup>1607</sup>, who visited it with Hilgers. The occasion for the second edition is unknown, but both times it was organised at the request of the German administration. Hence, it is not necessarily adequate to qualify *Aus den Schätzen des Museums* as non-official. Furthermore, it seems that more exhibitions were planned or organised than those mentioned by Reinert. A letter from Meyers of 3 December 1943 alluded to three exhibitions organised in the building that year. Further details were not provided, except for the limitations due to

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<sup>1602</sup> We can extract from a wartime report by Meyers that he travelled to Düsseldorf for a meeting with Hilgers only a month later. This travel took place immediately after a discussion with Schumacher, Nothumb and Schmitt on the disposition of the exhibition rooms and his presentation of related plans (ANLux, IP-1809, *Tätigkeitsbericht für die Zeit vom 15.1.1941-15.2.1941*, by Joseph Meyers).

<sup>1603</sup> MNHA archives, unnumbered box (Historique Musée national d'histoire naturelle), Musée d'Histoire Naturelle de l'Etat. Chronique, [Marcel Heuertz et alii], undated, p. 59.

<sup>1604</sup> In his monthly report for December, for instance, Heuertz writes about the arrangement of the exhibits in a couple of rooms (ANLux, IP-1809, *Monatsbericht (Dezember)* by Marcel Heuertz, 20/12/1941).

<sup>1605</sup> Reinert, “*Inter arma silent Musae*”. Les musées d'Etat pendant la guerre', 71–72.

<sup>1606</sup> MNHA archives, unnumbered box (Historique Musée national d'histoire naturelle), Musée d'Histoire Naturelle de l'Etat. Chronique, [Marcel Heuertz et alii], undated, p. 61-63

<sup>1607</sup> It was most certainly Heinrich Haake, who was Landeshauptmann of the Rhine Province.

broken and useless glass cabinets.<sup>1608</sup> Some days later, Meyers requested workforce for a future exhibition on art prints and engravings.<sup>1609</sup>

Reinert's interpretation of "passive resistance", especially regarding a planned exhibition by the *Hilfswerk für deutsche bildende Kunst* of the Volkswohlfahrt that was apparently prevented in 1941,<sup>1610</sup> needs to be critically considered. This exhibition was requested from 30 August to 28 September 1941. Reinert did not elaborate on who prevented it at the last moment ("de justesse", as he wrote). According to the sources, Albert Nothumb, head of department (*Abteilungsleiter*), guided the city architect Petit and two representatives of the Nazi organisation through the rooms of the museum. Nothumb, in his letter to the VHKVA of 25 June 1941, reported on the visit. He observed that the rooms were not yet suitable to accommodate an exhibition and opined that it might not be the best idea to have an external exhibition as the first to be shown at the museum. He criticised that the visitors barely took note of his concerns. They stressed that it would be an official Reich exhibition under the patronage of the CdZ. The final say would be up to the head of civil administration himself. However, Nothumb also signalled his general agreement to organise such an exhibition.<sup>1611</sup> The VHKVA agreed with Nothumb's assessment. Yet, according to a handwritten note on the letter, Landesrat Hilgers informed that the exhibition could not take place due to the ongoing construction works. Hence, it is highly doubtful that "passive resistance" prevented the exhibition. It is more probable that the administration simply shared the concerns expressed by Nothumb.

The impact of the *Bauverbot* on the organisation of temporary exhibitions is challenging to assess. In July 1942, Hilgers denied a request from the Kunstkreis Luxemburg to organise an exhibition in the museum rooms. The Landesrat (and Kommissar of the VHKVA) expressed his discontent with the *Bauverbot* and explained that he was attempting to achieve an annulment of the interdiction.<sup>1612</sup> This letter also documents a case in which the organisation of a temporary exhibition was avoided for technical/pragmatic reasons.

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<sup>1608</sup> ANLux, IP-1809a, Letter from Joseph Meyers to the Verwaltung der höheren Kommunalverbandsangelegenheiten, 03/12/1943.

<sup>1609</sup> ANLux, IP-1809a, Letter from Joseph Meyers to the Verwaltung der höheren Kommunalverbandsangelegenheiten, 07/12/1943.

<sup>1610</sup> Reinert, "Inter arma silent Musae". Les musées d'Etat pendant la guerre', 71–72.

<sup>1611</sup> MNHA archives, separate shelf, folder no. 20, Letter from Albert Nothumb to the Kommissar für höhere Kommunalverbandsangelegenheiten, 25/06/1941.

<sup>1612</sup> ANLux, CdZ-A-6820, Letter from Hilgers to Hanns Divo (Kunstkreis Luxemburg), 28/07/1942, no. 16.

## *Excavations*

There are no indications in the sources that the museum organised excavations during the occupation. However, this does not mean that none occurred. Excavations in Pétange and Grevenmacher in 1943-1944 and on the Titelberg in February 1943 were organised. These were smaller undertakings.<sup>1613</sup> The most extensive one was led by the SS *Sturmbannführer* Gustav Riek of Tübingen at the Aleburg in Beaufort in 1940 and 1941, under the supervision of the SS Ahnenerbe. The Ahnenerbe was headed by Heinrich Himmler and operated, besides Luxembourg, in South Tyrol and in the Soviet Union.<sup>1614</sup> According to Reinert (and to Meyers), the operation in Beaufort was not even under the supervision of the archaeological service of Trier.<sup>1615</sup> However, according to an article on the Landesmuseum in the *Luxemburger Wort* in June 1943, they were carried out with the financial support of the VHKVA. The article presented it as the beginning of new archaeological research.<sup>1616</sup>

The museum was certainly paying attention to what was happening in Luxembourg. In the context of passive aerial defence measures in the old part of Luxembourg City, Meyers urged the police director to inform the museum of possible findings during works in the basements.<sup>1617</sup> The museum also knew of Riek's excavations. In March 1944, Meyers received a letter from a colleague in Trier that a sculpture was deposited in a tavern where Riek had been staying during the operation. Meyers was invited to examine the sculpture,<sup>1618</sup> which the museum later secured.<sup>1619</sup> In January 1943, two people excavated without authorisation in Dudelange on Johannisberg<sup>1620</sup>. Contrary to what the custodian told the mayor of Dudelange, they claimed that Meyers was informed.<sup>1621</sup> As a result, Meyers announced to the mayor that

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<sup>1613</sup> Reinert, “‘Inter arma silent Musae’. Les musées d’Etat pendant la guerre”, 69.

<sup>1614</sup> Petropoulos, *Art as Politics in the Third Reich*, 315.

<sup>1615</sup> Reinert, “‘Inter arma silent Musae’. Les musées d’Etat pendant la guerre”, 69.

<sup>1616</sup> ‘Aufbau und Ausbau des Landesmuseums Luxemburg: Von seiner Entwicklung u. seinen Aufgaben / Zusammenschluß der Museen zu einem großen Institut / Erweiterungen der Sammlungen seit 1940 / Planungen für die Zukunft / Aus einer Unterredung mit Professor Dr. Meyers’, *Luxemburger Wort*, June 1943.

<sup>1617</sup> MNHA archives, separate shelf, folder no. 1, Letter from Joseph Meyers to the Polizeidirektor in Luxembourg, 04/05/1943.

<sup>1618</sup> MNHA archives, separate shelf, folder no. 1, Letter from Dr Gose of the Rheinisches Landesmuseum in Trier to Joseph Meyers, 21/03/1944.

<sup>1619</sup> MNHA archives, separate shelf, folder no. 1, Anonymous note to Dr Gose from the Rheinisches Landesmuseum in Trier, 07/04/1944.

<sup>1620</sup> The Johannisberg is also known as Mont Saint-Jean, where ruins of a castle can be visited today.

<sup>1621</sup> In his letter, Meyers explained that he had been only informed about it by the mayor and a small note in the *Luxemburger Wort* of 20 January 1943. This small notice (entitled ‘Interessanter Fund bei Düdelingen’) can be read here:

[http://www.eluxemburgensia.lu/BnlViewer/view/index.html?lang=fr#panel:pp|issue:781882|article:D\\_TL176](http://www.eluxemburgensia.lu/BnlViewer/view/index.html?lang=fr#panel:pp|issue:781882|article:D_TL176). It even claims that the human remains were transported to the museum.

he would “use every means at his disposal” to prevent future unauthorized excavations on Johannisberg and seek to have the “old cultural site” declared a nature preserve.<sup>1622</sup> In this context, Meyers referred to a decision of the government from 1938. It is not possible to assess whether it was still in effect under the occupation, but from the tone of his letter, it seemed to be the case. “It has already been placed under monument protection by the government’s decision of 23 April 1938 (Memorial Nr. 12, Saturday, 12 February 1937, Page 129),” Meyers highlighted. Meyers would not have a reason to mention this law had it not been recognized by the German administration.

#### **IV.3.3. The staff of the Landesmuseum**

The situation and the attitudes of the staff, especially of the custodians, are one of the most complex and elusive aspects of the history of the Landesmuseum. The written sources rarely provide clear answers to the questions that arise in this context. As the previous sub-section has already shown, a critical analysis needs to move beyond simplified categories of resistance and collaboration, as tempting as their use might be. When motivations for certain acts are stated, it is mainly done in the context of legitimisation, resistance and *déculpabilisation* narratives. Yet, the unsaid and unwritten are at least as necessary to consider.

In the present sub-section, the first part focuses on the description of the situation during the occupation period, on the relationships between the actors, on the reactions of the custodians to the situation and the policies of the Germans. The second part examines how historical actors, especially the custodians, have presented their actions in their post-war accounts. This approach is necessary because narratives about resistance have proven powerful until today. The second part also serves as a transition to the next chapter on the post-war period.

The context of an authoritarian regime is not an imperative reason to evaluate every resistance as a political act against the regime. In this context, the post-war narratives must be confronted with the situation during the occupation to provide a more nuanced picture of the museum staff. This can be accomplished by identifying tropes used after the war to frame and legitimise the actions during the occupation and by highlighting unspoken aspects in the post-war accounts. Two tropes will be called “patriotic self” and “good mediator”. The first one refers to a narrative in which an individual presents their acts in a patriotic light or puts them in a perspective of resistance. The second trope designates those accounts that present friendly

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<sup>1622</sup>“Ich werde mit allen mir zu Gebote stehenden Mitteln zu verhindern suchen, dass nicht genehmigte Ausgrabungen auf dem Johannisberg vorgenommen werden, und ausserdem bemüht sein zu erwirken, dass diese alte Kulturstätte zum Naturschutzgebiet erklärt wird.” (MNHA archives, separate shelf, folder no. 1, Letter from Joseph Meyers to the mayor of Dudelange, 02/02/1943).

and helpful Germans with whom the individuals were directly in touch, in opposition to the unrighteous Germans higher up the hierarchy with whom they had no direct contact, or so it would appear.

### *The evolution of the staff*

On the eve of the German invasion, three people officially worked at the State Museum: the concierge Damien Lamberty and the custodians Marcel Heuertz and Joseph Meyers. The latter two were detached secondary school teachers.<sup>1623</sup> Victor Ferrant, honorary custodian since his legal retirement in 1924, continued to dedicate himself to the natural history collection and died on 27 September 1942.<sup>1624</sup> The German administration took over the existing staff, thus marking a considerable continuity to the interwar period, especially as Heuertz and Meyers were the most important figures of the museum. Similar continuities in terms of personnel were also observed in studies of other institutions.<sup>1625</sup> Despite some minor criticisms and requests, at least in early 1942<sup>1626</sup>, the occupation period benefitted the museum, which increased its staff and hired collaborators under temporary service contracts. Vogler declared that “construction workers and a considerably extended staff of scientific and technical personnel have been employed since 1940.”<sup>1627</sup> According to Jungblut, the increase resulted from the decree of 1940 on the acquisitions and exportations of objects.<sup>1628</sup> It is a possible reason, but not the only one.

Given the importance of cultural institutions in the Third Reich, the increase in staff and the substantial funding were not surprising. Other museums in Germany and in occupied countries had similar experiences. For example, the Rheinisches Landesmuseum in Trier profited from

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<sup>1623</sup> At least for Heuertz the situation changed in 1941, when he left school to dedicate himself entirely to the museum.

<sup>1624</sup> J.P.R., ‘Die naturwissenschaftliche Abteilung unsers Museums: Reichhaltige und wertvolle Sammlungen in zweckmäßiger Zusammenstellung’, *Luxemburger Wort*, October 1942.

<sup>1625</sup> In his research on museums in Frankfurt on the Main, Sebastian Farnung came to a similar conclusion, with only some limited exceptions: “Lassen sich somit beim Personal nach 1933 wenige Veränderungen und eine große Kontinuität feststellen, gilt dies in gleichem Maß auch für die Zeit nach 1945. Alle Direktoren oder Kustoden, die nach 1933 in Frankfurt im Amt waren oder tätig wurden, konnten nach 1945 ihre Karrieren ohne größere Probleme fortsetzen.” (Farnung, *Kulturpolitik im Dritten Reich am Beispiel Frankfurter Museen*, 360).

<sup>1626</sup> In his report of March 1942, Meyers referred to his repeated request for hiring staff for the labelling of the objects, the organisation of the inventory and other writing-related tasks; cf.: ANLux, IP-1809, Abt. *Geschichte. Tätigkeitsbericht für die Zeit vom 15.2.1942-15.3.1942*, by Joseph Meyers, undated.

<sup>1627</sup> Own translation. “[...] Bauleute und ein seit 1940 beträchtlich erweiterter Stab von wissenschaftlichem und technischem Personal wurden herangezogen [...].” (ANLux, IP-1809a, Report B by Dr Vogler, undated, p. 5).

<sup>1628</sup> Jungblut, ‘La spoliation des biens culturels au Luxembourg’, 207.

an increase in funds and personnel.<sup>1629</sup> The staff of the Kunsthistorisches Museum in Vienna, in a country officially annexed, increased from 123 (early 1938) to 343 employees (early 1945).<sup>1630</sup> It should be noted, however, that the museum in Vienna experienced dismissals for anti-Semitic reasons in 1938/39. This was not the case in Luxembourg, as the Landesmuseum did not employ Jews by the time the Germans arrived. In Frankfurt-am-Main, the revitalisation of the cultural sector after 1933 was beneficial to museums, expressed through higher visitor numbers, more financial means, or extensions and modernisations.<sup>1631</sup>

Like its counterparts, the museum in Luxembourg was a beneficiary or took advantage of Nazi cultural policy, even though it was not officially open, unlike the other museums mentioned above. Hence, the progressive increase of personnel was less caused by visitor numbers than by activities described in the previous sub-section, especially the acquisitions and the related decrees. Most importantly, this evolution somewhat contrasted with the construction and expansion activities. In 1940, Jean (Johann) Kieffer joined the staff. He was reportedly the only person hired that year.<sup>1632</sup> When the museum employees gathered in the morning of 10 October 1941 to be made aware of the “correct answers” to provide in the *Personenbestandsaufnahme*<sup>1633</sup>, Heuertz, Lamberty, and Kieffer were present; Nothumb was on holiday, and Meyers was on an official trip with Vogler.<sup>1634</sup> Thus, the museum’s workforce had not visibly grown more than a year after the invasion.

Albert Nothumb was not even an employee of the museum. Working for the cultural department of the VHKVA until 1942, he was responsible for monuments, the museum, the Landesbibliothek and various administrative tasks. However, he was removed from his position in January 1943 because of his protest after the strikes of September 1942 (he returned his VdB membership card).<sup>1635</sup> Considered by the German authorities to belong to the “clerical

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<sup>1629</sup> Reinert, “‘Inter arma silent Musae’. Les musées d’Etat pendant la guerre”, 67.

<sup>1630</sup> Monika Löscher and Susanne Hohenberger, ‘Akteurinnen und Akteure im Kunsthistorischen Museum Wien: Personelle Kontinuitäten und Brüche 1933/34 - 1938 - 1945’, in *Museen im Nationalsozialismus: Akteure - Orte - Politik*, ed. Tanja Baensch, Kristina Kratz-Kessemeier, and Dorothee Wimmer (Köln: Böhlau, 2016), 134.

<sup>1631</sup> Farnung, *Kulturpolitik im Dritten Reich am Beispiel Frankfurter Museen*, 374.

<sup>1632</sup> MNHA archives, separate shelf, folder no. 29, *Personalaufstellung des Landesmuseums*, 05/12/1940.

<sup>1633</sup> It was a population census organised by the Nazis and in which Luxembourgers were expected to answer to the questions of mother tongue and ethnicity with “German”.

<sup>1634</sup> The names were noted on the circular by hand. MNHA archives, separate shelf, folder no. 28, *Rundschreiben an alle Dienststellen*, 10/10/1941.

<sup>1635</sup> ANLux, EPU-01-14440, *Rapport des délégués de l’enseignement secondaire concernant Monsieur Albert Nothumb, professeur-attaché au gouvernement à Luxembourg*, 20/08/1945.

circles”<sup>1636</sup>, Nothumb was a close collaborator of Albert Wehrer. Back in 1940, the latter had made a plea in his favour to be nominated as *Regierungsrat*, which would have placed Nothumb at the higher level of the civil administration.<sup>1637</sup> After his protest, the German administration planned to relocate Nothumb, but according to his account, Landesrat Hilgers intervened and managed to get Nothumb a compulsory service in Xanthen for archival works.<sup>1638</sup>

The hiring policy would gain momentum from 1942 onwards, despite the war. Between 1941 and 1944, according to Meyers, a dozen people joined the staff of the museum.<sup>1639</sup> A list of employees, regularly updated possibly until the early 1980s, provides a more detailed overview of the evolution of the staff.<sup>1640</sup> It is an undated source, but it was first created by Eugénie Wilhelm (“E.W.”). A handwritten annotation of 10 March 1967 in the lower right corner of the second page informs that Françoise Adam (“F.A.”), also hired during the war, copied and updated the list. Despite uncertainties concerning the original creation date, it shows who was employed. Unfortunately, a distinction between permanent positions and service contracts is not made. Nevertheless, the list confirms what is already known: Heuertz, Lamberty and Meyers were the only people officially working at the museum when the Germans invaded. The information is not always complete. Jean Kieffer (I) worked until 1950, Charles Warisse until 1944, but the document does not provide the date on which they started their employment. The document shows that 14 people were hired between 1941 and 1944: two in 1941, five in 1942 and six in 1943. This number roughly confirms Meyers’ claim. A newspaper article on the museum of 5 June 1943 declared that the staff was increased by a factor of twelve. The subtitle suggests that the information originated from an interview with the curator. On what basis this calculation was made is unclear; such an increase might sound impressive for propagandistic reasons, but if, for instance, the employment of the concierge in 1939 is chosen as a starting point, it provides a different and more realistic picture, as around a dozen people were working in 1943/44. Eight employees and collaborators were still working in September 1944, when Luxembourg was liberated.

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<sup>1636</sup> ANLux, EPU-01-14440, *Fragebogen zur politischen Beurteilung (Abschrift)*, undated [1942].

<sup>1637</sup> ANLux, CdZ-A-1874-50, Letter from Albert Wehrer to the Chef der Zivilverwaltung, 09/10/1940, no. 150.

<sup>1638</sup> ANLux, EPU-01-14440, *Enquête administrative prévue par l’arrêté grand-ducal du 30 novembre 1944*, Albert Nothumb, 15/03/1945.

<sup>1639</sup> Reinert, “Inter arma silent Musae”. Les musées d’Etat pendant la guerre’, 65.

<sup>1640</sup> MNHA archives, D-00142, *Personnel* by Eugénie Wilhelm and Françoise Adam, undated [after 1966].

The increase was apparently within the budget revisions.<sup>1641</sup> The wage bill and other contract fees visibly increased over the years. For 1942, the administration set a budget amounting to RM 35,000 for the personnel: RM 20,000 for regular public servants (“*planmässige Beamte*”) and RM 15,000 for assistance by other non-regular employees (“*Hilfsleistungen durch nichtbeamtete Kräfte*”).<sup>1642</sup> In 1943, the budget increased to RM 63,750 (RM 31,150 and RM 32,600 respectively).<sup>1643</sup>

Heuertz’s chronicle remains tacit concerning the situation of the workforce. He shares only sparse information, confirming, for instance, that the two Jean Kieffer, referred to as “*Kieffer père*” (senior) and “*Kieffer fils*” (junior), worked at the museum.<sup>1644</sup> Eugénie Wilhelm is mentioned, too.<sup>1645</sup> Yet, other people appear in the chronicle but are not on Wilhelm’s list. The photographer Helminger<sup>1646</sup>, for whom an office was installed in February 1943, and the painter-decorator Josef Goldschmit collaborated with the museum. In March 1943, Goldschmit was conscripted to the Sicherheits- und Hilfsdienst (SHD) due to a not further specified “refractory attitude” (“*attitude réfractaire*”).<sup>1647</sup> Some months later, Meyers negotiated a leave for Goldschmit, so that he could work on an exhibition in the museum.<sup>1648</sup> A naturalist from Cologne, Sander, collaborated with Heuertz to clean the natural history collection.<sup>1649</sup> It is possible that these people were hired under the terms of a service contract and not in a permanent position.

Another question concerns the decisional power held by the custodians to choose their collaborators. Using the trope of “patriotic self”, Meyers claimed that he had tried as far as he could to pick collaborators himself, to ensure that he would work with people who shared the same political convictions as the curators and who would not compromise their “patriotic

<sup>1641</sup> ‘Aufbau und Ausbau des Landesmuseums Luxemburg’.

<sup>1642</sup> ANLux, CdZ-A-0053, *Haushaltsplan des Chefs der Zivilverwaltung in Luxemburg für das Rechnungsjahr 1942*, 04/04/1942, no. 152.

<sup>1643</sup> ANLux, CdZ-A-0054, *Haushaltsplan des Chefs der Zivilverwaltung (Verwaltung der Höheren Kommunalverbandsangelegenheiten) in Luxemburg für das Rechnungsjahr 1943*, undated, no. 105.

<sup>1644</sup> MNHA archives, unnumbered box (Historique Musée national d’histoire naturelle), Musée d’Histoire Naturelle de l’Etat. Chronique, [Marcel Heuertz et alii], undated, p. 55, 59, 65.

<sup>1645</sup> MNHA archives, unnumbered box (Historique Musée national d’histoire naturelle), Musée d’Histoire Naturelle de l’Etat. Chronique, [Marcel Heuertz et alii], undated, p. 59.

<sup>1646</sup> Some of Helminger’s photographs are included in Heuertz’ chronicle.

<sup>1647</sup> The *réfractaires* designated those who eluded compulsory military service introduced by the German administration in 1942. The logic deduction would be that Goldschmit attempted to avoid military service. (MNHA archives, unnumbered box (Historique Musée national d’histoire naturelle), Musée d’Histoire Naturelle de l’Etat. Chronique, [Marcel Heuertz et alii], undated, p. 61).

<sup>1648</sup> ANLux, IP-1809a, Letter from Joseph Meyers to the Verwaltung der höheren Kommunalverbandsangelegenheiten, 07/12/1943.

<sup>1649</sup> MNHA archives, unnumbered box (Historique Musée national d’histoire naturelle), Musée d’Histoire Naturelle de l’Etat. Chronique, [Marcel Heuertz et alii], undated, pp. 65-67.

action” (“*notre action patriotique*”).<sup>1650</sup> Georges Schmitt was reportedly hired on the recommendation of Meyers, first under the terms of a service contract, then definitely employed, starting his job as museum assistant on 1 April 1943.<sup>1651</sup> Another employee, Ferdinand Werling, accepted to work at the museum to evade a *Zwangseinsatz* (forced assignment or deployment). This position, as he claimed, came with a very modest remuneration (“*une rémunération très modique*”)<sup>1652</sup>. Though he did not provide further details in his *épuration* folder, he was hired as a *Werkverträgler* in April 1943. According to the terms of his service contract, he was tasked with creating an inventory of photographic material related to the history and folklore of Luxembourg.<sup>1653</sup>

In general, it is difficult to examine how much influence the custodians exerted on recruiting policy. As in the interwar period, recruitment depended on budget allocation and the goodwill of the higher hierarchies. In his post-war report, Joseph Meyers shed an incomplete light on the situation, especially by being very selective with the information. As he was the *Geschäftsleiter* of the museum, it cannot be denied that Meyers had at least the possibility to check the profiles of potential collaborators. One example illustrates this situation. During the occupation, a call for the position of excavation specialist (*Ausgrabungstechniker*) in the Archäologischen Landesdienst was published in the newspapers. A list of eight candidates was drawn, whose profiles could not have been more diverse. The youngest was 17 years old, and the oldest was 61 years old.<sup>1654</sup> Meyers examined the list and shared his opinion. While pointing out the very diverse profiles, he suggested that a personal meeting should be arranged with the candidates, as none showed any evident skills or experiences required for the position.<sup>1655</sup> Though Meyers presented his viewpoint, it is unclear to what extent he could have influenced the final decision. The most promising contender was François (Franz) Erpelding, who worked at the steel factory in Differdange. While his main job was unlike the position he applied for, he was also known as an *Altertumsforscher* (antiquarian or archaeologist, depending on the context) and possessed, as the comment on the list reads, a “remarkable collection”. Therefore, Erpelding was the most suitable person by default. The other candidates did not have equivalent

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<sup>1650</sup> Meyers, ‘Le musée d’histoire pendant la guerre’, 119.

<sup>1651</sup> Jungblut, ‘La spoliation des biens culturels au Luxembourg’, 207.

<sup>1652</sup> ANLux, EPU-01-22286, *Enquête administrative prévue par l’arrêté grand-ducal du 30 novembre 1944*, Ferdinand Werling, 14/04/1945.

<sup>1653</sup> ANLux, CdZ-B-0408, *Werkvertrag Ferdinand Werling*, 01/04/1943, no. 105.

<sup>1654</sup> ANLux, CdZ-B-0432, List of candidates for the position of Ausgrabungstechniker, undated [1942], no. 39-40.

<sup>1655</sup> ANLux, CdZ-B-0432, Note by Joseph Meyers on the candidates for the position of Ausgrabungstechniker, 17/04/1942, no. 41.

experiences (if any). Already in 1941, it was attempted to hire Erpelding, but this failed, despite the promise made to the regional archaeological service in Trier.<sup>1656</sup> In the end, a *Grabungstechniker* was not hired.

Georges Schmitt's case was different. The custodians, especially Meyers, could possibly get acquainted with him and assess his political views much better. Most importantly, it was a fortunate opportunity. In the context of the trope of the patriotic self, Schmitt was, according to his statement, hired at the request of Meyers to prevent a pro-German or German collaborator from being employed.<sup>1657</sup> It is not clear whether there were other candidates, but it appears that Schmitt was hired for a position that had already been in accordance with the plans of the administration. Finally, it should be observed that Joseph Lauer, an engineer, worked at the museum and was hired during the war. Yet, he was a "notorious Nazi".<sup>1658</sup>

#### *Attitudes and post-war (self-)representation*

Working for a cultural institution in an occupied country inevitably raises questions about the attitudes of the staff, especially of the custodians, towards the authoritarian regime and its policies. Such attitudes can be complex or ambiguous and do not allow apparent dichotomies of resistance versus collaboration. A more complex picture of the situation is required, as well as a critical analysis of the post-war accounts. The concept of resistance cannot be limited to a political or ideological meaning but needs to be extended to include resistances inscribed in a professional or institutional logic. Such a perspective leaves space for resistances that could as well have happened in a non-occupation scenario and that were not necessarily motivated by ideological considerations.

Scientific integrity is another important question to consider, discussed in various studies on museums in the Third Reich. Wilhelm Reinecke and Gerhard Körner, the two leading figures of the museum in Lüneburg, for instance, and despite their sympathies for the Nazis, drew a line as soon as they thought that a closer collaboration could jeopardise their scientific integrity and credibility. Despite conflicts with some people, they could rely on the support of other important figures of the Nazi apparatus and did not oppose the regime in general. After

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<sup>1656</sup> ANLux, CdZ-B-0432, Letter from Albert Nothumb to the Landesmuseum Trier, 17/10/1941, no. 69.

<sup>1657</sup> ANLux, EPU-01-17501, *Enquête administrative prévue par l'arrêté grand-ducal du 30 novembre 1944*, Georges Schmitt, 31/12/1944.

<sup>1658</sup> ANLux, EPU-01-13207, *Enquête administrative prévue par l'arrêté grand-ducal du 30 novembre 1944*, Joseph Meyers, 31 December 1944.

the war, they adapted their accounts and downplayed their sympathies or collaboration.<sup>1659</sup> Another case study of two museums in occupied France shows that the museum in Carnac (Britanny) had no choice but to collaborate with the German administration. Though the Germans described the collaboration as fruitful, the situation remained ambiguous for the French museum director Maurice Jacq. As Reena Perschke observed in her analysis, Jacq's hands were bound, and he had to accept the presence of the staff of *Einsatzstab Reichsleiter Rosenberg* (ERR), a task force of the NSDAP confiscating cultural objects in the occupied territories. Though Jacq supported the Germans in different tasks, he withheld objects during excavations in the region.<sup>1660</sup>

Heuertz and Meyers may not have shared any convictions with the Nazis, but like their French colleagues, they had to work with the German administration to stay employed. Beyond these constraints, the sources related to acquisitions, for instance, show that they actively invested in becoming further involved in its activities, while still refraining from crossing some personal lines that were not explicitly or visibly moral. For instance, the custodians did not publish under their names during the occupation period.<sup>1661</sup> Concerning the removal of French inscriptions on monuments, an issue that was still on the table as late as April 1943, Joseph Meyers joined the opinion of the police director in Luxembourg. He advanced preservation arguments against the removal when it proved difficult or entailed a major intervention.<sup>1662</sup> Meyers was repeatedly asked to give lectures for the *Kunstkreise*, but he refused and used urgent art preservation as a reason, a task assigned to him by the civil administration.<sup>1663</sup>

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<sup>1659</sup> Ulfert Tschirner, 'Museumsgestalter mit eigener Position: Handlungsspielräume von Wissenschaftlern am Museum Lüneburg in der Zeit des Nationalsozialismus', in *Museen im Nationalsozialismus: Akteure - Orte - Politik*, ed. Tanja Baensch, Kristina Kratz-Kessemeier, and Dorothee Wimmer (Köln: Böhlau, 2016), 126.

<sup>1660</sup> Reena Perschke, 'Zwischen Kollaboration und Widerstand. Die Museen von Carnac und Vannes während der Besatzung der Bretagne 1940-1944', in *Museen im Nationalsozialismus: Akteure - Orte - Politik* (Köln: Böhlau, 2016), 333.

<sup>1661</sup> According to their statements in the *épuration* folders, they were asked to contribute to Nazi publications but declined the offers. The catalogue of the National Library in Luxembourg does not list any publications by Meyers or by Heuertz, at least none that would have been published under their names. This does not mean, however, that they did not contribute by collecting information for commissioned publications. In 1942, Meyers collected material for a calendar: "Ich trug während Wochen Material geschichtlichen Inhaltes zu einem Kalender zusammen, den der CDZ über den Kreisleiter Diehl sowie den Lux. Kunstkreis herausgeben will." (MNHA archives, separate shelf, folder no. 9, *Tätigkeitsbericht für die Zeit vom 15.10.42 – 15.11.42* by Joseph Meyers, undated).

<sup>1662</sup> MNHA archives, separate shelf, folder no. 20, Letter from Joseph Meyers to the cultural department of the VHKA, 14/04/1943.

<sup>1663</sup> MNHA archives, separate shelf, folder no. 20, Letter from Joseph Meyers to the Gesellschaft für Literatur und Kunst, 20/07/1944.

Other decisions by the custodians were not necessarily linked to the occupation. In 1941, Heuertz requested to leave his position as a schoolteacher under the pretext of the work to be carried out in the museum. In his chronicle, he explained that he had wanted to avoid the political training for teachers in Friedewalt. His request had been granted.<sup>1664</sup> In the report contained in his *épuration* file, Heuertz referred to this situation but merely stated that he had left public education to work at the museum.<sup>1665</sup> Yet, this was not the first occurrence in which he wished to spend more time at the museum, considering his letter of 1937 to Nicolas Margue, which elicited Ferrant's disagreement. Only the context changed, and the request could be framed accordingly. Heuertz also refused the title of director, which was offered to him and to Joseph Meyers.<sup>1666</sup> The motivations for their reported refusals are not known. It might be possible that both attempted to limit their implication in the German administration's affairs and preferred being subordinate to mediators who had more responsibilities. It cannot be denied that the custodians had good relationships with some Germans, for instance, Kornfeld (Vogler's successor). When Meyers was informed about Kornfeld's conscription to the Wehrmacht and his impending replacement, he wrote a note of thanks and expressed his gratitude. During the short time of Kornfeld's supervision, the museum had carried out, according to Meyers, "new, beautiful tasks":

In the short time from 1942 to 1943, you had superbly understood how to gain our trust, and we had enjoyed working with you. You had given the museum new and beautiful tasks.<sup>1667</sup>

The good relationship must have been mutual, as Kornfeld thanked the custodian for the support he received.<sup>1668</sup>

While the war-time reports and the internal documents do not reveal any political statements and, thus, do not allow a substantial assessment of the custodians' behaviour towards the regime, Heuertz's chronicle includes some comments on the political situation, for instance, when he recorded the periods of his sick leave (in October 1941 and in August 1942). The most

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<sup>1664</sup> MNHA archives, unnumbered box (Historique Musée national d'histoire naturelle), Musée d'Histoire Naturelle de l'Etat. Chronique, [Marcel Heuertz et alii], undated, p. 51.

<sup>1665</sup> ANLux, EPU-01-07804, *Enquête administrative prévue par l'arrêté grand-ducal du 30 novembre 1944*, Marcel Heuertz, 24/01/1945.

<sup>1666</sup> ANLux, EPU-01-07804, *Enquête administrative prévue par l'arrêté grand-ducal du 30 novembre 1944*, Marcel Heuertz, 24/01/1945.

<sup>1667</sup> "Sie hatten es in der kurzen Zeit von 1942-1943 ausgezeichnet verstanden, unser Vertrauen zu gewinnen, und die Arbeit mit Ihnen hatte uns Freude gemacht. Dem Museum waren neue schöne Aufgaben von Ihnen gestellt worden." (MNHA archives, separate shelf, folder no. 20, Letter from Joseph Meyers to Kornfeld, 06/04/1943).

<sup>1668</sup> "Ich darf Ihnen hiermit nochmals herzlich danken für die Unterstützung, die Sie mir bei meiner Arbeit in Luxemburg haben zuteil werden lassen." (MNHA archives, separate shelf, folder no. 20, Letter from Kornfeld to Joseph Meyers, 01/04/1943).

explicit statement related to the political situation appears in the entry of May 1943. Heuertz mentioned a press conference organised by the VHKVA; the curator believed that this conference aimed to strengthen the VHKVA's position and legitimise its activities. According to Heuertz, the VHKVA had always been opposed to the "brutal and stupid methods" by the Chef der Zivilverwaltung:

On 25 [May], the press was summoned to the "Brauer" (Brasseur!) hotel by Landesrat Hilgers to explain the work of the "Verwaltung für höhere Kommunalverbandsangelegenheiten". This administration, which was always in opposition to the brutal and stupid methods of the "Chef der Zivilverwaltung" and which had often intervened on behalf of persecuted Luxembourgers, seemed to want to justify its activity in order to strengthen its positions.<sup>1669</sup>

This excerpt is one example of the "good mediator" trope: creating an opposition between services with which Heuertz was directly in touch, against those who were the "bad" ones and with which he allegedly had no contact. As explained in a previous sub-section, this chronicle is a source to be critically considered. Meyers and Heuertz did not show or express sympathies with the Nazi regime. They did not openly criticise it, either. The risk of deportation or dismissal was real, especially as both were not evaluated favourably by the German security services. Whereas Heuertz and Meyers insisted on their attempts to postpone and slow down as much as possible some projects of the administration in their post-war reports, they collaborated on other tasks, such as the acquisition of objects, with the support of the administration. Political views, scientific virtues, and personal and material security were intertwined. This becomes especially clear by examining the case of Joseph Meyers.

Bernard Thomas shows in his study on the *Westforschung* that historians in Luxembourg strengthened the nationalist tone and imbibed their narratives with an ethnocultural perspective in the 1930s. They did not disseminate theories on the *Deutschum* (as the WFG hoped) but used similar concepts and applied them to construct a *Luxemburgertum*. In fact, through their contacts with their German colleagues, Luxembourgish researchers, such as Nicolas Margue and Joseph Meyers, concluded that they had to radicalise their discourse to keep track with the *Westforschung*. In addition, the political context with the ethnocultural concept of nationality contributed to this development.<sup>1670</sup> Nicolas Margue published an article in January 1938 to

<sup>1669</sup> "Le 25 [mai], la presse est convoquée à l'hôtel « Brauer » (Brasseur !) par le Landesrat Hilgers pour lui expliquer les travaux de la « Verwaltung für höhere Kommunalverbandsangelegenheiten ». Cette administration qui était toujours en opposition avec les méthodes brutales et stupides du « Chef der Zivilverwaltung » et qui était intervenue souvent pour des Luxembourgeois persécutés, semblait vouloir justifier son activité pour fortifier ses positions." (MNHA archives, unnumbered box (Historique Musée national d'histoire naturelle), Musée d'Histoire Naturelle de l'Etat. Chronique, [Marcel Heuertz et alii], undated, p. 63).

<sup>1670</sup> Thomas, *Le Luxembourg dans la ligne de mire de la Westforschung*, 219–234.

attempt to relativize some elements of the narrative that the *Westforscher* Wolfgang von Franqué constructed in a contribution to the journal *Deutsches Archiv für Landes- und Volksforschung* (itself a reaction to a contribution by Margue). In the article, Margue reaffirmed that a will for political independence had only developed slowly or hesitantly at best. He highlighted the particularity of Luxembourg and dismissed some of Franqué's claims, for instance, that the motivations for the Peasants' War (*Klëppelkrich*) would have included an imperial notion (*Reichsgedanke*). Margue observed that the German historian mentioned neither the Franco-Prussian war of 1870 nor the Great War.<sup>1671</sup> Though Margue did not wholly align himself with the master narrative as disseminated by Meyers, for example, he used his arguments to highlight Luxembourg's specificity.

Joseph Meyers was part of the milieu of conservative and right-wing historians who constructed a master narrative and revised it with *völkisch* aspects. Meyers' behaviour, in this context, created space for ambiguities in his actions. Meyers received his doctoral degree at the Institut für geschichtliche Landeskunde der Rheinlande (Institute for Historical Applied Geography of the Rhine Region) of the University of Bonn. Throughout the 1930s, he was the main contact for Steinbach in Luxembourg in organising conferences and inviting *Westforscher*; both were friends. Meyers was a member of the (re-founded) GEDELIT (since 1936), used as a German propaganda platform, and the Luxemburger Sprachgesellschaft (Luxembourgish Language Society), which reunited Luxembourgish nationalists. These associations, through Meyers, acted as liaisons for the Westdeutsche Forschungsgesellschaft (WFG) in Luxembourg during the interwar period.<sup>1672</sup> When the WFG organised colloquia dedicated to Luxembourg in 1932 and 1936, Meyers assisted both times, together with other researchers such as Nicolas Hein, Nicolas Majerus and Nicolas Margue (the latter only in 1936).<sup>1673</sup> As late as January 1938, Steinbach held a conference in Luxembourg on the French-German linguistic border under the auspices of the GEDELIT.<sup>1674</sup> Then minister Nicolas Margue, Albert Nothumb, and unspecified teachers were present. Meyers did not officially leave the GEDELIT after the invasion of Luxembourg. In question 5 of his *épuration* folder, he chose to mention that he was on the list of the Kulturkammer but refused to pay the

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<sup>1671</sup> Nicolas Margue, 'Zur Entwicklung des Luxemburger Nationalgefühls', *Die Rundschau: Beilage des 'Luxemburger Wort' für Literatur, Kunst und Wissenschaft*, January 1938.

<sup>1672</sup> Thomas, *Le Luxembourg dans la ligne de mire de la Westforschung*, 156.

<sup>1673</sup> Thomas, 191.

<sup>1674</sup> 'Entstehung und Bedeutung der deutsch-französischen Sprachgrenze', *Obermosel-Zeitung*, January 1938.

membership fee. According to his answer to question 18, Meyers refused “any active collaboration” with the GEDELIT or the Kunstkreis.<sup>1675</sup>

The German plans for the exhibition in the museum were not a novelty and fitted *völkisch* narratives. Meyers was probably not surprised by them. Unfortunately, the sources do not reveal what documents Vogler used for his project, not to mention who else was involved. However, it cannot be denied that the narratives about Luxembourg of the WFG were in line with the discourse of the projected exhibition. The general Nazi policy of removing any *welsch* (French-Romanic) influences and of Germanisation overlapped with the *Westforschung*, which denied any Luxembourgish specificity. It carefully adapted its narratives to accommodate the idea that Luxembourgers would be part of the *Deutschstum*. In addition, during the occupation period, newspapers published articles reusing the master narrative as modified by the Germans, attempting to illustrate Luxembourg’s supposedly German essence, or questioning its (past) independence. Emil Glass, for instance, published an article in the *Luxemburger Wort*, in which he denied the existence of “true” independence of Luxembourg; Germany had always been the “true motherland” (“*eigentliche Mutterland*”), and Luxembourgers and Germans would share the same blood.<sup>1676</sup>

Josef Schmithüsen, the researcher listed in the bibliography of the *Livre du Centenaire*, stayed in occupied Luxembourg as an advisor to the German *Kommandatur* to organise a collaborationist movement, i.e. the VdB. Indeed, Schmithüsen appears in the reports of the Sicherheitsdienst. Described as an “outstanding expert” (“*vorzüglicher Kenner*”) of Luxembourg, he was involved in the reorganisation of the political life in Luxembourg.<sup>1677</sup> He was also the head of the Volksdeutsche Mittelstelle (VoMi) in Luxembourg, an NSDAP body dedicated to the interests of ethnic Germans living outside of the German Reich.<sup>1678</sup> In the

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<sup>1675</sup> ANLux, EPU-01-13207, *Enquête administrative prévue par l’arrêté grand-ducal du 30 novembre 1944*, Joseph Meyers, 31 December 1944.

<sup>1676</sup> For the entire article, see: Emil Glass, ‘Das war Luxemburgs “Unabhängigkeit”’, *Luxemburger Wort*, October 1940. The German chancellor Otto von Bismarck, depicted as a skilled diplomat and politician, is presented as the saviour of Luxembourg’s independence in 1867 against French “annexation”, in a quarrel that is nearly entirely reduced to that between Napoleon III and Bismarck – the role of William III is barely mentioned. The First World War is also put in a perspective accommodating *völkisch* narrative, by claiming that France let Luxembourgers fight against “German brothers” (“*deutsche Brüder*”). On many occasions, Glass excludes or distorts facts. That Bismarck did not want Luxembourg to be sold to Napoleon was mainly motivated by strategic arguments. Moreover, in the previous year Prussia had not been opposed to France extending at the expense of Belgium and Luxembourg, if France would promise to not negotiate with German countries – an aspect that Glass leaves unmentioned.

<sup>1677</sup> LHA Ko, 662,006-917, Report on the activities of the Volksdeutsche Mittelstelle in Luxembourg by the SD-informant LH 7887, 01/07/1940.

<sup>1678</sup> Thomas, *Le Luxembourg dans la ligne de mire de la Westforschung*, 245.

volume ...et wor alles net esou einfach. *Questions sur le Luxembourg et la Deuxième Guerre mondiale* (2002), published by the Luxembourg City Museum, some photographs illustrating the removal of plates with French street names were taken by Schmithüsens. On 5 September 1940, the *Obermosel Zeitung* published an article signed by Schmithüsens in which he welcomed the removal of any *welsch* traces in Luxembourg City:

The city of Luxembourg is currently shedding piece by piece the foreign dress it has had to wear for years. Much of the whitewash has already been washed off. Others are being cleaned up as we speak.<sup>1679</sup>

Schmithüsens interpreted the removal of French words from public space as a liberation from a foreign language and a return to Luxembourg's 'true' essence.

An institution such as the Landesmuseum certainly attracted Schmithüsens's interest as a scholar, but it is impossible to ascertain how many times and in what contexts Schmithüsens and Meyers met. Their paths most certainly crossed, though, as Meyers was repeatedly invited by Schmithüsens, but also by Zender and others, to participate in a *volksdeutsch* movement between May and July 1940. Meyers, as he wrote, declined. He included this in his answer to question 17 about acts of resistance.<sup>1680</sup>

While Meyers disseminated a deeply nationalist narrative of Luxembourg's past during the interwar period – even Nicolas Margue disagreed with his construction of a Luxembourgish national consciousness dating back to Medieval times – some tropes and concepts used by the Germans did not necessarily provoke Meyers' rejection, especially if these concepts could be adapted to a Luxembourgish version of a nationalist narrative. The archival sources further illustrate the complex situation in which Meyers found himself during the occupation. On 4 September 1942, around the same time when Meyers requested to collect objects from resettlers, the Oberbereichsleiter of the NSDAP ordered a procedure to remove Meyers from his position. The curator returned his VdB member card to protest the decrees of the CdZ concerning citizenship and the introduction of compulsory military service on 30 August 1942. Meyers was not the only one:

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<sup>1679</sup> "Die Stadt Luxemburg entledigt sich zur Zeit Stück für Stück des fremden Kleides, das sie jahrelang hat tragen müssen. Vieles von der welschen Tünche ist bereits abgewaschen. Anderes wird gerade in diesen Tagen bereinigt." (Josef Schmithüsens, 'Volkstümliches Namensgut!', *Obermosel-Zeitung*, September 1940).

<sup>1680</sup> ANLux, EPU-01-13207, *Enquête administrative prévue par l'arrêté grand-ducal du 30 novembre 1944*, Joseph Meyers, 31 December 1944.

The official mentioned above [Meyers] belongs to the group of people who returned their membership card of the Volksdeutschen Bewegung in protest against the decrees of the CdZ on nationality and compulsory military service in Luxembourg of 30.8.42.<sup>1681</sup>

Yet, in December 1942, the Oberbereichsleiter withdrew his order at the instigation of the Kreisleiter. This letter was marked “*strenge vertraulich*” (“strictly confidential”).<sup>1682</sup> Why the procedure came to a halt and whether Meyers’ contacts helped him is yet another question with no answer. A report might provide a clue. Considering the innumerable times when Meyers refused requests by Germans for various matters (publication, positions, events, etc.), the delegates of the commission of the secondary education for the *épuration* expressed their surprise about him not having been severely punished by the regime, despite the “considerable number of patriotic refusals, protests, stratagems and ruses” (“*nombre considérable de refus, de protestations, de subterfuges, de combines patriotiques*”). They concluded that Meyers used his German contacts to avoid the worst. Though he was arrested by the Gestapo and imprisoned after the strike of 1942<sup>1683</sup>, he was released thanks to the influence of a collaborator of the museum, Joseph Lauer, a “notorious nazi” (“*nazi notoire*”), as the delegates stressed. They continued:

It also appears that in many other critical situations, there was a person among his numerous German contacts who, without being an orthodox Nazi, still possessed enough influence to bail him out. Thus, covered by this protection that he cleverly and discreetly used, he could allow himself to do acts of resistance that others less fortunate had to pay with destitution, incarceration, or deportation.<sup>1684</sup>

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<sup>1681</sup> “Der obengenannte Beamte [Meyers] gehört zu dem Personenkreis derjenigen, die aus Protest gegen die Verordnungen des CdZ. über die Staatsangehörigkeit und die Wehrpflicht in Luxemburg vom 30.8.42 ihren Ausweis über die Mitgliedschaft zur Volksdeutschen Bewegung zurückgegeben haben.” (ANLux, CdZ-A-1970-13, Letter from the Oberbereichsleiter of the NSDAP to the Chef der Zivilverwaltung, 04/09/1942, no. 177).

<sup>1682</sup> ANLux, CdZ-A-1970-13, Letter from the Oberbereichsleiter of the NSDAP to the Chef der Zivilverwaltung, 08/12/1942, no. 178.

<sup>1683</sup> It should be added that during the strikes in September 1942, Meyers returned his VdB card and wrote a letter to the Landesleitung of the VdB. He provided this information specifically in his answer to question 16, on the attitude taken towards the strike, even though there is no apparent link to the question itself (ANLux, EPU-01-13207, *Enquête administrative prévue par l’arrêté grand-ducal du 30 novembre 1944*, Joseph Meyers, 31 December 1944).

<sup>1684</sup> Own translation. “De même il paraît qu’en mainte autre situation critique il se trouva une personne parmi ses nombreuses relations allemandes qui, sans être nazi orthodoxe, disposait néanmoins d’une influence suffisante pour le tirer d’affaire. Ainsi, à l’abri de cette protection qu’il faisait habilement et discrètement jouer, il pouvait se permettre des actes de résistances que d’autres, moins heureux, payaient de la destitution, de l’incarcération ou de la déportation.” (ANLux, EPU-01-13207, *Rapport au sujet de Mr. Joseph Meyers, professeur à l’Athénée de Luxembourg*, by the delegates of the secondary education, undated).

Neither Meyers nor the delegates probably knew that a procedure to destitute him was launched. Besides Meyers' contacts, the procedure was possibly stopped because Meyers did not definitely abandon his membership in the VdB. If Meyers wanted to stay employed, he had no other choice than to accommodate with the rules and dispositions, though he was still an aspiring member (*Anwärter*) of the VdB in 1944. Meyers' skills might be a third explanation, potentially linked to the first. His superiors, either at the VHKVA or at the museum in Trier, did not want to lose a custodian.

Another document raises additional questions. A letter dated 27 March 1943 informed Joseph Meyers of his upcoming detachment to a school in Wuppertal, starting on 1 April 1943.<sup>1685</sup> Retrospectively, we know that this did not happen. Meyers was working in Luxembourg throughout the occupation period. Two hypotheses can be provided at this stage. The first posits that the letter was not addressed to the custodian Joseph Meyers but to another person with the same name (a painter bore the same name as the custodian, for instance). The second theory assumes that the custodian was indeed targeted. But then, why should he be detached? Was it a consequence of his protest in 1942? And why did this not happen in the end? Some people in the administration might have protested in his favour. In addition, as Evy Friedrich expanded in his book on the *Umsiedlung*, in some cases, the resettlement did not occur for several reasons. It also depended on the responsible Kreisleiter.<sup>1686</sup>

Even if Joseph Meyers did not voluntarily participate in disseminating Nazi views and, on some occasions, was not blindly doing what the Germans asked, he had never crossed a line that caused him to lose his job and, if beneficial for the museum's collection and status, collaborated voluntarily. Meyers' behaviour shows more complexities than the binary categorisation of resistant and collaborator. He had fostered good contacts with German researchers dating back to the interwar period, and he did not hesitate to disseminate a nationalist narrative, even if this meant reusing tropes of the *Westforscher* and adapting them to Luxembourg. In the post-war period, Meyers legitimised his involvement by using the trope of the patriotic self. A paragraph in his report combined the “patriotic self” with the “good mediator”:

The ‘R.P.A.’ Aussenstelle Lux. tried from the very first months of the ‘CdZ’ to get hold of the exhibition rooms of the Museum to carry out, with the help of the Luxembourg staff, Nazi

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<sup>1685</sup> It is a transcription of the original letter. ANLux, CdZ-A-1874-24, Letter from the Abteilung II of the CdZ to Joseph Meyers, 27/03/1943, no. 74.

<sup>1686</sup> Friedrich, *Als Luxemburg entvölkert werden sollte: Geschichte und Geschichten der Umsiedlung*, 17.

propaganda; the 'Kreisleitung' attempted again for the 'Kreistag' of 1942. With the help of the 'Verw. der höh. K.V.A.', these plans were foiled.<sup>1687</sup>

This example of the “good mediator” trope is immediately followed by the “patriotic self” strategy:

But then this administration [VHKVA] wanted the Landesmuseum to organise temporary exhibitions in its building and even to complete one part or another of the museum. Then they had the idea of conferences on museum topics [...]. All these projects it submitted to me more than once until September 1944. But whatever it did, and despite a few lapses in our ranks, we eventually prevailed; the Museum maintained its attitude of passive resistance until the end of the war.<sup>1688</sup>

In this excerpt, Meyers presented the “resistance” as a fight that the museum and the Luxembourgers won. The same report includes another example of both tropes, again combined. When discussing the parochial archives and their conservation, Meyers explained:

Thanks to the goodwill of some Germans who were colluding with us and manoeuvred with great skill, the parish priests remained in possession of their archives. Thanks to Germans, the archives of the Historical Section did not go to Ehrenbreitstein, but remained in Luxembourg.<sup>1689</sup>

Whenever Meyers mentioned a collaboration with Germans, he presented good Germans and used the same trope. In the excerpt above, he claimed that Germans helped to save the parochial archives and keep them within Luxembourg. Combined with this narrative and put into the perspective of his whole report, his presentation implies the accomplishment of a patriotic act.

Indications provided by Meyers in his *épuration* folder also comprise numerous patriotic and resistance interpretations. At least one detail shared by the custodian is further from the

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<sup>1687</sup> “Le ‘R.P.A.’ Aussenstelle Lux. essaya dès les premiers mois du ‘CdZ’ de mettre la main sur les salles d’expositions du Musée, afin d’y faire, avec le concours du personnel luxembourgeois, de la propagande nazie; la ‘Kreisleitung’ revint à la charge pour le ‘Kreistag’ de 1942. Avec l’aide de la ‘Verw. der höh. K.V.A.’, ces projets furent déjoués.” (Joseph Meyers, ‘Le musée d’histoire pendant la guerre’, in *Annuaire 1949*, ed. Société des Amis des Musées [Luxembourg: Société des amis des musées, 1949], 125).

<sup>1688</sup> “Mais cette administration désira à son tour voir le ‘Landesmuseum’ lui-même organiser des expositions temporaires dans son bâtiment, et même d’achever l’une ou l’autre partie du Musée. Puis elle eut l’idée de conférences sur des sujets muséaux [...]. Tous ces projets, elle me les soumit plus d’une fois jusqu’en septembre 1944. Mais quoi qu’elle fit, et malgré quelques défaillances dans nos rangs, nous finîmes par l’emporter; le Musée garda son attitude de résistance passive jusqu’à la fin de la guerre.” (Joseph Meyers, ‘Le musée d’histoire pendant la guerre’, in *Annuaire 1949*, ed. Société des Amis des Musées [Luxembourg: Société des amis des musées, 1949], 125).

<sup>1689</sup> “Le ‘CdZ’ aurait voulu s’emparer de ces dernières; grâce au bon vouloir de certains Allemands, qui étaient de connivence avec nous, et qui manœuvraient avec beaucoup d’habileté, les curés restèrent en possession de leur archives. Grâce encore à des Allemands, les archives de la Section historique ne prirent pas le chemin d’Ehrenbreitstein, mais restèrent à Luxembourg.” (Joseph Meyers, ‘Le musée d’histoire pendant la guerre’, in *Annuaire 1949*, ed. Société des Amis des Musées [Luxembourg: Société des amis des musées, 1949], 121–122).

truth than he wanted the reader to think. Under question 20, “*autres actes patriotiques*” (“other patriotic acts”), Meyers wrote:

I had tens of thousands of objects of all kinds belonging to the Grand Ducal family, to the State, or to private individuals, and representing an important part of the national heritage, transported and hidden (resp. kept) in the Museum – objects that the Germans had ordered to be confiscated.<sup>1690</sup>

In addition to the “patriotic self” trope, documents conserved at the archives of the MNHA prove that the acquisition and conservation of objects belonging to the Grand-Ducal family were less clandestine than the custodian’s testimony suggests. Indeed, letters and other sources exist, documenting at least partly these acquisitions. The museum acquired flags, the gala coach, and paintings belonging to the royal family.<sup>1691</sup> Furthermore, the formulation of the testimony is imprecise to the extent that it becomes meaningless: hiding or keeping thousands of objects belonging to the grand-ducal family, to the state, to private owners, i.e., to anyone.

The “patriotic duty” regularly highlighted by the custodians was undoubtedly limited. Meyers and his colleagues did not have any apparent problems with acquisitions. In fact, Meyers’ behaviour is not an exceptional case but a confirmation of how museum professionals generally acted under the Nazi regime. His narrative is also an example of situational opportunism. As Sebastian Farnung has shown in his research on museums in Frankfurt-am-Main during the Third Reich, the custodians of the city’s museums were in an ambiguous situation. While they were involved in the Nazi policies and sought advantages of the situation, as was the case with the acquisition of Jewish collections, some sporadic activities contradicted decisions taken by the authorities or were not in line with their policy.<sup>1692</sup> Some acts, which made narrow ideological gaps or even a rejection of the regime apparent and which were inflated to acts of resistance after 1945, only happened when the interests of the concerned museums were endangered. As Farnung explained:

Ultimately, the example of the Frankfurt museums also shows the National Socialists' claim to enforce comprehensive control of all areas of life. The museums were also unable to escape the power of this claim, despite partially successful resistance to individual measures and a partially existing ideological distance from or rejection of the regime. Corresponding actions, which after

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<sup>1690</sup> “J’ai fait transporter et cacher (resp. garder) au Musée des dizaines de milliers d’objets de toute espèce appartenant à la Famille grande-ducale, à l’Etat, ou à des particuliers, et représentant une partie importante du patrimoine national – objets dont les Allemands avaient ordonné la confiscation.” (ANLux, EPU-01-13207, *Enquête administrative prévue par l’arrêté grand-ducal du 30 novembre 1944*, Joseph Meyers, 31 December 1944).

<sup>1691</sup> These documents can be found in: MNHA archives, isolated shelf on second floor, folder no. 4. The folder includes two subfolders: “Gegenstände des früheren Marstall der Grossherzogin” and “Luxbgische Fahnen u. Bilder der ehemaligen grossherzoglichen Familie [...]”.

<sup>1692</sup> Farnung, *Kulturpolitik im Dritten Reich am Beispiel Frankfurter Museen*, 361–362.

1945 were often inflated to acts of resistance, can usually only be found when the interests of “one's own” museum were affected and could not prevent their other involvement in Nazi cultural policy, even among those officials who stood aloof from National Socialism. A contradictory picture emerges here. It is true for almost all museums that they benefited from Nazi cultural policy, especially the anti-Jewish measures (Aryanisation, property levies, purchases of Jewish collections), and their directors initiated or were involved in actions that clearly showed them as actors in the sense of Nazi policy. However, in isolated cases, actions can also be identified that were incompatible with the principles of a Nazi policy and must be clearly understood as opposition to National Socialist measures.<sup>1693</sup>

A similar description can be applied to Heuertz and Meyers. Disregarding their antipathy for the regime, they participated in the cultural policy of the occupation period, defended the interest of the museum whenever opportune and attempted to maximise advantages. When they could bloat some actions into acts of resistance and patriotism after the war, they were helped by the general context. With the tide turning against the Germans in the war and the *Bauverbot* in 1942, they did not need to contribute to the inauguration of the museum and the finalisation of the permanent exhibition. However, they still criticised the state of the museum and the unfinished rooms unfit for conservation purposes. Yet, in the post-war period, even the most obvious activities of custodians were presented as patriotic actions or political resistance.

The questionnaires of the *épuration* were not evident in their terminology. A distinction was made between “acts of resistance” (question 17), direct or indirect refusal to collaborate (question 18) and “other patriotic acts” (question 20). Despite a lack of definition and potential confusion, the answers to these questions also reveal what the respondent considered as resistance, patriotic duty, and refusal to collaborate. Meyers did not miss to note every instance in which he refused to participate in the movement, to sign the manifesto *Heim ins Reich*, or to bear the badge of the VdB. To this list, he added the non-participation in the

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<sup>1693</sup> “Letztlich zeigt sich auch am Beispiel der Frankfurter Museen der Anspruch der Nationalsozialisten, eine umfassende Kontrolle aller Lebensbereiche durchzusetzen. Der Wirkungsmacht dieser Inanspruchnahme haben sich auch die Museen nicht entziehen können, trotz partiell erfolgreichen Widerstands gegen einzelne Maßnahmen und einer teilweise vorhandenen ideologischen Distanz oder Ablehnung des Regimes. Entsprechende Handlungen, die nach 1945 oftmals zu Taten großen Widerstands aufgebläht wurden, sind zumeist nur dann festzustellen, wenn die Interessen des „eigenen“ Museums betroffen waren, und konnten auch bei denjenigen Beamten, die dem Nationalsozialismus fernstanden, ihre sonstige Verstrickung in die nationalsozialistische Kulturpolitik nicht verhindern. Hier zeigt sich ein widersprüchliches Bild. Für nahezu alle Museen gilt, dass sie von den Maßnahmen nationalsozialistischer Kulturpolitik profitierten, insbesondere den antijüdischen (Arisierung, Vermögensabgaben, Ankäufe jüdischer Sammlungen), und ihre Leiter Handlungen initiierten oder an solchen beteiligt waren, die sie klar als Akteure im Sinne einer NS-Politik zeigten. Es lassen sich aber vereinzelt auch Handlungen feststellen, die mit den Grundsätzen einer NS-Politik nicht vereinbar waren und eindeutig als Widerspruch gegen nationalsozialistische Maßnahmen verstanden werden müssen.” (Sebastian Farnung, *Kulturpolitik im Dritten Reich am Beispiel Frankfurter Museen* [Frankfurt am Main: Henrich Editionen, 2015], 361–362).

“Schulungslehrgang” in Friedewalt (Nothumb helped him to avoid it). The refusal to participate in the “Schulungslehrgang” could also have been written under question 18, but Meyers did it under question 17. Other cases reveal a similar lack of clarity. Under question 18, Meyers noted that he did not write a pro-Nazi text as requested by Kratzenberg. For Meyers, then, the concept of resistance was broadly defined. As for Meyers’ colleague Heuertz, he did not provide an answer to question 17, but under question 18, he noted that he did not respond to Kratzenberg’s request to contribute to the publication series *Heim ins Reich* in June 1941 (it is not clear whether this is the same one mentioned by Meyers). As far as can be deducted from the questionnaires, Heuertz had a narrower understanding of resistance. Yet, he might also simply have shared less information.

The questionnaires of the *épuration* were a fitting stage for individuals to show their attitudes of “resistance” during the war – or to legitimise their acts as much as possible. Like these examples of situational opportunism, a letter by Nothumb is another case. In this undated letter written in the context of the *épuration* and preserved in his folder, Albert Nothumb explained the reasons for joining the VdB, which he did after the arrest of Wehrer, with whom he worked closely. Nothumb wanted to avoid any backlash against himself. Nevertheless, in the same letter, he moved on to more general considerations and attempted to legitimise the stance of state employees during the occupation period. His argument ran along the following lines: had the state officials consequently resisted the pressure exerted on them, the Germans would have unleashed an unprecedented terror; the attitude of the Luxembourgish state officials made them think that they could achieve their goals without the need of a radical purge:

I am firmly convinced that the Germans would have unleashed untold terror in our country if the officials had not yielded to their pressure. The attitude of the civil servants against whom the first and most challenging wave of the assault was launched gave them the hope that, despite everything, they would succeed in overcoming the Luxembourg people. It incited them, against their officially professed doctrine of radical purification of the first hour, to engage in a path which they would certainly never have entered if they had been able to realise, from the beginning, that it would lead them to a complete failure of their policy.<sup>1694</sup>

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<sup>1694</sup> “Je suis fermement convaincu que les Allemands eussent déchaînés dans notre pays une terreur sans nom si les fonctionnaires n’avaient pas cédé à leur pression. L’attitude des fonctionnaires contre lesquels était lancée la première vague d’assaut, celle qui est la plus difficile à soutenir, leur donnait l’espoir que, malgré tout, ils arriveraient à bout du peuple luxembourgeois. Elle les incitait, à l’encontre de leur doctrine officiellement professée de l’épuration radicale de la première heure, à s’engager dans une voie dans laquelle [sic] ils ne seraient certainement jamais entrés, s’ils avaient pu se rendre compte, dès le début, qu’elle les conduirait à une faillite complète de leur politique.” (ANLux, EPU-01-14440, Letter from Albert Nothumb, undated [1945]).

On the one hand, Nothumb did not speak of resistance but referred to the difficult position in which state officials found themselves after the invasion. He recognised that they collaborated, at least to a certain extent. On the other hand, he put this stance in a positive light, as it would have allegedly avoided radical measures that the Germans implemented elsewhere. Resistance would have elicited far worse consequences than giving in to the pressure. Nothumb's perspective does not allow space for the possibility that some might have voluntarily collaborated. While moving away from the resistance narrative, Nothumb resorts to the victimisation trope and indirectly legitimises his actions.

It is possible that Heuertz and Meyers were not sympathising with the occupation, but this is not the main issue in the present study. In any case, their texts should be considered with reservations. The way François Reinert presented the stance of the curators by labelling it “politics of passive resistance” (*“politique de résistance passive”*) is problematic, especially as Reinert used Meyers’ account for his text without any critical confrontation – and Meyers, too, had used the expression of “passive resistance”.<sup>1695</sup> Comparing his article with Meyers’ text shows that Reinert merely paraphrased parts of the report, often without referencing the information. For this comparison, I reproduce the original French texts. On the situation in September 1939, Reinert wrote:

Le conservateur Joseph Meyers, qui venait de commencer à installer les premiers objets, reçut l’ordre gouvernemental de vider toutes les salles et de mettre sans tarder les collections à l’abri d’éventuelles attaques aériennes. Il fallut un mois pour démonter les monuments du lapidaire et les ensevelir dans des montagnes de sacs de sable au sous-sol et dans les caves. Le reste des collections fut soigneusement emballé dans de nombreuses caisses et déposé dans les caves les plus profondes.<sup>1696</sup>

In comparison, this is the original text in Meyers’ report:

Le jour même où je finissais les premières vitrines [...] un contre-ordre gouvernemental, qui m’atteignit tard dans l’après-midi, m’arrêta net dans mon travail : il fallait vider toutes les salles et descendre tous les objets dans les caves, pour les mettre là à l’abri de toutes attaques aériennes ou de tout autre danger de guerre. [...] Nous mêmes environ un mois à démonter les monuments du lapidaire, pour les ensevelir dans des montagnes de sacs de sable, dans les lieux les plus sûrs du sous-sol et des caves ; le reste des collections, soigneusement et « scientifiquement » emballé dans de nombreuses caisses, fut déposé dans les caves les plus profondes [...].<sup>1697</sup>

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<sup>1695</sup> “Mais quoi qu’elle fit, et malgré quelques défaillances dans nos rangs, nous finîmes par l’emporter ; le Musée garda son attitude de résistance passive jusqu’à la fin de la guerre.” (Meyers, ‘Le musée d’histoire pendant la guerre’, 125).

<sup>1696</sup> Reinert, “‘Inter arma silent Musae’. Les musées d’Etat pendant la guerre”, 70.

<sup>1697</sup> Meyers, ‘Le musée d’histoire pendant la guerre’, 114.

Hence a lack of critical assessment of Meyers' account. Indeed, the expression of passive resistance needs to be questioned. Where to draw a line between categories such as “collaborating”, “doing nothing”, “passively resisting”, and “actively resisting”? Foni Le Brun-Ricalens' interpretation of Marcel Heuertz and his chronicle is even more problematic:

The pages reveal the self-sacrifice and commitment of a man devoted to his country who, instead of fleeing abroad, resists “from within” by trying to remain in control of the place in order to safeguard better the national heritage for which he is responsible.<sup>1698</sup>

Whereas Reinert might have at least relativized Meyers' behaviour by using the flawed “passive resistance” category, this distinction is not even drawn in Le Brun's text. Despite this minor difference, both authors have missed the ambiguous stance of the custodians during the occupation period and even before 1940. Furthermore, Le Brun takes it for granted that the entries in Heuertz' chronicle were written on the indicated dates.

After the war, it was not in the personal interest of anyone in a public institution to discuss collaboration or personal (involuntary) involvement in propagandistic activities, especially as the government planned to discharge museum employees in the immediate post-war period. In the context of the *épuration* and the suspicions towards those state officials and employees who remained in Luxembourg during the occupation, Meyers' account might also be an attempt to support his colleagues: such as himself, they were not collaborators. The post-war accounts of the curators – as well as Heuertz's chronicle – remain tacit on the propagandistic use of the collection. They did not expand on the acquisitions of the objects. After the meeting of December 1940, according to Heuertz, the curators decided to realise only those parts of the projects that were in the interest of the building and the conservation of the collections and to avoid a “political inauguration”.<sup>1699</sup> While it is unclear what he meant precisely with the expression of “political inauguration”, this attitude might be what Meyers meant with “patriotic action”. In any case, the curators might have tried not to compromise their scientific work as much as possible. Only a month after the invasion, they wrote a letter to Albert Wehrer and

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<sup>1698</sup> “On découvre au détour des pages l'abnégation et l'engagement d'un homme dévoué à sa patrie et qui, au lieu de fuir à l'étranger, fait acte de résistance “de l'intérieur” en tentant de rester maître des lieux afin de pouvoir mieux sauvegarder le patrimoine national dont il a la charge.” (Foni Le Brun-Ricalens, ‘Le Musée d'Histoire naturelle de Luxembourg sous l'occupation allemande (1940-1945). Un témoignage: le livre-chronique de Marcel Heuertz’, in .....et wor alles net esou einfach. *Questions sur le Luxembourg et la Deuxième Guerre mondiale. Fragen an die Geschichte Luxemburgs im Zweiten Weltkrieg*, ed. Musée d'histoire de la Ville de Luxembourg [Luxembourg: Musée d'histoire de la Ville de Luxembourg, 2002], 78).

<sup>1699</sup> Heuertz, ‘Le Musée d'histoire naturelle pendant la guerre mondiale 1939-1945 et dans les années d'après-guerre’, 130.

expressed the wish that the museum building should not be occupied by a “foreign administration”. In that letter, they put the conservation of the collection to the fore:

Would it not be possible to free the Museum from any external influence on its services, in the interests of conserving the country's historical and natural riches, so that the curators could continue to work on its internal organisation in the best interests of the collections?<sup>1700</sup>

The evolution of the war helped the curators not get involved – at least not visibly and explicitly – in the Nazi plans for the museum. However, in a wartime report, Heuertz was concerned about the conservation of the collection due to the unfinished construction works<sup>1701</sup>. As for many other people during the occupation, Heuertz and Meyers were doing their jobs – any apparent resistance or opposition would have posed a risk to their careers. The curators – and the whole staff – were part of an institution placed under German administration and profiting in many ways from the situation. When issues arose, such as the limits of the decree on the exportation of objects, or the lack of space in the museum, they highlighted those problems and made suggestions. The situation was not only more complex but highly ambiguous. The institution was eager to expand the collection.

A minor, different, yet revealing case shows how people adapted their arguments during the occupation. This, too, is an example of situational opportunism. In March 1942, the painter Alfons Roth applied for the position of a taxidermist (*préparateur*) in the museum. As he explained in his letter to the mayor of Luxembourg, this was not the first time. In 1939, he applied for a similar position. A copy of this letter was attached to his renewed application. According to his explanations, despite his skills, he did not receive the job because he was Volksdeutscher.<sup>1702</sup> Roth probably hoped he could finally get it precisely because he was German. Though it could not be verified whether his nationality had indeed been a hindrance in 1939, it was a plausible reason considering the general political context of the late interwar period. More significantly, his second application might have been motivated by his financial situation. In his letter of 1942, he stressed that he worked as a painter's assistant

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<sup>1700</sup> “N'y aurait-il pas moyen de rendre libre le Musée de toute emprise extérieure à ses services, dans l'intérêt de la conservation des richesses historiques et naturelles du pays, pour que les conservateurs puissent continuer à travailler à son organisation intérieure au mieux des besoins des collections?” (MNHA archives, separate shelf, folder no. 29, Letter from the curators of the museum to Albert Wehrer [12/07/1940]).

<sup>1701</sup> ANLux, IP-1809, *Monatsbericht (15.2.1942 bis 15.3.1942) von Dr M. Heuertz, Leiter der Abt. Naturkunde*, 20/03/1942.

<sup>1702</sup> Original text: “Die Prüfung meiner Papiere ergab, dass ich Volksdeutscher bin und dies genügte, um mein Gesuch, trotz bester Empfehlungen, abzulehnen, obwohl man mir in Fachkreisen bestätigte, dass ich unter den Bewerbern der am besten geeignete Fachmann wäre.” (ANLux, CdZ-B-0432, Letter from Alfons Roth to the mayor of Luxembourg, 06/03/1942, no. 2).

(*Anstreichergeselle*) and had to feed his family. In the end, he did not get the job again.<sup>1703</sup> Roth's example illustrates how individuals adapted their narratives and framed their motivations according to the context.

For the Germans, the museum should become a tool to legitimise Nazi ideology. With the *Bauverbot* and the development of the war, the plans for the extension and interior reorganisation could not be carried out. On the one hand, the institution could not fully develop. On the other hand, Nazi cultural policy played in its favour in terms of staff, financial resources and acquisitions. This situation constituted a break from the preceding period, even if the same curators continued to be employed. Though Vogler dedicated some reflections to the visitors' experiences, the curators did not seem interested in this aspect. This attitude was once again reflected in Heuertz's chronicle: When the Americans entered Luxembourg City on 10 September 1944, Heuertz noted his relief concerning the protection of the collections: "After four years of fear, I am relieved to know that all collections have been conserved and that the building is intact".<sup>1704</sup> The museum was caught in a tension between political-ideological exploitation, individual interests, and scientific rationales.

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<sup>1703</sup> ANLux, CdZ-B-0432, Unsigned letter to Alfons Roth, 01/06/1942, no. 1.

<sup>1704</sup> Own translation. "Après 4 ans d'anxiété, je suis content de savoir toutes les collections conservées et le bâtiment intact." (MNHA archives, unnumbered box [Historique Musée national d'histoire naturelle], Musée d'Histoire Naturelle de l'Etat. Chronique, [Marcel Heuertz et alii], undated, p. 69).

#### IV.4. Preliminary Conclusions

In many respects, the occupation period from 1940 to 1944 marked a break in Luxembourg's cultural policy. According to Nazi ideology, Luxembourg was German territory, disenfranchised from its essence due to French cultural propaganda. It was to be annexed to the Third Reich. Though this did not happen officially, many initiatives by the Nazi regime meant a de facto annexation. While Luxembourgers continued to be employed, the higher offices of the German Civil Administration, headed by the Gauleiter Gustav Simon as Chef der Zivilverwaltung (CdZ), were reserved for *Reichsdeutsche*. New structures and organisations were created or introduced from the *Altreich*.

The *Aufbauarbeit* and the *Deutschstumpflege* were the main pillars of cultural policy. In the area of culture, the Germans saw themselves in direct competition with the French. The administration wanted to remove every trace of French culture and language in a parallel process of de-romanisation and germanisation. The language law of August 1940 is one example of this ambition. The administration aimed not only to denationalise the country but also to deconstruct the intermediate character of Luxembourg. The Nazi discourse systematically refuted the country's self-perception as a mediator between two cultures, candidly exposed, for instance, in Robert Csaki's report.

While its overall policy was an apparent reaction to Luxembourg as a nationalised intermediate space, the civil administration, with support from the central Reich authorities, sought to replace the intermediate character of the territory with the new status of a *Grenzland* on the western border of the Reich. Luxembourg was to be transformed into a bulwark against the West (i.e. France). This ideological framework needs to consider cultural and non-cultural policies (resettlement). Furthermore, though being one of the most western-occupied territories of the Reich, some actors, such as the Reichspropagandaamt, thought Luxembourg should become a stage for disseminating German culture to the West. This was possibly a discursive strategy to avoid competition between Luxembourg and other German cities in the Gau Moselland, such as Trier.

A rather complex situation was created within the administration for culture, but also with the appearance of various actors, entailing polycratic power structures. Several departments of the Nazi regime were involved in cultural policy. Besides an Abteilung V, which was responsible for culture, the Verwaltung der höheren Kommunalverbandsangelegenheiten (VHKVA) encompassed its cultural department (*Kulturpflege*). It was headed until 1942 by Albert Nothumb. The Abteilung II supervised libraries, among others, though the VHKVA

administered the Landesbibliothek. Albert Perizonius headed the Luxembourg branch office of the RPA.

The German administration instituted a dispositif of control to keep the cultural society in check and reorganise it towards Nazi goals. The administration created a strict framework in which the cultural society developed and cultural activities were organised. Whereas non-compliant structures and associations were abolished, the occupation period experienced a multiplication of state-controlled actors in a top-down approach. As part of the dispositif of control, they disseminated discourses on the German essence of Luxembourg, coerced cultural actors, and supported conformist culture. Among these structures figured the Landeskulturkammer, the Kunstkreise, and other Nazi organisations imported from the Reich, such as the KdF movement. They helped to identify individuals who were not fully cooperating or expressed disagreements. At the same time, artists who supported the regime or did not produce critical or undesired artworks could exhibit in the *Altreich* and Luxembourg. The Kunsthaus in Luxembourg was a space created for exhibitions. Of course, loopholes in the dispositif of control were not wholly neutralised, and disagreements within the polycratic power structures existed. Nazi propaganda did not have its desired effect, or at least this is what the SD reports convey. Quarrels between actors arose, especially when the competencies and interests of actors overlapped.

Besides the efforts invested in propaganda and the creation of a dispositif of control, traditional institutions were a cornerstone of German cultural policy. In this sense, it was not a break compared to the interwar period. What differed, however, was the practical impact on the institutions and their use as tools for cultural propaganda and the strengthening of German culture in Luxembourg. The Nazi regime, at least the regional authorities, conceived ambitious projects for Luxembourg. A new theatre was planned but never realised. The Landesbibliothek moved to a new building. The state archives were reorganised. The Germans introduced their models from the *Altreich* for the internal organisation. In conformity with Nazi ideology, the institutions were to be purged. The playhouse hosted German performances with the ambition of reaching high quality. For the State Archives, the administration drew a list of archival funds to be returned from France, for instance. The Landesbibliothek was only allowed to exhibit German or German-speaking literature. However, non-German writings were still to be conserved. For the reorganisation and administration of cultural institutions, the CdZ implicated experienced individuals from Germany loyal to the regime, such as Alex Röder. Collaborations between institutions in Luxembourg and those in other German cities of the Gau Moselland were put in place. In addition, some of the most notable cultural innovations

introduced by the Nazis in Luxembourg were related to traditional institutions. A decree regulated the submission of depository copies. Pierre Frieden, director of the Landesmuseum until 1942, was himself implicated in the process and made suggestions. In the area of archival preservation, the administration instituted an *Archivberatungsstelle*.

Yet, the case of the cultural institutions also shows that power relations between local authorities, regional administrations and the Reich ministries were complex. The interests of these different actors at different scales did not always converge, often due to structural constraints. The support from the Reich could reach its limits, especially after 1942, when the workforce became sparse and financial resources were reduced against the backdrop of the war efforts. As a result, the CdZ could not see all its wishes realised, such as the creation of a theatre company for Luxembourg. Projects for the extension or construction of cultural institutions had to be postponed to an imagined post-war future. The years 1942/1943 marked a clear break in this context. A minor exception was the Landesbibliothek, which could at least open its doors in a building of the former Elsässische Bank. Its collection had dramatically increased, as books were confiscated from libraries all over the country and transferred to it. Yet the wish to transform the scientific library into the most important one of the Gau remained unfulfilled.

Like the other institutions, the Landesmuseum had to contribute to the *Aufbauarbeit* in Luxembourg. Administrative ties were created between Luxembourg and Trier. While the director of the Landesmuseum in Trier was theoretically also the director of the museum in Luxembourg, Joseph Meyers effectively managed the everyday affairs. Meanwhile, Karl Vogler was tasked with planning and supervising the expansion and reorganisation of the museum. The permanent exhibition had to convey the Nazi perspective on Luxembourg by focusing on the links between Luxembourg and Germany from the Middle Ages onwards while ignoring all ties with France. Here too, Luxembourg was to be showcased as a *Grenzland*. Despite not being confirmed by the sources, the participation of *Westforscher* – at least Matthias Zender – is a strong possibility. The narrative of the permanent exhibition barely differed from the *Westforschung* and its *völkisch* perspective, already disseminated during the interwar period. With the construction ban of February 1942, the projects as imagined by Vogler were not realised, and many rooms remained unfinished.

The museum took advantage of the structures imposed by the occupation. It had a larger budget at its disposal, and the staff increased. The collections were enriched, particularly laying the foundations for the fine arts section. The Reiffers acquisition is among the most important and notable ones. The decrees put the museum in a more favourable situation for the acquisition of objects by endowing it with a preferential right to buy them from antiquarians and art dealers,

but also by regulating the exportation of objects. However, the practical implementation had its limits. The regulations were not strictly followed, the antiquarians were not fully cooperating, and not all transactions were covered. The museum was endorsing an active role in criticising loopholes and lobbying for either an extension of the prerogatives or a stricter implementation of existing regulations.

The provenance of most objects cannot be retraced, as art dealers and antiquarians often appeared as intermediaries, but possibly also because the curators might have preferred to ignore the origins of objects. Art dealers were not the only partners of the museums. At least some objects were acquired in ambiguous contexts from other actors. The registry lists of the occupation years show that objects were acquired from the Deutsche Umsiedlungs-Treuhandgesellschaft (DUT), for instance. The Reiffers and the de Muyser acquisitions were financed with money from the *Aufbaufonds*. Spoliations took place, as the case of the castle of Ansembourg shows.

The increase of the staff in cultural institutions, in the Landesmuseum partly a consequence of the decrees on the exportation of objects, was a phenomenon that has been highlighted in other studies about museums during the Second World War. The curators Joseph Meyers and Marcel Heuertz, as well as the concierge Damien Lamberty, had worked at the museum before the war and continued to be employed during the occupation. This was not the case in other institutions. Pierre Frieden, for instance, was removed from his position in 1942. The position and activities of the main custodians and their collaborators were ambiguous and are difficult to assess today. Though Meyers revoked his VdB membership to protest the introduction of compulsory military service, he advocated for a more substantial implication of the museum in the inventory and acquisition of objects belonging to resettlers. This happened around the time when the administration announced its policy of *Umsiedlung*. Though a procedure to remove Meyers from his position was initiated, it was stopped for unknown reasons. His superiors at the VHKVA possibly did not want to lose Meyers as an experienced curator. Meyers' behaviour, like that of many other people during the war, is an example of situational opportunism, when individuals make specific choices at specific moments by considering their margin of decision-making. The custodians of the Landesmuseum had to play by the rules and somewhat adapt to the structures if they did not want to lose their jobs. In addition, they did not refrain from making suggestions to improve the situation of the Landesmuseum, framed in an institutional and professional logic.

After the war, the reports written by the custodians, the folders of the *epuration administrative*, and the undated chronicle written by Marcel Heuertz disseminated a limited

and subjective narrative of what had happened during the war. The custodians either did not provide all the information on their activities and remained tacit or interpreted their actions in a way as to put them in a favourable light. Traditional tasks of the everyday activity of custodians were presented as patriotic acts, for example, Meyers' mention of the conservation of objects. Yet, they did not talk about acquiring objects from the DUT. Meyers concealed his role in acquiring objects belonging to the resettled. Their claims to have hired people who shared the same views need to be put into perspective. They might have had some decisional power, but they had not the final say in this matter.

Two tropes were identified that had been used by the custodians in their writings and testimonies: the “good mediators” trope and the “patriotic self” trope. In the first case, Heuertz and Meyers created a distance to the higher hierarchies of the administration and presented “friendly” Germans with whom they worked directly. In the second case, they interpreted their actions through a patriotic lens, carrying out patriotic duties such as trying to postpone the museum's inauguration. The narratives and interpretations that the custodians produced need to be questioned, such as the prevention of a “political inauguration” or the attitude of “passive resistance”. With the *Bauverbot* of 1942, the question of inauguration was postponed. The German administration supported the museum in its acquisition activities with a favourable budget and by strengthening the legal framework. To a certain extent, the custodians were caught in a tension between individual interests, general policies, and scientific integrity. As other studies have shown, even custodians in Germany loyal to the regime did not want to cross certain lines as soon as they deemed their scientific integrity to be at risk.

In addition to the post-war narratives, the perpetuation of these narratives in the literature on the museum needs a critical assessment. Especially the texts by François Reinert and Foni Le Brun uncritically reproduced the narratives constructed by the custodians in the post-war period and applied categories such as (passive) resistance. These flawed categorisations are not epistemologically adequate to grasp the complexity of the occupation period and human behaviour in extreme situations. Furthermore, the concept of passive resistance, for instance, was not only used by the custodians but also by the SD. Hence, the necessity to move beyond a dichotomy of resistance versus collaboration.

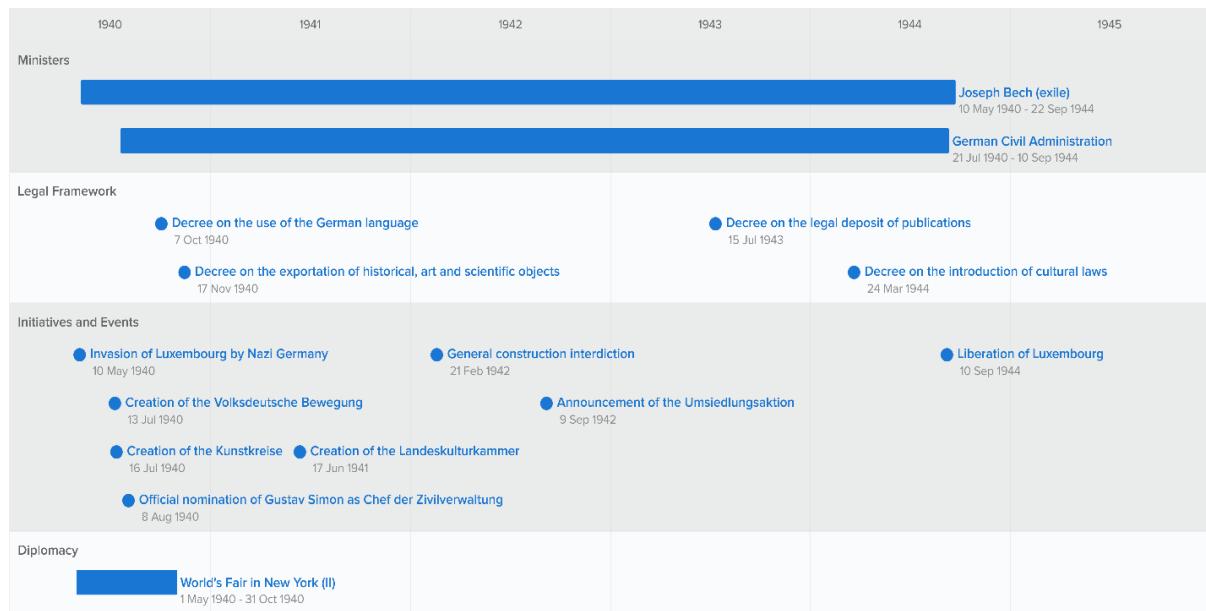


Fig. 68: Timeline of administration, laws and selected events. Created with Preceden.

## CHAPTER V. REBUILDING THE NATION: CULTURAL POLICY IN THE POST-WAR PERIOD

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After the war, Europe was struck by economic, political, cultural, and social crises: torn families, ruined economies, displaced people, supply shortages, poverty and the advent of the Cold War. The disintegration of colonial empires contributed to an internal crisis of the metropolises. Simultaneously, the war's end paved the way for a reconstruction period and a new international order (Bretton Woods in 1944, GATT in 1947, Marshall Plan). Europe was recovering economically (*Trente Glorieuses* in France, *Wirtschaftswunder* in Germany), especially in but not limited to the western part.<sup>1705</sup> However, differences remained between occupied countries and those that were not, between colonial empires and those devoid of colonies, between industrialised countries and mainly agrarian states, and between liberal democracies and dictatorships. The Spanish and Portuguese remained under authoritarian rule until the 1970s. Progressively, the Soviet Union tightened its grip on Eastern Europe, where communist regimes were established. The Marshall Plan, declined by these countries, contributed to the economic recovery of the receiving European countries and opened a new market for the US to sell their goods.

Against the backdrop of the economic prosperity of the 1950s and 1960s, modern welfare states were constructed. This period has been called the “reconstruction boom” in the literature, when growth and welfare “created a basis for the mutually reinforcing dynamics between mass consumption and mass production, demand and supply, under demarcation to the people’s democracies of Eastern Europe.”<sup>1706</sup> Some state social policies had already been devised before the war, but these were not covering the entire population. Characteristics of the welfare state were, among others, the extension of social insurance to the whole population, the guarantee of basic care and provision, the modernisation of the education system, and the equality of educational opportunities.<sup>1707</sup> The war damages and the resulting social challenges made gaps and shortcomings apparent. Governments expanded state administrations, implemented interventionist policies, and nationalised companies to support economic modernisation and

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<sup>1705</sup> Hartmut Kaelble, *Sozialgeschichte Europas: 1945 bis zur Gegenwart* (München: C.H. Beck, 2007), 412–414.

<sup>1706</sup> Bo Strath and Peter Wagner, *European Modernity: A Global Approach*, Europe’s Legacy in the Modern World (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2017), 165.

<sup>1707</sup> Hartmut Kaelble, *Kalter Krieg und Wohlfahrtsstaat: Europa 1945–1989* (München: C.H. Beck, 2011), 35.

reconstruction. New social plans and reforms were devised, such as in Great Britain, by a commission headed by William H. Beveridge during the war.<sup>1708</sup>

In the cultural field, a new international cultural public sphere emerged, for instance, through the foundation or revival of festivals. Intellectuals such as Albert Camus, Jean-Paul Sartre, Bertrand Russell, Benedetto Croce and Hannah Arendt participated in public debates.<sup>1709</sup> The European media landscape developed with the foundation of the European Broadcasting Union in 1950 and the creation of the Eurovision Song Contest in 1954.<sup>1710</sup> The post-war welfare state also affected European cultural policies. In France, the theatrical landscape was organised shortly after the war. In 1959, the government created the Ministry for Cultural Affairs. In Germany, where the strong implication of the state in cultural matters in the Third Reich led, after its demise, to a reluctance to intervene in culture, political authorities soon realised that a democratic state needed to take culture into account.<sup>1711</sup> Luxembourg needs to be embedded in this European context.

The present chapter is divided into three sections: the immediate post-war period, the 1950s until the early 1970s, and the case study. Individual and collective war experiences deeply marked the immediate post-war discourse. Dedicating a section to this period enables a dialogue between the post-war period, the occupation years, and the interwar period. This approach enables a sharper understanding of the continuities and breaks concerning structures, discourses and actors in a nationalised intermediate space, where a significant part of the discourse revolved around the use of languages and cultural references to promote. It sets the foundation for understanding cultural policy between the 1950s and the early 1970s. The study of the State Museums aims to contextualize the development of the museum (official opening, activities, professionalisation, legal framework) within the post-war context. It will be argued that the activities of the museum and related discourses are linked to the appearance of the democratic vein, to the nationalist trope, and to the dissemination of high culture. In addition, the creation of a legal framework and the challenges related to its professionalisation will be considered.

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<sup>1708</sup> Kaelble, *Sozialgeschichte Europas*, 336.

<sup>1709</sup> Kaelble, *Kalter Krieg und Wohlfahrtsstaat*, 37.

<sup>1710</sup> Kaelble, 38.

<sup>1711</sup> Abelein, *Deutsche Kulturpolitik*, 13.

## V.I. Cultural Policy in the Aftermath of the War

Upon their return from exile, the remaining ministers of the Luxembourg government – Dupong, Bech, Krier and Bodson – relied on the extension of executive powers implemented in 1938 and 1939 to publish decrees to respond to the context. The regime change and the liberation of Luxembourg ended Nazi cultural policy discourses of *Aufbauarbeit* and *Deutschtumpflege*. Nazi organisations crumbled and vanished. The head of the former Volksdeutsche Bewegung, Damian Kratzenberg, was sentenced to death. His execution in 1946 might stand symbolically for the end of the cultural sector as constructed by the Nazis.

The cultural policy of the immediate post-war period in Luxembourg was marked by some developments that became less prevalent or disappeared over time. The government conceived new administrations and state services. In August 1944, an Office des Séquestrés was created with the mission of managing “enemy” property.<sup>1712</sup> In October 1944, a decree extended the agency’s missions to the property of Luxembourgers who fled with Germans and thus collaborated from the perspective of the lawmakers. Over the years, the dispositions were loosened, such as patents of inventions excluded under certain conditions in 1950.<sup>1713</sup> In October 1944, the state re-established the Office de l’Etat des Dommages de Guerre, which the Administrative Commission had already instituted in July 1940. This Office distributed subsidies for urgent conservation and repair measures and to buy essential furniture for Luxembourgish families in need.<sup>1714</sup> In August 1945, the Comité d’Etudes pour les Réparations de Guerre was constituted. Marcel Noppeney and future Prime Minister Pierre Werner were part of this committee.<sup>1715</sup>

Another example of what could be subsumed under the concept of contextual state apparatus is related to the *épuration administrative*, initiated in November 1944 to identify and punish collaborators and “end the uncertainty caused by the adherence of public office holders to anti-national organisations” (“*faire cesser l’équivoque créée par l’affiliation durant l’occupation*

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<sup>1712</sup> ‘Arrêté grand-ducal du 17 août 1944 concernant la mise sous séquestre de la propriété ennemie’, in *Mémorial A*, vol. 4 (Luxembourg, 1944), 41–47.

<sup>1713</sup> ‘Arrêté grand-ducal du 27 juillet 1950 portant modification de l’arrêté grand-ducal du 17 août 1944 concernant la mise sous séquestre de la propriété ennemie’, in *Mémorial A*, vol. 43 (Luxembourg, 1950), 1064.

<sup>1714</sup> ‘Arrêté grand-ducal du 4 octobre 1944, concernant la création d’un Office de l’Etat des Dommages de guerre’, in *Mémorial A*, vol. 8 (Luxembourg, 1944), 65–66.

<sup>1715</sup> ‘Arrêté ministériel du 25 août 1945, portant nomination des membres du Comité d’Etudes pour les Réparations de Guerre’, in *Mémorial A*, vol. 48 (Luxembourg, 1945), 549–550.

*de serviteurs publics à des organisations antinationales”*).<sup>1716</sup> The purge was progressively extended to other administrative areas and professional activities. In August 1945, the artistic and literary area (“vie artistique et littéraire”) was included. The sanctions could be a reprimand or temporary or permanent interdiction to exercise an artistic or literary activity.<sup>1717</sup> Several days later, a second decree added a fine to the possible penalties.<sup>1718</sup>

### V.1.1. The administration of culture between continuities and changes

Four types of approaches in the reconstruction period can be differentiated. One approach concerned the return to the antebellum status quo – the most prominent aspect was the re-institution of former administrative structures and hierarchies. The second one concerned the inclusion of a selection of German decisions for pragmatic reasons. One example, as will be discussed in another sub-section, concerns the protection of monuments and sites. A third approach of the government pertained to reparations and measures related to the consequences of the occupation and the war, such as the restitution of property or the repatriation of citizens who were resettled or deported<sup>1719</sup>. Finally, a fourth approach focused on introducing new measures and structures that had not previously existed, such as the introduction of compulsory military service on 30 November 1944.

Once the government in exile had returned to Luxembourg, the *arts et sciences* were re-established as an administrative and political category, constituting an interrupted continuity. The stability of this category was not self-evident, even though the distribution of the portfolio might have been the result of pragmatic considerations. Joseph Bech, already minister of arts and sciences before the invasion, remained responsible for this area for several months. In February 1945, the arts and sciences were attached to the Ministry of National Education, headed since November 1944 by Pierre Frieden (CSV). The grand-ducal decree of 15 March 1945 did not provide an extensive description of Frieden’s competencies concerning culture:

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<sup>1716</sup> ‘Arrêté grand-ducal du 30 novembre 1944 autorisant le Gouvernement à procéder à une enquête administrative’.

<sup>1717</sup> ‘Arrêté grand-ducal du 13 août 1945, concernant l’épuration de la vie artistique et littéraire’, in *Mémorial A*, vol. 42 (Luxembourg, 1945), 472–473.

<sup>1718</sup> It should be highlighted that the purge of the artistic and literary professions has not yet caught the attention of historians and remains to be analysed in detail.

<sup>1719</sup> On 11 August 1944, a month before the liberation of Luxembourg, the government issued a decree on the creation of the Commissariat du Rapatriement. This structure organised the repatriation of Luxembourgers, of allied foreigners to their respective countries, and monitored and eventually detained “enemies and undesirables” caught on the territory of the Grand Duchy (cf. ‘Arrêté grand-ducal du 11 août 1944 constituant un Commissariat du Rapatriement’, in *Mémorial A*, vol. 2 [Luxembourg, 1944], 12, <http://legilux.public.lu/eli/etat/leg/agd/1944/08/11/n2/jo>).

“arts et sciences” and “Archives et Bibliothèque du Gouvernement”.<sup>1720</sup> The latter were a new addition to the list compared to the interwar period.<sup>1721</sup>

The choice of Pierre Frieden (1892-1959) was not far-fetched for several reasons. Firstly, prime minister Pierre Dupong deliberately chose some men who had stayed in the country during the occupation. Secondly, as the pool of potential candidates was quite restricted, and as Frieden was the director of the National Library, he might have appeared as the best choice. Thirdly, subsuming arts and sciences under national education reconnected with a practice already known from the interwar period. Lastly, Nicolas Margue, who was minister for public education before the war, was still deported. Upon his return, he became minister for agriculture in April 1945, then minister of national education in November 1945. In July 1947, he was succeeded by Pierre Frieden. An extended period of relative stability followed until February 1959, when Frieden passed away.

Frieden studied philosophy and Latin in Luxembourg and Switzerland. From 1916 until 1929, he taught in Esch-sur-Alzette, then in Diekirch where he and Damian Kratzenberg published a student journal. Frieden wrote a German study on the French education system, published in 1927. From 1929 until 1942 and from 1945 until 1959, he directed the National Library,<sup>1722</sup> even while being a minister. This symbiosis between a political office and a cultural-administrative position was rather unusual. Considering the post-war period and the possible lack of suitable candidates, this is probably less surprising than it might be from today’s perspective. Frieden defended a humanist Christian worldview<sup>1723</sup>. He published works on Europe as a humanist ideal, on war and peace, and on education. Some speeches and texts have been collected in a posthumous anthology of two volumes, both with a foreword by Pierre Grégoire (CSV), minister of cultural affairs in the 1960s.<sup>1724</sup> In a speech held at the general assembly of the Luxemburger Katholische Volksverein (Luxembourgian Catholic Popular

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<sup>1720</sup> ‘Arrêté grand-ducal du 15 mars 1945, portant une nouvelle répartition des services publics’, in *Mémorial A*, vol. 12 (Luxembourg, 1945), 93, <http://data.legilux.public.lu/file/eli-etat-leg-memorial-1945-12-fr-pdf.pdf>.

<sup>1721</sup> In the decree of 1937, for instance, the competencies of the minister of arts and sciences were merely described with “arts et sciences”, hence not providing any additional details. (‘Arrêté grand-ducal du 5 novembre 1937, portant une nouvelle répartition des services publics’, in *Mémorial A*, vol. 75 [Luxembourg, 1937], 801, <http://data.legilux.public.lu/file/eli-etat-leg-memorial-1937-75-fr-pdf.pdf>).

<sup>1722</sup> For more information, see: Claude Conter, ‘Pierre Frieden’, Luxemburger Autorenlexikon, accessed 19 August 2019, <https://www.autorenlexikon.lu/page/author/709/709/DEU/index.html>.

<sup>1723</sup> Wilhelm, ‘La culture au coeur de la réalité luxembourgeoise’, 190.

<sup>1724</sup> Pierre Frieden, *Meditationen um den Menschen: Texte in deutscher Sprache*, vol. 1, 2 vols (Luxemburg: de Fréndeskrees, 1968); Pierre Frieden, *Meditationen um den Menschen: Texte in deutscher Sprache*, vol. 2, 2 vols (Luxemburg: de Fréndeskrees, 1984).

Association) in December 1935, Frieden stressed the importance of education and deplored the frequent limitation to political-economic questions by the state. While he did not categorically reject the socialist vision of the human being, he preferred the “catholic idea of the human” and its focus on the spiritual (*seelische*) foundations of existence (*Sein*).<sup>1725</sup> After the Second World War, Frieden continued to reflect on humanism and education, besides other aspects, shaped by his personal experiences during the occupation. In an undated post-war text, he claimed that “a call for humanism echoes in the world“ (“*ein Ruf nach Menschlichkeit [geht] durch die Welt*”) after the “atrocious explosion of inhumanity and barbarism” (“*grauenhaften Ausbruch von Unmenschlichkeit und Barbarei*”).<sup>1726</sup>

Frieden expressed his view on culture with a discourse reminiscent of the *Mischkultur* concept and the self-perception of a nationalised *Zwischenraum*. In a text entitled “Luxemburg, ein europäisches Experiment” (“Luxembourg, a European experiment”, 1955) – in the context of the European integration process – Frieden stressed the bicultural nature of Luxembourg: “Luxemburg ist kulturpolitisch betrachtet ein Land der Synthese, ein auf kleinem Raum (2,586 km<sup>2</sup>) sich seit Jahrhunderten vollziehendes Experiment der Symbiose zweier Kulturen.”<sup>1727</sup> Even the war experiences, the forced Germanisation and Frieden’s deportation to a concentration camp did not change this conviction, which he had already expressed in similar ways in the interwar period. In a speech held on 19 January 1937, he acknowledged a “double dependence on France and on Germany” but relativised it by adding that Luxembourg would possess “sufficient cultural particularity to distinguish itself favourably from both. Our cultural specificity is not creative, but passive: it is education.”<sup>1728</sup>

The return of the government and the implication of individuals such as Frieden and Margue was an interrupted continuity. Yet, biographical continuities did not only exist at the very top of the government. Many former state employees and officials were reemployed or remained in their positions after the war. Louis Simmer resumed work as a councillor in the Ministry of National Education. Albert Wehrer, a close confidante of Joseph Bech and acquitted by the purge commission despite his presidency of the administrative commission,<sup>1729</sup> was employed

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<sup>1725</sup> Frieden, *Meditationen um den Menschen*, 1968, 1:15.

<sup>1726</sup> Frieden, 1:266–267.

<sup>1727</sup> Frieden, *Meditationen um den Menschen*, 1984, 2:261.

<sup>1728</sup> Own translation. “[...] kulturelle Eigenart genug, um sich von beiden, und zwar vorteilhaft zu unterscheiden. Unsere kulturelle Eigenart ist nicht schöpferisch, sondern passiv: sie ist Bildung.” (Frieden, 2:20).

<sup>1729</sup> Mauve Carbonell, *De la guerre à l’Union de l’Europe: itinéraires luxembourgeois* (Bruxelles: Peter Lang, 2014), 70.

in the diplomatic corps.<sup>1730</sup> Hubert Schumacher, a former assistant to Paul Wigreux, succeeded him as state architect. In the State Museums, Marcel Heuertz and Joseph Meyers continued their employment, as did Georges Schmitt, who was hired during the occupation. At least a couple of reasons might explain such continuities in the state apparatus. Firstly, the ministers preferred subordinates they could rely on and who were experienced enough to manage the reconstruction. Secondly, the pool of potential candidates for state service was undoubtedly limited, not only because of the human losses during the war but also because of the interruption to an education system adapted to the needs of post-war public administration.

The dissolution of the Nazi administration and its structures affected cultural institutions in their internal matters but not their existence as such. The State Museums, the National Library and the State Archives were the only national cultural institutions. They all lacked a legal framework. The municipal theatre in Luxembourg City continued its activities and remained a local institution. It was managed by the city's theatre commission and relied on foreign ensembles from neighbouring countries.<sup>1731</sup> At this stage, it is difficult to assess what the governments of the pre-war period understood under the concept of “cultural institution”, impeding a diachronic comparison. However, it appears that the concept of “cultural institution” carried a broad definition in the post-war period, encompassing cultural institutions in the narrow sense (as used in the current study) and educational facilities. This is illustrated by a list of cultural institutions that the government sent to the International Committee on Intellectual Cooperation in April 1946. The list encompassed the Grand-Ducal Institute, the Office du Film Scolaire (created in 1945)<sup>1732</sup>, and primary, secondary and professional schools.<sup>1733</sup>

### V.1.2. The development of the cultural society

With the end of the Nazi regime, the dispositif of control established by the German administration disappeared. Some societies of the interwar period were revived, even if the

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<sup>1730</sup> Carbonell, 109.

<sup>1731</sup> ANLux, MEN-0196, Letter from the mayor of Luxembourg City to the minister of national education, 03/07/1947.

<sup>1732</sup> Such an office had not existed before the war. During the occupation, the Germans created the *Landesbildstelle*. After the war, and according to André Linden, the *Office du Film scolaire* was hastily created to fill the institutional gap left by the Landesbildstelle (André Linden, ‘Lux et Vox (...1921-1979...): Sons et Lumières de la représentation cinématographique du Luxembourg’, in *Lëtzebuerger Kino: Aspects du cinéma luxembourgeois*, ed. Jean Back et al. [Dudelange: Centre national de l’audiovisuel, n.d.], 17–18).

<sup>1733</sup> ANLux, MEN-0288, Letter from the Ministry of National Education to the secretary general of the Institut International de Coopération Intellectuelle, 30/04/1946.

composition of the new committees could be slightly different. In these cases, the war was a period of interruption. However, this cannot account for the psychological effects on members and possible changes in the objectives of collective actors. For other societies, the occupation marked a definitive end because either the structures and attitudes in the post-war period did not offer the proper prerequisites, or they continued to exist during the occupation and were part of the dispositif of control. A third group comprises societies that had not existed before and were founded in the post-war period. All three scenarios will be examined in the present sub-section.

Rosch Krieps described the post-war period as a “cultural awakening”. Folklore, be it poetry, dances or traditional costumes, was rediscovered. Amateurs of photography created associations. The recovery in the musical sector was mainly due to the Conservatoire and the Radio Luxembourg Orchestra.<sup>1734</sup> Yet, the interference of the occupation period was strong enough to affect the cultural sector. The GEDELIT disappeared, illustrative of the general mood in the post-war period that proscribed the creation of an association for the promotion and dissemination of German culture. German infrastructural creations such as the Kunsthaus and the art gallery in the Grand-Ducal Palace unravelled.

At the same time, the sector of the cultural society that had been suppressed or disbanded by the dispositif of control was revived.<sup>1735</sup> The Alliance Française, for instance, was re-founded as Amitiés Françaises. Another example is the Société des Amis des Musées. Its committee convened in February 1946 and decided to reactivate the society, which was disbanded in 1941. Pierre Blanc, Victor Ferrant, Alphonse Nickels, Nicolas Ries and Batty Weber had died in the meantime. Joseph Bech was president again. Besides him, Gustave Faber (teacher and chemist), Ernest Feltgen, Joseph Hess, Marcel Heuertz, Auguste Letellier, Joseph Meyers, Joseph-Emile Muller, Marcel Noppeney, Ernest Schneider, Hubert Schumacher, Pierre-Ernest (Poutty) Stein, Joseph Tockert, Paul Wigreux and Bernard Wolff composed the committee.<sup>1736</sup> Most of these men had been implicated in the cultural field before the invasion.

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<sup>1734</sup> Krieps, *Kultur im Kleinstaat 1879-1989*, 94–95. It should be noted, though, that this assessment ignores local music societies, which played a significant role in Luxembourg.

<sup>1735</sup> In 1949, for instance, the government sent a list of artists and main artist groups to the UNESCO. It illustrates the interrupted continuities of the cultural society, with associations such as the CAL or names such as Joseph Probst, Henri Pensis, Michel Stoffel or Marcel Noppeney (ANLux, MEN-0196, *Liste des artistes et des principaux groupements d'artistes, d'écrivains, de musiciens etc. auxquels il conviendrait d'envoyer le questionnaire de l'UNESCO et relatif aux conditions de la liberté de l'artiste à notre époque*, Ministry of National Education, undated [sent to the UNESCO on 17/06/1949]).

<sup>1736</sup> MNHA archives, D-00094, Document concerning the Société des Amis des Musées, undated [1946].

Except for Albert Letellier, whose date of birth could not be identified, ten members were born in or before 1900, and only three after 1900. The oldest member of the committee was the physician Ernest Feltgen, born in 1867; the youngest was the custodian and art critic Joseph-Emile Muller, born in 1911. The professional backgrounds were heterogeneous but typical for other groups analysed in the interwar period: historians, engineers, architects, writers and state employees. The society's objectives remained unchanged: finish the construction of the buildings for the collections, suggest the creation of a folklore museum, contribute to the enrichment of the collections, and support the use of the collections for educational purposes.<sup>1737</sup>

The Grand-Ducal Institute, which entered a comatose state during the occupation, was reactivated after the war. In January 1962, the IGD was extended with a new section, the Section des Arts et des Lettres. According to the grand-ducal decree, it pursues the cultivation "of arts and the languages and to encourage all other activities of artistic and cultural character." This section was sub-divided into six sub-sections: French literature, German literature, literature in "dialect" ("littérature dialectale", i.e. Luxembourgish literature), music, theatre, cinema, painting, visual arts ("arts plastiques"), industrial arts, architecture.<sup>1738</sup> Interestingly, the lack of photography shows that the definition of culture was not yet all-encompassing; the characterisation of Luxembourgish as a dialect illustrates the pervasiveness of the bilingual status. Because of the progressive professionalisation of the State Museums, the legislation of the 1950s and 1960s, and the diversification of the cultural society, the Grand-Ducal Institute lost much of the influence it had exerted until the interwar period.

The impact of the war on popular education associations was comparably more dramatic. In 1939, the Federation of Popular Education Associations (Fédération des Associations d'Education Populaires) counted 15 sections in Luxembourg with a total of 4,000 members.<sup>1739</sup> The *Volksbildungvereine* had been a major actor in the cultural society. The invasion of Luxembourg put an abrupt end to their activities. During the occupation period, the Nazis

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<sup>1737</sup> MNHA archives, D-00094, Document concerning the Société des Amis des Musées, undated [1946].

<sup>1738</sup> MNHA archives, unnumbered folder (Bulletin de Documentation 1945-59), Bulletin de documentation no. 5, 1962, p. 5-10.

<sup>1739</sup> According to Ben Fayot, Muller was the "cheville ouvrière du CCEP jusqu'en 1963 et développa des contacts tous azimuts, mais surtout en France" (Ben Fayot, 'Des "Associations pour l'Education Populaire" aux "Centres Culturels et d'Education Populaire"', *Galerie : revue culturelle et pédagogique* 36, no. 1 [2018]: 10, 29).

closed their libraries.<sup>1740</sup> The network created before the war did not recover. Most leaders of the VBV were of an advanced age and deeply marked by the occupation, morally and physically.<sup>1741</sup> Furthermore, the political landscape changed and was not comparable to the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, when the first popular education associations were founded.<sup>1742</sup>

However, the popular education movement was not completely neutralised. The first association to be revived was the section of Luxembourg City.<sup>1743</sup> A completely new society was entering the scene: the National Union of Luxembourgish Intellectuals (*Union nationale des intellectuels luxembourgeois*, UNIL), founded in August 1945. It pursued the promotion of culture and its free expression, the participation in the “spiritual and material renaissance” of the country, and literary, scientific and artistic education. Among the founding members figured journalists, engineers, independent workers and public servants, such as Victor Engels, Evy Friedrich, and Joseph-Emile Muller.<sup>1744</sup> The UNIL was involved in the post-war revival of popular education, as it planned the creation of “cultural centres” throughout the country. The strong connection with French culture was quite evident. For conferences, the members planned to invite French guest lecturers such as Georges Duhamel, Georges Huisman or Jean-Paul Sartre.<sup>1745</sup>

In Luxembourg City, the UNIL created a cultural centre, which elicited tensions with the local VBV. In 1946, this culminated in a merger between both societies, henceforth known as the Cultural and Popular Education Centre (*Centre culturel et d'éducation populaire*, CCEP), affiliated with the UNIL.<sup>1746</sup> The Centre considered itself a society of country-wide aspiration.<sup>1747</sup> It re-opened the library, which could only retrieve around half of the collection that the popular education association possessed before the war. The CCEP saw itself as the successor of the pre-war association.

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<sup>1740</sup> Henri Lutgen, ‘Die Bibliotheken der Luxemburger Volksbildungsvereine: Ursprung, Wesen und Versuch einer Bestandsaufnahme’, *Galerie : revue culturelle et pédagogique* 19, no. 4 (2001): 522.

<sup>1741</sup> Fayot, ‘Des “Associations pour l’Education Populaire” aux “Centres Culturels et d’Education Populaire”’, 10.

<sup>1742</sup> Fayot, 11.

<sup>1743</sup> Lutgen, ‘Die Bibliotheken der Luxemburger Volksbildungsvereine’, 522.

<sup>1744</sup> Fayot, ‘Des “Associations pour l’Education Populaire” aux “Centres Culturels et d’Education Populaire”’, 14.

<sup>1745</sup> Fayot, 16–17.

<sup>1746</sup> Fayot, 18.

<sup>1747</sup> Fayot, 19.

The association in Luxembourg City did not stay the only popular education actor. In 1955, a VBV in Bonnevoie was founded, which managed its library.<sup>1748</sup> In 1968, the Cultural Centre of Differdange was created. However, the activities of the association in Luxembourg City ended in the 1970s. The reasons were a declining membership and a negative trend in the usage of its library, which experienced the competition of the municipal library opened in 1967.<sup>1749</sup> An association in Walferdange, founded in 1967, was a short-lived experience, as it disappeared two years later.

The post-war period was marked by the appearance of many committees, commissions, and other organisms. Some have already been mentioned in the present chapter, and others will be mentioned later. The table below draws on a selection of such groups and their members. Not all cases mentioned in the present chapter are represented, as the composition could not be determined or entirely assessed for some instances.<sup>1750</sup> Except for these cases, every commission, committee and selection of associations has been taken into account, totalling 113 individuals. The main objective of this short prosopographic digression, with no claim to exhaustivity, is to provide a general overview of how a portion of the cultural society was composed, to measure the presence of some individuals, to ascertain the areas of activity of the individuals, and to draw general conclusions on the age structure. A social network analysis tool, such as *Palladio*, was not used, as the type of information and the low level of complexity would not result in graphs potentially providing additional insights. Furthermore, it should be noted that the table represents a snapshot of the cultural society at a particular moment or different moments because the examples are asynchronous. It does not account for the changes in the composition of the collective actors nor the rich biographies of many individuals.

Generally, the considered cases are overwhelmingly male, as only two members are female (less than one per cent). Sixty-five individuals were born before the First World War. The years of birth range from 1867 (Ernest Feltgen) to 1926 (Pierre Wurth). In 41 cases, neither the year of birth nor the year of death could be identified. 53.16% of the cases that could be determined

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<sup>1748</sup> Centres culturels et d'éducation populaire, *Almanach culturel 1968 des Centres culturels et d'Éducation populaire: Bonnevoie, Differdange, Luxembourg-Ville et Walferdange* (Centres culturels, 1968), 253.

<sup>1749</sup> Lutgen, 'Die Bibliotheken der Luxemburger Volksbildungsvereine', 522.

<sup>1750</sup> This applies to following organisms: Oeuvre Nationale de Secours Grande-Duchesse, Commission des sites et monuments nationaux, the jury for the Millennium Emblem, the Conseil Supérieur de la Reconstruction (only partly known: François Huberty, Alphonse Osch, Joseph Schroeder, Hubert Schumacher) and the Grand-Ducal Institute. In the case of the Luxembourgish Dictionary Commission, we know that Joseph Hess, Joseph Meyers and Hélène Palgen were members, together with Ludovic Beck, Kintzelé, whose first names would not be identified. A former member of the commission was the linguist Robert Bruch, who died in 1959.

were born before 1914, which implies that they could have been active members of the cultural society during the interwar period. Indeed, among these cases figure people such as Jérôme Anders, Joseph Bech, Jean-Pierre Erpelding, Pierre Frieden, Nicolas Hein, Joseph Hess, Lucien Koenig, Henri Luja, Nicolas Margue, Joseph Meyers, Marcel Noppeney, Poutty Stein, Michel Stoffel, Joseph Tockert and Paul Wigreux. By 1970, 27 of those 73 individuals had deceased (37%). By 1980 the share had increased to 64%. These numbers hint at a generational change in the 1960s and 1970s.

Considering their professional background, most individuals were employed in the public sector, such as public institutions and administrations, or worked in the government. Smaller groups pertain to the sector of communication and media (mostly journalists), to the non-statal sector (associations or private sector) and to liberal professions. These categorisations are, of course, not strictly delimited, and many biographies cross these boundaries. It was not possible to identify the area of activity in ten cases. The main reference used to categorise the individuals was the self-presentation or the ascription used in documents or decrees related to the composition of commissions, committees and associations.

Of 113 individuals, 82 only appear once, which shows that the cultural society was, at least from this perspective, rather diverse. However, twelve individuals have participated in at least three different organisms. In this respect, Joseph Meyers leads the table with six appearances, followed by Hubert Schumacher (five), Joseph Petit (four), Georges Schmitt (four), and Joseph-Emile Muller (four). A bias towards those who worked in the State Museums cannot be denied, especially as the chosen examples include four cases directly related to the museum. Hence, the cultural society encompassed a small share of an elite (10.6%) that set itself apart. Though more rigorous studies would be necessary, these indications and conclusions might suffice for the present study, mainly to provide general background information for the following sections and sub-sections.

Surname	First Name	Year of Birth	Year of Death	Area of activity	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	TOTAL
ANDERS	Jérôme	1893	1983	Public sector	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	3
BASTIAN	Paul	nd	nd	Public sector	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	2
BECH	Joseph	1887	1975	Public sector	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	2
BUCHLER	Jean-Pierre	1908	1993	Public sector	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	2
ENGELS	Victor	1892	1962	Liberal profession	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	2
FRIEDEN	Pierre	1892	1959	Public sector	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	2
FUNCK	Joseph	1902	1978	Non-public	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	2
HAYOT	Jules	nd	nd	Non-public	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	2
HESS	Joseph	1889	1973	Public sector	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	2
HUBERTY	François	1896	1980	Public sector	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	2
KOENIG	Lucien	1888	1961	Public sector	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	2
LUJA	Henri	1899	1977	Public sector	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	2
MARGUE	Nicolas	1888	1976	Public sector	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	2
MARGUE	Georges	1918	2003	Liberal profession	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
MARX	Emile	1899	1964	Communication and media	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	2
MEYERS	Joseph	1900	1964	Public sector	1	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	6
MULLER	Joseph-Emile	1911	1999	Public sector	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	1	4
NEUMAN	Tony	1902	1979	Liberal profession	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	2
NOPPENEY	Marcel	1877	1966	Liberal profession	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
PETIT	Joseph	1912	2001	Public sector	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	4
SCHIMMITT	Georges	1907	1986	Public sector	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	4
SCHNEIDER	Ernest	1885	1954	Liberal profession	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	2
SCHULTE	Paul	nd	nd	Public sector	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	2
SCHUMACHER	Hubert	1896	1961	Public sector	0	1	0	0	1	0	1	1	1	0	1	0	5
SCHUMMER	Alphonse	nd	nd	Public sector	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
STAUD	Richard Maria	1891	1970	Non-public	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	3
STUMPER	Robert	1895	1977	Non-public	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	1	0	3
TOCKERT	Joseph	1875	1950	Public sector	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	2
WEBER	Paul	1898	1976	Public sector	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	3
WEICKER	Alphonse	1891	1973	nd	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	3
WIGREUX	Paul	1880	1960	Public sector	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	3

Fig. 69: List of members of the post-war cultural society with at least two appearances. Nd = Not determined; A = Millennium Commission (1961/63); B = Société des Amis des Musées (1945); C = Commission du livre; D = Comité d'études pour les réparations de guerre; E = Commission de surveillance pour la restauration des édifices religieux; F = Luxembourgish orthography commission; G = John the Blind 1946 - Organising committee; H = Brussels 1958 - Permanent committee; I = Joseph Kutter exhibition - Organising Committee; J = Joseph Kutter exhibition - Honorary committee; K = Museum Acquisition Commission (1958); L = UNIL (1945).

### V.1.3. Cultural policy in times of restitution and reconstruction

The wish to return to the pre-war situation was already apparent during the occupation. In April 1941, the government in exile decreed, for instance, the abolition of decisions taken by the German administration in case of a gradual liberation of the country and an end of the hostilities.<sup>1751</sup> Since the beginning, spoliations and dispossessions had been a key concern, expressing normalisation attempts based on creating a contextual state apparatus and primarily supporting the elites. These elites were involved in organising related endeavours and the primary beneficiaries.

#### *Restitution of books*

The creation of the *Commission du Livre* was the first measure of the post-occupation period explicitly linked to cultural policy. Joseph Bech signed the related ministerial decree (as the minister of arts and sciences) and Victor Bodson (as the minister of justice) on 17 October 1944, a few weeks after their return to Luxembourg.<sup>1752</sup> The decree was a reaction to the pillage of public and private libraries by the German occupation forces and the Gestapo. The commission was tasked with the retrieval of looted books, the identification of their original owners, the restitution to the owners, and, in case of non-identification, the deposition of the books at the National Library. The decree nominated four commission members: Pierre Frieden, Alphonse Schummer (engineer), Jean Palgen (teacher) and Antoine May (State Archives). Joseph Meyers later joined the commission and became its president, though it is unclear exactly when. The most probable reason would be Meyers succeeding Frieden when the latter became a minister.

The journalist Rosch Krieps explained the government's interest at such an early stage, though it is quite disputable. According to Krieps, Pierre Dupong created a commission on 30 September 1944.<sup>1753</sup> If it were indeed the same book commission as the one instituted in October, it remained unclear on what sources Krieps based his claim. Pierre Dupong did not sign the ministerial decree (which does not necessarily exclude his involvement), and Krieps indicated a different date. Though the journalist considered it a "miracle" that the government had shown such an interest in "supposedly not very vital objects", he presumed that the initiative had been motivated mainly by Pierre Dupong's personal interests. As Krieps

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<sup>1751</sup> 'Arrêté grand-ducal du 22 avril 1941, déterminant l'effet des mesures prises par l'occupant', in *Mémorial A*, vol. 3 (Luxembourg, 1944), 21.

<sup>1752</sup> 'Arrêté ministériel du 17 octobre 1944, instituant une Commission du Livre', in *Mémorial A*, vol. 12 (Luxembourg, 1944), 95–96.

<sup>1753</sup> Krieps, *Kultur im Kleinstaat 1879-1989*, 71.

explained, the prime minister's private library had been confiscated by the Nazis.<sup>1754</sup> But, of course, Dupong was not the only claimant. The grand duchess figured among the dispossessed, besides Marcel Noppeney, Evy Friedrich or Joseph-Emile Muller. According to Krieps, the commission was, after two years, "as discreetly dissolved as it was created".<sup>1755</sup> On 10 November 1944, the *Luxemburger Wort* reported on the creation of the commission and referred to the ministerial decree of 17 October.<sup>1756</sup> With the grand-ducal decree of 19 March 1945, the dispositions were strengthened. Individuals with knowledge of confiscated books were obliged to inform the Book Commission. Any non-declaration was to be sanctioned, either with a prison sentence, a fine, or both.<sup>1757</sup> In a report dated 19 March 1946, Meyers explained that the commission was confronted with 400,000 books belonging to refugees, deported people, prisoners, organisations disbanded by the Nazis, or fleeing German nationals and collaborators. At the time of the report, 200,000 books had been returned to their original owners.<sup>1758</sup> Some 100,000 books were stored at the museum.<sup>1759</sup>

In the context of such restitution policies, Pierre Frieden, minister of national education, contacted the editorial board of the journal *Hémecht*. He exposed that several individuals had complained about losing their libraries. As a result, the minister suggested the publication of an appeal to collect books from donors, teachers, retired priests and inheritors of deceased intellectuals. In Frieden's opinion, private initiatives were more successful than an initiative from the government. As his administrative services were overburdened, he suggested that the *Hémecht* could organise the collection.<sup>1760</sup> Unfortunately, the letter is an isolated source, which makes it impossible to retrace the subsequent steps.

A second case is less related to restitution and more to the return to the status quo by removing traces of the occupation. On 1 May 1945, a call to remove Nazi literature from libraries was published in the newspapers and signed by Frieden.<sup>1761</sup> Hence, all librarians and

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<sup>1754</sup> Krieps, 72–73.

<sup>1755</sup> Krieps, 72.

<sup>1756</sup> 'Zur Ausplünderung unserer Büchereien: Ein Ministerialbeschuß vom 17. Oktober', *Luxemburger Wort*, November 1944.

<sup>1757</sup> 'Arrêté grand-ducal du 19 mars 1945, concernant la déclaration obligatoire des livres illégalement enlevés par les autorités allemandes aux bibliothèques publiques, professionnelles ou privées', in *Mémorial A*, vol. 18 (Luxembourg, 1945), 160.

<sup>1758</sup> Fayot, 'Des "Associations pour l'Education Populaire" aux "Centres Culturels et d'Education Populaire"', 26.

<sup>1759</sup> Meyers, 'Le musée d'histoire pendant la guerre', 125–126.

<sup>1760</sup> ANLux, MEN-0003, Letter from the minister of national education to the editorial board of the *Hémecht*, 27/04/1945.

<sup>1761</sup> ANLux, MEN-0003, Official communication from the minister of national education sent to the newspapers, 01/05/1945.

owners of lending libraries were requested to purge their stocks. In case of doubt of the “true significance” (“véritable portée”) of a German book, the minister provided the names of three specialists who could offer advice: Paul Henkes (1898-1984), Albert Hoefler (1899-1950), and Mathias Goergen.<sup>1762</sup> These people might have been chosen because of their educational background. The author and teacher Paul Henkes studied German and Greek in Germany and France. The leftist intellectual, author and journalist Albert Hoefler (1899-1950) had developed an interest in German literature with the support of his teachers Nikolaus Hein, Joseph Hess, Isi Comes, and Damian Kratzenberg. Later, he studied in Bonn. Mathias Goergen is, from today’s perspective, the least known of the triad. According to the appeal, he was a teacher in Diekirch.

These book-related policies beg the question of why the government showed so much interest in the restitution and the purge of literature as early as 1944. Several potential explanations can be advanced at this stage. Firstly, the interest might have stemmed from personal motives. Joseph Bech, Nicolas Margue and Pierre Frieden were not only part of the political elite but also belonged to the cultural society. Nazi policies towards literature and libraries affected them personally. Frieden’s professional background as director of the National Library was intricately linked to these policies. Secondly, it could be argued that books were the most accessible cultural commodity in the immediate post-war period, spreading knowledge – and undesired ideologies. The restitution aimed to reorganise the accessibility and dissemination of books. The purge would remove any ideologically suspicious and undesired literature from libraries.

### *Restitution of artworks*

The looting of artworks by the Nazis and the restitution after the war is certainly not a neglected topic in international historiography. Following Bianca Gaudenzi and Astrid Swenson, the “drastically new level of systematic plundering and destruction of cultural property perpetrated by the National Socialists from the early 1930s onwards and its intrinsic connections to the Holocaust” is the “best researched instance of looting” in history.<sup>1763</sup> Academic research has produced case studies, for instance, on particular collections or comparative and transnational analyses.<sup>1764</sup> The looting perpetrated by National Socialists is

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<sup>1762</sup> Pierre Frieden, ‘Appel’, *Luxemburger Wort*, May 1945.

<sup>1763</sup> Bianca Gaudenzi and Astrid Swenson, ‘Looted Art and Restitution in the Twentieth Century - Towards a Global Perspective’, *Journal of Contemporary History* 52, no. 3 (2017): 504, doi:10.1177/0022009417692409.

<sup>1764</sup> Gaudenzi and Swenson, 505.

not the only example in human history of the theft and destruction of cultural heritage. However, it was unprecedented in magnitude and scale. Furthermore, it sparked serious international reflections about the protection of cultural heritage, resulting in international frameworks such as the *Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict*, signed in The Hague in 1954. Luxembourg ratified the convention in 1961,<sup>1765</sup> the chronological gap hinting at its low priority to the government.

However, such accomplishments require a nuanced analysis, especially as decolonisation led to further questions and issues related to cultural heritage and ownership of pillaged objects. From an international perspective, “the issue of Holocaust-era and colonial restitution remained largely untouched for several decades”. Progress could only be made in the 1990s concerning the looting in the context of the Holocaust, with considerable restitution campaigns and the definition of guidelines in international agreements, such as the Washington Declaration in 1998.<sup>1766</sup>

This brief overview cannot do justice to the research of the last decades. Nevertheless, it provides a general description of international developments. In the case of Luxembourg, the restitution and the looting of artworks had been a neglected topics in historiography for a long time. They have received some attention since the 2000s. In 2005, the Luxembourg City Museum organised the temporary exhibition *Looted!* on cultural looting in Luxembourg during the occupation.<sup>1767</sup> This exhibition stirred some debates and pushed the National History and Art Museum to publish a statement.<sup>1768</sup> That the State Museums did not organise a systematic restitution campaign after the end of the occupation is not necessarily an uncommon case. Writing about the spoliation of artworks by the Nazis during the war, the historian Hubert Bonin mentioned a “grey” area of spoliated property within official museums:

Celui des objets que les familles spoliées ne peuvent réclamer parce que celles-ci ont disparu dans les déportations, se sont exilées outre-Atlantique, ou parce que les inventaires ont été établis dans un simple but de recension, sans réel désir de restitution, comme si prévalait l'idée

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<sup>1765</sup> ‘Loi du 13 juillet 1961 portant approbation de la Convention pour la protection des biens culturels en cas de conflit armé, signée à La Haye, le 14 mai 1954’, in *Mémorial A*, vol. 30 (Luxembourg, 1961), 13, <http://data.legilux.public.lu/file/eli-etat-leg-memorial-1961-30-fr-pdf.pdf>.

<sup>1766</sup> Gaudenzi and Swenson, ‘Looted Art and Restitution in the Twentieth Century - Towards a Global Perspective’, 507.

<sup>1767</sup> Jungblut, *Looted: Current Questions Regarding the Cultural Looting by the National Socialists in Europe*.

<sup>1768</sup> Reiles et al., “Le grand pillage” et le Musée national d’histoire et d’art: Prise de position du musée’.

de bâtir un musée parallèle public jugé plus légitime que la restitution et la dispersion entre des mains privées.<sup>1769</sup>

Furthermore, the lack of documents and the opaque nature of the transfers and operations during the war complicate the matter. This situation is, however, not distinctive to the Luxembourgish context. As Gaudenzi and Swenson pointed out, “research on the mid- to late-twentieth century is hampered by substantial gaps in the archival record linked to inaccessibility, wilful destruction, as well as the secrecy of the art market.”<sup>1770</sup> Nevertheless, the analysis of the procedures and the internal logic related to the restitution of artworks in post-war Luxembourg reveals several significant aspects, which will be illustrated in more detail below: the restitution of books mainly profited the elites; authorities made use of their transnational contacts in their investigations; the restitution attempts concerned nearly entirely objects taken away from Luxembourg, and not those sold or donated to the museum during the occupation. The fact that objects were found abroad and transferred back to Luxembourg, primarily via Belgium, illustrates the lack of implementation of the German decree of November 1940. Among the most discussed cases figure five paintings of the Reiffers collection, analysed by Michel Polfer in 2011.<sup>1771</sup> Though these paintings were sold voluntarily, the transaction was an illegal act according to Allied dispositions and Luxembourgish law, as well as an infringement of the German decree of November 1940.<sup>1772</sup>

Even before any investigation into despoiled artworks was seriously launched, the government decided that paintings formerly belonging to the Gauleiter were to be transferred to state property. In this context, the minister of arts and sciences shared a list with the State Museum, on which artworks belonging to the Gauleiter were highlighted. This list illustrated Simon’s artistic taste for his office and residence. As symbols of power and references to an imagined glorified past, portraits of Frederick the Great, Otto von Bismarck and Adolf Hitler hung in Simon’s office. Other rooms were decorated with more mundane paintings depicting landscapes (of Luxembourg), flowers or animals.<sup>1773</sup> One might see in this choice a symbolic appropriation of the territory by the Gauleiter.

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<sup>1769</sup> Bonin, ‘Pillages nazis et musées virtuels’, 296.

<sup>1770</sup> Gaudenzi and Swenson, ‘Looted Art and Restitution in the Twentieth Century - Towards a Global Perspective’, 510.

<sup>1771</sup> Polfer, ‘Nationalsozialistische Kulturpolitik oder Herrschaftsstabilisierung?’, 333–335.

<sup>1772</sup> Polfer, 335.

<sup>1773</sup> MNHA archives, separate shelf, folder no. 38, Letter from the Minister for Arts and Sciences to the custodian of the State Museum with an appended list of paintings, 05/01/1945.

The key administration in the investigations was the OREL (Office de récupération économique du Luxembourg), created in August 1945.<sup>1774</sup> Its mission encompassed the assessment of enemy war material in Luxembourg and the research, assessment and conservation of other objects and goods that had been abandoned, destroyed and repurposed for reasons related to the state of war since September 1939, thus including the months preceding the invasion of Luxembourg. Furthermore, the OREL was entrusted with identifying original owners or beneficiaries. Though art objects were not explicitly mentioned in the competencies of the OREL, the government nominated Georges Schmitt as the official delegate for their restitution. Ironically, Schmitt had been tasked with acquiring objects for the museum during the occupation. His mission focused exclusively on stolen objects exported to Germany. As Schmitt could not rely on his own network of agents to investigate looted artworks, the Luxembourgish authorities collaborated with the Belgian counterpart of the OREL, the ORE. In October 1946, a meeting between representatives of both offices resulted in the decision that the Belgian side would ensure the investigations into the Luxembourgish art recovery in the occupied zones. The Luxembourgish representatives acknowledged that their government could not “organise a network of Luxembourgish agents in the occupied zone and to keep them there for as long as required”.<sup>1775</sup>

In November 1948, Schmitt drew an overview of the main spoliations in Luxembourg. Though the list is not exhaustive, it reveals the main focus of the investigations: rustic furniture and art bought by Luxembourgish and German antiquarians and by German individuals; collections of paintings previously owned by Reiffers and by a banker named Frank; collections of engravings belonging to Joseph Bech, to Marcel Noppeney and to the count of Ansembourg<sup>1776</sup>; arms collections (the grand-ducal collection and the Schaack collection including Malaysian kris and weapons from the Far East); collections removed from their original location as a result of deportation of the owner or a residential change, such as Luxembourgish faience belonging to a certain Muller<sup>1777</sup> and wood engravings from the painter

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<sup>1774</sup> ‘Arrêté grand-ducal du 1er août 1945 portant création d’un Office de Récupération Economique’, in *Mémorial A*, vol. 40 (Luxembourg, 1945), 446–447, <http://legilux.public.lu/eli/etat/leg/agd/1945/08/01/n5/jo>.

<sup>1775</sup> Own translation. “[...] d’organiser en zone occupée un réseau d’agents investigateurs et de les y maintenir le temps requis.” (MNHA archives, separate shelf, folder no. 37, Letter from Georges Schmitt to the Office de récupération économique, 03/11/1948).

<sup>1776</sup> Schmitt did not seem to refer to the same objects sold by Milius in 1942. The objects acquired by the museum then had not been engravings, but different kinds of antique utensils and weapons.

<sup>1777</sup> In case it could be Paul Muller, mentioned in the context of objects acquired by the museums from the DUT. Schmitt might refer to other objects. In 1943, the museum had acquired an oil painting belonging to Muller, but according to the registry not faience ware.

Klopp; finally, objects originating from prehistorical excavations. Some of the collections were either recovered or about to be recovered at the time of writing. Others, as Schmitt regretted, were more difficult to identify due to a lack of transparency regarding the transfers during the occupation.<sup>1778</sup> Indeed, the list documents the extent of spoliations during the Nazi occupation. When Schmitt opined the lack of transparency and resulting problems in the investigation, this could also be applied to many objects acquired by the museum from antiquarians and art dealers. Combining Schmitt's list with the actual restitutions and investigations, the whole operation served to a large extent the political and cultural elites in Luxembourg. Not only because art collecting, for instance, was an activity that could only be pursued by people with sufficient economic (and cultural) capital. The main investigations also focused on the most culturally or symbolically prestigious collections, besides the recovery of single objects that were not linked to any collection.

Among the most notable examples of restitution attempts figures the grand-ducal arms collection. Power relations and symbolic meaning underscored these efforts. The investigations also prove that Meyers' assessment of the conservation and protection of the grand-ducal possessions in his *épuration* folder was less successful than he implied. The earliest document on the events at the grand-ducal castle in Colmar-Berg is a report by a sergeant (*Wachtmeister*) known by the name Nothumb. It was originally written on 10 May 1941, but only a copy created in 1946 allegedly survived. For whom and why it was written remains unclear, as it blames German officials and the SS. The sergeant retraced the events at the castle from the invasion until April 1941. It appears that the theft of paintings, weaponry and furniture happened between January 1941 and March or April 1941. Nothumb reported that the Germans had claimed to move some paintings to the palace in Luxembourg City; furniture was transferred to Cologne or Koblenz. The German administration and members of the SS ordered and participated in these spoliations. Witnesses claimed having seen the German *Oberwachtmeister* and head of the beat police post of castle Berg in a hotel near Colmar with accessories belonging to members of the grand-ducal family.<sup>1779</sup> The transportation of furniture

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<sup>1778</sup> MNHA archives, separate shelf, folder no. 37, Report by Georges Schmitt appended to a letter dated 3 November 1948, 22/10/1948.

<sup>1779</sup> MNHA archives, separate shelf, folder no. 37, *Bericht bezüglich der Vorgänge im Grossherzogl. Schloss zu Berg vom 10. Mai 1940 bis 17. Januar 1941* by the sergeant Nothumb (copy of the report of 10/05/1941), 26/08/1949

was ensured by the Luxembourgish haulier Dasbourg.<sup>1780</sup> However, he was not the only Luxembourger involved in or knowing about the operation.

On 25 July 1946, Georges Schmitt drew a short report of objects belonging to the grand-ducal family and stolen by the occupiers, which he shared with the director of the OREL. It is unclear if he based his information partly or entirely on Nothumb's report, the copy of which was posterior to Schmitt's document. According to the custodian, an important collection of weapons was transported to Koblenz. Wetter, the former police president of Luxembourg, possibly ordered the transfer, as he wanted to create a hunting museum in Koblenz. Some furniture of the palace was acquired by a private buyer. Other objects were sold to the city of Trier or its Landesmuseum. This information was shared with Schmitt by a lawyer who was forced to stay in Trier between 1942 and 1944.<sup>1781</sup> The investigation by the Belgian administration for the recovery of art, headed by the art historian and future president of the ICOMOS Raymond Lemaire, dates back at least to 1947. The earliest trace of the investigation can be found in a letter from Lemaire to Schmitt, in which he shortly noted that the ORE was looking into the case.<sup>1782</sup>

Schmitt regularly exchanged with Lemaire. In a letter of March 1949, Schmitt shared some details on the stolen objects, referring to his report of July 1946. One object had probably been recovered since then, i.e. a statue near Koblenz. In fact, in July 1948, Schmitt informed the OREL about the statue depicting Diana, the Roman goddess, and asked for a restitution request to be made. The statue was brought to Koblenz in 1942. The transport included weapons, too. The investigation on the statue was not even carried out by the Belgian ORE, but by French authorities.<sup>1783</sup> As this statue had been given to a hunting association at the same time as the weapons, Schmitt wondered how it could be that the statue was recovered, but the weapons would have been destroyed. He offered some clues regarding potential witnesses to be interviewed.<sup>1784</sup>

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<sup>1780</sup> MNHA archives, separate shelf, folder no. 37, *Anhang zu dem Bericht bezüglich der Vorgänge vom 10. Mai 1940 bis zum 17. Januar 1941 zu Schloss Berg* by the sergeant Nothumb, 27/08/1949.

<sup>1781</sup> MNHA archives, separate shelf, folder no. 37, *Liste des objets appartenant à S.A.R. Madame la Grande-Duchesse, spoliés par l'occupant après le 10 mai 1940* by Georges Schmitt, 25/07/1946.

<sup>1782</sup> MNHA archives, separate shelf, folder no. 37, Letter from R. Lemaire to Georges Schmitt, 06/09/1947.

<sup>1783</sup> MNHA archives, separate shelf, folder no. 37, Letter from Georges Schmitt to the OREL, 07/07/1948.

<sup>1784</sup> MNHA archives, separate shelf, folder no. 37, Letter from Georges Schmitt to R. Lemaire, 18/03/1949. It seems that an unidentified source informed Schmitt that the weapons had been destroyed; this source could not be identified in the archives.

The investigation of the weapons belonging to the grand-ducal family made barely any progress. In January 1950, Schmitt, referring to a report by a delegate of Lemaire, Cogge, from July 1949, concluded that weapons stored in Homburg Castle by the museum director Konrad (or Conrad) were partly the wanted items. He enquired whether Cogge had made further progress and had been able to interrogate Conrad in the meantime. Schmitt was probably under pressure, as he added: “I will not hide from you that the Inspector of [the Crown’s] Estates is impatiently awaiting the investigation results and the restitution of the collection.”<sup>1785</sup> Schmitt urged Lemaire to hasten the process. The Luxembourgish delegate suggested the court’s grand marshall’s mediation with the British authorities. Furthermore, Schmitt let Lemaire know that he and the inspector of the grand-ducal estates could accompany the Belgian delegates to Germany to assess the objects:

I think there is a risk of losing too much time that could be used to hide the objects, which are not complete anymore. I would be infinitely grateful if you could use your influence among your agents to hasten the investigation. M. Inspector of Estates would even be inclined to join you and your agents in Germany in order to identify, on the basis of our inventory, the objects from the arms room of the castle in Colmar-Berg. If necessary, I would join your agents.<sup>1786</sup>

The letter hints at the asymmetrical relations between the OREL and its Belgian counterpart. Not possessing the necessary means, Schmitt depended on the Belgian agents’ work.

The investigation dragged on for months. In June 1950, Schmitt contacted Lemaire again to receive updates and reiterated his proposition concerning the grand marshall’s intervention.<sup>1787</sup> In September 1950, Schmitt discussed the weapons. He did not receive a reply to his previous two letters, as he asked once again about possible results in the exchanges with the director of the museum of Homburg. The inspector, as Schmitt surmised, was growing impatient:

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<sup>1785</sup> “Je ne vous cacherai pas que l’Inspecteur des Domaines attend avec impatience les résultats de l’enquête et la restitution de la collection.” (MNHA archives, separate shelf, folder no. 37, Letter from Georges Schmitt to R. Lemaire, 25/01/1950).

<sup>1786</sup> “Je crois qu’il y a danger à laisser trop durer la possibilité d’escamoter des objets, qui déjà ne sont plus au complet. Je vous serais infiniment obligé, de bien vouloir user de toute votre influence auprès de vos agents pour hâter l’enquête. Monsieur l’Inspecteur des Domaines serait même disposé à accompagner vos agents en Allemagne, afin de reconnaître sur place et sur la foi de notre inventaire, les objets de la salle d’armes du château de Colmar-Berg. Si cela était nécessaire, je me joindrai [sic] à vos agents.” (MNHA archives, separate shelf, folder no. 37, Letter from Georges Schmitt to R. Lemaire, 25/01/1950).

<sup>1787</sup> MNHA archives, separate shelf, folder no. 37, Letter from Georges Schmitt to R. Lemaire, 28/06/1950.

I will not disclose that I might have noticed some impatience in the words of Mister Inspector of Domains, who begins to doubt the efficiency of our approach, as the affair had already seemed to come to a closure a year ago.<sup>1788</sup>

Schmitt asked Lemaire for a meeting “to find together the means to hasten the investigation”. He repeated that they could count on the full backing of the Court and apologized for his insistence on the urgency of the matter. Lemaire replied on 26 September; apparently, Lemaire’s letter of 26 July had not reached Schmitt. The Belgian delegate informed about the issues encountered by the agents during their investigations. The ORE located the weapons, but the British authorities claimed they could not be found. Reaching this impasse, Lemaire suggested that the only solution would be to use diplomatic channels.<sup>1789</sup> While Lemaire was open to a meeting between him and Schmitt, none of the available sources confirms the actual occurrence of such a meeting.

In his reply of 22 November, Schmitt explained that weapons were transported from Koblenz to Volperhausen, then from Volperhausen to Homburg. Yet, the weapons that arrived in Homburg were not those of Luxembourg anymore. Therefore, Schmitt deduced that something must have happened in Volperhausen.<sup>1790</sup> Schmitt must have lost patience, as he contacted the diplomat Albert Borschette on the day following his letter to Lemaire. Borschette was Luxembourg’s representative at the French occupying forces, a member of the control commission of the Allies, and secretary at the embassy in Berlin. He was a close contact of Schmitt, as the latter addressed him informally and confided him in his issues. Schmitt considered that the investigation of the Belgian agents arrived at a dead end. He did not only criticise the problems the agents faced but assumed that the Allied forces were protecting the dishonesty of the interrogated Germans:

This [letter] is not the place to expose in depth how German individuals, quite certainly informed about the journey of this collection, entirely and unexpectedly remained silent when facing the questions of the Belgian agents. All this emanates from an evident bad faith that seems to be additionally dictated or at least protected by the agents of the occupying forces.<sup>1791</sup>

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<sup>1788</sup> Own translation. “Je ne vous cacherai pas que j’ai cru décéler [sic] une certaine impatience dans les propos de Monsieur l’Inspecteur des Domaines, qui, puisque l’affaire semblait aboutir il y a déjà un an, commence à douter de l’efficacité de nos démarches” (MNHA archives, separate shelf, folder no. 37, Letter from Georges Schmitt to R. Lemaire, 28/06/1950).

<sup>1789</sup> MNHA archives, separate shelf, folder no. 37, Letter from R. Lemaire to Georges Schmitt, 26/09/1950.

<sup>1790</sup> MNHA archives, separate shelf, folder no. 37, Letter from Georges Schmitt to Lemaire, 22/11/1950. Schmitt writes “Volpershausen” in his letter, though the correct name is “Volperhausen”.

<sup>1791</sup> Own translation. “Ici n’est pas la place pour t’exposer plus longuement, comment des personnages allemands, très certainement au courant des pérégrinations de cette collection, ont opposé le mutisme le plus complet et le plus inattendu aux questions des agents belges. Tout ceci procède d’une

Schmitt was subsequently looking for alternatives. The Belgians recommended contacting the Foreign Office, but Schmitt did not want to approach “an apparatus of such scale and probably of a certain sluggishness”.<sup>1792</sup> Instead, Schmitt announced to Lemaire that the OREL would attempt to contact a German in Düsseldorf, who had been “our supervisor during the occupation and who is very influential in the museum circles of the Rhine province”.<sup>1793</sup> Schmitt repeated this idea in his letter to Borschette. He hoped that these German acquaintances, “who were very useful to us [during the occupation]”, could “provide us with clarifications without which the case of the weapons belonging to HRH the Grand Duchess would have to be definitively closed”.<sup>1794</sup> He then revealed what Germans he had in mind: Karl Wilkes (the former acting director of the archives in Luxembourg during the occupation) and Karl Vogler. The custodian assumed that Vogler could still influence the Rhineland museums (including the Homburg museum). This twist in the investigation is quite peculiar, considering the context. Due to the issues faced by the Belgian investigation and the apparent lack of interest of the Allied forces, the Luxembourgish delegate’s last hope resided in two Germans who were significantly involved in the Nazi reorganisation of two cultural institutions during the occupation.

Eventually, Schmitt’s new approach paid off. Though the details of subsequent exchanges are unknown, Schmitt and Vogler were both in touch. In December 1951, Vogler, then *Regierungsrat* (senior civil servant) at the Ministry of Education of North Rhine-Westphalia, reminded Schmitt of a letter of 25 September and to which Vogler had not received an answer. Since then, and with Vogler’s intervention, discussions with no further specified services reached a critical moment. The *Regierungsrat* needed Schmitt’s reaction. He asked when he could expect Schmitt’s visit.<sup>1795</sup> The service to which Vogler referred was probably the higher

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mauvaise foi évidente qui semble en plus être dictée ou du moins protégée par des agents des puissances occupantes.” (MNHA archives, separate shelf, folder no. 37, Letter from Georges Schmitt to Albert Borschette, 23/11/1950).

<sup>1792</sup> MNHA archives, separate shelf, folder no. 37, Letter from Georges Schmitt to Albert Borschette, 23/11/1950.

<sup>1793</sup> MNHA archives, separate shelf, folder no. 37, Letter from Georges Schmitt to Lemaire, 22/11/1950.

<sup>1794</sup> Original text : “Peut-être des Allemands, que nous avons appris à connaître pendant la guerre et qui nous ont été très utiles alors, pourront-ils nous faire donner les éclaircissements sans lesquels l’affaire récupération des Armes de S.A.R. Madame la Grande-Duchesse sera à classer définitivement.” (MNHA archives, separate shelf, folder no. 37, Letter from Georges Schmitt to Albert Borschette, 23/11/1950).

<sup>1795</sup> MNHA archives, separate shelf, folder no. 37, Letter from Karl Vogler to Georges Schmitt, 19/12/1951.

district direction of Oberberg in Germany, headed by Goldenbogen. On 1 February 1952, the latter met with Konrad (director of the museum in Homburg), Schmitt and Vogler.

After the meeting, Goldenbogen exposed in a letter to Schmitt the events related to the arms collection and legitimised the actions taken by him and by Konrad. According to Goldenbogen, Allied troops destroyed or removed the weapons in castle Homburg. Mid-July 1945, Goldenbogen was informed that weapons were stored in Volperhausen, which belonged to the former Gau hunt administration of Koblenz. The British military administration identified them as those of Homburg and transferred them to the Kreisheimatmuseum, of which Konrad was the director. As Goldenberg stressed, the weapons were in bad shape, partly defective, and had to be restored – a *Schutthaufen* (“heap of rubble”), as he qualified it. From 1948 to 1950, Goldenbogen was repeatedly approached by Belgians, French, English, higher British authorities, and German antiquarians with requests concerning the weapons. The Oberkreisdirektor refused to deliver them without proof of ownership. During the discussions, the possible ownership of the collection by the grand-ducal court came up. Finally, it was Karl Vogler who approached Goldenbogen with a copy of the inventory list of the lost collection at Castle Berg. A comparison resulted in the identification of the weapons. Goldenbogen stressed that he would voluntarily transfer the weapons to the grand-ducal family, adding that he “acted rightly and saved a part of the grand-ducal arms collection from the heap of rubble, not without efforts and financial costs”.<sup>1796</sup> Goldenbogen might have hoped to receive financial compensation, but Schmitt, at least, did not discuss it in his reply of 18 February. Schmitt informed that Joseph Lauer would be sent to Germany to inspect the collection, and in the same week, Schmitt would travel to Germany to conclude the negotiations.<sup>1797</sup>

The arms collection of the grand-ducal family was not the only notable example of restitution. Another one highlights the personal enrichment and large-scale spoliation in the context of Jewish persecutions, deportations, and emigrations. From at least 1947 onwards, the Belgian ORE and the OREL jointly investigated the art dealer Lippemeier. The latter figured among the art dealers in Luxembourg who sold some objects to the museum. In the context of the investigation, Lippemeier, arrested after the liberation, was interrogated, the result of which was “quite miserable” (“assez piteux”) in Schmitt’s opinion. Schmitt reported that Lippemeier moved artworks from Luxembourg to Germany before the liberation. Most of these items were

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<sup>1796</sup> MNHA archives, separate shelf, folder no. 37, Letter from Oberkreisdirektor Goldenbogen to Georges Schmitt, 04/02/1952.

<sup>1797</sup> MNHA archives, separate shelf, folder no. 37, Letter from Georges Schmitt to Oberkreisdirektor Goldenbogen, 18/02/1952.

acquired during the occupation and part of the dealer's business stock. The transport included, among other things, Malaysian kris of the Schaack collection. The objects were first moved to Trier, then to a farmhouse in Zeltingen. Less than two years before the interrogation – around or after the end of the war – Lippemeier had returned to Zeltingen, cleared some boxes containing the objects (among others, the kris) and brought them to his residency in Cologne.<sup>1798</sup> The OREL was also looking “mainly” for paintings owned by Joseph Bech<sup>1799</sup> and by the banker Frank, presumably part of the transport. Furthermore, Schmitt explained that a lot of furniture confiscated from deported Luxembourgish citizens by German authorities was exported by Lippemeier.<sup>1800</sup>

Despite Schmitt’s disappointment, the information extracted from the interrogation resulted in the retrieval of 48 kris pertaining to the Schaack collection located in Lippemeier’s house. In addition, the ORE agents discovered eight objects acquired by the art dealer in Luxembourg.<sup>1801</sup> The ORE also investigated furniture and objects removed from Luxembourg by Mira von Schorlemer and Lippemeier.<sup>1802</sup> While the sources do not reveal much about Mira von Schorlemer, one agent of Lemaire explained that the baroness, “who appeared to have played a significant role in the art looting in Luxembourg and who was the brain trust of the von Schorlemer-Lippemeier society, lives indeed in the castle Overhagen near Lippstadt.”<sup>1803</sup>

Unfortunately, the sources do not always tell what recovered objects were part of which investigation or how many investigations ran parallel. At some point, the Lippemeier case crossed another investigation. In April 1948, Lemaire urged Schmitt to have Ackermann and a

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<sup>1798</sup> MNHA archives, separate shelf, folder no. 37, Letter from Georges Schmitt to R. Lemaire, 17/05/1947.

<sup>1799</sup> Lippemeier had bought objects belonging to Bech’s collection and refused to sell these objects to the museum. After the liberation, nearly all objects disappeared. The shop assistant confirmed Schmitt that many crates left the shop for Germany shortly before the arrival of the US troops (MNHA archives, separate shelf, unnumbered folder (Correspondance), Letter from Georges Schmitt to the OREL, 15/12/1945).

<sup>1800</sup> MNHA archives, separate shelf, folder no. 37, Letter from Georges Schmitt to R. Lemaire, 17/05/1947.

<sup>1801</sup> MNHA archives, separate shelf, folder no. 37, Letter from R. Lemaire to Georges Schmitt, 06/09/1947.

<sup>1802</sup> MNHA archives, separate shelf, folder no. 37, Letter from R. Lemaire to Georges Schmitt, 04/08/1947.

<sup>1803</sup> Own translation. “Cette personne qui semble avoir joué un grand rôle dans le pillage artistique du Luxembourg et qui était le brain trust de la société Von Schorlemer-Lippemaier habite bien le Schloss Overhagen près de Lippstadt.” (MNHA archives, separate shelf, folder no. 37, copy of a letter by the ORE agent Amand, 04/10/1947). The digitized sources related to the illegally exported artworks and recovered by the ORE, conserved in the archives of the Royal Archives in Belgium, often bear the name Mira van Schorlemer. Malaysian kris are among the objects, too. (Algemeen Rijksarchief 2 - Archives générales du Royaume 2 - Dépot Joseph Cuvelier - I 400 – 451).

certain Brauchmann interrogated. A witness had confirmed that both had confiscated Jewish possessions. Lemaire wished to know whether they were prisoners in Luxembourg before the ORE continued its research in Germany.<sup>1804</sup> During the occupation, Ackermann was heading the Abteilung IV. From the documents, it appears that Ackermann and Brauchmann did not only confiscate objects formerly belonging to Jews but also assets of the grand-ducal family and emigrated ministers. However, their names did not explicitly come up concerning the lost arms collection.<sup>1805</sup> In his letter of April 1948, Lemaire appended a report written by one of his agents. The witness in question was a certain Petry in Trier. Petry bought objects in Luxembourg that had belonged to Jews and explained that many farmers used the opportunity to renew their furniture. Ackermann and Brauchmann supervised confiscated furniture; all paintings, rugs and furniture were moved to Koblenz. Concerning Lippemeier (written “Liffenmayer”), the report observed the following:

It appears then that the most beautiful pieces were not sold but directly transferred to Koblenz. Then, the remaining antiquities were sold by Brauchmann and Ackermann to antiquarians (Petry gave me the name of Liffenmayer and of a Luxembourger called Feit) and to amateurs. The valuable objects already being reserved, the customers could only buy the remainder.<sup>1806</sup>

The investigations continued at least until December 1948. In the meantime, however, Lippemeier was released from custody. His felony did not constitute a war crime as defined by law.<sup>1807</sup> In October, Schmitt expressed his exasperation concerning the case. Ackermann remained untraceable, Brauchmann seemed to have told everything there was to tell, and a confrontation with Lippemeier was not possible anymore. “The very strenuous investigations I carried out to constitute a case Lippemeier and Brauchmann,” Schmitt lamented in a letter to Lemaire, “are now without concern. The interested parties to whom I offered our services did not consider it necessary to communicate the spoliation reports to me. You can see that it does not run smoothly.”<sup>1808</sup> Despite these issues, there seemed to be a conclusion in the case. It is

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<sup>1804</sup> MNHA archives, separate shelf, folder no. 37, Letter from R. Lemaire to Georges Schmitt, 28/04/1948.

<sup>1805</sup> MNHA archives, separate shelf, folder no. 37, Copy of a report appended to a letter from R. Lemaire to Georges Schmitt dated 17 June 1948, 12/06/1948.

<sup>1806</sup> Own translation. “Il apport donc que les plus belles pièces aient été non vendues mais dirigées directement sur Coblenze. Puis les antiquités restantes étaient mises en vente par Brauchmann et Ackermann à des antiquaires (Petry m'a donné le nom de Liffenmayer et d'un luxembourgeois nommé Feit) et à des amateurs. Les bonnes choses ayant été réservées, les clients ne pouvaient acheter que des rogatons” (MNHA archives, separate shelf, folder no. 37, Report by the agent Amand appended to a letter from R. Lemaire to Georges Schmitt dated 28 April 1948).

<sup>1807</sup> MNHA archives, separate shelf, folder no. 38, Letter from Georges Schmitt to R. Lemaire, 14/10/1948.

<sup>1808</sup> Own translation. “Les investigations très pénibles que j'avais menées pour constituer un dossier Lippemeyer et Brauchmann sont à présent sans objet. Au cours de ces recherches j'ai constaté

impossible to retrace in detail what happened next, but in December, Schmitt informed Lemaire that the Luxembourg state would recover artworks with the same dispositions as in the Reiffers case.<sup>1809</sup>

Another example concerns the restitution of paintings to the collection of the Jesuits in Luxembourg, whose spoliation was investigated by Schmitt at the request of a certain Reverend Urbany. In June 1947, Schmitt sent a report to Urbany, not without highlighting the museum's role in "saving nearly all the furniture and paintings of the St. Augustine sisters." While mentioning fears of an "irreversible loss of historical and artistic objects during the massive confiscations of Church belongings" and possibly distorting the power relations at the time, Schmitt explained that the "Luxembourgish leaders of the Landesmuseum solicited and obtained, through the mediation of their German superior, the authorisation of the Stillhaltekommissar to supervise the confiscated possessions."<sup>1810</sup> Unlike Meyers and Heuertz in some sources, Schmitt did not invoke any patriotic duty. It seems that the museum would have been more interested in its conservation duty than in any possible restitution of these objects. Yet, Schmitt also mentioned the loopholes as "the interests of some were opposed to our interests". During the confiscation of Jesuit possessions, the museum was informed after German agents and official Luxembourgish resellers removed objects in which they were interested. Apparently, the antiquarian Badu acquired items during the confiscation. Other artworks and books were reportedly destroyed. A statue was sold to a Luxembourgish buyer who refused to return it at the time of writing of the report.<sup>1811</sup>

Over the years, several individual artworks not (explicitly) related to any specific investigation were recovered. Some paintings, though, had been part of Reiffers' collection, and their history might again raise questions about the effectiveness of the November 1940

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d'autres spoliations qui on fait l'objet d'une plainte auprès des tribunaux. Les intéressés auxquels j'ai offert nos services, n'ont pas jugé nécessaire de me communiquer des rapports sur la spoliation. Vous voyez que cela ne tourne pas rond du tout." (MNHA archives, separate shelf, folder no. 38, Letter from Georges Schmitt to R. Lemaire, 14/10/1948).

<sup>1809</sup> MNHA archives, separate shelf, folder no. 37, Letter from Georges Schmitt to R. Lemaire, 04/12/1948.

<sup>1810</sup> "Craignant la perte irréparable d'objets de valeur historiques ou artistiques lors des confiscations massives des biens religieux, opérées par l'occupant en 1941, les dirigeants luxembourgeois du Landesmuseum avaient, par l'entremise de leur chef allemand, sollicité et obtenu du Stillhaltekommissar l'autorisation de superviser avant tout autre les biens confisqués et d'acquérir tout objet qui, raisonnablement, rentrerait dans la catégorie: objet d'art ou de curiosité. Il avait été possible ainsi de sauver la presque totalité du mobilier et des tableaux des Sœurs de St. Augustin." (MNHA archives, separate shelf, folder no. 38, Letter from Georges Schmitt to Reverend Urbany and an appended report by Schmitt, 23/06/1947).

<sup>1811</sup> MNHA archives, separate shelf, folder no. 38, Letter from Georges Schmitt to Reverend Urbany and an appended report by Schmitt, 23/06/1947.

decree. In this context, a report from Schmitt on his travel to Brussels in November 1946 documents the iterations and dissemination of paintings during and after the war, though not all details are clarified. Three artworks, two Zenale and one Giovanni di Paolo, were transferred from the Central Art Collecting Point in Munich to Brussels.<sup>1812</sup> Besides these paintings, later transported to Luxembourg, two paintings attributed to Taddeo Gaddi were located by the Belgian ORE, as well as a painting by Lucas Cranach and a female portrait by Cornelis van Harleem, both formerly belonging to the Reiffers collection. The van Harleem was deposited in the museum in Strasbourg.<sup>1813</sup> As for the two Taddeo Gaddi, Walter Andreas Hofer, Hermann Göring's provider of paintings or, in the words of Jonathan Petropoulos, “the ‘director’ of Hermann Göring’s art collection”<sup>1814</sup>, informed that they were bought in Luxembourg. It appears, though, that this was not correct. Indeed, both paintings were later claimed by Belgium and transported from Luxembourg back to Brussels.<sup>1815</sup> The two Zenale had ended up in Göring’s private collection, whereas the Giovanni di Paolo had been reserved for the planned *Führermuseum* in Linz. The Cranach was probably located in the castle Wolfsburg in Austria, the “lair” (“*repaire*”) of the SS Mühlmann.<sup>1816</sup> According to Michel Polfer’s research, the Reiffers collection encompassed the two Zenale, the Cranach, the di Paolo and the van Harleem. They were sold by their owner, probably in February 1941, to Eduard Plietzsch, an intermediary of the “*Dienststelle Mühlmann*”. The Cranach was eventually located in the residence of Mühlmann in Tyrol.<sup>1817</sup> For all the paintings, the Luxembourg government raised claims. Finally, on 15 January, it decided to incorporate them into the museum’s collection.<sup>1818</sup>

When Luxembourg participated in an exhibition with despoiled artworks in Brussels, which opened in November 1948, some of these paintings figured among the exhibits: the Lucas

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<sup>1812</sup> MNHA archives, separate shelf, unnumbered folder (Musée d’histoire. Lettres reçues), Note concernant les résultats techniques des démarches auprès de l’O.R.E. à Bruxelles en vue de la récupération d’œuvres d’art spoliées by Georges Schmitt, 22/11/1946.

<sup>1813</sup> According to Michel Polfer, Reiffers sold both Zenale, the Cranach, the di Paolo and the van Haarlem to Eduard Plietzsch for an amount of RM 135,000, probably in February 1941 (Polfer, ‘Nationalsozialistische Kulturpolitik oder Herrschaftsstabilisierung?’, 334).

<sup>1814</sup> Jonathan Petropoulos, ‘Art Dealer Networks in the Third Reich and in the Postwar Period’, *Journal of Contemporary History* 52, no. 3 (2017): 550, doi:10.1177/0022009416637417.

<sup>1815</sup> Polfer, ‘Nationalsozialistische Kulturpolitik oder Herrschaftsstabilisierung?’, 336. According to Edmond Reiffers himself, the two Gaddi had never been part of his collection.

<sup>1816</sup> MNHA archives, separate shelf, unnumbered folder (Musée d’histoire. Lettres reçues), Note concernant les résultats techniques des démarches auprès de l’O.R.E. à Bruxelles en vue de la récupération d’œuvres d’art spoliées by Georges Schmitt, 22/11/1946.

<sup>1817</sup> Polfer, ‘Nationalsozialistische Kulturpolitik oder Herrschaftsstabilisierung?’, 334–335.

<sup>1818</sup> MNHA archives, separate shelf, unnumbered folder (Correspondance administrative. Lettres reçues [1944-1960]), Letter from the Ministry of National Education to Georges Schmitt, 03/02/1947.

Cranach the elder, the two Taddeo Gaddi, and both Bernardo Zenale.<sup>1819</sup> The criteria for choosing the artworks cannot be assessed, but they ranged among the most valuable paintings recovered for Luxembourg. Initially, the state did not plan to cover the insurance and transport fees, but changed its mind. Schmitt informed Robert Giron, director of the *Société auxiliare des Expositions du Palais des Beaux-Arts*, that the government decided to cover the fees. It was framed as a gesture of gratitude for the efforts of the Allied troops and the organisers.<sup>1820</sup>

### *Reconstruction and restoration of monuments*

Besides the restitution of artworks and historical objects, the immediate post-war period was also characterised by reconstruction efforts concerning cultural heritage – especially monuments and religious buildings. As one of the more noteworthy examples in this respect, the Basilica in Echternach was rebuilt between 1949 and 1952.<sup>1821</sup> The government proceeded to create a contextual state apparatus for the reconstruction, including but not limited to cultural heritage. In February 1945, the office of the General Commissioner for Reconstruction was instituted.<sup>1822</sup> In December 1945, the High Council for Reconstruction followed, in which the general commissioner for reconstruction participated.<sup>1823</sup>

In its policies towards heritage conservation, the government adopted a pragmatic approach concerning decisions taken by the Nazi administration. In October 1945, it decided that “until further regulation”, the regulations of the German administration related to the protection of the environment and sites would remain effective as long as these decisions were not contradictory to the law of 1927. Additionally, classifications of monuments would not be invalidated. The government’s motivation relied on tropes reminiscent of the interwar period: the protection of the fauna and flora of the country and of “the beauty of our touristic regions”.<sup>1824</sup>

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<sup>1819</sup> MNHA archives, separate shelf, folder no. 38, Letter from Georges Schmitt to R. Lemaire, 25/10/1948.

<sup>1820</sup> MNHA archives, separate shelf, folder no. 38, Letter from Georges Schmitt to Robert Giron, 26/10/1948.

<sup>1821</sup> Luc Diederich, *La protection du patrimoine au Luxembourg* (Luxembourg: Lycée Technique du Centre, 2002), 54.

<sup>1822</sup> ‘Arrêté grand-ducal du 23 février 1945 portant création du poste de commissaire général pour la reconstruction.’, in *Mémorial A*, vol. 8 (Luxembourg, 1945), 66–67, <http://data.legilux.public.lu/file/eli-etat-leg-memorial-1945-8-fr-pdf.pdf>.

<sup>1823</sup> ‘Arrêté ministériel du 19 décembre 1945, concernant la création d’un Conseil Supérieur de la Reconstruction’, in *Mémorial A*, vol. 74 (Luxembourg, 1945), 1008–1009, <http://data.legilux.public.lu/file/eli-etat-leg-memorial-1945-74-fr-pdf.pdf>.

<sup>1824</sup> ‘Arrêté grand-ducal du 8 octobre 1945 modifiant et complétant la loi du 12 août 1927 sur la conservation des Sites et Monuments nationaux’, in *Mémorial A*, vol. 63 (Luxembourg, 1945), 819–820, <http://data.legilux.public.lu/eli/etat/leg/agd/1945/10/08/n28/jo>.

Responding to a conservative vision of culture, reflecting the importance of the Church as an institution, and underlining the significant number of church buildings considered as historical and artistic heritage, a supervising commission for the restoration of religious buildings was created in March 1945.<sup>1825</sup> Its competencies covered damaged churches not classified for protection under the law of 1927. Its agenda did not only feature conservation but also attempts to avoid “works hastily executed by unprofessional artists” (“*des travaux exécutés à la hâte et par des artistes de fortunes*”), which could damage the art and the “good taste” (“*bon goût*”). The decree expressed an elitist vision of art, even though it did not define “good taste”. In September 1945, the dispositions were extended to include reconstruction, restoration and interior arrangement of rectories (*presbytères*).<sup>1826</sup> For the composition of the commission, Frieden chose experts and representatives of the Catholic Church. The nominated individuals were Paul Wigreux, Hubert Schumacher, Léon Lommel (teacher at the Séminaire), Richard-Maria Staud (already a member of the *Commission des monuments historiques*), and Georges Schmitt. Schmitt, Wigreux and Schumacher had all been implicated in the administrative apparatus of the occupation period. A budget line for the reconstruction and restoration of historical monuments was added to the state budget of 1947, in addition to the regular conservation of monuments. In 1954, the Commission de surveillance pour les bâtiments religieux appeared for the first time in the state budget.

#### V.1.4. Ambiguities in the nationalised intermediate space

In the immediate post-war period, the elites cultivated an ambiguous stance towards the country’s status as a nationalised intermediate space. The forced Germanisation and the attempted removal of French culture during the occupation of Luxembourg left their traces in post-war cultural policy, in cultural discourses and self-perception. German culture was regarded sceptically, initiatives to promote Luxembourgish were launched, and preferences for French culture transpired. These aspects are observable both in the policies and in the attitudes and opinions of actors. Three general attitudes are discernible: explicit promotion of French culture and language, reservations towards or outright rejection of German culture and language, and adherence to the bilingual status. These attitudes were not mutually exclusive.

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<sup>1825</sup> ‘Arrêté ministériel du 15 mars 1945 portant création d’une commission de surveillance pour la restauration des édifices religieux’, in *Mémorial A*, vol. 13 (Luxembourg, 1945), 113.

<sup>1826</sup> ‘Arrêté ministériel du 20 septembre 1945 portant extension de la compétence de la Commission pour la surveillance des édifices religieux aux travaux de restauration des presbytères’, in *Mémorial A*, vol. 53 (Luxembourg, 1945), 616.

### *Cultural diplomacy*

Whereas Luxembourg concluded new cultural agreements with France and Belgium, reconnecting with the interwar period, an agreement with the Federal Republic of Germany was not signed until 1980. At this stage, it is worth highlighting the sceptical attitude of members of the diplomatic corps towards Germany. In her study of the careers of high-ranking Luxembourgish officials, Mauve Carbonell stressed the ambiguities of those men who experienced exile, occupation, deportation or forced conscription.<sup>1827</sup> Some sources are explicit in this respect. On 26 September 1951, Robert Als, Luxembourg's ambassador in Belgium, wrote Joseph Bech a personal letter with his views on the German embassy in Brussels, especially its ambassador. The observations were marked by a deep mistrust towards the Germans, even though Als had previously highlighted the pleasant character of the ambassador Dr Pfeiffer, "who does everything to reverse, if possible, the feelings created by German imperialism in general and Nazi imperialism in particular".<sup>1828</sup> Then, Als referred to the "psychological error" committed by Pfeiffer in suggesting to the Luxembourgish community in Brussels a mass in German and professing: "Let us pray Our Father for our Fatherland" ("Lasst uns noch ein Vaterunser beten für unser Vaterland"). Als considered Pfeiffer as one of the "good Germans" but noted that "even the 'good Germans' seem to have nothing learnt". Als feared that Germany might again justify annexationist intentions based on the linguistic situation of Luxembourg.<sup>1829</sup>

Als' letter should certainly not be considered an archetype of the attitude of every diplomatic representative or any political actor. Yet, it shows that scepticism was present among state officials. This scepticism reappeared two years later in a report, of which Joseph Bech sent an excerpt to Pierre Frieden in March 1953. During a meeting of the permanent commission of foreign policy of the Benelux states on 5 February 1953, Belgium informed its partners that it was approached by German authorities for concluding a cultural agreement. The Belgian delegates were rather in favour of such an initiative, advancing that "despite the deplorable memories of a recent past, one has to acknowledge that West Germany has more or less retaken its place among the European nations".<sup>1830</sup> The Luxembourgish delegation did not share the

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<sup>1827</sup> Carbonell, *De la guerre à l'Union de l'Europe*, 104–105.

<sup>1828</sup> Own translation. "[...] qui fait tout pour renverser, si possible, le cours des sentiments créés par l'impérialisme germanique en général et nazi en particulier." (ANLux, AE-06843, Letter from Robert Als to Joseph Bech, 26/09/1951).

<sup>1829</sup> ANLux, AE-06843, Letter from Robert Als to Joseph Bech, 26/09/1951.

<sup>1830</sup> Original text: "De l'avis de la délégation belge, de sérieux arguments plaident en faveur d'un tel accord. Malgré les souvenirs navrants d'un passé récent, on doit se rendre compte que l'Allemagne occidentale a à peu près repris sa place parmi les nations européennes et qu'elle coopère avec ces

opinion of their Belgian colleagues. Taking a reticent stance, it advised “extreme prudence”. It would be improbable that the Luxembourg government would take the initiative.

Whereas Germany was not a trusted diplomatic and cultural partner, the opposite was the case for France and Belgium, at least at the cultural-diplomatic level. The organisation of exhibitions dedicated to Belgian and French books (1949 and 1945, respectively) needs to be embedded in the context of reconnection with French culture. The idea of an exhibition on French books at the National Library emanated from the cultural society in 1944. More precisely, Michel Stoffel, president of the Cercle artistique, invited French authorities to organise such an exhibition in Luxembourg. “I made these gentlemen understand how much the Luxembourgish public was separated from the French book during Nazi occupation,”<sup>1831</sup> Stoffel reported in his letter to Frieden. The minister promised his full backing.<sup>1832</sup> Some months later, he issued a recommendation and the legation in Paris agreed. The minister conceded “great importance” to the exhibition, “as after four years of absolute separation, it appears urgent that our intellectuals re-establish contact with French thought and culture.”<sup>1833</sup> Two aspects should be highlighted. Firstly, in this specific case, the interests of the cultural and the political elites converged. Secondly, the exhibition was apparently not targeting the broad public, as the minister explicitly mentioned the need for intellectuals to “reconnect” with French culture, and despite Stoffel’s use of the vague concept of “Luxembourgish public”. The inauguration happened on 23 June 1945, organised by the CAL with support from the National Library and the State Museums. As a journalist assisting at the opening, Pierre Grégoire applauded the exhibition. He had personal reasons. Experiencing life in concentration camps and coming to disdain German, French was, in his eyes, “the language of humanity”.<sup>1834</sup>

A particularity of Luxembourg as a nationalised *Zwischenraum* was undoubtedly the choice of universities abroad and countries where young adults pursued their studies. As in the attitudes towards languages, the war experiences affected the choices of Luxembourgish nationals, though the tendency was slowly turning. As higher education was a traditional matter

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dernières sur un pied d’égalité au sein d’institutions communes.” (ANLux, MEN-0266, Letter from the Minister for Foreign Affairs to the minister for national education, 26/03/1953).

<sup>1831</sup> Own translation. “J’ai fait comprendre à ces messieurs combien le public luxembourgeois avait été sevré du livre français pendant l’occupation nazie.” (ANLux, MEN-1659, Letter from Michel Stoffel to Pierre Frieden, 28/11/1944).

<sup>1832</sup> ANLux, MEN-1659, Letter from Pierre Frieden to Michel Stoffel, 02/12/1944.

<sup>1833</sup> Own translation. “[...] comme après quatre années de séparation absolue il paraît urgent que nos intellectuels reprennent contact avec la pensée et la civilisation françaises.” (ANLux, MEN-1659, *Recommandation* by the minister of arts and sciences, 15/02/1945).

<sup>1834</sup> Pierre Grégoire, ‘Salut de la France - Salut à la France’, *Luxemburger Wort*, June 1945.

of exchanges in the context of cultural agreements, it was not surprising that Belgian delegates, in a meeting of the mixed commission of the Belgian-Luxembourgish cultural agreement, voiced concerns about the decreasing number of Luxembourgish students in Belgium, as Lambert Schaus, envoy at the Luxembourgish embassy to Belgium, reported.<sup>1835</sup> These concerns were not necessarily unfounded, precisely as a result of an increasing number of students in Germany. In 1947, according to statistics compiled by the National Students' Union (Union national des étudiant-e-s du Luxembourg, UNEL) and quoted by Schaus, 415 Luxembourgish nationals studied in France, 140 in Belgium, and 6 in Germany. In 1953, the picture was already slightly different, though France was still the preferred country with 325 students. Belgium, with 87 students, was outranked by Germany, with 100 students. Schaus questioned these numbers, though, and collected statistics according to which 145 students studied in Belgium in 1953. He shared some conclusions, such as the impact of the cost of living and study conditions on the choices. Concerning Germany, Schaus highlighted, among other aspects, that many universities had been still closed in Germany in 1947.<sup>1836</sup>

### *Cracks in the self-perception*

After four years of occupation and forced Germanisation, the wish to reconnect with French culture was quite strong, at least among the elites and especially in literature and print. A document from the Ministry of National Education on the problems concerning the distribution of books clearly expressed this need. In a letter of 6 August 1945, to which the report was attached, the minister for national education explained that “the Grand Duchy is greatly interested in this issue, considering that the missing exchange with France during nearly five years has produced an unpleasant deficit of intellectual and cultural relations between both of our countries.”<sup>1837</sup> The report did not refer once to German books but mentioned the issue of the exportation of French books and the destruction of libraries of cultural associations such as the Alliance française.<sup>1838</sup>

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<sup>1835</sup> ANLux, MEN-0257, Letter from Lambert Schaus to Joseph Bech, 28/07/1954.

<sup>1836</sup> ANLux, MEN-0257, Letter from Lambert Schaus to Joseph Bech, 28/07/1954.

<sup>1837</sup> Own translation. “[...] le Grand-Duché est vivement intéressé à ce problème, vue que le manque de communications avec la France pendant presque cinq ans a produit une très fâcheuse lacune dans les rapports intellectuels et culturels de nos deux pays.” (ANLux, MEN-0288, Letter from the minister of national education to the director of the Institut International de Coopération Intellectuelle, 06/08/1945).

<sup>1838</sup> ANLux, MEN-0288, *Problème de la production et de la diffusion du Livre*, attached to a letter of the minister of national education to the director of the Institut International de Coopération Intellectuelle, 06/08/1945.

A notable change happened in the legislative domain. Until the 1930s, legal texts were published in French and German. After the war, laws were exclusively published in French. The cultural sphere was also affected. According to the historian Paul Lesch, until 1946, movies in the German language were absent from cinema projections. Afterwards, Austrian and Swiss productions represented most movies in German. Movies from Germany only resurfaced slowly from 1947 onwards; these mostly dated from before 1944. The government reacted by conceding the cinema surveillance commission the right to prohibit the projection of pre-1944 German movies. In some cases, the commission made use of this right.<sup>1839</sup> In 1948, Ewy Friedrich, who was not categorically against German movies, observed that they attracted the largest audience in Luxembourg and, thus, were the most successful. He sharply criticised the strong presence of US movies as a “danger to European national productions”.<sup>1840</sup>

In the following years, and throughout the 1950s, the number of German movie projections increased and, in terms of spectator numbers, even surpassed the US-American productions. Lesch advanced several explanations for the popularity of German movies, especially the *Heimatfilme*. First, the linguistic aspect favoured German productions, as Luxembourgers who had attended school during the occupation period possessed limited French language skills. Furthermore, according to Lesch, the success of German *Heimatfilme* could also be explained by its values that spoke to a population of a relatively conservative country. The movies depicted clear Manichean visions of the world, praised traditional values and idealised rural life.<sup>1841</sup>

The language question affected the education system and related debates, too. In December 1948, the minister for national education deemed it necessary to publish a circular for teachers on using German as a vernacular language in primary schools. On the one hand, the minister observed that, since the liberation, some teachers had been prone to use Luxembourgish as the vernacular language. For the minister, this would result in generally lower German language skills among the pupils. On the other hand, the minister’s wording implied that German was the least complicated language to learn for Luxembourgers compared to other languages:

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<sup>1839</sup> Lesch quotes three examples of movies that were forbidden (produced in 1938, 1939 and 1943 respectively), but he stresses that the exact reasons for their interdiction are unknown (Paul Lesch, ‘Les années 50: L’âge d’or de l’exploitation cinématographique’, in *Le Luxembourg des années 50: Une société de petite dimension entre tradition et modernité = Luxemburg in den 50er Jahren: Eine kleine Gesellschaft im Spannungsfeld von Tradition und Modernität*, ed. Claude Wey [Luxembourg: Musée d’histoire de la Ville de Luxembourg, 1999], 379–380).

<sup>1840</sup> Quoted in German in: Lesch, 396.

<sup>1841</sup> Lesch, 382.

Since the liberation, many teachers have tended to use Luxembourgish nearly exclusively as a vernacular language in the various branches. It results from this that due to the lack of continuous training, the study of German elicits the same difficulties for pupils as the study of any other foreign language that the knowledge of this language, especially concerning orthography and the correction of the expression, has been visibly reduced and that the general level in certain schools has even decreased in the other branches.<sup>1842</sup>

The minister explicitly related this attitude to the “severe sufferings inflicted by the occupier”. Thus, “the staff has come to hate everything that closely or remotely reminds of its abominable regime.”<sup>1843</sup> The minister highlighted that “German remains the only language that every Luxembourger can read fluently and manages to write fairly correctly”<sup>1844</sup>. The government upheld the principle of bilingualism in the education system. Yet while endorsing this principle, the education system still favoured French. French teaching hours were twice that of German in primary schools. Luxembourgish could only be used with “a pedagogical value for the pupils”.<sup>1845</sup>

Besides the wish to promote French, fears of its fading influence were voiced by some actors of the cultural society, even many years after the end of the occupation. In 1970, the SELF, the society of French-writing Luxembourgish authors, addressed a letter to the prime minister in which it opposed suggestions to reduce French education at school and concede more importance to German. The SELF reacted to a report of the Association des Professeurs, which suggested introducing German as the vernacular language in all branches of the lower classes and in many branches of the higher classes. Of course, the SELF was acting in its own interest and in the interest of its members. The promotion of French culture was its mission statement. It perceived the suggestion as an attack on the education system of Luxembourg, which, among

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<sup>1842</sup> Own translation. “Depuis la libération, un certain nombre d’instituteurs ont tendance à employer comme langue véhiculaire dans les différentes branches presque exclusivement le luxembourgeois. La conséquence en est que faute d’entraînement continu, l’étude de l’allemand présente aux élèves les mêmes difficultés que l’étude de n’importe quelle autre langue étrangère, que les connaissances de cette langue en ce qui concerne notamment l’orthographe et la correction de l’expression ont sensiblement diminué et que le niveau général dans certaines écoles a même baissé dans les autres branches.” (ANLux, MEN-0003, *Circulaire du 22 décembre 1948 au personnel enseignant sur l’emploi de l’allemand comme langue véhiculaire dans l’enseignement primaire* by the minister of national education). In fact, the circular was inspired, in many parts, by a report sent from the secretary of the college of inspectors to the general inspector of the primary education system.

<sup>1843</sup> Own translation. “[...] le personnel ait pris en haine tout ce qui de près ou de loin rappelle son régime odieux.”

<sup>1844</sup> Own translation. “L’allemand reste la seule langue que tout Luxembourgeois lise couramment et sache écrire avec une certaine correction.”

<sup>1845</sup> ANLux, MEN-0003, *Circulaire du 22 décembre 1948 au personnel enseignant sur l’emploi de l’allemand comme langue véhiculaire dans l’enseignement primaire* by the minister of national education.

others, would safeguard national specificity. At the same time, it did not fundamentally question the bilingual status:

Because of a long tradition that has stood the test of time, because of the fundamental needs as much at the intellectual level as at the economic level, because of an indispensable orientation to maintain our national particularity, the S.E.L.F., worried about manoeuvres that might damage the originality of our education and of our cultural life, implores you to judge as inadmissible the intentions that tend to diminish French education in our country that, not without reason, claims to be a country “partially of French language”.<sup>1846</sup>

A certain L.K. (possibly Lucien Kayser, a co-signatory of the letter) criticised the report in an article published in the *Luxemburger Wort* on 10 March 1970. In this piece, the report was quoted as follows:

Is it necessary to remind that German, our cultural language since the Middle Ages, is the only language understood by all Luxembourgers and the only language that allows us to assimilate European culture, French remaining a luxury of an intellectual minority?<sup>1847</sup>

The report and the reaction show that the cultural society was far from unanimous in its views. It also reveals the values and ideas attached to the languages: German is the people's language, while French incarnates the small intellectual sphere. The report triggered reactions not only because it appeared to question the bilingual status of Luxembourg but possibly because it might have been reminiscent of discourses from the occupation period. For the government, there was no question of changing the system in favour of either language.<sup>1848</sup>

In 1950, Marcel Engel discussed the language question in a piece published in the *Cahiers Luxembourgeois*. Like many of his peers in the cultural society, Engel studied in France and Germany before the war. Under the occupation, he lost his teaching position in high school due to an anti-German attitude and was relocated to Germany, then deported to the Hinzert concentration camp in 1944.<sup>1849</sup> His experiences possibly shaped his attitude toward the

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<sup>1846</sup> Own translation. “En raison d'une longue tradition qui a fait ses preuves, en raison des besoins fondamentaux sur le plan intellectuel comme sur le plan économique, en raison d'une orientation indispensable au maintien de notre particularisme national, la S.E.L.F., s'inquiétant de manœuvres qui risquent de porter préjudice à l'originalité de notre enseignement et de notre vie culturelle, vous prie instamment d'opposer une fin de non-recevoir aux velléités qui tendent à diminuer l'enseignement du français dans notre pays qui non sans raison se réclame d'être un pays ‘partiellement de langue française’.” (ANLux, MEN-0010, Letter from the SELF to the prime minister, 10/03/1970).

<sup>1847</sup> Own translation. “Faut-il rappeler que l'allemand, qui est notre langue de culture depuis le bas moyen-âge, est la seule langue comprise par tous les Luxembourgeois, et la seule langue qui nous permette d'assimiler la culture européenne, le français restant le luxe d'une minorité d'intellectuels?” Quoted in: ANLux, MEN-0010, *La querelle linguistique n'aura pas lieu. Resterons-nous bilingues?* by L.K., in *Luxemburger Wort*, 10/03/1970.

<sup>1848</sup> ANLux, MEN-0010, Letter from Jean Dupong to Pierre Werner, 24/07/1970.

<sup>1849</sup> Frank Wilhelm, ‘Marcel Engel’, Luxemburger Autorenlexikon, accessed 16 October 2019, <https://www.autorenlexikon.lu/page/author/151/1511/DEU/index.html>.

German language after the war. He advocated promoting French teaching in schools and thought that French should be supported for reasons of “spiritual enrichment” and “national self-assertion”.<sup>1850</sup> In a similar vein, in a French piece with the German title *In deutscher Sprache* (“In German language”), Alphonse Arend criticised the spread of German in Luxembourg.<sup>1851</sup> He explicitly referred to the language policies of the Nazis. In his view, German equalled oppression. He thought the perception of French as a language used by the privileged class would have negatively affected its social position.<sup>1852</sup> However, Luxembourgish, “our dialect”, had not been able to replace German, “*le boche*”. According to Arend, such hopes turned out to be naïve wishes.<sup>1853</sup> Arend’s life was deeply marked by Nazi policies. During the war, he was resettled to Germany and forced to work on the motorway construction in Wittlich.<sup>1854</sup> Yet, not everyone shared such opinions. Some views were more moderate by drawing a clear distinction between German as a language and its use by Hitler.<sup>1855</sup>

The disdain for German culture has been rarely expressed with such candour as Pierre Grégoire, future minister of cultural affairs, did in 1945. His experiences in the concentration camps of Sachsenhausen and Mauthausen pushed him to “hate everything that had a German scent”. During this time, he claimed to have found a “remedy” to “resist Nazism”, which was the act of speaking French, “the language that is the true expression of humanity”. He dreamt of an organisation that could facilitate the “human, social and spiritual relations between France and Luxembourg.”<sup>1856</sup>

For all the scepticism and aversion professed against German, the cultural and political elites did not want to abandon the bilingual status of the country. Als considered the promotion and intensification of the bilingual status of Luxembourg as the best protection against possible annexationist intentions emanating from Germany. Luxembourgish, he noted, could not replace German as “a great written cultural language”. French was the only language that could

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<sup>1850</sup> Quoted in: Josiane Weber, ‘Produktion und Rezeption deutschsprachiger Literatur in Luxemburg’, in *Le Luxembourg des années 50: Une société de petite dimension entre tradition et modernité = Luxembourg in den 50er Jahren: Eine kleine Gesellschaft im Spannungsfeld von Tradition und Modernität*, ed. Claude Wey (Luxembourg: Musée d’histoire de la Ville de Luxembourg, 1999), 327.

<sup>1851</sup> Weber, 327.

<sup>1852</sup> Original text: “L’usage peut-être inconsidéré du français comme moyen d’expression dans certaines familles en avait fait, à tort bien entendu, le privilège d’une classe de gens qu’on se plaisait à nommer ‘huppés’.”

<sup>1853</sup> Alphonse Arend, ‘In deutscher Sprache’, *Die Warte: kulturelle Wochenbeilage des ‘Luxemburger Wort’*, May 1950.

<sup>1854</sup> Frank Wilhelm, ‘Alphonse Arend’, Luxemburger Autorenlexikon, accessed 17 October 2019, <https://www.autorenlexikon.lu/page/author/111/1117/DEU/index.html>.

<sup>1855</sup> Weber, ‘Produktion und Rezeption deutschsprachiger Literatur in Luxemburg’, 327.

<sup>1856</sup> Grégoire, ‘Salut de la France - Salut à la France’.

defy the “dangerous political influence of the German language” and fully develop “the bilingualism of which we are rightly proud”.<sup>1857</sup> While Arend favoured the spread of French, Als went a step further and linked bilingualism to the very survival of Luxembourg as a nation-state. Yet, despite his suspicions towards Germany, he did not suggest abandoning German altogether. When he addressed the question of strengthening bilingualism, Als observed that it concerned only a minority.<sup>1858</sup> This might be linked to the opinion expressed more explicitly by the minister in the circular to the teachers. The strong adherence to the bilingual status and the arguments advanced by people such as Als and Arend were reminiscent of the *Mischkultur* concept. The idea behind the *Mischkultur* consisted in presenting “Luxembourg as a mixture of French and German characteristics while simultaneously distancing the grand duchy from Germany itself.”<sup>1859</sup>

Despite all the initiatives to promote Luxembourgish, the cultural society had a somewhat mixed view, as expressed by Als’ statement. The perception of Luxembourgish culture did barely change compared to the pre-war period. In fact, despite celebrating national poets in the interwar period, many members of the cultural society thought Luxembourgish was too young and could not have produced any classic work. This was candidly exposed in one exchange in 1948. To prepare his answer to a request from the UNESCO regarding the translation of Luxembourgish works, Frieden contacted actors of the cultural society: Lucien Koenig, Marcel Noppeney (Société des écrivains luxembourgeois de langue française, SELF), Alphonse Arend (Amitiés françaises) and Raymond Mehlen (editor of the *Cahiers Luxembourgeois*).<sup>1860</sup> Besides highlighting difficulties concerning the definition of “classic”, they agreed that such a work did not exist and, if any, then possibly *Rénert* (1872) by Michel Rodange (according to Raymond Mehlen). Koenig used the opportunity to include some self-promotion. According to his letter to the minister, the *Akademie vu Lëtzebuerg* insisted on informing the UNESCO of an “épopée nationale” by “Siggy vu Letzebuerg” (Lucien Koenig) in the process of publication and “by judging the parts published until now, it might be that this volume would plainly merit the qualification of a ‘classic’”.<sup>1861</sup>

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<sup>1857</sup> ANLux, AE-06843, Letter from Robert Als to Joseph Bech, 26/09/1951.

<sup>1858</sup> ANLux, AE-06843, Letter from Robert Als to Joseph Bech, 26/09/1951.

<sup>1859</sup> Péporté et al., *Inventing Luxembourg*, 263.

<sup>1860</sup> ANLux, MEN-0196, Letter from the minister of national education to several addressees, 09/09/1948.

<sup>1861</sup> Own translation. “[...] à en juger les parties publiées à ce jour il se pourrait que cet ouvrage méritât de plein droit la qualification de “classique”.” (ANLux, MEN-0196, Letter from Lucien Koenig to the minister of national education, 14/10/1948).

The answers reveal different opinions about the age of Luxembourgian literature: for the SELF, it was barely 40 years old; for Koenig, it appeared 120 years ago. Raymond Mehlen did not miss to produce a discourse reminiscent of the *Mischkultur*:

We think, however, that Luxembourgish writers, because of their “hybrid” culture situated between the cultures of France and Germany, could act as mediators between both cultures [*civilisations*] by translating French and German classics in one or another of those languages. We are convinced that the intimate contact with the two languages and the two literatures particularly predispose Luxembourgish authors to the task of translators.<sup>1862</sup>

Mehlen was not the only one to assume that Luxembourgers would be particularly suited as translators. Koenig suggested launching a call for applications for translators at UNESCO.<sup>1863</sup> The perception of Luxembourg as an intermediate space, a Mischkultur, or any of the possible variations of the same theme, continued far into the post-war period. Robert Bruch, a promoter of Luxembourgish language studies, argued in his doctoral thesis submitted at Marburg University in 1952 that Luxembourg “was an intermediate territory between two great cultures”.<sup>1864</sup>

During the months following the liberation, Luxembourgish was enjoying popularity. Some newspapers, such as the *Luxemburger Wort*, published their first issues mostly in this dialect.<sup>1865</sup> The interest in Luxembourgish and the importance conceded to the bilingual status were apparent in the government’s attitude. Shortly after the liberation, public authorities intended to clarify the linguistic situation. The results, however, were limited. The efforts to conceive an official orthography of Luxembourgish dated back to the pre-war period, when a special commission was created in 1939. In December 1944, the minister of national education sent the folder compiled by the commission to the teacher Paul Henkes, with suggestions addressed to the minister concerning the introduction of an official orthography.<sup>1866</sup> This attempt to revive the committee did not work, but Margue created a new one, including Georges Margue (his son), Nicolas Hein and Jean Feltes. As a result, a ministerial decree of 5 June 1946

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<sup>1862</sup> Own translation. “Nous sommes d’avis cependant que les écrivains luxembourgeois de par leur culture « hybride » située entre celle de la France et de l’Allemagne, pourraient jouer un rôle actif de médiateurs entre ces deux civilisations, en entreprenant des traductions d’œuvres classiques françaises et allemandes dans l’une ou l’autre de ces langues. Nous sommes convaincus que le contact intime avec les deux langues et les deux littératures prédisposent particulièrement les auteurs luxembourgeois à la tâche de traducteurs.” (ANLux, MEN-0196, Letter from Raymond Mehlen to the minister of national education, 20/10/1948).

<sup>1863</sup> ANLux, MEN-0196, Letter from Pierre Frieden to the director general of the UNESCO, 25/01/1949. The information is indicated in a note to the minister written below the text of the letter.

<sup>1864</sup> Péporté et al., *Inventing Luxembourg*, 290.

<sup>1865</sup> Péporté et al., 282–283.

<sup>1866</sup> ANLux, MEN-0002, Letter from the Ministry of National Education to Paul Henkes, 22/12/1944.

by Nicolas Margue introduced the new Luxembourgish spelling as developed by the committee, but it has never caught on. In 1950, when Arend characterised the orthography as “unfortunate” (“orthographie malheureuse”), sounding the death bell for a dialect that merely survived as a spoken idiom, he probably referred to the spelling introduced in 1946.<sup>1867</sup> According to Rosch Krieps, the typesetting and the correction of the dialect were too costly.<sup>1868</sup>

The constitutional revision of 6 May 1948 replaced article 29 with a new one, according to which the law regulates the use of languages in administrative and judicial matters.<sup>1869</sup> The previous legal text on this matter was published in 1834.<sup>1870</sup> Nevertheless, the lawmakers refrained from regulating the linguistic situation. German was not declared an official language, but neither was French, of which “few people had an adequate grasp.”<sup>1871</sup> Luxembourgish, too, was not on the table. However, the revision and the general context might have pushed the government to initiate reflections about a new law. In 1951, Pierre Pescatore, councillor at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and member of the permanent representation of Luxembourg at the UN, was asked by Pierre Frieden to propose a first draft law on the use of languages in public administration. In his letter, to which he attached the first version, Pescatore urged the government to prepare a law as soon as possible. He deemed the absence of a legal norm problematic. The diplomat noted that “we currently see the consolidation of a laissez-faire that contradicts all cultural efforts deployed by our education system [...].”<sup>1872</sup> It remains unclear, though, why Frieden asked Pescatore, a trained legal expert. The draft has never become law. Only in 1984 was the use of official languages regulated and Luxembourgish recognised as the national language. In fact, in the history of Luxembourgish, the 1950s and 1960s have been characterized as a “momentary lull” between the short-lived enthusiasm of the immediate post-war period and the development of new initiatives in the 1970s.<sup>1873</sup> This period of relative decline is also corroborated by the virtual inexistence of pro-Luxembourgish linguistic policy. The most prominent project carried out at the time was the Luxembourgish

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<sup>1867</sup> Arend, ‘In deutscher Sprache’.

<sup>1868</sup> Krieps, *Kultur im Kleinstaat 1879-1989*, 94.

<sup>1869</sup> ‘Révision de la Constitution’, in *Mémorial A*, vol. 30 (Luxembourg, 1948), 685–689, <http://data.legilux.public.lu/file/eli-etat-leg-memorial-1948-30-fr-pdf.pdf>.

<sup>1870</sup> ‘Arrêté royal grand-ducal du 22 février 1834 concernant l’usage des langues allemande et française dans les actes publics’, in *Mémorial A*, vol. 1 (Luxembourg, 1834), 99–100, <http://data.legilux.public.lu/file/eli-etat-leg-memorial-1834-1-fr-pdf.pdf>.

<sup>1871</sup> Péporté et al., *Inventing Luxembourg*, 287.

<sup>1872</sup> Own translation. “[...] on voit s’établir actuellement un laisser-aller qui se trouve en contradiction avec les efforts culturels déployés par notre système scolaire [...]” (ANLux, MEN-0288, Letter from Pierre Pescatore to Pierre Frieden, 27/11/1951).

<sup>1873</sup> Péporté et al., *Inventing Luxembourg*, 288.

Dictionary, which had already started in the 1930s, coinciding with the wish to promote Luxembourgish.<sup>1874</sup> The project was accomplished in 1975 with the publication of the final volume.

In general, the status of a bilingual country was not questioned in its essence. The continuity of the elites was undoubtedly one reason. In this sense, the preference of the cultural elite for French was a continuation of the interwar period. One might consider in this respect the Francophile tone of the Luxembourg pavilion in Paris in 1937. However, not all members of the cultural society shared the same opinion. Furthermore, traditional uses of the languages were not abandoned. The press outlets published mainly in German. In most cases discussed here, despite obvious scepticism towards German culture, the use of German as such was not questioned. The library catalogue of the Cultural and Popular Education Centre in Luxembourg City (1953) reveals that the association was collecting French, German, and even English books since 1946, though the list of French books (thirteen pages) was considerably longer than the list of German books (eight pages).<sup>1875</sup>

The contentious essence of the linguistic question did not dissipate so soon. At the end of the 1950s, a reader of the German Brockhaus encyclopaedia was struck by the description of Luxembourg as a trilingual country. According to the article, most Luxembourgers belonged to the “Frankish tribe”.<sup>1876</sup> In their letter to the publisher, the reader observed that “French is not the only official language. German is an official language, too.”<sup>1877</sup> Brockhaus contacted the ambassador of Luxembourg in the GFR. As he did not want to decide on such a “delicate question” without consultation, he wrote to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.<sup>1878</sup> Though it is not known if an answer was sent to Brockhaus, the draft letter observed that the article correctly represented the situation of Luxembourg. However, with reference to the occupation period,

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<sup>1874</sup> According to an article published in December 1962, the commission editing the dictionary had moved a dozen times since 1939. Though surviving the occupation period, after the liberation the archives were pillaged, moved to another place, and disarranged in the process (Michel Bauler, ‘La “langue” luxembourgeoise - luxe inutile?’, *d’Letzeburger Land*, December 1962). According to a short side note by Meyers in his post-war report, the Germans wanted to move the linguistic archives to Bonn (which they did not do), later they wanted the work on the dictionary to be resumed, but this did not happen either (Meyers, ‘Le musée d’histoire pendant la guerre’, 123).

<sup>1875</sup> Catalogue de la Bibliothèque du Centre culturel et d’Education populaire (Volksbildungsverein), Luxembourg: Acquisitions depuis 1946 (Luxembourg: Imprimerie P. Worré-Mertens, 1953).

<sup>1876</sup> ANLux, AE-11253, Letter from the Brockhaus publishing house to the embassy of Luxembourg in Germany, 09/04/1959.

<sup>1877</sup> ANLux, AE-11253, Letter from the Brockhaus publishing house to the embassy of Luxembourg in Germany, 09/04/1959.

<sup>1878</sup> ANLux, AE-11253, Letter from the ambassador to Luxembourg in the Federal German Republic to the minister of foreign affairs, 11/04/1959.

the “question of the belonging to a tribe [or race, “*Stammeszugehörigkeit*”] seems quite debatable”. Establishing a continuity that needs to be considered with critical distance, it highlighted that French had been an official language “since the Middle Ages”.<sup>1879</sup> The draft note recognised a bias towards French yet did not deny the bilingual status of Luxembourg. A contradiction in the note cannot be excluded. By confirming the article’s accuracy, the note indirectly accepted the trilingual status of Luxembourg (as written in the article) yet explicitly characterised Luxembourgish as a “West Frankish dialect”.

#### V.1.5. A renewed national aggrandizement: heroes, victims, patriots

As observed in the previous sub-section, the war left its mark on discourses and policies in Luxembourg as a nationalised intermediate space. The updated master narrative did not leave space for ambiguities and complexities. The use of concepts such as “heroes”, “victims”, or “patriotism” in the post-war period coincided, at least until 1947, with a discourse mobilising national symbols and characterised by patriotic rhetoric shared by all parties in the Chamber of Deputies. As the historian Daniel Spizzo pointed out:

[...] the period 1937-1947, except, of course, for the years of the Nazi occupation, was marked by a pluralist system of moderate parties and characterised by an enormous dissemination of national symbols in the language of the elites; symbols that, at least on the parliamentary stage, encountered a large implicit and explicit consensus on their signification [...].<sup>1880</sup>

The present section will focus on the post-war discourses surrounding war, the tropes used to commemorate it, and the events organised in this respect. Before doing so, two examples that mobilised the specific rhetoric of the immediate post-war period will be discussed shortly. The first one, not related to cultural policy, is the creation of the Oeuvre des Pupilles de la Nation in July 1945. It was not only representative of the government’s attempt to alleviate social issues but also of the legitimisation technique for promoting such policies. The Oeuvre des Pupilles de la Nation aimed to support children who survived the war as orphans. According to the motivations provided in the decree, “the Nation is indebted to those who died

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<sup>1879</sup> ANLux, AE-11253, Draft answer, anonymous, undated.

<sup>1880</sup> Own translation. “[...] la période 1937-1947 – à l’exception évidemment des années de l’occupation nazie – qui connaît un système des partis pluraliste modéré, se caractérise par une énorme diffusion des symboles nationaux dans le langage des élites; des symboles qui, du moins dans l’arène parlementaire, connaissent un grand consensus implicite et explicite autour de leur signification [...].” (Daniel Spizzo, ‘Démocratie consociative, système des partis et identité nationale: Les discours parlementaires dans les années 50’, in *Le Luxembourg des années 50: Une société de petite dimension entre tradition et modernité = Luxemburg in den 50er Jahren: Eine kleine Gesellschaft im Spannungsfeld von Tradition und Modernität*, ed. Claude Wey [Luxembourg: Musée d’histoire de la Ville de Luxembourg, 1999], 194).

for freedom and its independence”<sup>1881</sup>. They were “martyrs” and “heroes”. The decree expressly conceded priority to children whose parents died during an act of “patriotism”. Hence, besides the purge and the identification of collaborators, the post-war period was marked by a heroization of a specific group of people. The example is also striking because it made the support of children dependent on their parents’ behaviour. The second example, indirectly linked to cultural policy, was the institution of the Oeuvre Nationale de Secours Grande-Duchesse Charlotte in December 1944. Its purpose was not only to step in where the state was not yet able to intervene but, above all, to support Luxembourgish “victims” of the war and to coordinate and subsidise local and private relief organisations. Among the possible initiatives figured artistic and literary events. The Oeuvre still exists and has been a significant para-statal actor in the cultural field.

Hence, cultural policy was used to promote the nation-state and national reconstruction. The master narrative recurrent in cultural policy discourse was enriched with a new trope informed by the experiences of the occupation. Like the master narrative before the war, Luxembourg’s past was glorified. Indeed, there was no pressure to revise it fundamentally. Other researchers have already pointed out that “the war confirmed rather than undermined the underlying teleology and monarchical tendencies of the narrative.”<sup>1882</sup> Furthermore, the same historians who had shaped the master narrative before the war, such as Joseph Meyers or Nicolas Margue, continued to shape it after the war.

The idea of the nation was too attractive to be discarded after the occupation period, especially when it served the interests of reconstruction and aggrandizement. The wish to collectively present Luxembourgers as resistant fighters or victims certainly contradicted the *épuration* of the post-war period, which acknowledged the existence of collaborators. In 1946, the *Journée de Commémoration Nationale* (National Commemoration Day) was organised for the first time on 10 October to remember the failed population census of the occupiers. Narratives of sacrifice, victimisation and heroization were pervasive. In 1960, the minister of national education wrote that every year for National Commemoration Day,

the Luxembourgers solemnly recollect those of their compatriots who, through their heroism, their sufferings, the sacrifice of their life, stood up for and animated the Resistance of the Luxembourgish people, which lead to the Liberation.<sup>1883</sup>

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<sup>1881</sup> Own translation. “[...] la Nation a contracté une dette à l’égard de ceux qui sont morts pour la liberté et son indépendance.”

<sup>1882</sup> Péporté et al., *Inventing Luxembourg*, 109.

<sup>1883</sup> Own translation. “[...] les Luxembourgeois se recueillent en souvenir de ceux de leurs compatriotes qui, par leur héroïsme, leurs souffrances, le sacrifice de leur vie, ont soulevé, animé et

Consistent with the general view that cultural and educational institutions should promote and diffuse specific values, the minister believed that “school has an obligation to teach young generations the events of these tragic years”. In addition, it should “instil respect” towards the older compatriots “who followed their patriotic duty till the end”.<sup>1884</sup> Being an example of governmentality, this was a top-down narrative defined by the political elite and disseminated to pupils and students. In 1959, concerning the commemoration, the minister stressed in a letter that teachers should explain the importance of the commemoration and the “steps of the resistance of the Luxembourgish people”.<sup>1885</sup> During the Nazi occupation, the youth was told to believe in the German essence of Luxembourgers. After the war, the youth was told to believe in the distinctiveness and the collective resistance of Luxembourgers. Whether fascist or liberal, authoritarian or democratic, no government was free from ideologies that boiled down narratives to a selected range of interpretations. The world was either black or white.

The government or the political elite were not the only ones to contribute to the propagation of these post-war discourses. When a music association of Wiltz invited the minister Nicolas Margue to its 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary, it applied tropes of the updated master narrative. The planned performance of Wilhelm Tell was an “eloquent reproduction of the patriotic attitude of many of our fellow citizens, preferring an unfailing heroic death to humiliating submission, eventually sealing the victorious liberation from the oppressing yoke.”<sup>1886</sup> On a local level, numerous invitations from local authorities and associations all over the country were addressed to the minister of national education, for inaugurations of *monuments aux morts*: Eppeldorf (July 1948), Aspelt (August 1948), Moutfort (October 1948), Rodange (“monument érigé en l’honneur des jeunes gens et patriotes de Rodange, morts pour la Patrie”, June 1949), Bertrange (August 1949), Canach (September 1949), Strassen (September 1949), Hagen-

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conduit à la Libération la Résistance du peuple luxembourgeois.” (ANLux, MEN-1661, Journée de Commémoration Nationale, lundi le 10 octobre 1960, by the Ministry for National Education, 27/09/1960).

<sup>1884</sup> ANLux, MEN-1661, Journée de Commémoration Nationale, lundi le 10 octobre 1960, by the Ministry for National Education, 27/09/1960.

<sup>1885</sup> Own translation. “[...] étapes de la résistance du peuple luxembourgeois [...].” (ANLux, MEN-1661, Letter from the minister of national education to the principal inspector of primary education, 13/10/1959).

<sup>1886</sup> Own translation. “réproduction éloquante de l’attitude patriotique de nombre de nos concitoyens, préférant à la soumission humiliante, la mort héroïque sans défaillance, devant sceller la sortie victorieuse du joug oppresseur.” (ANLux, MEN-1660, Letter from the *Philharmonie municipale de Wiltz* to Nicolas Margue, 24/04/1947).

Kleinbettingen-Grass (October 1949), Gostingen (November 1949), Heisdorf (December 1949), Dudelange (15 October 1950), and Hobscheid (July 1950).<sup>1887</sup>

In 1960, the movements of war prisoners, resistance fighters and victims of the war organised the “Semaine du Rappel” (“Week of Remembrance”) from 1 to 8 May. The event was endowed with an official character through the support of the government. Emile Schaus, minister of national education, appealed to the teachers to discuss with pupils the occupation years. A specific theme marked each day. The choice of themes illustrated the perspective to be discussed, such as (collective) resistance: the “birth of the Resistance” (3 May), the “attack on our independence”, and the “big surges of popular patriotism” such as the referendum of October 1941 (4 May), or “the freedom regained thanks to the spirit of the Resistance” (9 May). Narratives of patriotism, resistance and sufferings of a whole nation were the only ones disseminated in the context of national aggrandizement. In accordance with the master narrative, the enemy was exterior to the nation. Within the framework of this week, a competition for children was organised with the topic “Luxembourg during the war”. The idea of this initiative was about “guaranteeing a deeper penetration of the patriotic ideas in the young minds”. Schaus himself used tropes of patriotism and resistance when he announced, in the circular, that the manifestation would be one of “patriotism and national solidarity, of commemoration and of active and effective recognition of the heroes who died for the fatherland.” He quoted Pierre Frieden, whom he described as a “great partisan and patriot”, with the words: “The nation is a soul as much as a body of institutions” (“*Une nation est une âme autant qu'un corps d'institutions.*”).<sup>1888</sup>

Productions of the cultural society dealt with war-related themes, too. The movie *Régions dévastées* (1945) documented the destructions caused by the Battle of the Bulge. *Hinzert, Ons doudeg Helden kommen heem* and *Deuil national* (both 1946) focused on the repatriation of the bodies of Luxembourgers who died in Hinzert and on the commemoration of the war, respectively.<sup>1889</sup> The titles referred to tropes of suffering and heroic deeds. In 1945, the Luxembourgian photographer Tony Krier published the first of two volumes of *Luxembourg Martyr 1940-1945*, a photographic report about Luxembourg from the invasion to the

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<sup>1887</sup> The list is not exhaustive. Letters and invitations related to these monuments are conserved in: ANLux, MEN-1660.

<sup>1888</sup> It remains unclear when and where Frieden supposedly said this; but it is also quite reminiscent of Ernest Renan's *Qu'est-ce qu'une nation?* (1882), in which he wrote: “Une nation est une âme, un principe spirituel.” For the appeal, see: ANLux, MEN-0006, Appeal from minister of national education Emile Schaus, 25/04/1960.

<sup>1889</sup> Linden, ‘Lux et Vox (...1921-1979...): Sons et Lumières de la représentation cinématographique du Luxembourg’, 18.

liberation. The book title could not be less programmatic, implying the collective suffering of Luxembourg for a higher cause. The Luxembourgish text was provided by Pierre Hentges, the French version was penned by Joseph Kanivé. It was by far not the only photographic report and brochure to which Krier contributed. In 1939, he published, for instance, a volume on the Centenary in the capital.<sup>1890</sup> In 1944, Krier edited with other collaborators the brochure *Faithful Luxembourg to her Liberators*, on the liberation in September 1944.<sup>1891</sup> The second volume of *Luxembourg Martyr* (1946) focused on the destructions caused by the Battle of the Bulge. As for the first volume, the contributors belonged to the generation that experienced the war as adults. Furthermore, Hentges (1890-1975) was the father-in-law of Krier.<sup>1892</sup> Kanivé (1899-1951) was a teacher and collaborator of the *Journal des Instituteurs*.<sup>1893</sup> The editors dedicated the publication to the grand duchess Charlotte, to the grand-ducal family, to “our unforgettable heroes and martyrs”, to “our destroyed villages”, and “to our people, brave and tenacious”. The narrative would not allow for a depiction of the war in all its complexities.

Krier’s photographic story of 1945 begins with the Centenary Celebration. The text insists on the strong ties between the people and its dynasty, on the celebration of freedom and independence while alluding to the difficult political context. For the period covering the months leading up to the invasion of May 1940 and the occupation, the events were perceived through the subjective lens of the authors, depicting a Manichean world of good versus evil, victims and perpetrators, heroes and criminals. “Cynical and stupid” were used in relation to Heinrich Diehl of the *Bund der Auslandsdeutschen*, “the fifth column”.<sup>1894</sup> The text used the negatively connoted “Preiss” (*Kraut* in English, *boche* in French) to refer to Germans. Gustav Simon was described as a “weakling” and called other names in a graphic description:

From the first hour onwards, this weakling, like a poisonous toad, spits his decrees day by day. Like an enraged devil, he lashes with the knout until Luxembourgish blood squirts from a thousand wounds. He destroys our democratic institutions founded on a secular tradition.<sup>1895</sup>

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<sup>1890</sup> Tony Krier and Charel Stephan, *D’Jorhonnertfeier 1939 am Bild: als Erennerong un d’Festlechketen vun onser honnertjähreger Onofhängegkét an der Hápststát Letzeburg vum 22. an 23. Abrel 1939* (Luxembourg: Ch. Stephan-Feltgen, 1939).

<sup>1891</sup> Tony Krier et al., *Faithful Luxembourg to Her Liberators: Letzeburg, 10. September 1944* (Luxembourg: T. Krier, 1944).

<sup>1892</sup> Claude Conter, ‘Pierre Hentges’, Luxemburger Autorenlexikon, June 2015, <https://www.autorenlexikon.lu/page/author/462/4628/DEU/index.html>.

<sup>1893</sup> Frank Wilhelm, ‘Dictionnaire de la francophonie luxembourgeoise’, in *La francophonie du Grand-Duché de Luxembourg* (Wien, Pécs: Institut für Romanistik der Universität Wien, Département de français de l’Université Janus Pannonius, 1999), 162.

<sup>1894</sup> “Cynical” is used several times to describe the actions of the Germans.

<sup>1895</sup> Own translation. “Dès la première heure, ce gringalet, tel un crapaud venimeux, crache ses décrets jour par jour. Comme un diable enragé il manie le knout jusqu’à ce que le sang luxembourgeois

When discussing the episode of the *Spéngelskrieg* (“war of the pins”), the authors distinguished between (not further qualified) “traitors” who attempted to strip away the pins of the Centenary and the “good Luxembourgers” (“bons Luxembourgeois”). Only Kratzenberg is called by his name in relation with the Volksdeutsche Bewegung. Using biblical references, the authors described him as a “Judas” who had sold out country and nation to the *Preiss*. A contradiction cannot be ignored when the authors mentioned the “traitors” yet insisted on the solidarity between Luxembourgers, for instance, during the first days of the invasion, or “the” Luxembourger being loyal to the fatherland and hating the *Preiss* (in the section about the VdB).

The discourse employed by the book converged with that of the political elite. In a letter to the state minister, the minister for national education referred to the good reviews of *Luxembourg Martyr* thanks to the quality of the pictures. The commercial success was, however, limited, as the market, according to the minister, was saturated with photographic reports about the occupation. He suggested that the Service de l’Information could acquire some copies, and he wanted to recommend acquiring the volume to school libraries.<sup>1896</sup>

The government’s attitude to students, motivated by the need to train a future elite to reconstruct the state, reflected the tropes at the time. On 5 November 1945, the minister for national education issued that all students who had served in the Wehrmacht by forced conscription but did not desert could not be considered perpetrating a crime due to the “brutal constraints of the bloody tyranny”.<sup>1897</sup> An internal note of the ministry on the situation of the students during the occupation, possibly inspiring the decision of November 1945, observed that they were forced to study in Germany. The note provided a patriotic interpretation: the students generally “gave a good example of patriotism through their mute or open opposition to the oppressor”. What exactly should be considered “mute opposition” (“opposition sourde”) remains unclear. The students were either collectively victimised or labelled as patriots and resistance fighters.<sup>1898</sup> The decisions and discourses were not only deriving from more pragmatic considerations (education of skilled citizens) but also framed within the general

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jaillisse de mille blessures. Il détruit nos institutions démocratiques fondées sur une tradition séculaire.” (Tony Krier, *Luxembourg Martyr 1940-1945*, vol. 1, 2 vols [Luxembourg: Imprimerie Pierre Linden, 1945]).

<sup>1896</sup> ANLux, MEN-0002, Letter from the minister of national education to the state minister, 02/04/1946.

<sup>1897</sup> ANLux, MEN-0003, Certificate issued by the minister of national education, 05/11/1945.

<sup>1898</sup> ANLux, MEN-0003, *Note sur la situation des étudiants luxembourgeois pendant l’occupation ennemie (10 mai 1940-10 septembre 1944)*, appended to a letter from the minister of national education to the minister of foreign affairs, 12/10/1945.

discourse shaped by the dichotomy of collective victimhood and collective resistance. The discourses about the younger generation might also be read on the background of constitutional changes in 1948 when the state's role in educational questions was clarified, and the legal voting age was lowered to 21 years.

### *The “return” of John the Blind (1946)*

As the previous examples have illustrated, the past was interpreted through the lens of the nation, through a “collective hardship”<sup>1899</sup>. The Nazi occupation became the most recent example of “foreign domination”. In the narrative of collective victimisation and heroization, groups such as Jews or foreigners were disregarded. One of the most explicit and symbolic events of heroization, and simultaneously a reconnection with Luxembourg’s medieval past, constituted the transfer of the remains of John the Blind to Luxembourg in 1946. It was possibly an attempt to promote a unified nation and overcome internal divisions within society.<sup>1900</sup> In any case, the transfer happened in a year marked by other celebrations commemorating the victims and the events of the war and the occupation: the first *Journée de Commémoration Nationale* in October or the return of the human remains of victims of concentration camps in March.<sup>1901</sup>

The tomb of John the Blind rested in Kastel-Staadt, Germany. In 1928 already, the topic of its relocation caused concerns among government circles in Luxembourg.<sup>1902</sup> Newspapers reported that Czechoslovakia approached the German government with a request to relocate the remnants of the medieval ruler to Prague. These reports eventually turned out to be false – refuted by the German government<sup>1903</sup> – but the reactions they elicited from Luxembourg, especially from Bech, showed symbolic importance. The case did not elicit further notable reactions with the clarification of the issue.

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<sup>1899</sup> Péporté et al., *Inventing Luxembourg*, 109.

<sup>1900</sup> As the historian Marc Schoentgen has noted with regard to the immediate post-war years and especially 1947-1949, the political purge was still an important matter. In 1947, Pierre Dupong lamented the lack of union (“désunion”) of the Luxembourgers and considered that it was time to “turn the page and forget the past” (Marc Schoentgen, ‘Zwischen Erinnern und Vergessen: Das Gedenken an den Zweiten Weltkrieg in den 1950er Jahren’, in *Le Luxembourg des années 50: Une société de petite dimension entre tradition et modernité = Luxembourg in den 50er Jahren: Eine kleine Gesellschaft im Spannungsfeld von Tradition und Modernität*, ed. Claude Wey [Musée d’histoire de la Ville de Luxembourg, 1999], 271). Considering that Dupong said this in 1947, one might advance that the initiatives such as the transfer of John the Blind’s remains only had a superficial effect and could not remove the divisions within the society.

<sup>1901</sup> Schoentgen, 273.

<sup>1902</sup> ANLux, MEN-1660, Letter from Joseph Bech to the chargé d'affaires in Berlin, 16/03/1928.

<sup>1903</sup> ANLux, MEN-1660, Verbal note to the legation of Luxembourg, 30/03/1928.

After the liberation, the prospect of returning the remains to Luxembourg rekindled the debates. The context was quite favourable. Luxembourg occupied two sectors of the French occupation zone in Germany<sup>1904</sup>; the area allocated to Luxembourg included Kastel-Staadt. Furthermore, 1946 was symbolically important, as it marked the 600<sup>th</sup> anniversary of John the Blind's death and the 650<sup>th</sup> anniversary of his birth. In May 1946, the OREL contacted the minister of national education and explained that its delegate informed the French occupation forces in Germany of an official request of the Luxembourg government to receive the remains of the "national hero".<sup>1905</sup> The French were inclined to accept. The debates reached back several months at least. On 19 February 1946, the *Luxemburger Wort* published a short notice in which the author wondered whether the remains of the "national hero" would finally return and how much longer he would have to rest on "foreign soil".<sup>1906</sup>

Unfortunately, the exchanges and the organisation during the months leading up to the transfer cannot be reconstructed at this stage. Certainly, an organisation committee must have been coordinating the efforts, as a newspaper article mentioned the "organisers" of the transfer: Lucien Koenig, Joseph Meyers, Joseph Petit, Lambert Schaus (échevin), Georges Schmitt, Hubert Schumacher, Paul Schulté (Ministry of Foreign Affairs), and Pierre Welter (State Ministry).<sup>1907</sup> On 25 August, the coffin was transported from Kastell to Remich, via Trassem, Meurich, Sinspelt. In Remich, the first Luxembourgish town on the itinerary, a reception was organised in which state officials, local authorities and the Luxembourgish military participated. Afterwards, the convoy continued its trajectory to Luxembourg City. The government wanted as many people as possible to witness the procession. The convoy between Remich and the capital was composed of the military and political class and of French military vehicles, including a tank. The programme insisted on the presence of pupils and local populations of the villages traversed by the convoy in the streets. The arrival of the convoy on Place Guillaume II in Luxembourg at around 16 hours was announced by church bells. Pupils, boy scouts and girl guides were expected to stand in the capital's streets. Speeches were held by the state minister, the mayor of Luxembourg City and the French general Koenig; the national hymn was played, and cannon shots were fired from the plateau of the Thüngen fortress. After the ceremony on the Place Guillaume, a procession in which the general

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<sup>1904</sup> Vincent Artuso, 'Besatzungsmuecht Lëtzebuerg', *Zäithistoriker*, April 2019, <https://www.100komma7.lu/article/aktualiteit/besatzungsmuecht-letzebuerg>.

<sup>1905</sup> ANLux, MEN-1660, Letter from the Office the recuperation économique luxembourgeois to the minister of national education, 31/05/1946.

<sup>1906</sup> 'Allerhand Ménongan: Johann der Blinde', *Luxemburger Wort*, February 1946.

<sup>1907</sup> 'E Késerpapp an Heldekinnek nés dohém', *Luxemburger Wort*, August 1946, 2.

population and the military participated, transported the remnants of John the Blind to the Cathedral. The “return” was celebrated in the early evening with a French concert on the Place d’Armes, and a dinner offered to “foreign personalities”.<sup>1908</sup> The cultural elite assisted, too. Joseph Meyers and Lucien Koenig, who had already defended the “return” in 1919<sup>1909</sup>, assisted at the opening and examination of the coffin (covered with the Luxembourg flag) in Kastell before the start of the convoy.<sup>1910</sup>

The move from Kastell to Luxembourg City was recorded on camera. The movie by Pierre Bertogne and P. Kinzinger corroborates other sources. It recorded how, in the presence of militaries and dignitaries, Joseph Meyers, Lucien Koenig, and state architect Hubert Schumacher examined the content of the coffin. It captured parts of the trajectory of the convoy and the people watching it. The images of Trassem reveal some destroyed houses in the background, marks of the war. Nearly half of the footage is dedicated to the ceremony in Luxembourg on the Place Guillaume.<sup>1911</sup> Another anonymous movie is composed of shots from a different perspective on the same events (transfer and ceremony).<sup>1912</sup>

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<sup>1908</sup> ANLux, MEN-1661, *Programme des cérémonies à l'occasion du retour des cendres de Jean l'Aveugle à Luxembourg, le 25 août 1946*, appended to a letter from the state minister to the minister of national education, 10/08/1946.

<sup>1909</sup> Gast Mannes, ‘Lucien Koenig’, Luxemburger Autorenlexikon, accessed 1 October 2019, <https://www.autorenlexikon.lu/page/author/190/1908/DEU/index.html>.

<sup>1910</sup> ‘Johann der Blinde kehrt heim’, *Obermosel-Zeitung*, August 1946; R.T., ‘Die Ueberführung der Gebeine Johanns des Blinden von Kastell an der Saar nach Luxemburg’, *Tageblatt*, August 1946.

<sup>1911</sup> For the movie, see: CNA, IA0003SG, Collection Pierre Bertogne no. 37, *Retour des cendres de Jean l'Aveugle*, P. Bertogne and P. Kintziger, 1946.

<sup>1912</sup> For the movie, see: CNA, IA0004PN, *Retour de Jean l'Aveugle*, anonymous, 1946.



Fig. 70: Inspection of the remains of John the Blind in Kastell. Hubert Schumacher is reaching into the coffin. In the centre of the shot, slightly bowed, Lucien Koenig, behind him Joseph Meyers (Source: CNA, IA0003SG, Collection Pierre Bertogne no. 37, Retour des cendres de Jean l'Aveugle, P. Bertogne and P. Kintziger, 1946).



Fig. 71: Arrival in Remich (bridge) (Source: CNA, IA0003SG, Collection Pierre Bertogne no. 37, Retour des cendres de Jean l'Aveugle, P. Bertogne and P. Kintziger, 1946).



Fig. 72: The convoy in Luxembourg City (Source: CNA, IA0004PN, *Retour de Jean l'Aveugle*, anonymous, 1946).



Fig. 73: Ceremony on the Place Guillaume in Luxembourg City (Source: CNA, IA0004PN, *Retour de Jean l'Aveugle*, anonymous, 1946).



Fig. 74: The grand-ducal family watching the ceremony from the tribune (Source: CNA, IA0004PN, *Retour de Jean l'Aveugle*, anonymous, 1946).

The relocation of the human remains of a Medieval ruler unquestionably was a symbolic act to which the government conceded great importance. The elites, the general population, and the youth were mobilised to assist at the “return” of John the Blind. It was not only an attempt to reconnect with a glorified past and invent a continuity with a past political entity. It was additionally a symbolic gesture, as a “national hero” was removed from the territory of a (former) enemy to find its proper place. The event illustrated a teleological vision of the past through the lens of the nation-state. Press articles retraced the life of John the Blind. The language used in the headlines of the newspapers applied recurrent tropes: “Johann der Blinde kehrt heim” (“John the Blind returns home”)<sup>1913</sup>, “Johann der Blinde kehrt heim nach Luxemburg” (“John the Blind returns home to Luxembourg”)<sup>1914</sup>, and “Ein großer Luxemburger findet seine letzte Ruhestätte” (“A great Luxemburger finds his last resting place”)<sup>1915</sup>. On 26 August, the *Wort* dedicated two pages to the king’s “homecoming”. The piece, entitled “E Késerpapp an Heldekinnek nés dohém” (“An imperial father and heroic king at home again”), retraced the entire ceremony, including photos of the event.<sup>1916</sup>

Unsurprisingly, the “return” was positively covered and greatly appreciated. The press organ of the Luxembourgish resistance *Unio 'n* wrote about the “return of the dead royal hero” (“die Rückkehr des toten Heldenkönigs”).<sup>1917</sup> Similar tropes were used in other newspapers and in political speeches: the “return” as an important day, the “restitution of Luxembourg’s honour” (Hamilius, the mayor of Luxembourg), the depiction of John the Blind as a national hero (“the greatest hero of his century”<sup>1918</sup>), a ruler who was always there to defend liberty (French General Koenig), a great knight, his ties with France, the presentation of Luxembourg as John’s homeland. John served as a projection of the ideal image of a monarch, serving his country and fighting courageously, improving Luxembourg’s glory in Europe. One might argue whether this projection was motivated by the recent past and might have had a link with indirectly granting Grand Duchess Charlotte a similar aura.

The only newspaper that was comparably more critical of John the Blind’s elevation to a national hero, though still using the trope of “return”, was the *Tageblatt*. Between the lines, one might decipher a pacifist stance and a warning of creating a cult around a historical figure.

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<sup>1913</sup> ‘Johann der Blinde kehrt heim’, *D'Union*, August 1946; ‘Johann der Blinde kehrt heim’, August 1946.

<sup>1914</sup> ‘Johann der Blinde kehrt heim nach Luxemburg’, *Ons Jongen*, August 1946.

<sup>1915</sup> N.M., ‘Ein großer Luxemburger findet seine letzte Ruhestätte’, *Tageblatt*, August 1948.

<sup>1916</sup> ‘E Késerpapp an Heldekinnek nés dohém’.

<sup>1917</sup> ‘Johann der Blinde kehrt heim’, August 1946.

<sup>1918</sup> ‘Johann der Blinde kehrt heim nach Luxemburg’.

The *Tageblatt* stressed the different historical contexts. “Where is the link between the belligerent family politics of our blind John, since long cold historical memory, and our democratic national consciousness in the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century?” the *Tageblatt* wondered.<sup>1919</sup> Instead, it identified other potential heroes more suitable to the context, such as those “admirable examples of patriotic self-sacrifice”, the “resistance heroes”.

Whether John the Blind was considered a national hero or not, both positions were marked by the recent past and the occupation period. In another article published on 26 August, after the official ceremony, the *Tageblatt* voiced its conviction that the remains belonged on Luxembourgish soil and stressed that the transfer to Luxembourg happened in a worthy context. In the same article, however, the author observed that the enthusiasm of the population was less apparent compared to the recent visit of Winston Churchill, the “resistance fighter against Hitler Germany” (“*Resistenzler gegen Hitlerdeutschland*”), who meant more to contemporary Luxembourgers than John the Blind.<sup>1920</sup>

In 1952, the German Trier-based newspaper *Trierischer Volksfreund* published an article that elicited some agitation in Luxembourg. It claimed that the remains of John were not in the coffin during the transportation. Newspapers in Luxembourg (*Tageblatt*, *Luxemburger Wort* and *Journal*) published releases and addressed questions to the German newspaper. In the *Wort*, a witness of the transfer stressed that the coffin was not empty. The author of the article in the *Trierischer Volksfreund*, Karl Conrath, claimed that he got the information from a soldier who was present at the opening of the coffin. He further claimed that the Luxembourgish authorities confirmed the information.<sup>1921</sup> The German newspaper distanced itself from the article in a later issue, but the incident showed the symbolic importance of John the Blind to the public opinion in Luxembourg.

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<sup>1919</sup> Own translation. “Was hat die kriegerische Familienpolitik unseres blinden Johann, längst kalte historische Erinnerung geworden, mit unserem demokratischen nationale Selbstbewußtsein zu tun in der Mitte des 20. Jahrhunderts” (N.M., ‘Ein großer Luxemburger findet seine letzte Ruhestätte’).

<sup>1920</sup> Original text: “Wenn die Organisatoren aber vielleicht gedacht hatten, die Rückkehr der Gebeine des seit sechs Jahrhunderten toten Grafen und Königs werde in den luxemburgischen Volksmassen einen so spontanen Begeisterungsjubel auslösen wie der neuliche Besuch Winston Churchill’s, so sind sie nicht auf ihre Rechnung gekommen. Winston Churchill, der Resistenzler gegen Hitlerdeutschland, bedeutet den Luxemburgern von heute doch natürlicherweise mehr als der seit 600 Jahren tote “Blanne Jang” mit seiner kriegerischen und heiratsspekulativen Familienpolitik [...].” (R.T., ‘Die Ueberführung der Gebeine Johans des Blinden von Kastell an der Saar nach Luxemburg’).

<sup>1921</sup> ANLux, AE-06844, Letter from the *Trierischer Volksfreund* to the consul of Luxembourg in Trier, 24/06/1952.

## V.2. The Age of the State-Administrator

The present section focuses on Luxembourg's cultural policy from the 1950s to the early 1970s. This period bore traces of the immediate post-war years while foreshadowing some of the changes in the 1970s. It was generally a period in which the state mainly administrated cultural policy without changing its foundations while implementing some improvements to existing structures. Hence, the expression “state-administrator” is used to describe the state’s approach to culture. As will be shown, besides the pervasiveness of the limited concept of culture, the period was characterised by the emergence of the democratic vein (in addition to the monarchical and liberal veins), the educative approach, the continued importance of subsidies, and the conservation of national cultural heritage. The cultural institutions constituted the main pillars of cultural policy, embodying all the aspects mentioned above. Meanwhile, the “modern” understanding of cultural policy was developing. In some areas, cultural policy was still essentially a matter of a top-down approach. An intervention in artistic creation was not wanted, and the state limited itself to the distribution of subsidies. Intervention in institutions was paralleled with non-intervention in artistic creation.

### **V.2.1. From “arts et sciences” to “affaires culturelles”**

From an administrative perspective, the most notable change occurred with the appearance of a new expression: “cultural affairs” (in French *affaires culturelles*). Following Pierre Frieden’s death in February 1959, the cabinet was reshuffled. This led to a rather peculiar situation lasting until 1964. The arts and sciences department was transferred to the Ministry of the Interior, headed by the Christian Democrat Pierre Grégoire. The responsibilities encompassed traditional areas, partly inheriting the monarchical tradition as described by Pascal Ory: “Commission des cinémas – Musées; Monuments et sites – Bibliothèque Nationale; Archives et Bibliothèque du Gouvernement”<sup>1922</sup>. Compared to the decree of 1954<sup>1923</sup>, the explicit mention of the National Library, of the museums and of monuments and sites was a novelty.<sup>1924</sup> However, these additions did not elicit a practical extension of political

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<sup>1922</sup> ‘Arrêté grand-ducal du 7 mars 1959 portant constitution des départements ministériels’, in *Mémorial A*, vol. 10 (Luxembourg, 1959), 137, <http://data.legilux.public.lu/file/eli-etat-leg-memorial-1959-10-fr-pdf.pdf>.

<sup>1923</sup> ‘Arrêté grand-ducal du 29 juin 1954 portant une nouvelle répartition des services publics’, vol. 34 (Luxembourg, 1954), 1044–1046, <http://data.legilux.public.lu/file/eli-etat-leg-memorial-1954-34-fr-pdf.pdf>.

<sup>1924</sup> The cinema commission was introduced as an explicit competence in 1947 (‘Arrêté grand-ducal du 3 mars 1947 portant une nouvelle répartition des services publics’, in *Mémorial A*, vol. 12

responsibilities, but they recognised these as official competencies. Furthermore, the law of 1958 on the organisation of the National Library<sup>1925</sup> possibly exerted an influence.

Additionally, the same decree listed *affaires culturelles* among the responsibilities of the Ministry of National Education, led by Emile Schaus, Grégoire's fellow party member (CSV). The concept of *affaires culturelles* did not exist in the administrative structures of Luxembourg before. Furthermore, it was not delimited or defined. Thus, two ministries and two ministers were responsible for culture. The only two laws signed and published between 1959 and 1964 do not allow conclusions as to how *affaires culturelles* was defined. Neither *arts et sciences* nor *affaires culturelles* encompassed media. This was already the case in the interwar period, thus marking an (interrupted) continuity. In 1959, radio broadcasting was supervised by the Ministry of Finances (Ministère des Finances); from 1964 onwards, it was headed by the State Ministry. One might carefully advance the hypothesis that the signatures of both ministers depended on the content and the topic of law. The law on the organisation of the State Museums in 1960<sup>1926</sup>, directly related to the competencies of the Ministry of the Interior, was signed by Pierre Grégoire. However, the law on the approbation of the *Convention pour la protection des biens culturels en cas de conflit armé* of 1961<sup>1927</sup> bears the signatures of Eugène Schaus, Foreign Affairs Minister, of Emile Schaus and of Pierre Grégoire.

Pierre Grégoire (1907-1991) was born in Vichten and attended the Athenaeum in the 1920s. Like Frieden, Grégoire was a member of the cultural society and attracted the discontent of the Nazis. He was arrested by the Gestapo and deported to the concentration camp in Sachsenhausen, then to Mauthausen. Unlike Frieden, Grégoire did not study abroad but had a prolific publishing activity. After quitting his position in the postal administration, he worked as a journalist for the Luxemburger Wort from 1933 to 1940 and from 1945 to 1959. Grégoire was politically engaged and helped to expand the Party of the Right before the war. After the war, he was elected to the Chamber of Deputies and from 1952 to 1960, he was secretary general of the CSV. From the 1920s to the 1980s, he was one of the most productive authors

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[Luxembourg, 1947], 208–210, <http://data.legilux.public.lu/file/eli-etat-leg-memorial-1947-12-fr-pdf.pdf>).

<sup>1925</sup> ‘Loi du 5 décembre 1958 ayant pour objet l’organisation de la Bibliothèque Nationale et des Archives de l’Etat’, in *Mémorial A*, vol. 64 (Luxembourg, 1958), 1551–1552, <http://data.legilux.public.lu/file/eli-etat-leg-memorial-1958-64-fr-pdf.pdf>.

<sup>1926</sup> ‘Loi du 17 août 1960 ayant pour objet l’organisation des Musées de l’Etat’, in *Mémorial A*, vol. 52 (Luxembourg, 1960), 1279–1280, <http://data.legilux.public.lu/file/eli-etat-leg-memorial-1960-52-fr-pdf.pdf>.

<sup>1927</sup> ‘Loi du 13 juillet 1961 portant approbation de la Convention pour la protection des biens culturels en cas de conflit armé, signée à La Haye, le 14 mai 1954’.

in Luxembourg and shifted from a liberal to a conservative worldview. His literary publications treated subjects such as Christian philosophy, humanism, Christian Occident, Europe, Second World War, or Luxembourgish cultural history. In addition, Grégoire was one of the first film critics in Luxembourg and founded, with Evy Friedrich and Nicolas Molling, the Association de la presse cinématographique.<sup>1928</sup>

Though Grégoire's presence in the memory of ministers who supervised cultural affairs has been stronger, Emile Schaus (1903-1994) was not less predestined for the office. His professional profile certainly played a role in choosing a successor to Frieden. Schaus belonged to the same political generation as Frieden and Grégoire, to the same political party, and experienced the German occupation. After his secondary education in Diekirch, he studied German and Latin in Luxembourg (*Cours supérieurs*), Paris, Munich, and Berlin. From 1929 onwards, he taught German at the high school in Diekirch, then at the Athenaeum after 1935. During the occupation, he was arrested and sent to the concentration camp in Dachau. In 1942, he worked as an assistant-archivist at the Landessippenamt in Koblenz-Ehrenbreitstein. After the war, he was shortly employed as a journalist for the *Luxemburger Wort*. From 1945 to 1959, he directed the vocational school for teachers. At the same time, he was pursuing a political career as a city councillor in Luxembourg since 1952. Furthermore, Schaus was active in the cultural society: since the interwar period, he had been writing novels, articles, and critiques. He was also member of the Section de linguistique, de folklore et de toponymie of the IGD.<sup>1929</sup>

The cultural policy context in Belgium and especially France might provide clues to assess the introduction of the novel expression *affaires culturelles* in Luxembourg. In France, a Ministry of Cultural Affairs was created in 1959, headed by André Malraux. The related decree was signed by president Charles de Gaulle on 24 July 1959 and published on 26 July 1959<sup>1930</sup>. Despite the importance of separating the (implicit) existence of cultural policy from the creation of a dedicated ministry, this moment is often considered in the literature as the invention or appearance of cultural policy, conferring to France a pioneering role.<sup>1931</sup> While

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<sup>1928</sup> Claude Conter, ‘Pierre Grégoire’, Luxemburger Autorenlexikon, accessed 19 August 2019, <https://www.autorenlexikon.lu/page/author/149/1499/DEU/index.html>.

<sup>1929</sup> Roger Muller, ‘Emile Schaus’, Luxemburger Autorenlexikon, accessed 19 August 2019, <https://www.autorenlexikon.lu/page/author/379/3791/DEU/index.html>.

<sup>1930</sup> ‘Ministère d’Etat chargé des affaires culturelles: Décret n° 59-889 du 24 juillet 1959 portant organisation du ministère chargé des affaires culturelles’.

<sup>1931</sup> Even in recent literature, the creation of the French *Ministère chargé des Affaires Culturelles* is regarded as a pioneering move in cultural policy: “De Gaulle’s creation of a *Ministère de la Culture* [sic] commissioned to André Maulraux [sic!] in 1959, pioneered cultural policy in Europe.” (Caterina Carta and Angel Badillo, ‘National Ways to Cultural Diplomacy in Europe: The Case for Institutional

this new *ministère chargé des affaires culturelles* was pursuing a universal objective, “rendre accessibles les œuvres capitales de l’humanité”, this was framed in a national context, as among the “most important creations of humanity”, it was those of France which were above all to be made accessible to the “plus grand nombre de Français”. Though the inspiration from France might appear as a potential explanation, a peculiarity remains, at least for the appearance of *affaires culturelles* in Luxembourg. The decree on the distribution of the ministries in Luxembourg and introducing “cultural affairs” was signed on 7 March 1959 – four months before the French decree. The Belgian Ministry of Cultural Affairs was created in 1958. According to Christophe Pirenne, this was inspired by the French example.<sup>1932</sup> It is an example of how an expression was already circulating in several countries even before official decrees might have enshrined the concept in the administrative language. Furthermore, Malraux had already been vested with a ministerial office before the creation of the French Cultural Affairs Ministry that confirmed pre-existing competencies. New ones were not invented. Instead, they were transferred from the former Fine Arts Department (*Beaux-Arts*) of the Ministry of National Education.<sup>1933</sup>

Unlike in France, a clear mission was not defined for the culture ministries in Luxembourg. The French decree covered arts and literature (*arts et lettres*), popular education, the Directorate for Architecture, the Directorate of the Archives, and the Centre national de la cinématographie.<sup>1934</sup> The attributions were slightly dissimilar to those of *arts et sciences* and *affaires culturelles* in Luxembourg. Only architecture was missing; for the rest, areas such as cinema, arts, and traditional institutions were present in the Luxembourgish decree with different denominations and structures. However, whereas libraries in Luxembourg were included in *arts et sciences*, in France, they were supervised by the Ministry of National Education.

Whatever the reasons behind the administrative situation created in 1959 and the choice to introduce *affaires culturelles*, the situation ended in 1964, when a new government was formed. The decree on the constitution of the ministerial departments of 18 July 1964 created a

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Comparison’, in *Cultural Diplomacy in Europe: Between the Domestic and the International*, ed. Caterina Carta and Richard Higgott [Palgrave Macmillan, 2020], 67).

<sup>1932</sup> Pirenne, ‘Les politiques culturelles en Belgique depuis 1945’, 75.

<sup>1933</sup> Dubois, *La politique culturelle*, 227.

<sup>1934</sup> ‘Ministère d’Etat chargé des affaires culturelles: Décret n° 59-889 du 24 juillet 1959 portant organisation du ministère chargé des affaires culturelles’.

Ministère de l'Education et des Affaires culturelles.<sup>1935</sup> For the first time in Luxembourg's history, culture or a derived expression was explicitly mentioned in an official ministerial title – even if ministers had already signed letters and internal documents with titles such as "Ministre des Arts et Sciences" (as Bech did). The coexistence of *arts et sciences* and *affaires culturelles* remained, however, though the latter gained more symbolical importance. The competencies of the ministry were listed as follows: "*Affaires Culturelles – Arts et sciences; recherche scientifique; commission des cinémas – Musées; monuments et sites – Bibliothèque Nationale; archives et bibliothèque du Gouvernement.*"<sup>1936</sup>

In general, the areas of competence barely evolved. The only change to be observed concerns the inclusion of scientific research (*recherche scientifique*), which had not existed as a policy category until then. In fact, except for the official opening of the State Museum in the late 1940s, no significant research infrastructure had been created in the meantime. In his paper on the development of research and culture in Luxembourg, Morgan Meyer noted that "by the 1960s, institutions, and individuals who carried out scientific research were a rarity."<sup>1937</sup> He also referenced an OECD report of 1963 and quoted from it: "There exists, on the governmental level, no organised research nor scientific programme."<sup>1938</sup> Whether the OECD report and related debates led to the explicit inclusion of scientific research in the competencies of the ministry is not the focus of the present study, but it would need further investigation.

In hindsight, it is difficult to retrace decisions that led Frieden, Grégoire, and Schaus to become ministers of arts and sciences/cultural affairs. Considering their biographies, which reveal similarities, it is not surprising that they were heading the cultural department. When Madeleine Frieden-Kinnen became minister of cultural and religious affairs in 1969, she was the first woman in Luxembourg to invest a ministerial office. Frieden-Kinnen (1915-1999) was the widow of Pierre Frieden, yet a biography – one of the rare female politicians in a predominantly male surrounding – remains to be written. She is mainly remembered as the minister who resigned in 1972 following a press campaign instigated against her by the *Tageblatt* (and its chief editor, Jacques Poos, future Socialist minister) and a subsequent judicial affair.<sup>1939</sup>

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<sup>1935</sup> 'Arrêté grand-ducal du 18 juillet 1964 portant constitution des départements ministériels', in *Mémorial A*, vol. 59 (Luxembourg, 1964), 1146,  
<http://legilux.public.lu/eli/etat/leg/agd/1964/07/18/n1/jo>.

<sup>1936</sup> 'Arrêté grand-ducal du 18 juillet 1964 portant constitution des départements ministériels', 1146.

<sup>1937</sup> Meyer, 'Creativity and Its Contexts', 456.

<sup>1938</sup> Quoted in: Meyer, 456.

<sup>1939</sup> In August 1969, the *Tageblatt* published a report on the seduction of a student by a priest on the beach of Bourgfried. The newspaper mainly aimed at discrediting a political opponent by claiming

From an administrative viewpoint, a further step was taken in 1969. Indeed, the grand-ducal decree of 6 February 1969 instituted the Ministry of Cultural and Religious Affairs (*Ministère des Affaires culturelles et des cultes*), slightly extending its responsibilities by adding cultural diplomacy (UNESCO and cultural treaties):

*Affaires Culturelles – Arts et Sciences; recherche scientifique – Archives de l’Etat – Bibliothèque Nationale et Bibliothèque du Gouvernement – Musées de l’Etat – Commission des cinémas – Commission des sites et monuments nationaux – Commission de surveillance des bâtiments religieux – Unesco – Exécution des Accords culturels.*<sup>1940</sup>

The general expression *monuments et sites* disappeared, and two commissions were mentioned instead. Other than that, the ministry continued to supervise traditional areas. Even religious affairs, attached to cultural affairs, were not new. One might consider this as an influence of Christian-Democratic policies. As seen in the biographies of Frieden and Grégoire, culture was not neatly separated from reflections on Christianity or Christian humanism.

When Madeleine Frieden-Kinnen resigned, her ministry was disbanded. Cultural affairs were integrated into the State Ministry, headed by Prime Minister Pierre Werner (CSV). Werner’s party colleague and future prime minister Jacques Santer became state secretary for cultural affairs.<sup>1941</sup> The competencies were identical to those of the previous ministry.<sup>1942</sup>

Generally, national cultural policy was supervised by a generation that experienced the Second World War, belonged to the same party, shared Christian and conservative values, and participated in the cultural society. In this sense, it is not surprising that cultural policy did not fundamentally change during those years. Despite introducing “cultural affairs” in the administrative language, the symbolic importance did not result in far-reaching practical

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that Madeleine Frieden-Kinnen had witnessed the scene. A couple of judicial processes followed, one against the priest who was found guilty, and one against the minister. Frieden-Kinnen was acquitted as the court argued that the *Tageblatt* could not have had knowledge of her presence in Bourgfried. Yet, under the pressure of the minister, the young victim of the priest lied to protect her and was accused of perjury in 1972. Whereas the *Tageblatt* overdid with the details and jumped to false conclusions, the *Luxemburger Wort* minimized, even tried to hide, the incident and the role of the minister (‘Zum dritten Buurgfried-Jubiläum’, *d’Letzeburger Land*, August 1972; Krieps, *Kultur im Kleinstaat 1879–1989*, 253–254). For a more recent analysis, see: Marie-Paule Jungblut, ‘Die verlorene Ehre der Madeleine Frieden: Essay über Moral und gesellschaftliche Werte im Luxemburg der späten 1960er Jahre’, in *Kurtrierisches Jahrbuch*, ed. Michael Embach (Trier: Verein Kurtrierisches Jahrbuch e.V., 2017), 411–426.

<sup>1940</sup> ‘Arrêté grand-ducal du 6 février 1969 portant constitution des départements ministériels’, in *Mémorial A*, vol. 5 (Luxembourg, 1969), 30, <http://legilux.public.lu/eli/etat/leg/agd/1969/02/06/n1/jo>.

<sup>1941</sup> ‘Arrêté grand-ducal du 21 septembre 1972 approuvant la délégation de compétence accordée à Monsieur Jacques Santer, secrétaire d’Etat au Ministère d’Etat’, in *Mémorial A*, vol. 58 (Luxembourg, 1972), 1401, <http://legilux.public.lu/eli/etat/leg/agd/1972/09/21/n3/jo>.

<sup>1942</sup> ‘Arrêté grand-ducal du 21 septembre 1972 portant constitution des départements ministériels’, in *Mémorial A*, vol. 58 (Luxembourg, 1972), 1397–1400, <http://legilux.public.lu/eli/etat/leg/agd/1972/09/21/n1/jo>.

changes. As in France, the ministry supervising cultural affairs relied on a mostly traditional set of competencies.

### V.2.2. The cultural budget towards consolidation

As has been observed on other occasions, public spending on culture provides some clues to the status conceded to culture relative to other policy areas, to the spending scheme and priorities within the cultural budget, and to the fluctuations over a more extended period. The cultural budget shapes cultural policy, but it is also informed by debates, actors and legislative frameworks. The current sub-section analyses the evolution of the cultural budget and confronts it with the conclusions drawn in the previous sub-section.

The expressions “cultural budget” and “budget for culture” refer to the spending on culture or cultural expenses. These expressions will be used interchangeably, but there are some issues when analysing the state budget. Jean-François Chougnat noted in his analysis of the French cultural budget that

The term 'state budget' is most often used to refer to the total figure as it appears in the finance bill presented to and voted by Parliament each year. This 'official' figure is in fact the sum of the civil and military budgets, and also the repayment of the public debt.<sup>1943</sup>

Chougnat's observations on the problematic definition of the budget in the French context can be applied to the Luxembourgish one. The budget structure changes over the years through additions, removals and transfers of budget lines. Furthermore, variations between the draft law, the adopted budget law (voted by the parliament) and the actual spending cannot be excluded.<sup>1944</sup> The present study will rely on the yearly state budgets adopted by the Chamber of Deputies and not on the effective spending or the revised budget (*budget rectifié*). Indeed, not only does the state budget reveal the plans and the priorities of the state, disregarding their actual effect and execution, but the state budget is generally referred to in public discourse and policy documents.

As for the analysis of the budget during the interwar years, several approaches are possible. The first approach considers the evolution of the “raw” cultural budget without categorising the budget lines. The second approach categorises the budget lines according to the destination and the expenses' nature. Both approaches have already been applied in the chapter on the

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<sup>1943</sup> “Par “budget de l’État”, on désigne le plus souvent le chiffre total, tel qu’il figure dans le projet de loi de finances présenté chaque année au Parlement et voté par lui. Ce chiffre “officiel” procède en fait de l’addition des budgets civils et militaires, et aussi du remboursement de la dette publique.” (Jean-François Chougnat, ‘L’effort public pour la culture’, in *Institutions et vie culturelles*, ed. Guy Saez, Les notices de La documentation Française [Paris: La documentation française, 2004], 25).

<sup>1944</sup> Chougnat, 25.

interwar period. To keep the presentation and the analysis consistent and unified, all values in LUF have been converted to EUR. An additional adjustment for the numbers expressed in absolute terms concerns the inflation rate. This was necessary to compare the expenses over several decades. As the calculator of the STATEC<sup>1945</sup>, the Luxembourgish statistics agency only goes back to 1948, the graphs in this section start with that year. The situation of January 2015 serves as a reference to calculate the inflation rate, meaning that the amount of a particular year was adjusted to its value in January 2015.<sup>1946</sup> For example, one euro in January 1948 is equivalent to eight euros in January 2015.

### *General evolution and trends*

In general, the institutionalisation of cultural policy within a ministry and the changes in government do not always affect the budget. The only phase where a clear tendency coincides with a legislative period stretches from 1964 to 1969, when Pierre Grégoire was minister of cultural affairs. His own political style or the political strategy of the government might have influenced the steady increase of the cultural budget. However, there is not enough data to corroborate this hypothesis. Grégoire's mandate ended in February 1969, and the budget for 1969 was voted in April. Considering the process of preparation, debate and vote of the budget law, it could be argued that if Grégoire had stayed in office, the budget would still have stagnated after 1968.

What is understood in the current section as “cultural budget”, “expenses for culture”, or similar expressions is the sum of all budget lines under the budget section explicitly dedicated to culture. Like the administrative category discussed in the previous section, the budget section related to culture changed its denomination. Even the structure of the budget evolved. Some budget articles were removed, and others were added. The label of the section dedicated to culture evolved as follows: “arts et sciences” (1946-1965), “affaires culturelles” (1966-1968), “Ministère des affaires culturelles et des cultes” (1969), “Affaires culturelles” (1970), “Ministère des affaires culturelles et des cultes” (1971-1973), “Ministère d'Etat. – Département des Affaires culturelles et des cultes” (1974).

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<sup>1945</sup> To adjust the amounts, I used the calculator of the Luxembourgish statistics agency STATEC: <http://www.statistiques.public.lu/fr/economie-finances/prix-consommation/inflationcalculator/index.html>.

<sup>1946</sup> The choice of January 2015 is undergirded by a pragmatic reason. The absolute numbers are the result of calculations made for my Master's thesis. I provided a general overview of the budgetary evolution until 2015. Thus, it was easier to stick with 2015, which does not have any effect on the results, as the main concern is to compare the years with each other. It is not important what base is used, only that there is a unified reference point.

The graphs provide an overview of the spending on culture from 1948 to 1974. They were created with Microsoft Excel, yet the software does not provide a clearly labelled colour-blind-friendly palette. As far as possible, I chose a combination of colours and saturations that allow colour-blind people to perceive a difference.

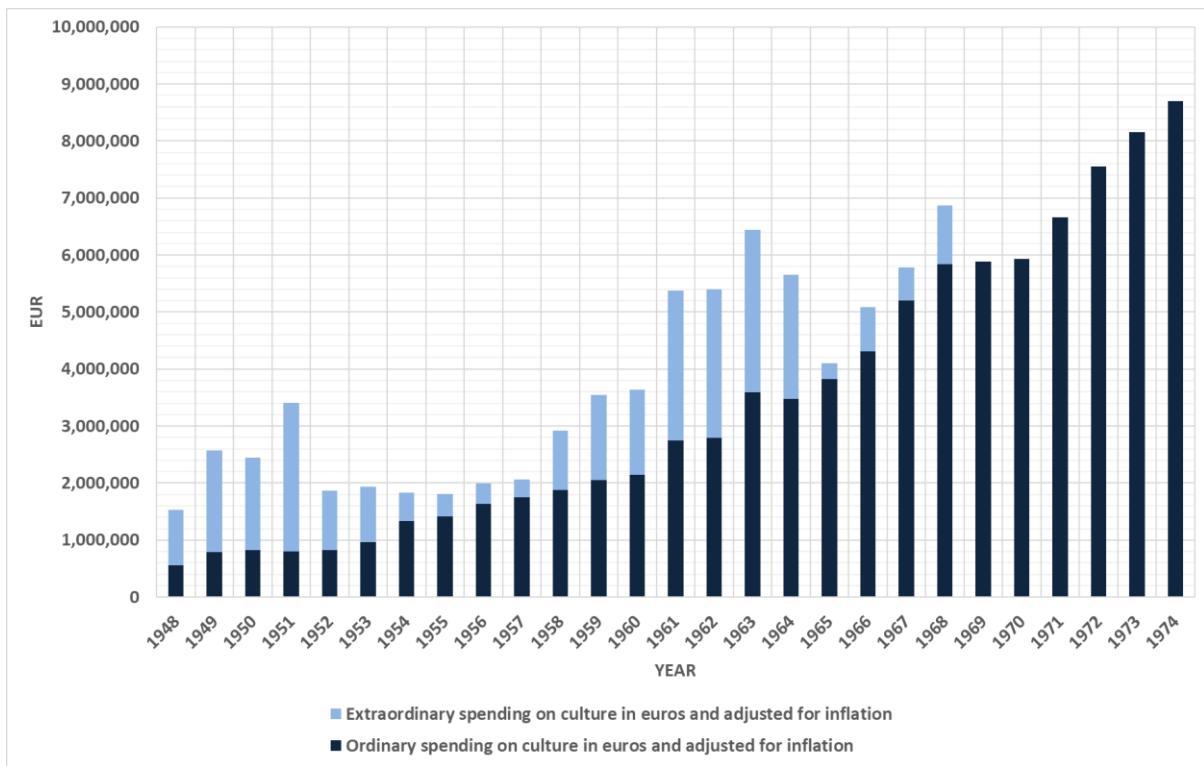


Fig. 75: Stacked chart showing the spending on culture in absolute terms, 1948-1974. Distinction operated between ordinary spending on culture and extraordinary spending on culture.

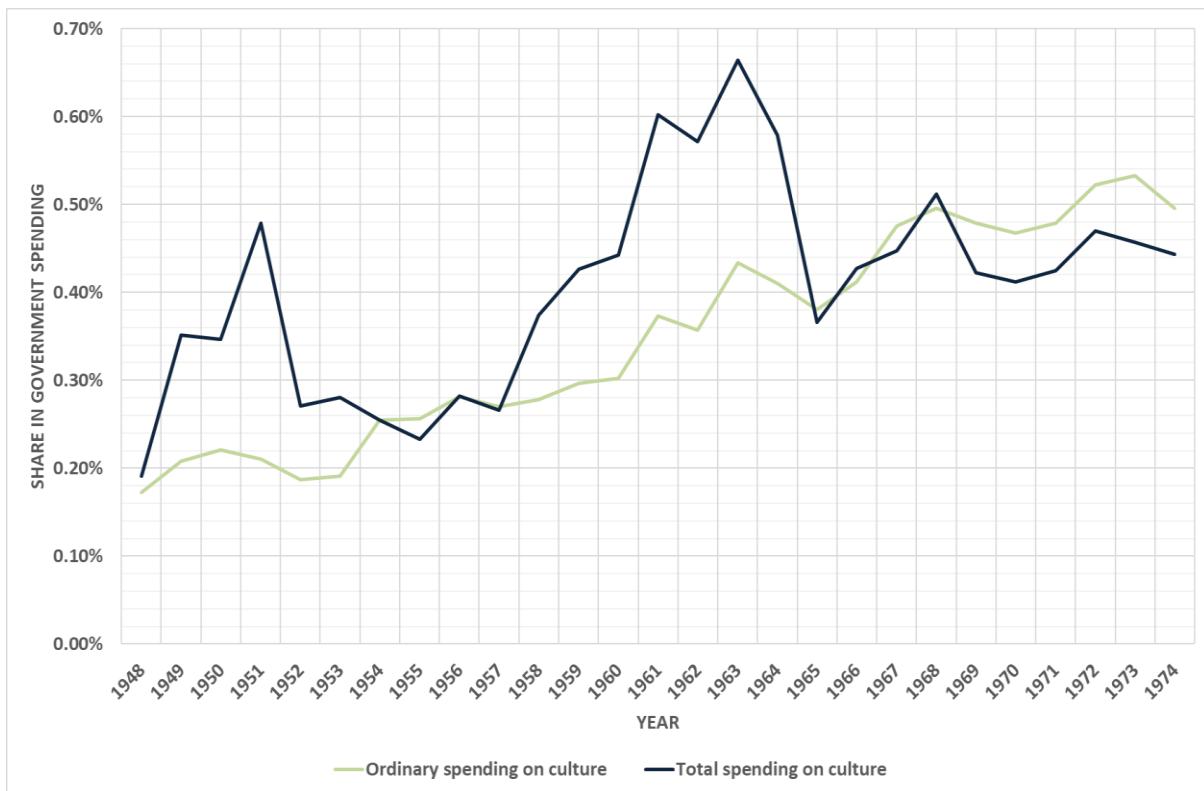


Fig. 76: Graph showing the spending on culture relative to the total government spending, 1948-1974. Distinction between ordinary spending and total spending on culture (ordinary spending + extraordinary spending = total spending). Note that the share of ordinary cultural budget is calculated in relation to the ordinary state budget, whereas the share of the total spending on culture is calculated in relation to the total state budget.

Examining the state budget offers a different perspective on the continuities and breaks between the post-war and interwar periods. In 1946, the total spending on culture equalled 0.05% of the total state budget. This was a third of the spending in 1940, a year marked by a decrease compared to 1939. The structure of the budget did not notably change, which was an interrupted continuity. Only the denominations were slightly altered, or articles were divided into several ones (such as for the acquisitions). However, what was missing compared to 1940 was a budget line related to the construction of a municipal museum in Luxembourg, although it was only inscribed as a placeholder in 1940. The subsidy to the Willibrordus-Bauverein for the reconstruction of the basilica in Echternach disappeared. The article *Réorganisation du théâtre populaire, indemnités et dépenses diverses* was new, but the reason for its appearance remains unclear.<sup>1947</sup> Its emergence was possibly inspired by the *théâtre populaire* in France, which developed at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century to promote theatre as an educational institution for the masses. Furthermore, the immediate post-war period in France was marked by a series of initiatives concerning performing arts.<sup>1948</sup> In Belgium, the national authorities created the Théâtre national de Belgique in 1945, the first cultural institution of the post-war period.<sup>1949</sup> A law or decree related to the *théâtre populaire* in Luxembourg does not exist, yet the ministry might still have had internal plans that were not transformed into legislation. In 1949, the budget article was replaced by *Théâtre populaire et manifestations folkloriques. – Subsides et autres dépenses*.<sup>1950</sup> Despite minor modifications, the cultural budget in the immediate post-war years barely diverged from the budgets before the invasion.

The evolution of the cultural budget shows a complex picture. The total spending on culture increased from 0.19% in 1948 to 0.44% in 1974, but this comparison between two chronological extremes hides the fluctuations in between. In relative terms, ordinary spending on culture has shown a general positive tendency, but it was not characterised by a steady development. The total spending is marked by more substantial variations caused by the extraordinary budget. The comparison between absolute and relative numbers shows that even an increase in absolute terms does not necessarily mean a bigger cultural budget compared to

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<sup>1947</sup> ‘Loi du 26 avril 1946, concernant le Budget des recettes et des dépenses de l’Etat pour l’exercice 1946.’, in *Mémorial A*, vol. 21 (Luxembourg, 1946), 355, <http://legilux.public.lu/eli/etat/leg/loi/1946/04/26/n1/jo>.

<sup>1948</sup> Pascal Goetschel, ‘Le théâtre’, in *Institutions et vie culturelles*, ed. Guy Saez (Paris: La documentation française, 2004), 93–94.

<sup>1949</sup> Pirenne, ‘Les politiques culturelles en Belgique depuis 1945’, 76.

<sup>1950</sup> ‘Loi du 23 mai 1949 concernant le Budget des recettes et des dépenses de l’Etat pour l’exercice 1949.’, in *Mémorial A*, vol. 21 (Luxembourg, 1949), 486, <http://legilux.public.lu/eli/etat/leg/loi/1949/05/23/n1/jo>.

the total state spending. For instance, inflation rates negatively affected periods of slight increases or stagnations. Indeed, from 1971 onwards, the considerable growth was absorbed by high inflation and an explosion of total state spending. Expressed in percentage, spending on culture followed a negative trend, which would continue beyond 1974. The high inflation rate (150.7% between 1972 and 1986), the steel crisis and the oil shocks of 1973 and 1979 contributed to a situation in which the state expenses increased in absolute terms, the spending on culture stagnated and, relatively to the state budget, experienced a downturn.

Both lines of the cultural budget relative to the state budget follow roughly the same tendency. There are two main exceptions, though. Around 1950, the sharp rise was caused by an extraordinary budget line entitled *Restauration et reconstruction de monuments historiques endommagés ou détruits par la guerre*, clearly influenced by the immediate post-war context. The second marked increase between 1958 and 1964 was caused by the construction of municipal theatres in Luxembourg (the Grand Théâtre) and in Esch-sur-Alzette. The state contributed financially to both projects. The money represented a considerable share of the total budget for culture (nearly half in 1961 and 1962).

Until 1968, the ordinary cultural budget was paralleled with an extraordinary budget, connected to the monumental policy and the monarchical tradition of the interwar period. In fact, from 1948 to 1959, the extraordinary spending was exclusively covered by *Restauration et reconstruction de monuments historiques endommagés ou détruits par la guerre* (the title slightly varied over time). It should be noted that the ordinary budget already included spending on the conservation of historical monuments. A further possible explanation for the continuing importance of monuments can be advanced by looking at the profiles of the ministers heading culture, such as Frieden. When extraordinary spending is not considered, most of the budget is allocated to the three national cultural institutions. This reflects the central place of cultural institutions in cultural policy at the time.

As briefly mentioned above, from 1960 to 1966, extraordinary spending was allocated to the construction of municipal theatres in Luxembourg City and Esch-sur-Alzette. The accomplishment of these projects elicited the sudden growth of financial support for non-national structures in 1967. After that, subsidies were allocated to municipal theatres and categorised under ordinary spending. From 1966 to 1968, the government reserved funds for renovating the old caserns on the Plateau St. Esprit for the National Archives. This infrastructural project might have positively impacted the overall budget for the archives. In 1968, the National Archives received 2,778,000 euros, compared to 3,467,000 euros in 1969.

This increase occurred in a period when the cultural budget stagnated in absolute numbers and decreased relative to the total state budget.

As for the ordinary budget, some moments characterised by a sudden increase as visualised in the graphs need to be explained. During the better part of the period, expenses steadily grew within certain variations. The examples analysed in the current section convey only a selection of those years in which the budget was comparably higher than the previous year. Yet, some changes were salient. The first one occurred in 1953-1954. Indeed, the section related to arts and sciences was extended with the budget for the National Library. This modification in the structure was not related to any law or administrative change. Technically, it remained under the supervision of the same ministry (national education) and the same minister (Pierre Frieden).

#### *Spending according to destination and nature<sup>1951</sup>*

Considering the evolution of the spending according to destination, institutions (I) represented the most significant part of total cultural spending, followed by heritage (or objectified destination, H) and cultural production (C). Other categories have played a comparatively marginal role, such as public administration spending, research activities and international relations.<sup>1952</sup> The amount dedicated to regional and local structures (or non-national structures, N) skyrocketed in the late 1960s. This was caused by an increase of state subsidies and of financial support for local institutions (music schools and the theatres in Luxembourg City and Esch). The category of specific events (E) appeared in 1958 for the commemoration of Saint Willibrord in Echternach and in 1963/1964 for the Millennium of Luxembourg City. As for spending according to the nature of investments, direct investments were the largest category, while indirect expenses grew proportionally stronger from the late 1960s onwards than in previous decades. This evolution was mainly linked to the increased subsidies to local institutions mentioned above.

We might complement the analysis of the general evolution – which hides many subtleties – with a close reading of a selection of moments marked by salient changes. Firstly, the budget allocated to the State Museums increased considerably in 1961. This is also confirmed by the graph showing the destination of spending. It was a consequence of the law of 1960 organising

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<sup>1951</sup> For explanations concerning the categorisations, see the annex.

<sup>1952</sup> The appearance of international relations is caused by a structural change of the budget and the re-allocation of specific budget lines. Of course, Luxembourg had already been investing efforts in cultural diplomacy before, as discussed in another section of the study.

the State Museums.<sup>1953</sup> Moreover, some general expenses increased, especially protection and conservation of monuments, sites, and historical furniture, as confirmed by the higher proportion of category H. Secondly, in 1963, the higher level of cultural spending cannot be attributed to a specific article or institution, as the increases affected the budget generally, especially subsidies for literature, arts and sciences, and the conservation of heritage. However, in 1963, Luxembourg City celebrated its millennial, to which the government contributed financially with a considerable amount (LUF 2,500,000, budget article 1008bis). Thirdly, the growth in 1967 mainly favoured heritage protection and non-national structures. In that year, the government began to financially support the Conservatoire de musique in Luxembourg City by covering its administration costs, in addition to the already existing subsidies for concerts organised by the institution. Hence, a new budget article of LUF 2,000,000 was added. Furthermore, the financial support of the theatres in Luxembourg City and in Esch-sur-Alzette, as well as to the music school in Esch-sur-Alzette, was increased. In 1968, the money allocated to local institutions increased again.

In many cases, variations of the allocated budgets from one year to the next cannot be clearly explained and might have undocumented reasons. It could be argued that the increase between 1966 and 1968 resulted from requests from local authorities and a higher awareness of financial issues encountered by at least some local institutions. The music school in Esch-sur-Alzette is a case in point. On 13 April 1967, Jules Schreiner, the mayor of the city, addressed a letter to the Ministry of National Education. He called attention to the yearly deficit of the school of 4 million francs. As it was a regional school considering the enrolled students, Schreiner argued that the financial contribution of neighbouring cities and an increase of the state subsidy were necessary.<sup>1954</sup> The minister replied on 10 May and informed that his department did not dispose of a budget for music schools, but he transferred the request to the minister of cultural affairs.<sup>1955</sup> Whether the changes in 1968 were a response to the issues raised by the mayor cannot be confirmed, but it could serve as a lead.

In general, 1967 was a positive year for local institutions, for the protection of heritage and, to a lesser extent, for national institutions. The legal framework had an impact, too. In 1966, the Chamber of Deputies passed a law on excavation and the protection of mobile cultural

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<sup>1953</sup> ‘Loi du 17 août 1960 ayant pour objet l’organisation des Musées de l’Etat’.

<sup>1954</sup> ANLux, MEN-0008, Letter from the mayor of Esch-sur-Alzette to the minister of national education, 13/04/1967.

<sup>1955</sup> ANLux, MEN-0008, Letter from the minister of national education to the mayor of Esch-sur-Alzette, 10/05/1967.

heritage.<sup>1956</sup> A new budget article in 1967 was explicitly related to the law (article 679, “Indemnisation et dépenses en vertu de la loi du 21 mars 1966 concernant les fouilles et la sauvegarde du patrimoine culturel mobilier”). Furthermore, a grand-ducal regulation (*règlement grand-ducal*) defined the organisation of the National Library.<sup>1957</sup> As a result, the salaries increased.

In 1971, the budget for culture increased, affecting all categories. For the first time, the cultural affairs budget included a sub-section dedicated to international relations, hence its appearance on the graph. Only a few budget articles saw their allocated money reduced. However, the sudden and considerable overall increase was somewhat dampened by the stagnation of the budget from 1968 to 1970 and partly neutralised by inflation. Nevertheless, 1971 marked the first in a series of years in which the spending on culture progressively increased before the progression was abruptly stopped in 1975 in the context of economic difficulties.

The 1970s stand out as an exceptional phase where both lines on the graph sharply fall from 1975 onwards. The budget stagnation between 1975 and 1977 was not the sole explanation, as the negative trend had started in 1973. The general economic situation affected this evolution. However, during the stagnation of the total budget for culture, direct investments increased. Despite the difficult economic situation, the state was not reducing its direct involvement. The most visible examples are cultural institutions (I) and public administration (PA). Yet, this is not the sole explanation. The increase in direct spending was also partly related to the addition of international relations and cultural diplomacy (IR) from 1971 onwards. In 1970, these budget articles were included in the section of the Ministry of National Education.

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<sup>1956</sup> ‘Loi du 21 mars 1966 concernant a) les fouilles d’intérêt historique, préhistorique, paléontologique ou autrement scientifique; b) la sauvegarde du patrimoine culturel mobilier’, in *Mémorial A*, vol. 18 (Luxembourg, 1966), 379–381, <http://data.legilux.public.lu/file/eli-etat-leg-memorial-1966-18-fr-pdf.pdf>.

<sup>1957</sup> ‘Règlement grand-ducal du 22 avril 1966 fixant l’organisation et les conditions de fonctionnement de la bibliothèque nationale’, in *Mémorial A*, vol. 23 (Luxembourg, 1966), 421–424, <http://data.legilux.public.lu/file/eli-etat-leg-memorial-1966-23-fr-pdf.pdf>.

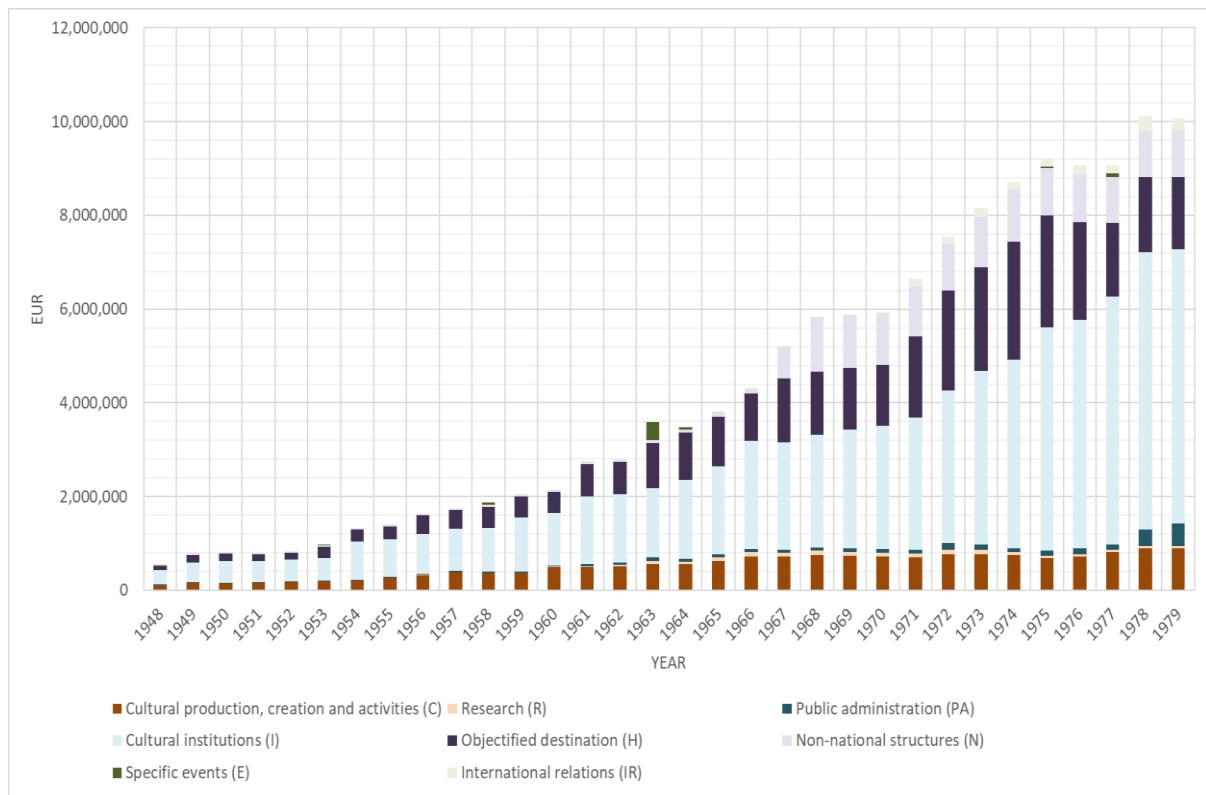


Fig. 77: Spending on culture according to destination, 1948-1974. Reference for the adjustment to the inflation (consumer price index): January 2015. The sum of the categories of each year equals the total ordinary spending on culture for that year.

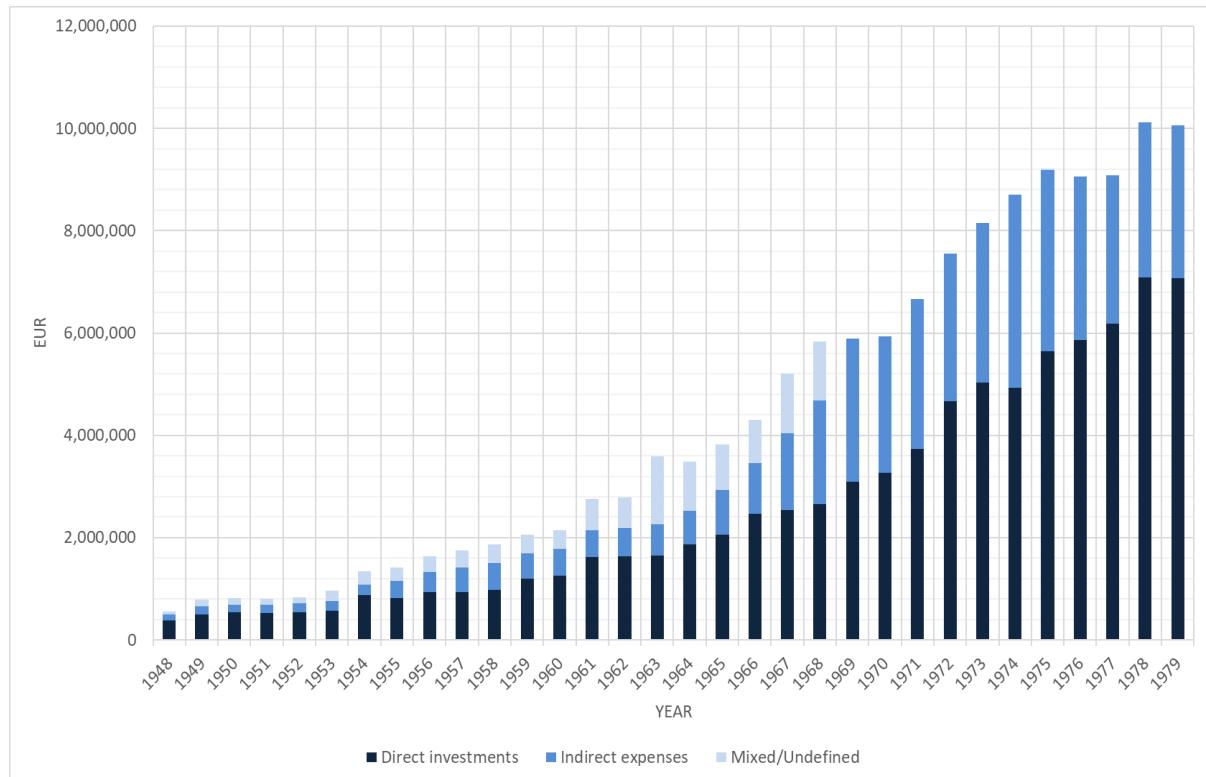


Fig. 78: Spending on culture according to nature, 1948-1979. Base: January 2015. The sum of the categories for a year equals the total ordinary spending on culture for that year.

### V.2.3. A conservative cultural policy: high culture, cultural heritage, cultural institutions

As discussed in the opening paragraphs of the present chapter, the welfare state expanded in the 1950s and 1960s. Scholars generally situate the appearance of cultural policy as an explicit policy category in this context. The French Ministry of Cultural Affairs, created in 1959, was considered by some as a pioneer, marking the “invention of cultural policy”, according to Philippe Urfalino. Yet, this view on French cultural policy as a model has been questioned, not the least by French historian Philippe Poirrier in the volume *Pour une histoire des politiques culturelles dans le monde* (2011).<sup>1958</sup> Cultural policies could vary according to national contexts. The French example was not necessarily used as a model for national cultural policies in Europe and beyond. The German Democratic Republic, in the context of the centralisation efforts of cultural policy, created a Ministry of Culture in 1954, five years before France.<sup>1959</sup>

Indeed, cultural policy gained traction as an explicit policy category in the post-war period. Still, the situation was more complex and farther away from innovation than the emergence of a ministry might suggest. Poirrier’s volume on cultural policies worldwide chose 1945 as a starting point. Even though some of the contributions move beyond this (Eurocentric) timeframe, it reveals the attractiveness of this year for periodization in history. The content of cultural policy, at least in France, was not necessarily based on novelties proper to the post-war period. As Pascal Ory showed, concepts and ideas such as “politique culturelle”, “animation”, “action culturelle”, or “ministère de la Culture” had already been coined in the 1930s during the period of the Front Populaire.<sup>1960</sup> Continuities with the Vichy regime also existed, even though the French Fourth Republic made some reorganisations to accommodate them better with democratic aims.<sup>1961</sup> The French constitution of 1946 and its version of 1959 included the right to culture.<sup>1962</sup> However, this right was strongly linked to education; culture

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<sup>1958</sup> Indeed, the volume on cultural policies around the world (*Pour une histoire des politiques culturelles dans le monde*) in 2011 pursued the goal to relativise the “Franco-French tropism” by providing accounts of other countries (Poirrier, *Pour une histoire des politiques culturelles dans le monde: 1945-2011*, 12). Ironically, Laurent Martin, in his contribution on France in the same anthology, reiterates the consideration of French cultural policy as a model, without explicitly questioning it (Laurent Martin, ‘La politique culturelle de la France depuis 1945’, in *Pour une histoire des politiques culturelles dans le monde: 1945-2011*, ed. Philippe Poirrier, Travaux et documents 28 [Paris: La Documentation française, 2011], 241).

<sup>1959</sup> Höpel, ‘La politique culturelle en Allemagne au XXe siècle’, 28.

<sup>1960</sup> Ory, ‘L’Etat et la culture de la Révolution à 1959’, 12; Ory, *La belle illusion*.

<sup>1961</sup> Ory, ‘L’Etat et la culture de la Révolution à 1959’, 12.

<sup>1962</sup> Ory, 12.

complemented education. The couple education-culture promoted the traditional canon of culture in the education system.<sup>1963</sup>

The post-war period in France was marked by the appearance of the “democratic perspective” in cultural policy. Cultural policy concerns were increasingly linked to questions of democratisation.<sup>1964</sup> The decentralisation of the theatre sector with the creation of the *centres dramatiques nationaux*, the foundation of the *Maison des jeunes et de la culture*, the development of the *bibliobus* service or the renovation of local libraries are examples of the democratic approach and the increasing role of public authorities in culture. However, the 1950s were marked by a clear deceleration of the reformist zeal: lack of financial resources (already since 1945), ideological fronts hardened by the Cold War context, and structural issues (the Ministry of Foreign Affairs being the only administration explicitly promoting the term “culture”).<sup>1965</sup> The creation of the Ministry of Cultural Affairs in 1959 and headed by Malraux until 1969 marked an important step in France. It entailed more budgetary autonomy and continuity with its inclusion in the French five-year plans (*plans quinquennaux*). Furthermore, in the framework of its competencies, the ministry created new, loosely institutionalised structures and invested efforts in politics supporting the creation and production of culture.<sup>1966</sup> However, its competencies were cobbled together from previously existing departments, largely attributed to the Ministry of National Education. They remained patchy and heterogeneous while lacking personnel and financial resources.<sup>1967</sup> This did not prevent the ministry from taking a series of initiatives, though: protection of heritage, support for cinematographic production, or the creation of *maisons de la culture*.

In the second half of the 1960s, Malraux’s cultural policy was increasingly questioned from both the Right and the Left. The disparity between discourse and practical implementation irritated the cultural sector.<sup>1968</sup> After Malraux, the ministry experienced several uncertainties. It was reorganised in the 1970s. Between 1971 and 1973, the cultural affairs minister Jacques Duhamel, considering the failures of the democratisation of culture and inspired by the

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<sup>1963</sup> Martin, ‘La politique culturelle de la France depuis 1945’, 244.

<sup>1964</sup> Pascal Ory, ‘Politiques culturelles avant la lettre: trois lignes françaises, de la Révolution au Front populaire’, in *Sociologie de l’art*, ed. Raymonde Moulin (Paris: La Documentation française, 1986), 25.

<sup>1965</sup> Ory, ‘L’Etat et la culture de la Révolution à 1959’, 13.

<sup>1966</sup> Augustin Girard, ‘Les politiques culturelles d’André Malraux à Jack Lang: histoire d’une modernisation’, in *Institutions et vie culturelles*, ed. Guy Saez, Les notices de La documentation Française (Paris: La documentation française, 2004), 14–15.

<sup>1967</sup> Martin, ‘La politique culturelle de la France depuis 1945’, 248.

<sup>1968</sup> Martin, 251.

movements of May 1968, put forward the concept of “cultural development” (*développement culturel*) to diversify and broaden the definition of culture.<sup>1969</sup>

In Germany, the Allied forces reconnected with the federal system in place before the Nazi regime. With the creation of the German Federal Republic in 1949, the federalist approach was anchored in the German fundamental law, framing cultural policy in the GFR for decades to come.<sup>1970</sup> The 1950s were marked by a conservationist approach to culture, expressed through the reconstruction of cultural institutions and the preservation of cultural heritage. Cultural policy was anchored in a restricted concept of culture developed by the bourgeoisie in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and associated with the new humanism collocating education with culture. The 1960s were marked by calls for cultural reforms spearheaded by the Social Democrats and the labour unions. The democratisation of culture was defended by cultural actors such as Hermann Glaser and Hilmar Hoffmann. This contestation deeply influenced the new cultural policy in the GFR in the 1970s.<sup>1971</sup>

In Belgium, culture was invested with a democratic mission after the liberation, to avoid the reappearance of fascism and Nazism. As in France, the democratic approach appeared quite early with the multiplication of cultural institutions and the decentralisation efforts to bring culture to the most remote places; it was visible throughout the 1950s and the 1960s.<sup>1972</sup>

A short consideration of Luxembourg’s neighbouring countries allows a more nuanced assessment of cultural policy in the grand duchy and the identification of similarities: the couple education-culture, the focus on high culture, the use of culture as a vector for democratic values, the continuities with policies from before 1940 or even 1945. It could be argued that the German administration of the occupation period had introduced the “modern” understanding of cultural policy to Luxembourg. This understanding was based, in broad outlines, on the intervention of public authorities in culture and the self-awareness of this intervention, on the pursuit of reflections on the content of cultural policy, on the creation of dedicated administrations, and on the recognition of the role of cultural policy for the development of the society. Not all these elements co-existed at the same time, and not all of them were present after 1945.

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<sup>1969</sup> Martin, 251–252.

<sup>1970</sup> Höpel, ‘La politique culturelle en Allemagne au XXe siècle’, 36.

<sup>1971</sup> Höpel, 39–40.

<sup>1972</sup> See, for instance, the examples provided by Christophe Pirenne, such as the “bibliobus”, or the reorganisation of the music and the theatre sectors (Pirenne, ‘Les politiques culturelles en Belgique depuis 1945’, 76–78).

In many respects, post-war cultural policy did not reinvent traditional policies of the pre-war period. Thus, we might advance the notion of conservative cultural policy, whereas “conservative” is understood in its broad meaning and not only in its political dimension. In addition, a conservative cultural policy does not exclude incremental improvements or changes and can be combined with the idea of a state-administrator. The concept implies that the foundations were not questioned: not the status of high culture, not the traditional cultural institutions, not the aggrandizement of the nation, and not the preservation of the past. A clear separation between culture and education was not made.

The concept of culture disseminated by the elites was still largely that of high culture, as opposed to popular culture; high culture encompassed the best creations disconnected from any transformational processes.<sup>1973</sup> Culture was not only the “best which has been thought and said in the world” (Matthew Arnold), it additionally fulfilled a moral function. Culture should disseminate (democratic) values. The UNESCO convention was precisely founded on these principles – securing peace and democracy. When the convention was debated in Luxembourg in July 1947 and submitted for ratification, culture was adorned with a moral value. In the declarations of the government, culture was relegated to a rather marginal role. In 1948, the state minister Pierre Dupong merely mentioned the importance of a better economic, social and cultural life, based on a return to “normal conditions”.<sup>1974</sup> Such discourse was strongly inscribed in the context of reconstruction. In 1954, state minister Bech explicitly mentioned cultural policy for the first time in a government declaration. Cultural policy was intimately linked to democracy. It would be based on respect for the rights and freedom of people:

Our cultural policy will be inspired, as in the past, by the very principles of democracy: freedom of private initiative within the limits set by the law; freedom of opinion, freedom of conscience, tolerance and cooperation with all those of good will.<sup>1975</sup>

In the 1960s, possibly with the influence of France and Malraux’s policy, democratisation of culture appeared in Luxembourgish political discourse. In November 1965, during debates related to a law project on excavations, Pierre Grégoire mentioned the idea of democratisation

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<sup>1973</sup> Stefan Lüddemann, *Kultur: Eine Einführung* (Wiesbaden: VS Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften, 2010), 15–16.

<sup>1974</sup> Chambre des députés, ‘2e séance (21 juillet 1948)’, in *Compte-rendu de la session extraordinaire de 1948* (Luxembourg: Chambre des députés, 1948), 15.

<sup>1975</sup> “Notre politique culturelle s’inspirera comme par le passé des principes mêmes de la démocratie: liberté de l’initiative privée dans les limites fixées par la loi; liberté des opinions, liberté de la conscience, tolérance et collaboration avec toutes les bonnes volontés” (Chambre des députés, ‘2e séance (7 juillet 1954)’, in *Chambre des députés, Compte-rendu de la session extraordinaire de 1954* [Luxembourg: Chambre des députés, 1954], 22).

of culture.<sup>1976</sup> In 1969, prime minister Pierre Werner (CSV) included a short reflection about the democratisation of culture in his government declaration. The idea was twofold: better access to culture and the dissemination of democratic values, and the active support for cultural creation and the respect of artistic expression.<sup>1977</sup> Indeed, one might consider the 1960s as a period in which cultural policy was slightly extended. Photography, for instance, had not been recognised as an artform until the 1960s by many members of the cultural elite. The evolution leading up to the recognition of Edward Steichen's oeuvre (his photographs as well as his exhibitions) represents a notable example. When Steichen was preparing his international travelling exhibition *Family of Man* in 1952, he wanted his home country Luxembourg to be the first station of the world tour. Yet, he received dismissive reactions and was told that photography is not art.<sup>1978</sup> According to Rosch Krieps, one of the proponents of Steichen's recognition in Luxembourg in the early 1960s, it was Joseph-Emile Muller among others who dismissed Steichen.<sup>1979</sup> This episode deeply troubled Steichen's relationship with Luxembourg and would only change in the 1960s. Contacts to the Museum of Modern Art in New York were used to promote Luxembourgish photographers with the hope that, thanks to Steichen's mediation, some photos by Luxembourgish artists would be acquired by the MoMA.<sup>1980</sup> However, despite the extension of the concept of culture, it remained confined to the idea of high culture, disseminated by traditional institutions and recognised by the cultural elite. Hence, the 1960s did not mark a revolution, but an incremental change within existing structures and discourses.

### *Parliamentary debates*

Previous sub-sections have hinted at the legal framework established in the post-war period. The cultural budget particularly mirrored some legislative changes. Yet, it is not only the kind of laws passed in the 1950s and 1960s that is of interest here, but also related parliamentary debates, which illustrated the rather restricted notion of culture. In the first years immediately after the war, the cultural budget did not elicit comments. This slowly changed from the 1950s

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<sup>1976</sup> Chambre des députés, ‘5e séance (18 novembre 1965)’, in *Compte-rendu de la session ordinaire de 1965-1966* (Luxembourg: Chambre des députés, 1966), 195.

<sup>1977</sup> Chambre des députés, ‘2e séance (11 février 1969)’, in *Compte-rendu de la session extraordinaire de 1969* (Luxembourg: Chambre des députés, 1969), 39.

<sup>1978</sup> Gerd Hurm, *Edward Steichen* (Luxembourg: Editions Saint-Paul, 2019), 143.

<sup>1979</sup> Krieps, *Kultur im Kleinstaat 1879-1989*, 156–157.

<sup>1980</sup> There are a series of letters between Paul Wurth, consul in New York, and Pierre Werner, prime minister and minister of foreign affairs, concerning the possible acquisition of photographs (cf. ANLux, AE-14079). Pierre Wurth met Steichen at the MoMA and both examined the photographs by three Luxembourgers (ANLux, AE-14079, Letter from Pierre Wurth to Pierre Werner, 13/06/1966).

onwards, but substantial debates remained scarce. Traditional cultural institutions played a major role. In 1951, Nicolas Margue suggested the creation of a fine arts museum to exhibit the Pescatore and Lippmann collections; this could create the possibility to “make something beautiful”<sup>1981</sup>. During the same parliamentary session, Victor Abens (LSAP) wondered whether some objects of the State Museum should not be exhibited in historic buildings in tourist locations, supervised by local authorities or the tourist board (*syndicat d’initiative*). “Many interesting objects are stowed in the [museum’s] attic,” the deputy explained with regret. Frieden, however, warned of the potential dangers of such a suggestion, without further explanations.<sup>1982</sup> Some exceptions existed to the otherwise dominating, and largely uncontested, notion of high culture. Linking culture to education, Abens suggested that children should learn Luxembourgish popular songs; the hours reserved for music education should be increased.<sup>1983</sup> Certainly, it was not a coincidence that Abens mentioned this aspect, as he was the president of the music federation Union Grand-Duc Adolphe (UGDA).

Theatre was less debated than other cultural areas. Only in the context of the construction of a theatre in Luxembourg City, which became a municipal one, some politicians mentioned the subject. Pierre Grégoire advocated that the future theatre should be a national one. Dominique Urbany (from the Communist Party, KPL) criticised that the existing theatre was too small and would only attract a “certain group of visitors”; workers would be excluded due to the choice of plays and the high entrance fees.<sup>1984</sup>

At least until the early 1960s, public theatrical infrastructures did not experience any considerable changes. A national theatre did not exist and the government did not deem it necessary.<sup>1985</sup> Most of the performances were done by foreign ensembles, including German ones. Though private societies and initiatives were not absent in Luxembourg, they only

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<sup>1981</sup> Chambre des députés, ‘38e séance (13 mars 1951)’, in *Compte-rendu de la session ordinaire de 1950-1951* (Luxembourg: Chambre des députés, 1951), 1646–1647.

<sup>1982</sup> Chambre des députés, ‘38me séance (13 mars 1951)’, in *Compte-rendu de la session ordinaire de 1950-1951* (Luxembourg: Chambre des députés, 1951), 1647–1648.

<sup>1983</sup> Chambre des députés, ‘42e séance (29 mars 1962)’, in *Compte-rendu de la session ordinaire de 1961-1962* (Luxembourg: Chambre des députés, 1962), 1458.

<sup>1984</sup> Chambre des députés, ‘33e séance (21 mars 1957)’, in *Compte-rendu de la session ordinaire de 1956-1957* (Luxembourg: Chambre des députés, 1957), 1322.

<sup>1985</sup> As Pierre Grégoire, minister for national education, wrote to the Minister for Foreign Affairs in 1965: “Le besoin d’un “théâtre national” ne s’est pas fait sentir.” (ANLux, MEN-0007, Letter from the minister of national education to the minister of foreign affairs, 07/12/1964).

received financial or moral support from the state. For secondary schools, the Ministry for National Education organised “matinée sessions, mostly performed by foreign ensembles.”<sup>1986</sup>

Debates related to the cultural budget seldom mentioned audiovisual cultural productions or media. When this was the case, mostly cinema was discussed. It was part of the competencies of the ministry heading cultural affairs, but these competencies were limited, as a cinematographic industry did not exist. Movies produced in Luxembourg were mainly commissioned works for educational or touristic purposes.<sup>1987</sup> Cinema was also the only area subjugated to censorship. The cinema commission, created in 1922, evaluated commercial movies for their content and eligibility to be shown; the government had the right to prohibit them if they were judged to compromise public order. Furthermore, boundaries between artistic expression and media were blurred. Unlike cinema, radio and television were not part of the ministry supervising culture. They shifted between the State Ministry and the Ministry of Finance. Yet, cinema was rather regarded as a medium, and less as an art. In many respects, the attitude of the state was a continuity to the interwar period. Pierre Grégoire, as the rapporteur of the law on the ratification of the UNESCO convention, highlighted the mission of the organisation to “enlighten the masses with the most efficient means, which are the press, film, and radio.”<sup>1988</sup> Though cinema was barely a topic of debate in the parliament, at least in 1951 the prohibition of the sex education movie *Because of Eve* (Howard Bretherton, 1948) elicited controversial exchanges in the Chamber of Deputies.<sup>1989</sup>

The idea of national culture was also present in political discourse. It was usually linked to literature and language. In fact, it did not differ much from the idea of national culture in the interwar period. The “Dicksfeier” (“Dicks Celebration”) in 1955, commemorating the premiere

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<sup>1986</sup> “[D]es matinées classiques en général, données le plus souvent par des troupes étrangères. C'est le Ministère qui choisit alors le répertoire et qui supporte le plus clair des frais.” (ANLux, MEN-0007, Letter from the minister of national education to the minister of foreign affairs, 07/12/1964).

<sup>1987</sup> Cf. ANLux, MEN-0196, Letter from Louis Simmer to the director general of the UNESCO, 02/05/1947.

<sup>1988</sup> Chambre des députés, ‘42me séance (17 juillet 1947)’, in *Compte-rendu de la session ordinaire de 1946-1947* (Luxembourg: Chambre des députés, 1946), 1592.

<sup>1989</sup> Chambre des députés, ‘39me séance (14 mars 1951)’, in *Compte-rendu de la session ordinaire de 1950-1951* (Luxembourg: Chambre des députés, 1951), 1691–1702. *Because of Eve* included explicit images of male and female reproduction organs and of a Caesarean section. The deputy Victor Bodson (LSAP) protested against the ban issued by the government, questioned its approach in the affair and qualified the interdiction as non-constitutional and against the law. Eugène Schaus, minister of justice, argued that he had the “duty” to protect the population or parts of it against “any danger, physical or moral”. Schaus questioned the benefit in showing the movie to teenagers or young adults, considered that it was a movie to be shown to medical students or midwives, and warned that many movies were falsely promoted as documentaries and only “speculated on the low instincts of both sexes” for commercial reasons.

of Edmond de la Fontaine's *De Scholtschein* in 1855, is a case in point. In his contribution to the brochure, Pierre Frieden adorned the year 1855 with symbolic value by choosing it as the beginning of "our moral autonomy":

It was around this time that the Luxembourgish people, which had been reduced for some years by its Walloon part and reduced to the purely Luxembourg part, became aware of a more pronounced originality and laid the foundations of the house it now inhabits. For the first time, it asserts the ethnographic and linguistic unity that it has always been since.<sup>1990</sup>

The most fervent proponent was the nationalist writer Lucien Koenig (1888-1961), deputy from 1951 to 1961. In his extensive speeches at the Chamber, he repeatedly referred to the triptych Dicks, Lentz and Rodange. He implicitly drew a line between high culture and popular culture and perceived the latter with some disdain. In 1954, Koenig criticised the lack of interest of pupils and students in classic theatre and poetry. In summer, they should perform their own stage plays, but only classic pieces and not "nonsense plays" (*Kabesstécker*, literally "cabbage plays"), the deputy recommended.<sup>1991</sup> He did not expand on what he understood as "classic". Moreover, he had been repeatedly addressing the linguistic question in his speeches. In 1953, he requested an official Luxembourgish orthography.<sup>1992</sup> In 1961, he criticised the "circles of so-called intellectuals" who would not recognise Luxembourgish as a real language. In his view, the language was a "national element", even the "soul of a people".<sup>1993</sup> In a teleological, romanticised and static view of Luxembourgish, Koenig assumed that it would be different and older than German (the latter "created by Luther in the 16<sup>th</sup> century").<sup>1994</sup> Yet, Koenig's depiction of the history of Luxembourgish needs to be questioned. The decision to declare an idiom as a language stems from a political choice; every idiom is prone to influences and changes over centuries. It is impossible to identify a precise moment when Luxembourgish started to be spoken. After the migratory movements of the 6<sup>th</sup> century, the linguistic borders stabilised. Most of the contemporary territory of Luxembourg was then situated in the

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<sup>1990</sup> "C'est vers ces années-là que le peuple luxembourgeois, diminué depuis quelques années de sa partie wallonne et réduit à la partie purement luxembourgeoise, prend conscience d'une originalité plus prononcée et pose les fondements de la maison qu'il habite actuellement. Il affirme pour la première fois cette unité ethnographique et linguistique qu'il n'a cessé d'être depuis." (ANLux, AE-06847, Brochure *Dicksfeier 1855-1955*, undated [1955]).

<sup>1991</sup> Chambre des députés, '30e séance (18 mars 1954)', in *Compte-rendu de la session ordinaire de 1953-1954* (Luxembourg: Chambre des députés, 1954), 1470.

<sup>1992</sup> Chambre des députés, '26e séance (19 mars 1953)', in *Compte-rendu de la session ordinaire de 1952-1953* (Luxembourg: Chambre des députés, 1953), 1183.

<sup>1993</sup> Chambre des députés, '35e séance (9 mars 1961)', in *Compte-rendu de la session ordinaire de 1960-1961* (Luxembourg: Chambre des députés, 1961), 1591.

<sup>1994</sup> Chambre des députés, 1591–1592.

Germanic region.<sup>1995</sup> Koenig might stand for an extreme case, but the essence of his thinking was not questioned by his peers. The protection of national culture, regardless of its definition, was widely accepted by politicians in its principles.

### *Legal framework*

The activities of the state-administrator focused on existing structures and approaches, typically by improving the protection of cultural heritage and traditional cultural institutions. Every law voted after 1945 was directly related to these matters, except for those on cultural diplomacy or approving international treaties and conventions. However, between 1945 and 1958, not a single cultural institution law was voted, though draft laws were submitted in the immediate post-war period. The process took many years, as illustrated by repeated requests from Nicolas Margue, while he was deputy at the Chamber. In March 1951, he asked about the progress of the draft law on the National Library, the State Museum (“musée national”) and the State Archives, “elaborated some years ago”. Pierre Frieden explained that the project was halted due to necessary revisions of the text.<sup>1996</sup> Three years later, Margue raised the issue again, though only referring to the museum. According to Frieden, the Commission d'économies et de rationalisation was looking into it.<sup>1997</sup> This commission was also known as “*commission de la hache*” (“axe commission”), due to its very sparing attitude towards questions regarding state expenses.

The importance of traditional cultural institutions has been highlighted in a previous subsection. In fact, the state organised and regulated existing national institutions. For the first time in Luxembourg, the National Archives, the State Archives and the State Museums received a legal framework. The first two in 1958<sup>1998</sup>, the latter in 1960<sup>1999</sup>. In both cases the parliamentary debates preceding the votes were marked by similar tropes. In general, politicians highlighted the importance of these institutions to cultural and intellectual life in the grand duchy. When the draft law on the State Archives and the National Library was submitted in 1956, the minister of national education highlighted their role in the dissemination of culture and the education of adults:

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<sup>1995</sup> Péporté et al., *Inventing Luxembourg*, 232.

<sup>1996</sup> Chambre des députés, ‘38me séance (13 mars 1951)’, 1646–1647.

<sup>1997</sup> Chambre des députés, ‘28me séance (16 mars 1954)’, in *Compte-rendu de la session ordinaire de 1953-1954* (Luxembourg: Chambre des députés, 1954), 1235.

<sup>1998</sup> ‘Loi du 5 décembre 1958 ayant pour objet l’organisation de la Bibliothèque Nationale et des Archives de l’Etat’.

<sup>1999</sup> ‘Loi du 17 août 1960 ayant pour objet l’organisation des Musées de l’Etat’.

The cultural importance of both institutions is self-explanatory. They are indispensable to the intellectual life of a country and to the dissemination of culture and the education of adults. To researchers they offer the necessary tools and material for their activity. They also expand the effect of our education in all degrees. They form the most fundamental cultural infrastructure that, in addition to schools, must be part of a civilised nation.<sup>2000</sup>

For the minister, cultural institutions were no longer reserved for some well-educated people (“*beaux esprits*”) or used as spaces of mere distraction. They should contribute to popular education, facilitate research, conserve and valorise “our cultural heritage” (“*notre patrimoine culturel*”).<sup>2001</sup> In his speech at the Chamber, the rapporteur Nicolas Margue also invoked their necessity in a “civilised country”.<sup>2002</sup>

These tropes did not differ much from what was voiced in regard with the State Museums. In the explanatory statement of the draft law in January 1957, the State Museums were depicted as an important space where national heritage was conserved and could be contemplated:

The role that the Museums play in our cultural life can be first explained by the fact that they are the shelter of a precious material heritage, witness to and illustration of the natural and human history of our country. The devoutness towards a long past as well as the legitimate curiosity for the old things justify the importance that a civilised society concedes to these institutions by giving them an official character.<sup>2003</sup>

As cultural policy was linked to education, so too was the cultural institution, contributing “to the education of the Luxembourgish public of every age”<sup>2004</sup>. Thus, the missions of the museum were undergirded by the national idea: exhibiting national heritage, conserving national objects, speaking to a national public. For the parliamentary commission examining

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<sup>2000</sup> “L’importance culturelle de ces deux institutions n’a pas besoin d’être mise en évidence. Elles sont indispensables à la vie intellectuelle du pays et à la diffusion de la culture et de l’éducation des adultes. Aux chercheurs elles offrent les instruments et les matériaux nécessaires à leur activité. Elles élargissent et prolongent aussi l’effet de notre enseignement de tous les degrés. Elles constituent le minimum d’outillage culturel dont, en plus de ses écoles, doit s’équiper une nation civilisée.” (Chambre des députés, ‘Projets de loi ayant pour objet l’organisation de la Bibliothèque Nationale et des Archives de l’Etat’, in *Compte rendu de la session ordinaire de 1957-1958* [Luxembourg: Chambre des députés, 1959], 698).

<sup>2001</sup> Chambre des députés, 698.

<sup>2002</sup> Own translation. “Il est bien évident pour tout le monde qu’un pays civilisé doit avoir des instituts culturels.” (Chambre des députés, ‘5me séance (18 novembre 1958)’, in *Compte-rendu de la session extraordinaire de 1958-1959* [Luxembourg: Chambre des députés, 1959], 133).

<sup>2003</sup> Own translation. “Le rôle que les Musées jouent dans notre vie culturelle s’explique d’abord par le fait qu’ils sont les dépositaires d’un précieux patrimoine matériel, témoin et illustration de l’histoire naturelle et humaine de notre pays. La piété à l’égard d’un long passé aussi bien que la légitime curiosité des choses anciennes justifient l’importance qu’une société civilisée attache à ces institutions en leur donnant un caractère officiel.” (Chambre des députés, ‘Projet de loi ayant pour objet l’organisation des Musées de l’Etat’, in *Compte-rendu de la session ordinaire de 1956-1957* [Luxembourg: Chambre des députés, 1957], 778).

<sup>2004</sup> Chambre des députés, 778.

the text, the museums had an “informative and educational character”; the treasures “document our cultural activities” and the “expressions are to be conserved and transmitted to future generations”.<sup>2005</sup>

Furthermore, political debates insisted on the international dimension of the institutions. The State Museums “occupy an important place” in “our international cultural relations”. They would contribute to the “fostering and development of foreign cultural relations”.<sup>2006</sup> For the National Library and the State Archives, the authors of the explanatory statement observed that “our country has joined international cultural exchanges”. Thus, the necessity of such “spiritual equipment” has grown. Luxembourg would benefit of the international exchanges. “We need to do our best to offer our modest cultural resources in exchange,”<sup>2007</sup> the statement read.

The debates and the modifications to the draft laws hint at the perceived strong connection between cultural institutions and the education system. In the submitted proposal, the library and the archives would be each headed by a detached secondary school teacher (“*professeur délégué*”), nominated by the minister of national education. The State Council, however, opposed this “hybrid solution”. It assumed that this proposal was motivated by a wish to avoid criticisms concerning the high number of state officials.<sup>2008</sup> Yet, the nomination of the director should not be based on a mere delegation. At the same time, the Council considered that the State Archives (as they would be called with the new law, formerly Government Archives), were not large enough as a service to legitimate an own supervision. Both institutions could be directed by the same person.<sup>2009</sup>

From this perspective, the draft law would contribute to a limited professionalisation of the institutions, despite the regularisation of the staff and the stipulation of the required competencies. The fact that one director should supervise two institutions stands in contrast with the declared importance of such institutions in the speeches and statements. At the Chamber of Deputies, the debates proved to be difficult, precisely surrounding the question of supervision. Margue and the parliamentary commission opined that the delegation of a

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<sup>2005</sup> Chambre des députés, ‘Projet de loi ayant pour objet l’organisation des Musées de l’Etat’, in *Compte-rendu de la session ordinaire de 1959-1960* (Luxembourg: Chambre des députés, 1960), 457.

<sup>2006</sup> Chambre des députés, ‘Projet de loi ayant pour objet l’organisation des Musées de l’Etat’, 1957, 778.

<sup>2007</sup> Chambre des députés, ‘Projets de loi ayant pour objet l’organisation de la Bibliothèque Nationale et des Archives de l’Etat’, 698.

<sup>2008</sup> Indeed, the Commission of Economisation and Rationalisation opposed the creation of two positions of state officials in the very early draft law submitted in 1948. It was this objection which led the government to change the text and resort to a delegation of teachers.

<sup>2009</sup> Chambre des députés, ‘Projets de loi ayant pour objet l’organisation de la Bibliothèque Nationale et des Archives de l’Etat’, 704–705.

professor would ensure a link between cultural institutions and education. Yet, the commission opposed the modification from the State Council and advocated for the delegation of a teacher to each institution: the required skills would differ and the duties at the State Archives would entail a workload legitimating a distinct supervision. An official nomination was also rejected by the commission and by Margue; though the State Council would have wanted to protect the position of director from arbitrary decisions of the competent minister (delegating and annulling the delegation at will), Margue did not consider this argument to be “very serious”.<sup>2010</sup> Among the parliamentary ranks, neither Margue’s proposal nor the State Council’s version attracted unanimous approval. Antoine Wehenkel (LSAP) called the project a “lousy result”, as it would not define any framework to coordinate national scientific research.<sup>2011</sup> Eugène Schaus (DP) criticised Margue’s “hybrid solution” concerning the supervision. Though he did not entirely agree with the State Council’s suggestion, it would still be preferable to Margue’s, as the deputy feared arbitrary decisions by the government.<sup>2012</sup>

As a response to the criticisms, the minister Pierre Frieden added some precisions. Initially, Frieden had been in favour of two nominated directors, but then changed his mind. According to his own explanations, the system of delegated teachers had already been applied in other cases and “produced good results”. He dismissed fears of arbitrary decisions, expressing his faith in the “wisdom and the equity, in the common sense of the governing people.”<sup>2013</sup> Despite criticisms voiced by some parliamentarians, the draft law, as proposed by the parliamentary commission, was unanimously adopted. A notable stipulation of the law was the introduction of the legal deposit (“dépôt légal”), or rather its re-introduction, as the German administration had introduced it with Pierre Frieden’s involvement.

In 1965, a new law modified several dispositions concerning the National Library and the State Archives. The principle of delegation was abolished. The director of each institution had to be properly nominated. Other modifications concerned the positions and remunerations of the staff.<sup>2014</sup> The rapporteur Emile Schaus motivated these changes with the extended missions of both institutions. As a national centre for scientific research did not exist, the National Library would incorporate this task. With the introduction of the legal deposit, it would need

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<sup>2010</sup> Chambre des députés, ‘5me séance (18 novembre 1958)’, 134–136.

<sup>2011</sup> Chambre des députés, 140–143.

<sup>2012</sup> Chambre des députés, 151–152.

<sup>2013</sup> Chambre des députés, 149.

<sup>2014</sup> ‘Loi du 26 février 1965 portant modification et complément de la loi du 5 décembre 1958 ayant pour objet l’organisation de la bibliothèque nationale et des archives de l’Etat’, in *Mémorial A*, vol. 10 (Luxembourg, 1965), 103–104, <http://legilux.public.lu/eli/etat/leg/loi/1965/02/26/n1/jo>.

to classify and conserve national publications. As for the National Archives, they would have to continuously work on the inventory and adapt it to international standards, simultaneously to other tasks (restoration, education).<sup>2015</sup> Nicolas Mosar (CSV) observed that the draft law would return to the very first suggestion in the text of 1948 (two nominated directors).<sup>2016</sup> The law was unanimously adopted.

The debates surrounding the draft law on the State Museum in 1959 and 1960 attracted less criticisms than the text of 1958 on the National Library and the State Archives. The supervision of the State Museums and of each of their components (History and Art Museum and Natural History Museum) was a major issue. As in the law on the library and the archives, the State Council opposed the system of delegation and preferred an official nomination of a custodian.<sup>2017</sup> It thus changed the disposition as it was voted a first time by the Chamber in July 1959, before the mandatory examination by the State Council. What remained was the idea of one of both heading the State Museums as a whole. In July 1960, the text was adopted including the principle of nomination, the supervision of each museum, and the supervision of the State Museums. With the definition of the required skills, of the missions of the State Museums and of the amount of staff employed in the institution, the law certainly contributed to a professionalisation and especially a regularisation of the institution.

Yet, despite political statements about the importance of cultural institutions to a civilized country and the central role of cultural institutions, contradictions between theory and reality persisted. The report of the National Library of 1954, for instance, described a rather desolate state. In 1955, the institution faced a budget cut and the personnel had been waiting for years for a legal status. Furthermore, “[a]t the current rhythm of acquisitions, the moment approaches when our storage and offices are full. Starting from now, the eternal problem of finding other rooms for the National Library arises again; it is a major problem that will need a radical solution sooner or later.”<sup>2018</sup> In the early 1970s, the move to another building, the old Athenaeum next to the Cathedral, entailed better prospects. Yet, the move itself was difficult

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<sup>2015</sup> Chambre des Députés du Grand-Duché de Luxembourg, ‘16e séance (3 février 1965)’, in *Compte-rendu de la session ordinaire de 1964-1965* (Luxembourg: Chambre des députés, 1965), 415–416.

<sup>2016</sup> Chambre des Députés du Grand-Duché de Luxembourg, 421.

<sup>2017</sup> Chambre des députés, ‘Projet de loi ayant pour objet l’organisation des Musées de l’Etat’, 1960, 464.

<sup>2018</sup> Own translation. “Au rythme actuel des acquisitions, le moment approche où nos magasins et nos bureaux seront combles. Dès maintenant se pose donc de nouveau l’éternel problème de trouver d’autres locaux pour la BN, problème crucial qui demandera un jour ou l’autre une solution radicale.” (ANLux, AE-06847, *Rapport sur l’activité de la Bibliothèque nationale en 1954*, attached to a letter from Alphonse Sprunck (acting director of the National Library) to the state minister, 21/04/1955).

as the accessibility to the library's services was drastically reduced. The activity report for 1972 hinted at the daunting task: "Since 12 July 1972 the Library has closed its doors, but the internal activity has remained intense, because the personnel, without any external help, proceeds to the biggest move the Library has ever seen."<sup>2019</sup> On top of that, the author of the report complained about the lack of staff, not only a quantitative issue, but also an issue of skills. The budget for acquisitions had increased since 1971 but was still not meeting the demands.<sup>2020</sup> The Library opened again on 1 February 1973, which did not necessarily lead to a regular service, as some rooms were still being equipped. However, the new location elicited positive reactions.<sup>2021</sup> The situation of the State Archives was less daunting, but there too, "minor problems" would need to be addressed concerning the workforce.<sup>2022</sup>

In the era of the state-administrator, the framework for the protection of cultural heritage and the excavations was updated, though it focused on castles, churches and fortifications, while first signs of change appeared in the 1960s. The number of buildings classified as protected monuments markedly increased in the 1960s.<sup>2023</sup> The government abandoned its "politics of indifference" towards feudal monuments in favour of a more active stance. One example is the reconstruction of destroyed parts of the castle of Clervaux, which eventually saved the edifice.<sup>2024</sup> Additionally, the 1960s saw the publication of two legal texts related to cultural heritage. The law of 21 March 1966 on the excavations and the protection of mobile cultural heritage replaced the older text of 1937 and referred in parts to the law of 1927 on national monuments and sites. The new law responded to an increased need of better regulation, particularly concerning amateur excavations. "Each excavation constitutes an irreversible, destructive act of a secular object embedded in superimposed layers," the rapporteur Emile Schaus deplored.<sup>2025</sup> During the debates, different views and opinions were voiced. The deputy Joseph Herr (CSV) criticized the lack of implementation of the 1937 law, which would have sufficed.<sup>2026</sup> The subject of property rights and the issue of overly constraining them was also

<sup>2019</sup> Own translation. "Depuis le 12 juillet 1972 la Bibliothèque a fermé ses portes, mais à l'intérieur l'activité est restée intense, car le personnel, sans aucune aide extérieure, y procède au plus grande [sic] déménagement que la Bibliothèque ait jamais vécu." (Ministère des Affaires culturelles, *Budget des dépenses 1973 : Mémoire concernant le Département des affaires culturelles* [Luxembourg: Ministère des affaires culturelles, 1972], 16).

<sup>2020</sup> Ministère des Affaires culturelles, 25.

<sup>2021</sup> Ministère des Affaires culturelles, 19–20.

<sup>2022</sup> Ministère des Affaires culturelles, 27.

<sup>2023</sup> Diederich, *La protection du patrimoine au Luxembourg*, 57.

<sup>2024</sup> Diederich, 59.

<sup>2025</sup> Chambre des députés, '4e séance (17 novembre 1965)', in *Compte-rendu de la session ordinaire de 1965-1966* (Luxembourg: Chambre des députés, 1966), 157.

<sup>2026</sup> Chambre des députés, 164.

discussed. Herr and André Wolff (CSV), for instance, requested that the law should not impose too many limitations and be applied with moderation. For the minister Pierre Grégoire, amateurs would create problems, but also prove their usefulness when following the rules set by the state.<sup>2027</sup>

The law included an unprecedented exception that reflects the debates surrounding the complex matter of property rights. An authorisation for exportation was not required for objects produced outside of Luxembourg by non-Luxembourgish artists and imported to Luxembourg less than a hundred years ago, except when “these objects originally emanate from territories of the old Duchy of Luxembourg”.<sup>2028</sup> This legal disposition was not present in the law of 1937. Besides raising the question about the definition of a Luxembourgish object, the passage refers to a territory that did not exist anymore and had been itself prone to changes over time. This exception was suggested by the parliamentary commission and resulted from fears that antiquarians and private collectors might not donate or loan any paintings to the museum because they did not want public authorities to know what they possess.<sup>2029</sup> The lawmakers extended the exportation rule to all objects of cultural interest. Furthermore, the protection potentially encompassed all objects and was not limited to those discovered during excavations.<sup>2030</sup> It was the first time that the concept of “mobile cultural heritage” was introduced into Luxembourgish law; the text of 1937 merely used the notion of “object”. In 1968, a law on national monuments and sites modified the law of 1927 and added, to the main list of protected monuments, an additional list of buildings or parts of buildings that did not need to be immediately classified as protected monuments, but still had an archaeological, artistic, aesthetic or scientific value. In addition, stipulations concerning publicity signposts on facades were amended.<sup>2031</sup>

The laws promulgated between 1958 and 1968 have three aspects in common: regulation of cultural activities, protection of cultural heritage, and improvement of existing structures. These were not only typical for a conservative vision of cultural policy, but they also reflected

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<sup>2027</sup> Chambre des députés, ‘5e séance (18 novembre 1965)’, 194.

<sup>2028</sup> ‘Loi du 21 mars 1966 concernant a) les fouilles d’intérêt historique, préhistorique, paléontologique ou autrement scientifique; b) la sauvegarde du patrimoine culturel mobilier’, 380.

<sup>2029</sup> Chambre des députés, ‘4e séance (17 novembre 1965)’, 163.

<sup>2030</sup> Chambre des députés, ‘Projet de loi concernant a) les fouilles d’intérêt historique, préhistorique, paléontologique ou autrement scientifique; b) la sauvegarde du patrimoine culturel mobilier.’, in *Compte-rendu de la session ordinaire de 1964-1965* (Luxembourg: Chambre des députés, 1965), 909.

<sup>2031</sup> ‘Loi du 20 février 1968 portant modification de la loi du 12 août 1927 conservant la conservation et la protection des sites et monuments nationaux’, in *Mémorial A*, vol. 8 (Luxembourg, 1968), 105–107, <http://legilux.public.lu/eli/etat/leg/loi/1968/02/20/n1/jo>.

the approach of the state-administrator. The aim did not consist in fundamentally changing policies related to cultural heritage, but to adapt and improve them through incremental steps. Much of the impetus in this area did not originate in Luxembourg but had its roots at the European level. Indeed, at the end of the 1960s, heritage protection policies started to change in Luxembourg at least partly as a result of sensitization campaigns of the Council of Europe. Throughout the 1960s, the CoE organised conferences and colloquia dedicated to cultural heritage. In 1969, European ministers responsible for the protection of architectural heritage convened in Brussels to discuss the project of a European Year of Architectural Heritage, which was proclaimed by the CoE in 1975. In 1973, the CoE instituted the Committee of Monuments of Sites, a permanent body of coordination.<sup>2032</sup>

In 1970, the minister Madeleine Frieden-Kinnen, certainly influenced by these European exchanges, announced a new approach to cultural heritage. Its protection should not be limited to a single, isolated monument, but encompass a whole site, old neighbourhoods or historical villages:

It is then the notion of the ensemble that has become the foundation of all activities of reactivation or conservation of cultural mobile heritage, urban ensemble, rural ensemble, and natural ensemble constituted by a site.<sup>2033</sup>

In 1971, the service of historical monuments (“*service des monuments historiques*”) was created as part of the Ministry of Cultural Affairs. In total, two experts supervised the conservation and restoration of historic monuments, in collaboration with the Commission of National Monuments and Sites. It was the first time that the government created such a dedicated service,<sup>2034</sup> which was the precursor of the Service des Sites et Monuments nationaux (SSMN), instituted in 1977. The European Charter of Architectural Heritage, adopted by the CoE in the context of the European Year 1975, enshrined a series of principles as partly outlined by Frieden-Kinnen: architectural heritage including “groups of lesser buildings in our old towns and characteristic villages in their natural or manmade settings”; the new approach encompassed an anthropological dimension, as “the past as embodied in the architectural heritage provides the sort of environment indispensable to a balanced and complete life”. The

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<sup>2032</sup> Diederich, *La protection du patrimoine au Luxembourg*, 77.

<sup>2033</sup> “C'est donc la notion d'ensemble qui est devenue la base de toute activité de réanimation ou de conservation du patrimoine culturel mobilier, ensemble urbain, ensemble rural, ensemble naturel constitué par un site.” (Chambre des députés, ‘2e séance (10 novembre 1970)’, in *Compte-rendu de la session ordinaire de 1970-1971* [Luxembourg: Chambre des députés, 1971], 496).

<sup>2034</sup> ‘Règlement ministériel du 13 mai 1971 portant création d'un service des monuments historiques’, in *Mémorial A*, vol. 32 (Luxembourg, 1971), 13, <http://legilux.public.lu/eli/etat/leg/rmin/1971/05/13/n1/jo>.

social aspect was recurrent in the Charter, which recognised the “spiritual, cultural, social and economic value” of architectural heritage. Indeed, years before French Culture Minister Jack Lang famously declared the end of a clear distinction between culture and economy in the 1980s, the Charter acknowledged a link between architectural heritage and economy, describing it as an “economic asset”. However, exploitation for tourism or economic development was not explicitly mentioned. The educative aspect was also present in the text.<sup>2035</sup>

In her speeches, Frieden-Kinnen stressed the spiritual aspect and the connection between man and nature. This was strongly related to her generally sceptical, even negative, stance towards mass media and technology, informed by a conservative vision. It fitted within the societal context. The social changes, the distribution of mass media and the diffusion of new technologies influenced cultural discourses at the end of the 1960s and the beginning of the 1970s. Frieden-Kinnen considered that in “our changing society”, culture “has become an affair that can and needs to concern all humans”.<sup>2036</sup> People should be sensitised to the “spiritual things for the development of the personality and for the level of the society.”<sup>2037</sup> Culture, then, should safeguard spiritual and immaterial values, especially in a “positivist and mechanised” world. The consumerist society and the “technocracy” would create “anti-values” (“*contre-valeurs*”), simultaneously to the “intoxication” by the “new media”, such as television, music records, radio, cinema or comics. Frieden-Kinnen also decried the “industrials of sex, blood and dreams” (“*industriels du sexe, du sang et du rêve*”) and claimed to quote the French minister André Malraux.<sup>2038</sup> Her preoccupation with spiritual values was connected to the protection of heritage, consisting in “regaining the contact with oneself and of man to man, and, finally, with nature”.<sup>2039</sup> In 1972, Jacques Santer, state secretary of cultural affairs, added

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<sup>2035</sup> Council of Europe, ‘European Charter of the Architectural Heritage - 1975’, ICOMOS, November 2011, <https://www.icomos.org/en/charters-and-texts/179-articles-en-francais/ressources/charters-and-standards/170-european-charter-of-the-architectural-heritage>.

<sup>2036</sup> Chambre des députés, ‘12e séance (25 novembre 1969)’, in *Compte-rendu de la session ordinaire de 1969-1970* (Luxembourg: Chambre des députés, 1969), 707. Frieden-Kinnen possibly referred to a speech held by Malraux at the inauguration of the Maison de la Culture in Amiens in 1966, where he expressed his disdain for “sex, blood and death” as the “most terrible elements in a human being” (Fabio Spirinelli, ‘Creative Luxembourg? From Implicit Debates on Cultural Industries to an Explicit Policy on Creative Industries in Luxembourg’, *Hémecht : Zeitschrift Für Luxemburger Geschichte = Revue d'histoire Luxembourgeoise*, 2018, 10; André Malraux, ‘Speech Given on the Occasion of the Inauguration of the House of Culture at Amiens on 19 March 1966’, in *French Cultural Policy Debates: A Reader*, ed. Jeremy Ahearne [London: Routledge, 2002], 716).

<sup>2037</sup> Chambre des députés, ‘12e séance (25 novembre 1969)’, 707.

<sup>2038</sup> Chambre des députés, 708.

<sup>2039</sup> Own translation. “[...] retrouver le contact avec soi-même et d’homme à homme, et, enfin avec la nature.” (Chambre des députés, ‘2e séance (10 novembre 1970)’, 497).

to these reflections the aspect of “reanimation” as defended by the CoE. It consisted in reusing old monuments for new purposes. In this context, Santer quoted examples such as the castle in Clervaux to house Edward Steichen’s *Family of Man* exhibition.<sup>2040</sup>

The protection of heritage, though, was only one side of the coin. The flipside concerned its destruction. When the *Luxemburger Wort* reported on a CoE conference reuniting experts in Vienna in October 1965, the article stressed the importance of the protection of cultural heritage. Referring to a meeting dedicated to the reanimation of monuments, the journalist pointed out the urgency of such meetings, as the “historical substance of cities and villages is unsafe due partly to the threat of increasing traffic, partly to destructions caused by war.”<sup>2041</sup> And further: “With increasing frequency leads the collision between utility and shortage of space, on the one hand, and historical value, on the other hand, to the destruction of the latter.”<sup>2042</sup> Luxembourg was not spared by the destruction of its heritage. The transformations of the urban landscape deeply impacted historical monuments. Rosch Krieps criticised the “fatal aberrations” in post-war Luxembourg. “The narrow-minded thinking of the fortification spirit,” he commented, “became the other extreme, a new megalomania, a maxi-reasoning” that lost all grasp of the past.<sup>2043</sup> Since the 1950s, 19<sup>th</sup>-century villas in Luxembourg City, for instance, had been destroyed to make space for modern, taller edifices better adapted to the development of the financial sector. Destructions frequently happened with the consent of public authorities, as local administrations used their legal and constitutional prerogatives. Another case was the Hasteschmillen, or “moulin Hastert” in French, a mill in the Grund (Luxembourg City), constructed in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and demolished in 1974 for reasons of “public security” and because a future cultural purpose would not legitimise the costly renovation.<sup>2044</sup>

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<sup>2040</sup> Chambre des députés, ‘14e séance (15 novembre 1972)’, in *Compte-rendu de la session ordinaire de 1972-1973* (Luxembourg: Chambre des députés, 1973), 615.

<sup>2041</sup> Own translation. “Derartige Beratungen sind aktueller denn je. Die historische Substanz von Städten und Dörfern ist teils durch die Gefährdungen des wachsenden Verkehrs, teils durch die Zerstörungen des Krieges nicht mehr als gesichert zu betrachten.” (zenb, ‘Zum Denkmalschutzkongress des Europarates in Wien’, *Luxemburger Wort*, October 1965, D-00110, MNHA).

<sup>2042</sup> Own translation. “Immer häufiger führt die Kollision von Zweckmäßigkeit und Raumnot einerseits und geschichtlichem Wert andererseits zur Zerstörung des letzteren.” (zenb).

<sup>2043</sup> Own translation. “Aus den Minimaß des engen Festungsdenkens verfiel man plötzlich ins andere Extrem, in einen neuen Größenwahn, ein Maxidenken, dem höhernorts jegliche Beziehung zur Vergangenheit abhanden gekommen schien” (Krieps, *Kultur im Kleinstaat 1879-1989*, 96).

<sup>2044</sup> Diederich, *La protection du patrimoine au Luxembourg*, 70.

#### V.2.4. The Millennium Celebration in 1963: aggrandizement and changes in continuity

The Millennium celebrations provide the population of our country the opportunity to look back and become aware of our national history's vicissitudes symbolising the close union between the Grand Duchy and its millennial capital.<sup>2045</sup>

Emile Hamilius (1897-1971), mayor of Luxembourg from 1946 to 1963

The national idea did not disappear after the war, as the transport of John of Luxembourg's remains exemplifies. This event, however, paled in comparison to the Millennium Celebration of the City of Luxembourg in 1963. In academic literature, historians have largely ignored this event happening halfway between the two celebrations of 1939 and 1989. Despite its focus on the capital, the Millennium Celebration bore resemblances with the Centenary of 1939 and was heightened to a national event, as Hamilius' quote illustrates. Yet, the context of the Millenary was different, of which the contemporaries were well aware. In January 1963, Joseph Petit noted:

May God be blessed, no clouds seem to darken the political horizon. It will not be like 1939. Because once we got to the Centenary of our Independence, we celebrated it with a string around our neck and the danger of war at our gates. Today, however, the world seems to be at peace and, according to the Big of the political world, the mood is on détente.<sup>2046</sup>

Nicolas Margue, president of the celebration's Coordinating Commission (*Commission de Coordination*) and veteran of 1939, applied traditional tropes when addressing Luxembourg's history in his speech at the symposium of 13 April 1963:

It concerns our origins, our entry into history. As Luxembourg exists and is willing to continue existing, we have the right and the duty to solemnly stress this will to live, by examining how we have become and who we are, - a small people, independent, peaceful, industrious, conscious of its particular essence amidst the large European and human community to which we belong, which surrounds and protects us, a people decided to accept all the duties that arise for us from this acknowledged reality.<sup>2047</sup>

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<sup>2045</sup> Own translation. "Les fêtes du Millénaire donneront à la population de notre pays l'occasion de jeter un regard en arrière et de se rendre compte des vicissitudes de notre histoire nationale qui symbolise l'union étroite existant entre le Grand-Duché et sa capitale millénaire." (VDL archives, LU 01.2.2:28, Letter from Emile Hamilius to the Grand Marshall of the Court, 26/03/1963).

<sup>2046</sup> Own translation. "Dieu soit loué, aucun nuage ne semble obscurcir l'horizon politique. Il n'en sera pas comme en 1939. Car le Centenaire de notre Indépendance retrouvée, nous l'avons célébré la corde au cou et la menace de la guerre à nos portes. Aujourd'hui par contre le monde semble en paix et, selon l'affirmation des Grands de la politique mondiale, l'atmosphère est à la détente." (Joseph Petit, 'Luxembourg fête le millième anniversaire de sa fondation', in *Programme des manifestations du Millénaire 1963-1963* [Luxembourg: V. Buck, 1963], 8).

<sup>2047</sup> Own translation. "C'est de nos origines, de notre entrée dans l'histoire qu'il s'agit. Puisque le Luxembourg existe et veut continuer à exister, nous avons le droit et le devoir d'affirmer solennellement cette volonté de vivre, en examinant comment nous sommes devenus et ce que nous

Containing ideas of the will to be independent, of the specificity of a people, of the laborious and peaceful character, the speech is reminiscent of the Centenary discourse. Margue's account was a slightly adapted reproduction of the master narrative. He did not use the concept of foreign dominations yet created a stark contrast between the Medieval times ("un siècle et demi de puissance et de gloire") and the Early Modern times ("c'est l'évanouissement, c'est la submersion"). However, Margue posited a continuing autonomy of Luxembourg until 1795 and an enduring conservation of institutions, laws, traditions, language, and religion over centuries. His vision was teleological as if the passing of time would not have affected the particularities of Luxembourg and its people. The *Klëppelkrich* of 1798 was interpreted as a manifestation of the "spirit of independence", a revolt provoked by the "first annexation".<sup>2048</sup>

Margue's speech illustrates the continuities between 1963 and 1939, but the tropes were undeniably adapted to the new context. At the end of his speech, Margue referred to the "new Europe", a "Europe of nations" ("*Europe des patries*"), in which Luxembourg would remain loyal to its "national motto", i.e. "We want to stay who we are".<sup>2049</sup> Indeed, the Millennium was a fitting stage for revealing these changes in continuity, as we might call such adaptations based on the same enduring foundations. Margue was by far not the only one. When the economist Jérôme Anders shared his thoughts on the initiatives developed during the preparations in a letter to the mayor of Luxembourg in January 1962, he discussed the European idea of the Millennium, highlighting that "we [he and probably some of his colleagues of the organising committee] have observed that the European character of Luxembourg is not enough highlighted in our programmes". He suggested contacting the ECSC authorities and especially Albert Wehrer.<sup>2050</sup>

The occasion for which the celebration was organised was not a novel idea. For years, publications on the city had been referring to its millennial history, such as a booklet of 1945 available in three languages (English, French and German) by the Luxembourg Tourist Office with financial support from the government, entitled *The City of One Thousand Years: La Ville*

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sommes, - un petit peuple indépendant, paisible, travailleur, conscient de son essence particulière au milieu de la grande communauté européenne et humaine dont nous sommes, qui nous entoure et nous protège, un peuple décidé à accepter tous les devoirs qui se dégagent pour nous de cette réalité bien comprise." (VDL archives, LU 01.2.2:30, Speech by Nicolas Margue at the academic symposium, 13/04/1963).

<sup>2048</sup> VDL archives, LU 01.2.2:30, Speech by Nicolas Margue at the academic symposium, 13/04/1963.

<sup>2049</sup> VDL archives, LU 01.2.2:30, Speech by Nicolas Margue at the academic symposium, 13/04/1963.

<sup>2050</sup> VDL archives, LU 11 – IV/4:1660, Letter from Jérôme Anders to the mayor of Luxembourg City, 12/01/1962.

*Millénaire: Die Tausendjährige Stadt.*<sup>2051</sup> The reconstruction was still going on, but the interest in attracting tourists did not wane. 1963 loomed on the horizon: “Not so far ahead, actually in the year 1963, the city of Luxembourg will celebrate the 1000<sup>th</sup> anniversary.”<sup>2052</sup> Unsurprisingly, the guidebook recycled the trope of foreign dominations. The German invasion was described graphically:

Quite recently, on May 10<sup>th</sup> 1940, the City was once again afflicted by the evils of warlike events, when the Germans, in defiance of their pledged word, flooded Luxembourg, leaving in their bloody wake the filth of their brown and yellow riffraff hordes’ abominations.<sup>2053</sup>

The booklet of 1945 was not the only publication making use of the trope. The historian Jean-Pierre Koltz (and custodian at the State Museums) penned the official guide of the Syndicat d’Initiative of the City of Luxembourg. In 1963, the second edition was published, followed by further editions until 1983.<sup>2054</sup> In the fourth edition of 1967, Luxembourg was depicted as “the most dynamic and important crossroad of Western Europe” and “a city of contrasts”:

[...] contrast between its new and prosperous neighbourhoods, built on flat terrain, and the depths of the Alzette and the Petrus, dug as chasms, below high cliffs, in the middle of the city; contrast between the gigantic metallic bridge and the already impressive viaducts of the past century; contrast between the latter and the old fortified bridges buried in the lower parts of town; contrast still between the peaceful character of the things and people and the remains of the military fortifications of the past; contrast between urban life, quite cosmopolitan, and the rural population visiting the market as in small villages and invading a whole neighbourhood; contrast between the hectic movement of modern life and the confident tranquillity of its numerous arboreous parks; finally, contrast between Latin and Germanic influences, visible in all kind of ways, in the architecture and in the way of life.<sup>2055</sup>

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<sup>2051</sup> Marcel Schroeder et al., *Luxembourg: the city of one thousand years = la ville millénaire = die Tausendjährige Stadt* (Luxembourg: Editions Paul Bruck, 1945).

<sup>2052</sup> Schroeder et al., 8.

<sup>2053</sup> Schroeder et al., 12.

<sup>2054</sup> Maurice Cosyn, *Guide officiel du Syndicat d’Initiative: La ville millénaire de Luxembourg*, 3rd ed. (Bruxelles: Cosyn, 1963).

<sup>2055</sup> Own translation. “[...] contraste entre ses quartiers neufs et prospères, créés sur un sol égal, et les fonds de l’Alzette et de la Pétrusse, creusés en précipices, sous de hautes falaises, en pleine ville; contraste entre la gigantesque passerelle métallique d’aujourd’hui et les viaducs déjà impressionnantes du siècle passé; contraste entre ces derniers et les vieux ponts fortifiés enfouis dans les villes basses; contraste encore entre le caractère paisible des choses et des gens et ce qui reste de l’appareil guerrier de jadis ; contraste entre la vie urbaine, assez cosmopolite, et la population rurale, venant au marché, comme dans les petites villes et envahissant tout un quartier ; contraste entre le mouvement trépidant de la vie moderne et le calme souverain de ses nombreux parcs arborés, contraste enfin entre les influences latine et germanique, qui s’affirme de toutes façons, dans l’art de bâtir et dans la façon de vivre.” (Maurice Cosyn and Jean-Pierre Koltz, *La ville millénaire de Luxembourg: guide officiel du Syndicat d’Initiative*, 4th ed. [Bruxelles: Cosyn, 1967], 16–17).

Besides the small reference to the mixed character of Luxembourg at the end of this quote, the guide insisted, in addition, on the European dimension of the city with the mention of the European Community of Coal and Steel (ECCS).<sup>2056</sup>

The idea of the Millennium did not only pervade in city guides. In 1951, the ambassador of Luxembourg in Paris mentioned in a letter to Joseph Bech a documentation assembled by Arthur Diderrick for a history of Luxembourg. According to the ambassador, Diderrick planned to publish “a vast, documented history” of Luxembourg for “the Millennium in 1963 of the existence of our country’s state”<sup>2057</sup>. Diderrick was a lawyer based first in Nancy, then in Paris. He wrote numerous articles in newspapers and defended cultural and historical ties between Luxembourg and France.<sup>2058</sup> After Diderrick’s death, the Ministry of National Education considered acquiring the collection. The letter is an isolated document. Subsequent decisions are not known.

#### *Organisation and coordination*

In early 1961, the municipal authorities of Luxembourg City created a Millennium Commission (or Coordinating Commission, *Commission de Coordination*). It included Henri Beck (secretary general of the city administration), Victor Engels (president of the CAL until his death in April 1962), Erpelding (teacher), Jean Kiefer (or Kieffer, president of the Association of Journalists), Jacques Krau (president of the Syndicat d’Initiative et de Tourisme), Henri Luja, Nicolas Margue, Joseph Meyers, Jemp (Jean-Pierre) Michels (succeeding Engels and Hamilius’ nephew), Marcel Noppeneij, Joseph Petit (government councillor), Edouard Probst (government councillor), Nicolas Schmit-Noesen (architect and president of the Ordre des Architectes), Richard Maria Staud (capitular and teacher at the Grand Séminaire), Alphonse Weicker (executive director of the Banque Générale du Luxembourg), Pierre Weyrich and Léon Zettinger (honorary archivist of the City of Luxembourg). Executive council members of Luxembourg City Marcel Fischbach and Paul Bohr, and the politician Georges Margue were also possibly members of the commission. Subsequent changes in the composition of the commission might have happened, but they are difficult to assess. Staud,

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<sup>2056</sup> Cosyn and Koltz, 21.

<sup>2057</sup> “Notre compatriote nourrissait l’ambition de composer une vaste histoire documentaire de notre pays dont il envisageait la publication lors du millénaire en 1963 de l’existence étatique de notre pays. Il avait, paraît-il, rassemblé à cet effet une vaste collection de chartes et documents qu’il importe peut-être de ne pas laisser se perdre.” (ANLux, AE-06843, Letter from the ambassador of Luxembourg in Paris to Joseph Bech, 02/05/1951).

<sup>2058</sup> Nicole Sahl, *Kleines ABC der Pseudonyme in Luxemburg* (Mersch: Centre national de littérature, 2018), 49.

for instance, joined after the commission had requested to invite a representative of the diocese.<sup>2059</sup> On 17 March 1961, the commission convened for its first meeting. It elected Nicolas Margue as president, Anders and Weicker as vice-presidents.<sup>2060</sup>

The creation of the commission elicited reactions in the newspapers. The *Luxemburger Wort* published a rather benevolent article. The commission, with its “important and commendable men of the spiritual and cultural life”<sup>2061</sup>, would guarantee that the Millennium becomes a worthy marker of Luxembourg’s history.<sup>2062</sup> The initials of the article’s author, M.F., could be an indication that it was Marcel Fischbach who wrote it, especially as he was a journalist at the *Wort*. In this case, the positive evaluation of the commission would not surprise. Some days earlier, in an article published on 7 April, the *Letzeburger Land* had taken a more critical and at times sarcastic stance. Maybe M.F.’s article was a reaction, but as he did not explicitly refer to the *Land* piece, it remains a hypothesis. The *Land* lamented the lack of monuments with an intrinsic aura (“*innere Strahlungskraft*”). The executive council was reproached about a lack of innovation, as it did not have any other idea than a Siegfried monument. It would have promoted a “corrupt glorification of the past, a show-off with soulless marble and bigoted festoons”, which was “the most unreflected and pathetic way to celebrate the Millennium of the City of Luxembourg”.<sup>2063</sup> According to the commentator, the preservation of the “old part of our town” should be the most important task of the commission. The “rocks and walls, towers and trees” would represent the “true monuments” of Luxembourg. As the city would suffocate in dust and fume of Diesel motors, the Millennium could serve as an opportunity to plant trees along the streets. From a cultural perspective, the capital’s offer would barely suffice for minimum standards. The average age of the commission members was sarcastically commented on: “Should this commission come up with the idea to calculate the total age of its

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<sup>2059</sup> VDL archives, LU 11-IV/4 :1670, Letter from the executive council of Luxembourg City to the Bishop of Luxembourg, 21/03/1961.

<sup>2060</sup> VDL archives, LU 11-IV/4 :1670, Report of the meeting of 17 March 1961 of the Commission de Coordination.

<sup>2061</sup> “Der Schöffenrat der Stadt Luxemburg hat vor einiger Zeit eine Koordinierungskommission unter ihren Auspizien gebildet, die sich aus führenden, verdienstvollen Männern des geistig-kulturellen Lebens der Hauptstadt und des Landes zusammensetzt.”

<sup>2062</sup> M.F., ‘Tausend und eine Dummheit’, *Luxemburger Wort*, April 1961.

<sup>2063</sup> Own translation. “Die käufliche Glorifizierung der Vergangenheit, der Protz mit seelenlosem Marmor und verlogenen Girlanden ist darum die gedankenloseste und armseligste Art, die Jahrtausendfeier der Stadt Luxemburg zu begehen.” (L.K., ‘Nach tausend Jahren’, *d’Letzeburger Land*, April 1961).

members, it would easily go back to the time of Siegfried the founder.”<sup>2064</sup> In a subsequent issue of the *Land*, a reader reacted to this article and requested more details on the composition of this commission. “Tell us who they are, and we tell you if 1963 will be a failure,” he announced. The reader regarded its creation by the executive city council with scepticism, as “in this case, only intellectuals have the opportunity to choose their collaborators”.<sup>2065</sup>

Indeed, the majority of the exclusively male members were born before 1900. Though the year of birth could not be identified for every member, it can be established with certainty that at least nine members were born in or before 1900; no one was born after the 1920s. Noppeney was the oldest member (born in 1877), and the youngest participant was probably Henri Beck (born in 1923). Hence, at the time the commission was created in 1961, the age varied between around 40 years and 84 years. All of them experienced the Second World War in some way or another. Some of them had already been implicated in the Centenary: Nicolas Margue, Victor Engels, Henri Luja, Joseph Meyers, Marcel Noppeney and possibly Edouard Probst.

Members of the Commission	Year of Birth
Henri Beck	1923
Paul Bohr	between 1915 and 1920?
Victor Engels	1892
J.P. Erpelding	1884
Marcel Fischbach	1914
Jean Kiefer	?
Lucien Koenig	1888
Jacques Krau	Around 1910?
Henri Luja	1899
Georges Margue	1918
Nicolas Margue	1888
Joseph Meyers	1900
Jemp Michels	1906
Marcel Noppeney	1877
Joseph Petit	1912
Edouard Probst	Around 1910?
Nicolas Schmit-Noesen	1899
Richard-Maria Staud	1891
Alphonse Weicker	1891
Pierre Weyrich	?
Léon Zettinger	Around 1900?

Fig. 79: List of members of the Commission and their years of birth. It does not account for possible changes over time. Some years could not be determined, others are estimates based on other biographical information.

mission consisted in submitting final suggestions for the Millennium programme to the

The Commission, however, was not the only body in the apparatus created to organise and implement the Millennium. Though it played a major role in 1961, it lost its relevance once ideas and proposals were drafted, whereas the working groups continued to meet until 1962 or early 1963. None of the consulted sources indicates that the Millennium Commission, as constituted in 1961, convened again after December 1961. In January 1962, the executive college of Luxembourg instituted a small executive committee, including Jérôme Anders, Henri Beck, Marcel Fischbach, Robert Ginsbach, Emile Hamilius, Georges Reuter, Gaston Thorn, Pierre Weyrich and Léon Zettinger. Its

<sup>2064</sup> Own translation. “Sollte diese Kommission auf die Idee verfallen, das Gesamalter ihrer Mitglieder auszurechnen, so würde sie ohne Schwierigkeiten bis ins Zeitalter Siegfrieds des Gründers zurückreichen.” (L.K.).

<sup>2065</sup> Eisen, ‘Le millénaire de la Ville de Luxembourg’, *d’Letzeburger Land*, April 1961.

executive college until April 1942.<sup>2066</sup> Considering the sources, it is difficult to separate this small executive committee from other names: “*commission restreinte de travail*”, “*groupe central de travail*”, and “*commission de travail*”. They are all mentioned in various documents, often with no possibility to identify their compositions. According to an undated organisational chart, the “*groupe central de travail*”, composed of Anders, Beck, Weyrich and Zettinger, was an intermediate body between the Millennium Commission and the working groups.<sup>2067</sup> Another organisational chart showed a different division. A “*groupe central de travail*” is not mentioned, but a “*comité exécutif municipal*”, the one created in January 1962.<sup>2068</sup> Even the listed working groups were not identical. Possibly identical to the restricted executive committee, the “*commission de travail*” submitted weekly reports written by Anders to the executive city council. The meeting notes show that this commission focused on the programme and met with various actors to discuss the organisation of events. Thus, it might have been the committee created in January 1962, especially as the weekly reports were produced from January onwards, and until April 1962.

The Millennium was not only a preoccupation of the municipal authorities, though. The government devised its own projects, independently from ideas developed by the committees. When the restricted executive committee convened on 15 January, it requested the creation of a government committee for better coordination,<sup>2069</sup> which did happen.<sup>2070</sup> Occasionally, the municipal actors needed clarifications from the government concerning some projects. They feared that the latter’s events for the inauguration of the Millennium Monument, for instance, would interfere with events organised by the city.<sup>2071</sup>

In March 1961, the executive council drew a provisional list of working groups and their compositions. They covered a vast range of subjects, such as urbanism, publications, performing arts or propaganda.<sup>2072</sup> The changes that occurred to the composition of the working

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<sup>2066</sup> VDL archives, LU 11 – IV/4:62, Excerpt of the executive council meeting of 4 January 1962, 05/01/1962.

<sup>2067</sup> VDL archives, LU 11 – IV/4:1670, *Organisation du Millénaire*, undated.

<sup>2068</sup> VDL archives, LU 11 – IV/4:62, *Organisation du Millénaire*, undated.

<sup>2069</sup> VDL archives, LU 11 – IV/4:62, Report of the restricted executive committee meeting of 15 January 1962.

<sup>2070</sup> Unfortunately, the date of creation of this committee is unknown, but according to organisational charts, it included a certain Friedrich, Joseph Petit and Edouard Probst. Some meeting reports hint at the presence of government representatives in some meetings.

<sup>2071</sup> VDL archives, LU 11 – IV/4:62, Report of the meeting of the two restricted working groups, 12/02/1962.

<sup>2072</sup> VDL archives, LU 11 – IV/4:1660, List of suggested working groups appended to a letter of the executive council of Luxembourg to the Commission de Coordination, 21/03/1961.

groups are difficult to assess, as the sources lack clarifications, with some exceptions.<sup>2073</sup> The executive council did not exclude the possibility of mergers between groups.

Overall, the number of participants in the organisation of the Millennium exceeded that of the Centenary by far. At least 200 actors were involved: state officials, representatives of civil society and associations, architects, teachers, artists, politicians, journalists, economic actors, clergymen, or employees of cultural institutions. Even when reducing this number to include only people who were regularly involved through committees and working groups, there were still at least a hundred individuals. The implication of such a large group inevitably entailed difficulties in coordination. Léon Zettinger, the secretary of the Millennium Commission, felt the need to personally exchange with various working groups. He deemed this even more important due to the “particularistic ambitions” of several people or groups to devise “their own little Millennium”.<sup>2074</sup> Zettinger further remarked in a letter to the municipal executive council that the meetings of the commission were too sporadic.<sup>2075</sup>

Personal vanities did not lack in the preparations, too. One example is Lucien Koenig. In early May 1961, the author and politician deplored the lack of Luxembourgish in the reflections of the commission. He inquired whether the “Luxembourgish national language” would be a mere appendix of German. He criticised the decision by the commission to nominate Erpelding for the supervision of the (re)publication of works by Luxembourgish authors. Implicitly, he questioned Erpelding’s competencies by highlighting that the professor had only published in German. “How should he know all those Luxembourgish poets?”, Koenig wondered. We can only guess what Erpelding thought of this critique. Koenig considered himself better qualified. Signing his letter with his traditional sobriquet “Siggy vu Lëtzebuerg”, he announced his resignation from the commission because “Luxembourgish was degraded to a small

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<sup>2073</sup> In December 1961, the Millennium Commission decided to create two working groups, one dedicated to “propaganda, another one focusing on advertising on posters (Cf. VDL archives, LU 11 – IV/4:62, Letter from Nicolas Margue, 02/01/1962; VDL archives, LU 11 – IV/4:62, Letter from Nicolas Margue, 27/12/1961).

<sup>2074</sup> Original text : “Pour maintenir quelque peu de cohésion et de coordination dans l’ensemble, j’ai donc été obligé de garder personnellement de façon continue le contact avec les divers groupes de travail. Je m’y suis cru obligé d’autant plus que plusieurs velléités particularistes ont été constatées en ce sens que plusieurs personnes ou groupes avaient l’intention de faire chacun pour soi un petit Millénaire à sa façon.” (VDL archives, LU 11 – IV/4:1670, Report by Léon Zettinger for the executive council of Luxembourg City, 24/11/1961).

<sup>2075</sup> “La Commission de Coordination est d’une utilité certaine et surtout au début elle a rendu de très grands services, mais ses réunions sont trop espacées et elle n’a pas suffisamment de souplesse.” (VDL archives, LU 11 – IV/4:1670, Report by Léon Zettinger to the executive council of Luxembourg City, 24/11/1961).

Cinderella” (*Äscheppiddelchen*).<sup>2076</sup> What exactly the commission discussed regarding Koenig’s letter is not recorded. In the meeting of 15 May, the members must have exchanged some thoughts. As the government reserved for itself the right to publish in Luxembourgish, the commission invited Koenig “to get in touch with the minister of fine arts who will certainly not fail to rely on the great competence of Mr Koenig”.<sup>2077</sup> In May 1962, another member of the main organising committee, Anders, announced his resignation for personal reasons (“*pour des raisons de convenance personnelle*”) and because the conditions in which the preparations took place “are susceptible to gravely compromise the success” of the Millennium.<sup>2078</sup> His resignation was written several months after his reflections in a letter to the executive council and related to tourism and the international events of the Millennium programme.<sup>2079</sup> Yet, Anders swiftly changed his mind. The executive council observed in its meeting of 11 May that he had revoked his decision.<sup>2080</sup>

Since the beginning, the Millennium had been devised as a celebration not only for the city, but for the whole country. Like their peers who were involved in the Centenary, the organisers of the Millennium aimed to implicate the cultural society and mobilise the population. The envisaged projects enabled the participation of associations, clubs, and federations. These could, additionally, approach the organisers and suggest their own ideas. Meetings took place with representatives of the cultural society to coordinate and prepare the Millennium programme,<sup>2081</sup> or to collect suggestions submitted by sports federations.<sup>2082</sup> The inclusion of representatives of important and influential associations, of RTL and of institutions should guarantee a large mobilisation. The youth was particularly endorsed for the celebration. Dedicated working groups reflected on ways to sensitize young people to the “idea of the

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<sup>2076</sup> VDL archives, LU 11 – IV/4:1660, Letter from Lucien Koenig to the secretary of the Commission de Coordination, 04/05/1961.

<sup>2077</sup> VDL archives, LU 11 – IV/4:1660, Report of the meeting of the Commission de Coordination of 15 May 1961.

<sup>2078</sup> VDL archives, LU 11 – IV/4:1672, Letter from Jérôme Anders to the executive council of Luxembourg City, 08/05/1962.

<sup>2079</sup> VDL archives, LU 11 – IV/4:1660, Letter from Jérôme Anders to the Mayor of Luxembourg City, 12/01/1962. This letter is discussed below in another context.

<sup>2080</sup> VDL archives, LU 11 – IV/4:1672, Meeting of the executive council of Luxembourg City of 11 May 1962.

<sup>2081</sup> As an example, in February 1962, Anders, Ginsbach, Zettinger and Weyrich met with the president and the vice-president of the Luxembourgish Football Federation (FLF) (VDL archives, LU 11 – IV/4:62, *Entrevue du 13 février 1962 avec MM. le Dr. Kongs, Président de la FLF et Albert Dicke, Vice-Président de la FLF*, 15/02/1962).

<sup>2082</sup> VDL archives, LU 11 – IV/4:62, *Réunion des représentants des Fédérations sportives, convoqués par le Commissaire Général aux Sports, M. René Van den Bulcke, en présence de délégués de la Ville*, 05/10/1961.

Millennium” and to implicate it through competitions, exhibitions or sport venues.<sup>2083</sup> This was realised through different kinds of activities, such as a football tournament between school teams of Luxembourg City,<sup>2084</sup> an exhibition of paintings by school children entitled *Notre belle Ville Millénaire (Our beautiful Millennial City)*, or a theatre festival.<sup>2085</sup>

Over the course of the preparations, the Millennium Commission had to clarify its own competencies and the general schedule. In a meeting of December 1961, it declared financial issues beyond its area of competence. The organisation of the Millennium was divided, according to the commission, in three phases: the draft of a programme with as many suggestions as possible (commission), the selection of suggestions (executive council), and the execution of the selected projects (executive council). The commission limited its own role to an advisory one.<sup>2086</sup>

Issues were encountered during the preparations. In its meeting of 21 December 1961, the Millennium Commission expressed its fears concerning the schedule while analysing the progress of the working groups. It insisted that the latter should accelerate their preparations.<sup>2087</sup> In fact, the commission was itself under pressure from the executive council. A couple of weeks earlier, the mayor Hamilius asked Margue to intervene. “Some groups and especially the one dedicated to fine arts and history,” Hamilius observed, “should undergo a more rigorous organisation and already have more concrete projects”.<sup>2088</sup> Thus, when Margue addressed a circular to the working groups in which he shared his concerns and requested to receive monthly reports<sup>2089</sup>, he probably reacted to pressure from above.

### *Projects and programme*

During the preparations for the Millennium, many ideas and projects were being discussed, discarded or accepted. Usually, the working groups made suggestions and reported to the commission, which in turn evaluated them and decided on what ideas to submit to the executive

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<sup>2083</sup> VDL archives, LU 11 – IV/4:1670, Report by Léon Zettinger for the executive council of Luxembourg City, 24/11/1961.

<sup>2084</sup> VDL archives, LU 11 – IV/4:62, *Entrevue du 13 février 1962 avec MM. le Dr. Kongs, Président de la FFL et Albert Dickes, Vice-Président de la FFL*, 15/02/1962.

<sup>2085</sup> VDL archives, LU 11 – IV/4:62, Meeting of the working commission with Nicolas Bosseler, secretary of the local school commission, on the participation of the youth in the Millennium festivities, 09/03/1962.

<sup>2086</sup> VDL archives, LU 11 – IV/4:1660, Report of a meeting of the Commission de Coordination of 21 December 1961.

<sup>2087</sup> VDL archives, LU 11 – IV/4:1660, Report of a meeting of the Commission de Coordination of 21 December 1961.

<sup>2088</sup> VDL archives, LU 11 – IV/4:1672, Letter from Emile Hamilius to Nicolas Margue, 11/12/1961.

<sup>2089</sup> VDL archives, LU 11 – IV/4:1672, Circular by Nicolas Margue to the presidents of the working groups of the Millennium Commission, 27/12/1961.

council. Since the start, however, the groups had disposed of a pool of ideas on which they could draw their inspirations. The commission received a list of ideas for the Millennium suggested by secondary education students and a list of ideas developed for the Centenary in 1939. The students suggested the construction of new cultural institutions (a new national library, a museum on the history of the capital, a theatre) and other infrastructures (avenues or buildings for social activities). Monuments, fountains and publications were also included.<sup>2090</sup> As some members were pioneers of the Centenary, the experiences of 1939 were taken into consideration. The debates on the organisation of a procession during the commission's meeting of 29 May 1961 was one such example. Anders and Meyers recalled the negative experiences in 1939 and the "difficulties to organise a somewhat worthy historical or popular procession in Luxembourg".<sup>2091</sup> Unfortunately, the report did not expand on the details of these difficulties and experiences. The commission decided to suggest Engels' idea of organising a procession (performed more than once) of the type of the one in Vevey (Switzerland) for the Fête des Vignerons.<sup>2092</sup>

An example of initiatives discussed since the beginning and eventually realised is the publication of books in French and German, reflecting the status of the nationalised *Zwischenraum*. The outcome was, for the French book, a *Livre du Millénaire* published by the SELF with texts by Henri Luja, Pierre Grégoire, Madeleine Frieden, Marcel Noppeney, Paul Palgen, and Liliane Thorn-Petit. The authors were either cultural "veterans" known from the interwar period or belonged to a newer generation of writers. The book was an anthology of short stories and articles by fifteen authors. Noppeney, coordinator of French publications during the preparations for the Millennium, informed the readers in his preface ("Avertissement") that the book was "neither a history book, nor a collection of tales"; invention and reality were both intermingled.<sup>2093</sup> Jean-Pierre Erpelding, the coordinator of German publications, compiled a cultural history of Luxembourg entitled *Luxemburg, tausend*

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<sup>2090</sup> VDL archives, LU 11 – IV/4:1660, *Millénaire 1963. Idées suggérées par des élèves d'un de nos établissements secondaires* appended to a letter from the executive council of Luxembourg to the Commission de Coordination, 21/03/1961.

<sup>2091</sup> "Après que MM. ANDERS et MEYERS eurent rappelé les mauvaises expériences faites en 1939, et exposé les difficultés qu'il y a pour monter à Luxembourg un Cortège historique ou folklorique au caractère quelque peu digne [...]."

<sup>2092</sup> VDL archives, LU 11 – IV/4 :1660, Excerpt of the meeting notes of 29 May 1961 of the Commission de Coordination, 01/06/1961. The Fête des Vignerons in Vevey takes place once every generation, for a maximum of five times per century. 1955 was the last time it took place before the Millennium.

<sup>2093</sup> Société des Ecrivains luxembourgeois de Langue Française, ed., *Le Livre du Millénaire: La Ville de Luxembourg de 963 à 1963* (Luxembourg: Imprimerie Bourg-Bourger, 1963).

*Jahre: kulturgeschichtliche Entwicklung der Stadt von 963-1963*. The book, commissioned by the executive council, addressed a broad public.<sup>2094</sup>

The books in French and German were already a promotion of national culture. More explicitly, the “Ministry of Arts and Sciences” considered publishing a series of books on Luxembourgish literature (in Luxembourgish and in French), on the history of arts, of theatre and of music in Luxembourg.<sup>2095</sup> Indeed, publications in Luxembourgish were the government’s prerogative.<sup>2096</sup> Grégoire’s department for arts and sciences instituted a commission for this purpose. Pierre Nimax, teacher at the Conservatoire in Luxembourg, was hired to write a history of music<sup>2097</sup>, while Joseph Hurt, a cleric and historian, was supposed to author a volume on theatre. In the end, neither Nimax nor Hurt (who died in March 1962) published the commissioned works.

The (official) programme of 1963 covered a vast range of athletic, cultural and social activities and events, around 80 in total.<sup>2098</sup> For theatrical and musical performances, the organisers implicitly distinguished between “high culture” (concerts in collaboration with RTL, the conservatoire of Luxembourg) and “popular culture”. Popular (or folklore) events were sometimes referred to as “*manifestations populaires*” or “*réjouissances publiques*”. They comprised concerts performed by local music societies and choirs, traditional events, or potential concerts by foreign ensembles. High culture and popular culture events were discussed in separate working groups. The final programme included a broad range of such events: popular festivals (for instance a beer festival), theatrical performances, concerts by international, national and local societies, or the Emaischen and the Schobermesse. When actors thought about inviting groups and ensembles from abroad, they mostly considered the

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<sup>2094</sup> Jean-Pierre Erpelding et al., *Luxemburg, tausend Jahre: kulturgeschichtliche Entwicklung der Stadt von 963-1963* (Luxemburg: Sankt-Paulus-Druckerei, 1963).

<sup>2095</sup> VDL archives, LU 11 – IV/4:1670, *Manifestations prévues par le Gouvernement dans le cadre des festivités du Millénaire*, appended to a letter from the State Ministry to the executive council of Luxembourg, 22/10/1962.

<sup>2096</sup> VDL archives, LU 11 – IV/4:1670, Report of a meeting of the Commission de Coordination of 15 May 1961.

<sup>2097</sup> According to existing sources, Nimax was confronted with issues concerning the accessibility of documents at the municipal archives, which lead to Pierre Grégoire’s involvement to solve the issue (Cf. VDL archives, LU 11 – IV/4:1672, Note from the secretary general of the Luxembourg City administration to the executive council, 08/11/1960; VDL archives, LU 11 – IV/4:1672, Letter from Pierre Nimax to Emile Hamilius, 05/01/1961; VDL archives, LU 11 – IV/4:1672, Letter from Pierre Grégoire to Emile Hamilius, 10/02/1961; VDL archives, LU 11 – IV/4:1672, Letter from Emile Hamilius to Pierre Grégoire, 27/02/1961).

<sup>2098</sup> Administration communale de la Ville de Luxembourg, ed., *Programme des manifestations du Millénaire 963-1963* (Luxemburg: V. Buck, 1963).

neighbouring countries, with a certain bias towards Belgium and France. Occasionally, they would also take Canada or the Netherlands into account, for instance.<sup>2099</sup>

The organisers of the Millennium were aware that the effects of the celebration could only be amplified through considerable propaganda and publicity. Since the very beginning, the actors of dedicated working groups insisted on the diffusion of brochures and programmes in several languages (English, French, German and Dutch); these would be distributed not only in Western European countries, but also in the US and in Canada.<sup>2100</sup> In fact, advertising and tourism were a nearly inseparable couple in the considerations. Jérôme Anders, for instance, addressed a letter to Emile Hamilius in January 1962 in which he deplored the lack of international events in the programmes drafted by the working groups, especially for “touristic flows from across the Atlantic”.<sup>2101</sup> Anders particularly thought of tourists from the United States and observed that intercontinental travel agencies should be persuaded to include Luxembourg for short trips in their European circuits. For Luxembourgers living in the US, the existence of a

tiny country with 300,000 inhabitants whose capital is celebrating its thousand years of existence [...] could constitute an attraction in itself [...]. For many Luxembourgers from overseas, such a travel would nearly equal a pilgrimage during which they would rediscover relatives and many childhood memories.<sup>2102</sup>

The professional background of Anders, an economist and councillor at the Ministry for Economy, explains why he reflected on the touristic aspect. He was not the only one, as the journalist Roger Krieps stressed the importance of the US in a meeting of the propaganda commission.<sup>2103</sup> Unfortunately, it is not known whether Anders wrote the letter at his own initiative or at the request of the Millennium Commission, whether his colleagues knew about

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<sup>2099</sup> As one example among many, see for instance: VDL archives, LU 11 – IV/4:62, Meeting report of the commission in charge of popular festivities, 13/10/1961.

<sup>2100</sup> VDL archives, LU 11 – IV/4:62, Meeting report of the propaganda commission, 29/09/1962.

<sup>2101</sup> VDL archives, LU 11 – IV/4:1660, Letter from Jérôme Anders to the mayor of Luxembourg City, 12/01/1962.

<sup>2102</sup> My translation. “D’autre part, nous avons l’impression que l’existence d’un minuscule pays de 300.000 habitants, dont la capitale a mille ans d’existence et qui fête ce millénaire, peut constituer une attraction en soi suffisante pour que l’on s’arrête, en cours de route, pour le visiter. Pour maints Luxembourgeois de là-bas, un tel voyage équivaudrait presque à un pèlerinage au cours duquel ils retrouveraient des parents et de multiples souvenirs d’enfance.” (VDL archives, LU 11 – IV/4:1660, Letter from Jérôme Anders to the mayor of Luxembourg City, 12/01/1962).

<sup>2103</sup> VDL, LU 11 – IV/4:62, Meeting report of the propaganda commission, 28/07/1962.

this and whether there exists a link between his letter and that of 16 January from the minister of economy and tourism to the executive council member Georges Reuter.<sup>2104</sup>

Some of the projects, such as a zoo (not realised), were argued with touristic development. Jemp Michels was the project's main proponent, though his views and enthusiasm were not shared by all his colleagues. A study was produced on the “*jardin zoologique*”, an “official camping-caravanning” and an “open-air museum” in the large forest (called Baumbusch) to the north of Luxembourg City<sup>2105</sup>. Though nowadays (as of 2020) advertised as a recreational area with several trails, the ambitious projects developed in the 1960s remained pipedreams. In the study, it was clear that the target groups were not only residents, but travellers from today's Greater Region (Lorraine, Trier, Belgium, Eifel) and other visitors during the tourist season. For the zoo, their number was evaluated at 150,000 people per year. Directors from zoos abroad (Antwerp, Bale, Cologne, Gelsenkirchen) were asked to evaluate the project. The other two projects, the camping site and the open-air museum, were less detailed. In fact, for the museum, the study merely observed that the programme and the commission were to be determined. In May 1961, the commission issued a favourable opinion and urged Michels to get in touch with the executive council.<sup>2106</sup>

Urban development and infrastructural projects figured among the most prevalent tropes of 1963. A related working group composed of engineers and architects reflected on existing infrastructures and future projects to reshape the city. These projects should not only benefit the Millennium Celebration. The preparations were embedded in a period in which the capital was changing its face to accommodate new demands: individual transport, European integration and economic development. The Millennium coincided with large infrastructural works, integrated into the official programme of the government for 1963: inauguration of the Athenaeum in September, finalisation of one of three spans of the Kirchberg Bridge around the end of September, inauguration of the Children's hospital in October, opening of the new municipal theatre in October.<sup>2107</sup> The committee for urban development reflected on how these

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<sup>2104</sup> In this letter, Elvinger enquired about the agenda of the Millennium programme, as several travel agencies had been contacting the ministry in this matter and in order to adapt their advertisement for 1963 (VDL archives, LU 11 – IV/4:1672, Letter from Paul Elvinger to Georges Reuter, 16/01/1962).

<sup>2105</sup> VDL archives, LU 11 – IV/4:1670, *Jardin zoologique de Luxembourg. Camping-Caravaning officiel de la Ville de Luxembourg. Musée de Plein-Air*, no author, undated.

<sup>2106</sup> VDL archives, LU 11 – IV/4:1670, Report of a meeting of the Commission de Coordination of 15 May 1961.

<sup>2107</sup> VDL archives, LU 11 – IV/4:1670, *Manifestations prévues par le Gouvernement dans le cadre des festivités du Millénaire*, appended to a letter from the State Ministry to the executive council of Luxembourg, 22/10/1962.

works could be used for the purposes of the Millennium. In addition, it suggested new projects: a car park on the Glacis<sup>2108</sup>, a new Millennium Avenue, the renovation of the public park, an esplanade between the Passerelle and the Adolphe Bridge, fountains, monuments, or the construction of a congress hall. The latter was considered by the members of the committee as the most important project to compensate the lack of cultural infrastructures in Luxembourg.<sup>2109</sup> Some of these suggestions (esplanade, car park, avenue, and congress hall) were approved by the commission.<sup>2110</sup>

The Millennium Celebration officially started on 13 April 1963. Inhabitants were requested to decorate their houses with flags.<sup>2111</sup> The final programme included official receptions, an inauguration of the Millennium monument, concerts by music societies and by the RTL orchestra, a “patriotic concert” on the Place d’Armes (22 June), sport competitions and championships, theatre performances, school events, fireworks, religious celebrations (Te Deum on 6 April) and various other events (international chess competition, events by the *Action catholique*). This list is by far not exhaustive, but it provides a glimpse at the broad range of activities and the mobilisation of the society. It shows that it was both a celebration of national importance and an aggrandizement of the nation.<sup>2112</sup>

Unsurprisingly, history was an important aspect of the Millennium. In 1939, the master narrative was disseminated through the historical procession. In 1963, a vast exhibition on the history of Luxembourg was organised in the Victor Hugo Hall in Limpertsberg. The idea had been suggested by Joseph Meyers in the early stage of the preparations and was accepted by the executive city council in its meeting of 5 June 1961.<sup>2113</sup> A specific working group was instituted with Koltz, Lentz, Paul Margue, Meyers, Georges Schmitt, Paul Weber and a certain “Miss Welter” (secretary). However, the sources elicit some questions related to the development of the project between 1961 and 1963. While Meyers and his collaborators were reflecting on the exhibition, the Ordre des Architectes submitted the project of an architectural and urbanistic exhibition. In September 1961, the architect Robert Lentz presented the first

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<sup>2108</sup> When the city was fortified, the glacis to the north was a large unconstructed plain in front of the city walls and the most vulnerable point of the city.

<sup>2109</sup> VDL archives, LU 11 – IV/4:1670, Report of the working group “Urbanisme et constructions”, 16/05/1961; VDL archives, LU 11 – IV/4:1670, Report of the working group “Urbanisme et constructions”, 22/05/1961.

<sup>2110</sup> VDL archives, LU 11 – IV/4:1670, Report by Léon Zettinger to the executive council of Luxembourg City, 24/11/1961.

<sup>2111</sup> VDL archives, LU 11 – IV/4:1672, Press release of the City of Luxembourg, 11/04/1963.

<sup>2112</sup> VDL archives, LU 11 – IV/4:1672, List of events for the Millennium Celebration, 05/09/1962.

<sup>2113</sup> VDL archives, LU 11 - IV/4:1660, Excerpt of the minutes of the executive council meeting of 5 June 1961, 07/06/1961.

draft programme of the “salon d’architecture et d’urbanisme”, focusing on the architectural history and the urban development of Luxembourg City.<sup>2114</sup>

From early 1962 onwards, the “Commission de Travail” (the restricted working group) regularly strived the question of the architectural exhibition, or at least included it in the proceedings as a placeholder. Several meetings took place to discuss the event. In January, the working group vaunted the “Exposition du Millénaire” as the “centrepiece” of the events examined until then.<sup>2115</sup> In a special meeting with Meyers on 24 January, the custodian was asked to collaborate with Lentz and Reuter. Meyers agreed, though he reserved for himself the historical part of the exhibition, including the choice of documents to exhibit, and let the architects tend to the “material organisation”.<sup>2116</sup> In March, the working group discussed with representatives of the government the potential overlap between the exhibition organised by the Ordre des Architectes and the exhibition projected by the government in the State Museums and in the State Archives. In the opinion of the government delegates, the architects’ project seemed “irrational and costly”, as it overlapped with the government’s exhibition. The working group, however, concluded that this was not the case. The exhibition by the Ordre des Architectes would “evoke, in an appealing and visual fashion” the main phases of the city’s evolution, particularly from an architectural and urbanistic perspective.<sup>2117</sup> When Anders, Beck, Lentz, Meyers and Zettinger met in May, Meyers presented his vision for the exhibition, which would expose the capital’s history through different perspectives (structures, social aspect, political climate, constructions, housing, etc.). Though Lentz, the representative for the Ordre des Architectes, declared that Meyers’ idea would go further than the architects’ plan, he agreed to it. The group decided to call the event “Exhibition of the Millennium”, organised by the city in collaboration with the government.<sup>2118</sup> The same men, joined by Koltz, would meet two months later to discuss further details. Lentz presented the plan for several sections. Meyers would receive a copy and suggest modifications where necessary.<sup>2119</sup> In September, administrative and logistical aspects were discussed.<sup>2120</sup> In the meantime, on 20 June 1963, the

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<sup>2114</sup> VDL archives, LU 11 – IV/4:62, *Programme provisoire du salon d’architecture et d’urbanisme 1963* by Robert Lent, 15/09/1961.

<sup>2115</sup> VDL archives, LU 11 – IV/4:62, Meeting report of the restricted working group, 18/01/1962.

<sup>2116</sup> VDL archives, LU 11 – IV/4:62, Meeting of the working group with Joseph Meyers, 24/01/1962.

<sup>2117</sup> VDL archives, LU 11 – IV/4:62, Commission de Travail: Rapport hebdomadaire pour la semaine du 20 au 26 mars 1962 by Jérôme Anders, 26/03/1962.

<sup>2118</sup> VDL archives, LU 11 – IV/4:62, Meeting between Jérôme Anders, Henry Beck, Robert Lentz, Joseph Meyers and Léon Zettinger, 23/05/1962.

<sup>2119</sup> VDL archives, LU 11 – IV/4:62, *Exposition du Millénaire: Réunion du 23 juillet 1962*.

<sup>2120</sup> VDL archives, LU 11 – IV/4:62, Meeting of the working commission with Henri Beck and J.P. Koltz, 27/09/1962.

exhibition *Luxembourg, histoire d'une Ville Millénaire*, the “central event” of the Millennium, was unveiled in a press conference. According to the information communicated during the press conference, the exhibition would target a broad public and did not pursue scientific ambitions.<sup>2121</sup> However, the initial suggestion of the commission for several smaller exhibitions organised by the state cultural institutions instead of a single big one was not consistently implemented.<sup>2122</sup>

The catalogue enables a partial reconstruction of the narratives, the choice of objects, and the presentation. For the enfranchisement of the city, a sound and light spectacle spooled every 20 minutes. The text, written by Paul Margue, was performed by the actor and founder of the Kasemattentheater in Luxembourg Tun Deutsch. The RTL orchestra recorded the musical composition.<sup>2123</sup> The catalogue listed the exhibited objects in the different rooms, enriched with contributions by Jean-Pierre Koltz, Paul Margue, Joseph Meyers, and Paul Weber. Nicolas Margue penned the introduction to the book. The exhibition should convey how the city was shaped over a thousand years and retrace the stages of its evolution from a feudal castle to the capital of an independent state. Reflecting the context of the European integration process, a room was dedicated to the “European vocation” of Luxembourg and to possible future developments.<sup>2124</sup> Despite the existence of a room on the “pre-history”, the title of the room on the year 963, “*L'origine de la ville et du pays de Luxembourg*”, implied that the “true” history only started then.<sup>2125</sup> The participation of Luxembourg in the integration process, or the impact of this process on the city, was repeatedly referred to. The European role and history of Luxembourg as a place where cultures had met and mingled was highlighted. “The history of Europe is inscribed in an exceptionally condensed fashion in the rocks and walls of Luxembourg”<sup>2126</sup>, as the first sentence of the section “Luxembourg, the millennial city” went.

In addition to the “Millennial City” trope, another one was conveyed through the exhibition of 1963, i.e. the “foreign dominations”, but in a less accentuated version. The “Austrian domination” and the “Burgundian domination” were both mentioned, but otherwise no

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<sup>2121</sup> VDL archives, LU 01.2.2 :28, Press conference of 20 June 1963 on the exhibition *Luxembourg, histoire d'une Ville Millénaire*.

<sup>2122</sup> VDL archives, LU 11 – IV/4:1660, Excerpt of the meeting notes of 29 May 1961 of the Commission de Coordination, 02/06/1961.

<sup>2123</sup> Nicolas Margue, *Luxembourg: Histoire d'une ville millénaire* (Luxembourg: Imprimerie de la Cour Joseph Beffort, 1963), 85.

<sup>2124</sup> Margue, *Luxembourg: Histoire d'une ville millénaire*.

<sup>2125</sup> Margue, 25.

<sup>2126</sup> “In den Felsen und Mauern Luxemburgs steht die Geschichte Europas in seltener Konzentration eingeschrieben.” (Margue, 45).

narrative clearly juxtaposed the “autonomy” of the Middle Ages with the early modern times. This might have stemmed from the focus of the exhibition on local history, urban evolution and demography, on the origins of events and festivities, on the economic development, and on the city’s implication in wars. The occupation period was barely strived. Many decades later, Rosch Krieps retained a positive memory of the exhibition:

The most unobstructed, convincing and successful event was the large historical exhibition in the halls of Limpertsberg. So many rich, highly interesting contributions to the vast subject *Luxembourg – Histoire d'une Ville millénaire* were shown. They were so neatly ordered, labelled and explained in a catalogue that their creators, historians, pedagogues, architects and experts of innumerable fields, swore on the uniqueness and premiere of their accomplished work to not let it be dismembered after the millennium of the city. They earned only praise and little criticism for this epochal documentary oeuvre.<sup>2127</sup>

Of course, the Millennium included other events that were not simply overshadowed by the exhibition. Many of these emanated from external suggestions. Some were considered positively by the Millennium Commission, others with reservation or rejection. Usually, the events for 1963 were to have a specific or unique character and depended on the actor proposing it. A request by Circus Krone to inscribe its spectacle in the official programme was declined by the commission.<sup>2128</sup> The decisions or motivations were not necessarily noted in the meeting reports. The plan of the bishopric to organise an International Congress of Christ the King was enthusiastically approved by the commission as it would “fit perfectly within the framework of the ceremonies to consider during the Millennium”.<sup>2129</sup> An international congress of the Resistant's Union for a United Europe, hosted by the UNION, the Luxembourgish federation of resistance movements, was also an official event of the Millennium.<sup>2130</sup> The first case allowed a major actor in Luxembourg's society – the Catholic Church – to be represented in the programme, the second combined the resistance trope with the Europe theme.

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<sup>2127</sup> Own translation. “Am reibungslosesten, überzeugendsten und erfolgsreichsten gestaltete sich die geschichtliche Großausstellung in den Limpertsberger Messehallen. Dort wurden derart viele und vielseitige, hochinteressante Beiträge zum umfassenden Thema Luxembourg - Histoire d'une Ville millénaire beigebracht und sie wurden derart übersichtlich geordnet, beschriftet und in einem Katalog erklärt, dass sich ihre Gestalter, Historiker, Pädagogen, Architekten und Fachleute ungezählter Gebiete angesichts der Erst- und Einmaligkeit ihres fertigen Gesamtwerks das Versprechen gaben, die Sammlung dürfe nach dem 1000. Stadtjubiläum nie wieder auseinander gerissen werden. Nur Lob und kaum Kritiken heimsten sie für dieses epochale Dokumentarwerk ein.” (Krieps, *Kultur im Kleinstaat 1879-1989*, 184).

<sup>2128</sup> VDL archives, LU 11 – IV/4:1660, Report of a meeting of the Commission de Coordination of 21 December 1961.

<sup>2129</sup> VDL archives, LU 11 – IV/4:1670, Report of a meeting of the Commission de Coordination of 15 May 1961.

<sup>2130</sup> VDL archives, LU 11 – IV/4:1672, Letter from Emile Hamilius to the UNION, 05/12/1962.

The CAL organised a national and international art exhibition in October 1963 as part of the Millennium Celebration. This exhibition included an official German and Belgian participation through the support of the respective embassies, the German Art Council (Deutscher Kunstrat) and the participation of the cities of Arlon and Trier. The French presence could not be officialised, as the French embassy in Luxembourg was not willing to contribute financially. However, the city of Metz participated. According to the CAL, the exhibition would encompass around 1,200 works. In order to connect with the Millennium, a section entitled “Le Visage de la Ville de Luxembourg” was dedicated to paintings depicting Luxembourg City. The interest in including the neighbouring country reveals the importance to Luxembourg of the French and German cultures. In July 1963, the CAL still did not want to give up on convincing the French diplomatic representation.<sup>2131</sup> The city council of Luxembourg contributed financially with an amount of LUF 397,800.<sup>2132</sup>

As in 1939, the government planned to erect a monument, which should be completed by June 1963. Like the one in 1939, it was not constructed. The preparations for the monument dated back to early 1962 at least. Initially, a steel spike with a height of 50 meters was planned, but then discarded.<sup>2133</sup> A jury was instituted to choose the winner of a competition for the concept.<sup>2134</sup> As a result of the first round at the beginning of 1962, the jury deemed none of the submissions adequate. A new competition was launched, ending in October 1962.<sup>2135</sup> This time, the jury did not award the first prize, but two projects became second (Paul Kayser, and Lucien Wercollier and Guy Frings), and one project was awarded the third prize (Albert Hames and Pierre Reuter). The final decision lay in the hands of the government.

In the end, an unexpected discovery thwarted the project. Around March and early April 1963, during the foundation works for the monument, remnants of the old castle on the Bock promontory were discovered. Despite this discovery and criticisms concerning the monument, the government was initially determined to construct it anyway.<sup>2136</sup> However, the works were

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<sup>2131</sup> VDL archives, LU 11 – IV/4:1660, Letter from the CAL to the executive council of Luxembourg City, 29/07/1963.

<sup>2132</sup> VDL archives, LU 11 – IV/4:1660, Letter from the executive council of Luxembourg City to Jemp Michels (president of the CAL), 03/04/1963.

<sup>2133</sup> VDL archives, LU 11 – IV/4:67, ‘Monument du Millénaire’, in *Luxemburger Wort*, 17/10/1962. At the time of writing, I could not clearly identify why it was discarded, nor by whom it was designed or when it appeared for the first time.

<sup>2134</sup> ‘Monument du Millénaire’, *Luxemburger Wort*, October 1962.

<sup>2135</sup> ‘Avis: Concours pour le Monument commémoratif du Millénaire’, *d’Letzeburger Land*, February 1962.

<sup>2136</sup> ‘Officiel: le monument du Millénaire se dressera sur le rocher du BOUCQ où l’on vient de faire d’intéressantes découvertes’, *Républicain Lorrain*, April 1963, D-00109, MNHA archives.

delayed as the discovery elicited excavation works with the implication of the State Museums.<sup>2137</sup> The government changed its mind and the plans for the monument were abandoned.

### *Media and propaganda*

As in 1939, media and propaganda were playing a crucial role in disseminating and amplifying the messages of the Millennium Celebration. Media and propaganda additionally carried a major role that has never been explicitly raised: they served to promote and support, indirectly, the cultural society by relying on them for creating content through commissioned works or competitions. This is already true for some of the initiatives and projects discussed above, such as the publications.

Since the beginning, the Millennium had been mobilising all kinds of media for amplification and dissemination: from the press (endorsed through its participation in a dedicated working group) over the use of RTL and its orchestra and special programmes dedicated to the Millennium, to the production of a movie commissioned by the City of Luxembourg. For the latter, negotiations between the Luxembourgish filmmaker Philippe Schneider and the administration were not initiated before early 1963. In March, following a meeting with Marcel Fischbach (executive college), Schneider outlined a general overview of the movie's content and themes:

In the potential movie on the millennium capital, one will see among other things the evolution of the industry etc., the arrival of the Grand Duchess in coach, received by the mayor at the time, Mister Diederich; Churchill and King Baudouin at the town hall; Pierre Krier and Mister Dupong going to the town hall; concert in the festival hall in presence of the Grand-Ducal Court; speech by Mister Dupong in the festival hall of the city; military cemeteries; aerial views of the city; the social evolution, the fate of a blind person in 1900 and 1963 with the Quirinus Chapel; the market (Knuedler), the most popular Catholic celebration, the Octave 1928 and 1963; the popular labour festival, 1 May 1960; the biggest festival of the country, the Schobermesse.<sup>2138</sup>

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<sup>2137</sup> ‘Dans 8 Jours, Le Gouvernement Devra Décider Si Le Monument Du Millénaire Sera Construit’, *Meuse*, April 1963, D-00109, MNHA archives.

<sup>2138</sup> Own translation. “Dans le film evt. sur la capitale millénaire, on verra entre-autre l'évolution de l'industrie etc, l'entrée de la Grande-Duchesse en diligence, reçue par le bourgmestre de l'époque, Monsieur Diederich ; Churchill et le roi Baudouin à l'hôtel de ville ; Pierre Krier et Monsieur Dupong se rendant à l'hôtel de ville ; concert dans la salle des fêtes en présence de la cour grand-ducale ; discours de Monsieur Dupong dans la salle des fêtes de la ville ; les cimetières militaires ; prises de vues aériennes de la ville ; l'évolution sociale, le sort d'un aveugle en 1900 et 1963 avec la chapelle du Quirinus ; le marché (Knuedler) ; la plus grande fête populaire catholique, l'Octave 1928 et 1963 ; la fête populaire du travailleur, le premier mai 1960 ; la plus grande fête du pays, la Schobermesse.” (VDL archives, LU 11 – IV/4: 1683, Letter from Philippe Schneider to the Luxembourg City administration, 05/03/1963).

The movie was to be composed of recordings of previous decades depicting themes and events. In its final version, *Luxembourg, ville millénaire 963-1963* did not capture the Millennium Celebration itself. In fact, Schneider relied on shots from his own collection and from recent movies he made, and on contemporary shots.<sup>2139</sup> It was composed of sequences showing past events and popular traditions, some of which Schneider had already evoked in his first outline, such as the Schobermesse or the Octave (the traditional procession to honour the patron saint of Luxembourg). For a city that boasted itself with a history of a thousand years, this history was very condensed in the movie. For the centuries between the “founding” of Luxembourg in 963 and the time around 1900, the movie dedicated less than half a minute out of a total runtime of nearly 33 minutes. This had, of course, archival and practical reasons: before 1900, there was no movie footage of Luxembourg City to use. Generally, *Luxembourg Millénaire* was composed of somewhat romanticised images of the capital, retraced its development in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, and evoked its traditions and main historical events.

The content of the movie blurs the line between a promotional work and a documentary. While retracing the capital’s evolution in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, including both world wars and the Centenary of 1939, the movie promoted the city’s perceived beauty, and the combination of traditions (popular festivities) and modernity (infrastructures). “Undoubtedly, the Luxembourgers have not lost their taste for popular festivities,” the narrator states while images of the Emaischen market are shown. This sequence is followed by shots of the Findel airport while the voice-over is highlighting Luxembourg’s adaptation to its new vocation as an ever-busier crossroad. Of course, Luxembourg’s place in Europe is also addressed. The capital is described as the “crossroad where the aspiration of the Europe in gestation is fostered”. While images of the American and the German military cemeteries are filling the screen, the voice-over compresses Luxembourg’s history by describing the evolution from a “battlefield where nations have been violently confronting each other for centuries” to its will of becoming a “crossroad of a united Europe”. The trope of “crossroad” (“carrefour”) recurs in the movie. Another trope concerns the grand-ducal dynasty and the visits of foreign royalties, especially of the king of the Belgians (twice), and other dignitaries (Winston Churchill, Eleanor Roosevelt). The Grand-Ducal Court occupies an important place in the movie, either through marriages or by highlighting its participation in festivities. A last but equally important trope concerns the idea of the nation, sometimes combined with religion. The Cathedral is described

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<sup>2139</sup> Linden, ‘Lux et Vox (...1921-1979...): Sons et Lumières de la représentation cinématographique du Luxembourg’, 24.

as the “national sanctuary”; the Octave procession is depicted as the “precis of the whole nation” (“*le condensé de toute la nation*”). The narration implies a unity of this nation through other statements. In the sequence dedicated to Labour Day, the celebration is interpreted as a “celebration for all”, because “everyone is at their level a worker” (“*chacun est à son échelon un travailleur*”). The final sequence is dedicated to the Schobermesse (appearing for a second time), highlighting the “joy of life”, as if sufferings, wars and oppression have become things of the past. “Luxembourg at the European moment can consider with some pride the conclusion of its thousand-year history,”<sup>2140</sup> the narrator says at the end of the movie.<sup>2141</sup>

An analysis of the Millennium cannot exclude questions of the kind of culture promoted through the events and projects. Besides the implicit distinction between high and popular culture, the status of Luxembourg as an intermediate space came to the fore. In this context, the publications in German and French or the contact with authorities of neighbouring countries (such as for the art exhibition by the CAL) are cases in point. It was insisted, for instance, that Erpelding’s publication had to be a bilingual edition.<sup>2142</sup> Koenig’s complaint about the unfavourable treatment of the Luxembourgish language could be considered from the perspective of cultural and linguistic tensions. Luxembourgish was still not considered as a language, though this did not entail its exclusion, as Luxembourgish theatre pieces were performed during the celebration. Overall, the elite’s geographical horizon was limited to Belgium, France and Germany (except in the context of tourism). This was partly favoured by the careers of implicated actors and their personal preferences, and partly the result of pragmatic reasons, for instance when inviting guests, sport teams or musicians. Despite a certain yet vaguely perceivable bias towards French culture throughout the organisation, the ambiguities of the immediate post-war period towards German culture were non-existent or not expressly stated. The actors did not openly view Germany with a sceptical mindset, though it remains difficult to analyse. In any case, when it came to tourism, every propaganda and every tourist was welcome, including transatlantic travellers.

How national(ist) was the Millennium Celebration? In comparison, the Centenary happened in a clearly nationalist context and the authorities and organisers were wary of the slightest implication of foreigners, at times even hostile. Certainly, some actors were implicated in both

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<sup>2140</sup> Own translation. “Luxembourg à l’heure européenne peut considérer avec quelque fierté le bilan de ses mille ans d’histoire.”

<sup>2141</sup> For the movie: CNA, AV000341, *Luxembourg, ville millénaire 963-1963*, Philippe Schneider, 1963.

<sup>2142</sup> VDL archives, LU 11 – IV/4:62, *Entrevue entre M. le professeur Erpelding et MM. Beck, Anders et Zettinger*, 05/02/1962.

celebrations and similar ideas were discussed in 1939 and 1963. However, the context was different in 1963. Luxembourg was not exposed to annexationist dangers. The Federal Republic of Germany had become an economic partner, well integrated into the European Communities. The European idea was undoubtedly one of the most salient differences between the Centenary and the Millennium. The working groups thought about a tournament between the six national teams of the EC members.<sup>2143</sup> Occurring parallel to a meeting of the Union of the Capitals of the EC, a “Day of the Capitals of the European Communities” was celebrated on 7 July, which should consolidate Luxembourg’s position at the geographical and symbolic centre of the EC.<sup>2144</sup> Speeches, publications and other media (such as Schneider’s movie) repeatedly insisted on Luxembourg’s role in the European integration process and the way this development shaped the capital’s urban evolution. Petit, in his contribution to the official programme, clearly highlighted the European dimension:

The Millennium certainly remains the celebration of the national community. But while diving into their own past, the Luxembourgers won’t forget their international ideal, the pursuit of which is one of the most important elements of the country’s history.<sup>2145</sup>

However, the mere presence of the European trope does not exclude the insistence on national specificities, traditions or identities. Nation and Europe were both not mutually exclusive. The Millennium offered a stage to national culture and identity, though strongly defined by the organising elite. The capital served as a background on which this perception of cultural understanding was lavishly laid out. In fact, the capital became itself a condensed representation of what national culture and identity meant, from local music societies with origins in the 19<sup>th</sup> century to the organisation of annual, traditional events of national importance (Emaischen, Octave, Schobermesse). The official programme of the Millennium repeatedly insisted on the national importance and applied expressions linking it to the national idea. Joseph Petit exclaimed that the Millennium “is going to be the celebration of a city. Yes, but it is going to be the celebration of a country, too.”<sup>2146</sup> Petit’s contribution exposed national festivities, or elevated the meaning of the planned Millennium Monument to national

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<sup>2143</sup> VDL archives, LU 11 – IV/4:62, *Entrevue du 13 février 1962 avec MM. le Dr. Kongs, Président de la FLF et Albert Dickes, Vice-Président de la FLF*, 15/02/1962.

<sup>2144</sup> VDL archives, LU 11 – IV/4:1674, *Tage der Hauptstädte der Europäischen Gemeinschaften*, undated.

<sup>2145</sup> Own translation. “Le Millénaire reste certes la fête de la communauté nationale. Mais tout en se plongeant dans leur propre passé, les Luxembourgeois n’oublieront pas leur idéal international, dont la poursuite est un des éléments les plus importants de l’histoire du pays.” (Petit, ‘Luxembourg fête le millième anniversaire de sa fondation’, 19).

<sup>2146</sup> Petit, 7.

importance, as a “national stronghold” (“un haut lieu national”), a “centre of remembrance, of patriotic introspection”.<sup>2147</sup> Sure enough, nationalism and the uncritical celebration of the national past were both not shared by everyone, as the article by one astute commentator illustrates, criticising the search for a Luxembourgish essence in the deepest depth of history.<sup>2148</sup> On the other hand, this commentator was a rather uncritical adherent to Luxembourg’s role in Europe.

The national was not only directed inwards or diachronic, but synchronic and centrifugal. Had the organisers of the Centenary already thought of the “Luxembourgish colonies” without clear projects, the actors involved in the Millennium were actively engaged in including the Luxembourgish diaspora, either through touristic propaganda or through specific events. This concern was repeatedly debated in the meetings. To reduce costs, the working commission suggested combining the “Journée des Luxembourgeois à l’étranger” with the “Journée consacrée aux villes jumelées et aux villes voisines”.<sup>2149</sup> In the end, this was not done. The official programme fixed the “Day of Luxembourgers Abroad” for 30 August. A reception was planned at the town hall with delegates of associations of Luxembourgers living abroad. However, associations cancelled or were unable to participate. This is illustrated by a series of letters between Emile Hamilius and Luxembourgers living outside of Luxembourg (Belgium, France, Germany and South Africa).<sup>2150</sup> Yet, beyond the inclusion of the Luxembourgish “diaspora”, the Millennium fulfilled a diachronic function with the official “Day of Mayors of the Cities and Centres of the Old Duchy” (“Journée des Maires des Villes et Centres de l’ancien Duché”) on 5 May. This event should glorify Luxembourg’s past, at a time when it was geographically larger. In the official programme, Petit was very clear about this use: “The mayors of these cities are going to be in Luxembourg, and their presence will symbolically and morally resurrect the Duchy of Luxembourg in its largest extension for twenty-four hours.”<sup>2151</sup> The fact that contemporary Luxembourg was quite different from the Duchy of Luxembourg did not matter in the construction of a historical continuity.

Beyond the events and the related discourse, the Millennium additionally served pragmatic needs. As a matter of fact, it was a whole system not only organised by the elite, but also

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<sup>2147</sup> Petit, 19.

<sup>2148</sup> Roger Claude, ‘Sentiment national et millénaire’, *d’Letzeburger Land*, August 1963.

<sup>2149</sup> VDL archives, LU 11 – IV/4:62, *Commission de travail. Rapport hebdomadaire pour la semaine du 9 au 15.4.62* by Jérôme Anders, 16/04/1962.

<sup>2150</sup> For the documents, see: VDL archives, LU 11 – IV/4:1683.

<sup>2151</sup> Own translation. “Les maires de ces cités viendront donc à Luxembourg, et leur présence fera renaître symboliquement et moralement pendant vingt-quatre heures le Duché de Luxembourg dans ses plus grandes limites.” (Petit, ‘Luxembourg fête le millième anniversaire de sa fondation’, 15).

destined to support the elite. Exhibitions, publications and competitions for emblems, posters or monuments were creating a dispositif of patronage. Painters, sculptors, writers and architects had a possibility to expose their skills and their creation. Koenig might have understood this, which partly motivated his reaction to the alleged exclusion of Luxembourgish. He might have feared to miss a chance in adding his name to the beneficiaries. The elite was benefactor and beneficiary alike. For Erpelding's German publication, Frantz Kinnen contributed with drawings.<sup>2152</sup> Noppeney's volume was the product of many collaborators and contributors of the SELF. Frantz Kinnen was again asked to contribute with drawings.<sup>2153</sup> The competition for the best millennium monument was another stage on which architects and sculptors could rival with the chance to be consecrated.<sup>2154</sup> The dispositif of support went so far that the organisers wanted to launch a design competition for "millennium cups" to be awarded in athletic tournaments.<sup>2155</sup>

The competition for the official emblem of the Millennium, for which a special working group was instituted, is another case study in this respect. As a first round at the end of 1961 did not produce satisfying results concerning originality and form, the jury declined to award any prize.<sup>2156</sup> Yet, it decided to acquire three projects. It was itself composed of politicians, artists, sculptors and other professionals. A second competition was launched shortly thereafter, which turned out to be more fruitful. Nevertheless, the jury refused to award a first prize. The artist Raymond Mehlen received the second prize (his project became the official emblem), and Paul-Marie Schlechter became third. The jury additionally decided to acquire several further projects.<sup>2157</sup> The unanimous decision of the jury was not always received with unrestricted acceptance. In the *Letzeburger Land* of 12 October 1962, a journalist criticised the choice of seven emblems, including those acquired by the city but not award-winning. The author evaluated the presence of two young artists among the "winners" positively, but blamed

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<sup>2152</sup> VDL archives, LU 11 – IV/4:62, *Note à l'attention de Messieurs les Echevins, relative à la publication en langue allemande de M. Erpelding*, 13/03/1962.

<sup>2153</sup> VDL archives, LU 11 – IV/4:62, *Note à l'attention de Messieurs les Echevins concernant la publication en langue française de M. Noppeney*, 13/03/1962.

<sup>2154</sup> The jury of the Millennium Monument unanimously awarded the second prize ex aequo to Pauly Kayser, and to Lucien Wercoller and Guy Frings. None of the 12 submitted projects received the first prize (VDL archives, LU 11 – IV/4:67, "Monument du Millénaire", in: *Tageblatt* [16/10/1962]).

<sup>2155</sup> VDL archives, LU 11 – IV/4:62, *Comité restreint de travail. Entrevue de MM. Anders, Weyrich et Zettinger avec M. l'Echevin Paul Bohr, délégué par le Collège Echevinal pour s'occuper des questions "Sports" dans le cadre du Millénaire*, 19/01/1962.

<sup>2156</sup> VDL archives, LU 11 – IV/4:62, 'Ville de Luxembourg: Concours "Emblème du Millénaire"', in *Tageblatt*, 15/12/1961.

<sup>2157</sup> VDL archives, LU 11 – IV/4:67, Meeting of the jury "Emblème du Millénaire" of 13 February 1962, report by Georges Reuter.

the Luxembourgish *Kleingeist*, which would want to “make everyone earn something and cannot clearly and unequivocally choose one symbol.”<sup>2158</sup>

**Ville de Luxembourg - Emblèmes du Millénaire**

A la fin de l'année 1961 et au début de l'année 1962 la Ville de Luxembourg avait organisé deux concours portant création d'un emblème du millénaire. En février 1962 les résultats de ces deux concours avaient été publiés par la presse. Par l'attribution de différents prix et par l'acquisition de certains projets la Ville s'est réservé le droit de disposer des projets qu'elle a primés ou acquis.

Le Collège Echevinal a donc décidé que l'un ou plusieurs de ces projets, qui sont reproduits par ailleurs, pourront être mis à la disposition des manufactures, firmes ou entreprises artisanales (faïencerie, verrerie, orfèvrerie, maroquinerie, textiles, papiers peints, papiers d'emballage etc.), qui désirent les utiliser, soit en les employant comme éléments décoratifs, soit en fabriquant les emblèmes dans la matière et en appliquant les techniques qui leur sont propres.

Les intéressés devront adresser une demande écrite au Collège Echevinal en indiquant le ou les emblèmes qu'ils ont l'intention d'utiliser.

Avant l'exécution en série, en quelle matière ou de quelque manière que ce soit, les fabricants seront tenus à soumettre au Collège Echevinal un modèle des objets, que ces objets soient, ou non, destinés à la vente, ceci afin d'éviter toute utilisation abusive ou toute présentation de mauvais goût.

Luxembourg, le 3 octobre 1962.  
Le Collège  
des Bourgmestre et Echevins  
s. Emile HAMILIUS,  
Président.

Achat: Pe'l SCHLECHTER      Achat: Raymon MEHLEN      Achat: Pe'l SCHLECHTER      Achat: Pe'l SCHLECHTER

Achat: Mademoiselle Marie-Thérèse LAMMAR      Achat: Pit WEYER

troisième prix:  
Pe'l SCHLECHTER

Deuxième prix:  
Raymon MEHLEN  
(emblème officiel du millénaire)

*Fig. 80: In October 1963, the city administration announced that companies and manufacturers were allowed to use one or several of the published emblems for their products. The “official” one is reproduced in the lower right corner. Symbolising in its upper part the old Roman number 1000 (before the Romans began to use “M”), combined with the letter “L”, it forms a key (possibly referring to Melusina’s key in a variant of the Luxembourgish myth about the foundation of the city).*

#### *Perceptions and impact*

The perception of the Millennium celebration was rather mixed. When the official programme was revealed in 1963, the *Letzeburger Journal* proclaimed that “the framework of

<sup>2158</sup> Kr., ‘Für sieben Jahrtausende’, *d’Letzeburger Land*, October 1962.

a befitting celebration” had been created.<sup>2159</sup> Sometimes, positive evaluations or enthusiastic expectations prior to the Millennium were not surprising considering their authors. In February 1962, the journalist Liliane Thorn-Petit wrote a favourable article about the *Salon du Millénaire* and its main organiser Robert Lentz.<sup>2160</sup> In fact, Gaston Thorn, a member of the municipal council of Luxembourg City, was Thorn-Petit’s husband.

In April 1963, Thorn-Petit published an article in the *Républicain Lorrain*, in which she wondered about the lack of enthusiasm for the Millennium. In her opinion, it could be explained by the indifference of some, the criticisms of others against everyone, and the smug attitude of a third group. In the same month, a certain Max Baden reacted to the article and published a long poem, entitled *Malaise*, including his take on the reasons, different to those exposed by the journalist.<sup>2161</sup> They would go beyond the Millennium, itself a waste of money. For Baden, they concerned politics in general, the financial worries of citizens, and social issues, as some excerpts show:

Le millénaire nous est trop cher  
avec son côté très amer  
de tout ce qui viendra après,  
en sus de ce qui déjà est,  
en taxes, impôts de toutes espèces  
et qui étouffent l’allégresse,  
qui donnent au citoyen des spasmes  
et nullement de l’enthousiasme,  
qui, même sans être veille bourrique,  
donnent soubresauts de saine critique  
et qui, même dans un non blasé,  
assomment toute bonne volonté.

[...]

Quelle joie peuvent faire les trois zéros  
s’ils s’ajoutent demain à l’impôt,  
si ces zéros nous pendent au nez  
comme des anneaux de bovidés,  
et si tant de nos choses publiques  
sont aux mains de zéros chroniques ?  
Si à la tête de nos affaires  
il y a le Monsieur le Maire,  
pour qui le maire est un jalon  
de conseils d’administration

<sup>2159</sup> VDL archives, LU 11 – IV/4:1674, ‘Luxemburg wird tausend Jahre alt’, in *Letzeburger Journal* (26/02/1963).

<sup>2160</sup> Liliane Thorn-Petit, ‘Le Salon du Millénaire’, *d’Letzeburger Land*, February 1962.

<sup>2161</sup> The article by Thorn-Petit was referred to and shortly summarised at the beginning of Max Baden’s piece.

et qui délègue tout l'autre reste  
pour avoir mieux ainsi sa sieste,  
à sa cohorte d'échevins  
qui aiment cela pour leur grand bien,  
car ils y trouvent l'occasion  
de préparer leurs élections  
en autant de bourgmestres ff.  
dont chacun a pour lui son fief  
pour faire la pluie et le beau temps  
à son plein gré comme il l'entend,  
et dont ainsi chacun se gère  
comme s'il était un petit maire.  
[...]<sup>2162</sup>

As rightly pointed out in the poem, 1963 was also a local election year. Some political actors among the organisers were possibly not unhappy about this coincidence. The Millennium would provide a stage for the elections in October, when the celebration was practically over. Commentators were aware of this coincidence. One observer concluded, with a pinch of sarcasm, that

two books and the memory of a beautiful exhibition of this notorious millennium are going to remain decades later. The rest has only been hidden electoral propaganda. I think that this is after all not so bad.<sup>2163</sup>

Retracing the perceptions of an event is always an endeavour riddled with uncertainties. Whether the Millennium was positively received by the population is difficult to assess. It seems that enthusiasm was dampened compared to the Centenary. Moreover, the long-term results were not necessarily created by the Millennium itself. The infrastructural works such as the Kirchberg bridge or the Grand Théâtre would still have been constructed without the Millennium. Despite the discourse about the protection of heritage and about improving the quality of life in Luxembourg, the economic development and the growth of the financial sector imposed their own agenda. Finally, one needs to differ between the perception of the Millennium as a whole, and the perception of single events that took place in this framework.

The impact of the Millennium on tourism is difficult to evaluate. According to the report of the National Tourist Office (Office National du Tourisme, ONT), the number of overnights increased in comparison to 1962: for hotels from 781,572 in 1962 to 802,302 in 1963. The most

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<sup>2162</sup> Max Baden, ‘Le Malaise du Millénaire’, *d’Letzeburger Land*, April 1963.

<sup>2163</sup> “[...] d’ici quelques décades, il restera deux livres et le souvenir d’une belle exposition de ce fameux millénaire. Le reste n’ayant été que propagande électorale déguisée, je suis d’avis que ce n’est quand même pas si mal que ça” (Claude, ‘Sentiment national et millénaire’).

impressive evolution occurred in the camping sector: 373,959 compared to 289,570 in 1962.<sup>2164</sup> Another indicator is the sales volume generated by hotels and restaurants in different cities. In Luxembourg, it increased by LUF 17,340,103, reaching a total volume of LUF 275,523,045 for 1963. In absolute numbers, this was the biggest increase that any city experienced. However, in relative terms, it was not extraordinary when compared, for example, to Echternach or Ettelbruck.<sup>2165</sup> Whether these numbers were influenced by the Millennium celebration is difficult to assess, even with the statistics provided by the ONT. When presenting overnights, the report observed that 1963 had been marked by the creation of the German-Luxembourgish natural reserve, the Millennium Celebration and the institution of a national fund to improve touristic infrastructure.<sup>2166</sup> In fact, the ONT was tasked with the international publicity efforts for the Millennium. From the perspective of the ONT, it would have clearly proven its impact, “one of the rare occasions where our country could offer a newsworthy topic capable to attract the interest of the international press.” It concluded that “[t]he response was excellent.”<sup>2167</sup> However, it depends on how the statistics are interpreted. Correlation does not mean causation, even if the ONT deployed many efforts, such as organising a press conference in The Hague or distributing 100,000 brochures in four languages.<sup>2168</sup> In the US, the “Luxembourg Millennium Mission” travelled nearly 20,000 km through 28 states, sent 3,500 invitations to “families of Luxembourgish descent”, distributed 15,000 brochures and published 200 press releases. The ONT report proudly announced that a group of 217 Luxembourgish emigrants visited the grand duchy.<sup>2169</sup> Added to the 178 individual visits, it barely carried weight in the total overnights of 1963.

### V.2.5. A new cultural diplomacy in a changing context

One of the most remarkable breaks caused by the Second World War concerned Luxembourg’s cultural diplomacy, embedded in a new international post-war configuration. Of course, efforts to avoid future wars and to improve communication and exchanges between states had already existed in the interwar period. The League of Nations was the most notable example. However, the government abandoned its neutrality in the immediate post-war period.

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<sup>2164</sup> Office national du tourisme, *XXXIIIe rapport annuel: Le tourisme en 1963* (Luxembourg: Office national du tourisme, 1964), 3.

<sup>2165</sup> Office national du tourisme, 26.

<sup>2166</sup> “Notons finalement que cette année a vu: la création du Parc Naturel Germano-Luxembourgeois, les fêtes du Millénaire de la Ville de Luxembourg et la conception d’un fonds national destiné à améliorer notre infrastructure touristique.” (Office national du tourisme, 3).

<sup>2167</sup> Office national du tourisme, 34.

<sup>2168</sup> Office national du tourisme, 34.

<sup>2169</sup> Office national du tourisme, 35.

Cultural agreements with new countries were signed and the government ensured the participation of Luxembourg in new international organisations. The current sub-section will focus on administrative developments, followed by an analysis of post-war cultural diplomacy. Cultural diplomacy can be intergovernmental or governmental<sup>2170</sup>, and both will be discussed in turn. Unfortunately, the development of the cultural diplomacy apparatus has not yet been analysed in detail in Luxembourgish historiography.<sup>2171</sup> The present sub-section provides a general overview with some specific examples, but it is certainly not exhaustive.

#### *Administrative expansion and struggles*

When the Chamber of Deputies revised the Constitution in April 1948 and removed the neutrality status from the first article, it was rather an adaptation to an existing situation. The lessons from the two world wars taught Luxembourgish politicians that neutrality would not save them from invasion. The increased participation entailed a reform of the diplomatic services, hence the law on the organisation of the diplomatic corps of 30 June 1947. In his dispatch to the State Council related to the draft law in September 1946, Joseph Bech highlighted the expansion of diplomatic representations during the war (London, Moscow, Washington) and observed the stronger political, economic and social interdependence of the countries.<sup>2172</sup>

The case of François-Léon Lefort illustrates, at a personal scale, the increasing cultural diplomatic activities. Lefort was a former member of the legation in Paris and considered to be employed in the government for tasks related to cultural diplomacy. In March 1950, Pierre Frieden exposed to Bech the lack of staff to process international affairs:

As a result of the numerous international treaties concluded after the war, the scientific and cultural relations with the contracting states have considerably developed, to the extent that my department does not have enough personnel to handle the numerous international affairs it has been entrusted with after the war.<sup>2173</sup>

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<sup>2170</sup> Robert Frank, ‘Culture et relations internationales: les diplomatises culturelles’, in *Pour l’histoire des relations internationales*, ed. Robert Frank (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 2012), 374.

<sup>2171</sup> For a more recent example focusing on Luxembourg’s participation in the UNESCO in the immediate post-war years, see for instance: Gilles Genot, ‘Luxemburg in der UNESCO: Die Anfangsjahre (1943 bis ca. 1950)’, *Hémecht : Zeitschrift für Luxemburger Geschichte = revue d’histoire luxembourgeoise* 71, no. 3 (2019): 311–324.

<sup>2172</sup> ANLux, MEN-0002, Dispatch from Joseph Bech to the State Council, 25/09/1946.

<sup>2173</sup> Own translation. “A la suite des nombreux traités internationaux conclus après la guerre, les relations d’ordre scientifique et culturel avec les Etats co-signataires des traités politiques se sont considérablement développées, au point que mon département ne dispose plus du personnel suffisant pour traiter les nombreuses affaires internationales dont il est saisi après la guerre.” (ANLux, MEN-0056, *Note pour Monsieur le Ministre des Affaires Etrangères*, by Pierre Frieden, 10/03/1950).

Thus, the diplomatic activities were reduced to a minimum. “We refuse every initiative, we limit ourselves to accept what we are offered and participate in common activities from which it is impossible to exclude ourselves,” Frieden exposed.<sup>2174</sup> In his opinion, this would barely contribute to heighten the international prestige of the country and bar Luxembourg from the advantages that would “constitute a legitimate compensation of the frequently large financial contributions (e.g. for the UNESCO) paid to international organisations.”<sup>2175</sup>

In this context, Bech and Frieden struck an arrangement to hire Lefort.<sup>2176</sup> However, as this would cause an additional financial burden for the state budget, the Commission d'économies et de rationalisation had to submit an assessment. This commission, instituted in 1946, suggested any reductions of state expenses and measures to rationalise work procedures. On the proposed employment, it issued a negative opinion. The state minister concurred.<sup>2177</sup> The affair was not concluded, though. Around January 1951, the Government Council agreed with the temporary employment of Lefort.<sup>2178</sup> Lefort was given several tasks: collaborate with the Foreign Affairs Department and more specifically on the exchange with the UNESCO; create a bibliography about the Nazi occupation; collaborate with the Natural History Museum in its scientific foreign relations.<sup>2179</sup> Lefort's temporary employment was a possibility to bypass the legal dispositions and the commission. Furthermore, Bech enquired about the practices of other governments in their relations with international institutions and sent suggestions to simplify and accelerate them to the state minister.<sup>2180</sup> Bech did not specify what governments were contacted; nor is it clear whether these documents are linked to Lefort's recruitment.

From the second half of the 1960s onwards, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of National Education and Cultural Affairs had internal debates about the delimitation of competencies. Unlike other areas of cultural policy, cultural diplomacy was a potentially shared competence between both ministries. In fact, until 1969, the grand-ducal decrees had not conceded explicit supervision of cultural diplomacy to either ministry, unless it would have

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<sup>2174</sup> Own translation. “[...] nous nous refusons toute initiative, nous nous bornons à accepter ce qu'on nous offre et à participer aux activités communes s'il est impossible de nous y dérober.”

<sup>2175</sup> ANLux, MEN-0056, *Note pour Monsieur le Ministre des Affaires Etrangères* by Pierre Frieden, 10/03/1950.

<sup>2176</sup> ANLux, MEN-0056, Letter from Joseph Bech to the president of the Commission spéciale d'économie, 07/04/1950.

<sup>2177</sup> ANLux, MEN-0056, Note from the state minister to the minister for foreign affairs, 08/05/1950.

<sup>2178</sup> ANLux, MEN-0056, Letter from the minister of national education to the state minister, 17/02/1951.

<sup>2179</sup> ANLux, MEN-0056, Letter from the minister of national education to François-Léon Lefort, 17/02/1951.

<sup>2180</sup> ANLux, MEN-0056, Letter from Joseph Bech to Pierre Dupong, 16/08/1950.

been subsumed under the more generic terms “international relations”, “international treaties” and “international organisations”. In the early post-war period, this might not have posed issues due to the limited cultural exchanges. In the 1960s at the latest, however, the Ministry of Cultural Affairs and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs expressed the wish to clarify the question. In the absence of clear rules, both raised a legitimate claim to manage international cultural relations. The Ministry of Cultural Affairs made the teacher and writer Alphonse Arend “director of cultural relations” in 1965. Grégoire sent beforehand a draft of the related ministerial decree to his colleague Pierre Werner, prime minister and minister of foreign affairs, in which he argued that “the increasing extension of our foreign cultural relations and of our commitments of our country at the international cultural level” would underpin this decision.<sup>2181</sup> As Grégoire explained in another, subsequent letter, Arend would “represent our common interests in all our international cultural relations,” because he was implicated in the affairs of both ministries.<sup>2182</sup>

Whereas Grégoire perceived the implication of his department in cultural relations as an evident fact, Werner’s view differed. The latter insisted on the prerogative of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in this matter. In reaction to Arend’s nomination, Werner addressed to his peer a long letter in which he delimited the competencies in international relations and sought to clarify certain aspects. Werner stressed that “in conformity with international practices as well as internal rules [...], the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is competent in all matters that concern the area of international relations, whatever ministry or service these affairs might concern in relation with the internal distribution of competencies.” Otherwise, only explicitly stated exceptions in the framework of conventions could apply.<sup>2183</sup> In addition, Werner expressed his discontent with the initiatives of the Ministry of Cultural Affairs, which would have caused “real difficulties to adequately assume our role in the area of cultural relations.” In order to keep a certain cohesion in the country’s diplomatic relations, he requested all matters concerning cultural diplomacy to be transferred to his ministry. Werner did not see the

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<sup>2181</sup> ANLux, AE-13978, Letter from Pierre Grégoire to Pierre Werner, 28/10/1965.

<sup>2182</sup> ANLux, AE-13978, Letter from Pierre Grégoire to Pierre Werner, 17/11/1965.

<sup>2183</sup> Own translation. “En conformité à la fois des usages internationaux et des règles internes (fixées par l’arrêté grand-ducal du 18 juillet 1964 portant constitution des départements ministériels) le Ministère des Affaires Etrangères est compétent pour toutes les affaires qui rentrent dans le domaine des relations internationales, quels que soient les Ministères ou les services que ces affaires peuvent concerter au niveau de la répartition des attributions à l’intérieur. Il n’est dérogé à cette règle générale qu’en vertu de dispositions expresses prises dans certaines conventions internationales, ou dans le cadre d’institutions créées en vertu de telles conventions [...].” (ANLux, AE-13978, Letter from Pierre Werner to Pierre Grégoire, 07/01/1966).

necessity for a state official of Grégoire's ministry to be entrusted with a mission executed by his own ministry. It would cause "endless conflicts of competence".<sup>2184</sup> The only solution would reside in cooperation based on mutual respect of the competencies of each ministry. Werner agreed with the nomination of Arend as long as it remained within the activities of Grégoire's ministry.

While not constituting an open struggle between two ministries, this exchange illustrates the institutional logic, the power relations and the personal interests within a government. Grégoire replied diplomatically, recognising the competencies of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, yet highlighting that, unlike other countries, Luxembourg was often only represented by an official from the Ministry for National Education and Cultural Affairs at intergovernmental meetings related to culture or education. Between the lines, this statement can be read as an implicit accusation as well as a motivation and legitimisation for Grégoire's previous initiatives. Whereas Werner saw a clear delimitation, Grégoire assumed that "questions of competence and administrative organisation can barely be neatly defined, especially in a small country like ours where the solution effectively consists, according to your words, 'in a cooperation founded on the mutual respect of the competencies that belong in this case to both departments.'"<sup>2185</sup> He further relativized the prospect of this cooperation by highlighting that it should not cause "sensible delays" in everyday affairs. Grégoire suggested that an official of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs could meet with Arend to discuss the practical terms of a cooperation.<sup>2186</sup>

The outcome of this meeting – if such a meeting took place – is unknown. Possibly, though, the exchange between both ministers was reflected in the next decree defining the ministerial departments and their competencies. Indeed, in 1969, for the first time, the Ministry of Cultural Affairs slightly enlarged its area which came to include UNESCO and the execution of cultural treaties. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs did not include any competence directly related to culture. Thus, the situation was more clarified to the advantage of the Cultural Affairs

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<sup>2184</sup> Original text : "Pour leur part, les services du Ministères des Affaires Etrangères – tant l'administration centrale que les missions diplomatiques – sont parfaitement à même de jouer leur rôle dans ce domaine : pour cette raison, je ne vois pas la nécessité de conférer à l'un de vos fonctionnaires une mission dans le cadre de ce Ministère. L'idée de créer une fonction qui serait en quelque sorte « à cheval » entre les deux Ministères me semble non seulement inutile du point de vue de l'organisation administrative ; il me semble même qu'elle risquerait de créer d'interminables conflits de compétence." (ANLux, AE-13978, Letter from Pierre Werner to Pierre Grégoire, 07/01/1966).

<sup>2185</sup> "[...] il apport que les questions de compétence et d'organisation administrative ne se laissent guère délimiter de façon très nette, surtout dans un petit pays comme le nôtre où décidément la solution me semble consister, selon vos termes, « dans une coopération fondée sur le respect mutuel des compétences qui appartiennent en l'occurrence aux deux Départements »." (ANLux, AE-13978, Letter from Pierre Grégoire to Pierre Werner, 17/02/1966).

<sup>2186</sup> ANLux, AE-13978, Letter from Pierre Grégoire to Pierre Werner, 17/02/1966.

Department. Arend's nomination possibly proved useful in cementing the ministry's active participation in international cultural affairs. Grégoire was not able to reap the fruits of this evolution, as he was succeeded by Madeleine Frieden-Kinnen in 1969. As for Werner, he ceded the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to the liberal Gaston Thorn.

However, the new definition did not change the fact that the foreign affairs minister signed and concluded cultural agreements with other countries. The most notable example is Thorn's visit to the USSR and the signature of a cultural agreement with the first communist country in 1969. Furthermore, the struggle over competencies potentially extended to a third ministry (Cultural Affairs) and a third minister (Frieden-Kinnen). The issues possibly persisted. Arend's retirement created a new opportunity to discuss the definition of competencies related to international affairs.<sup>2187</sup> Unfortunately, only letters between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry for National Education could be analysed. Nevertheless, this time only state officials exchanged. The ministers did not address each other directly. Several months before his retirement, Arend drew a list of his missions and tasks. Every matter of cultural and educational relations – nationally and internationally – was supervised by him. Arend represented the government in various commissions and organisations, from the Higher Council for National Education, over the RTL Programme Commission to international organisations and structures such as UNESCO, Council of Europe, OECD, NATO (research grants) and the European Communities.<sup>2188</sup> Arend himself evaluated this situation positively. "This vast network of activities and international relations", he argued, "entrusted to a single 'director', if conferring to the latter an important and varied mission, also allows him to gain an overview on questions and issues that are more or less tangent or interwoven."<sup>2189</sup> This "privileged" situation, favoured by the smallness of the country and its administration, was strengthened by the fact that Arend, as he explained, had to know all relevant issues related to both education and culture. He concluded his letter in a regretful tone, though. He expressed

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<sup>2187</sup> ANLux, AE-16854, Letter from P. Helminger (Ministry of Foreign Affairs) to Paul Reiles (Ministry of National Education), 09/06/1972.

<sup>2188</sup> ANLux, AE-16854, *Organisations où le soussigné représente respectivement le Luxembourg ou un Ministère luxembourgeois* by Alphonse Arend, appended to the letter from Arend to the minister of national education, 31/03/1972.

<sup>2189</sup> Own translation. "Ce vaste réseau d'activités et de relations internationales, confié à un seul „directeur“, s'il confère à ce dernier une mission importante et variée, lui permet aussi un survol global des questions et problèmes qui de loin ou de près se touchent voire se chevauchent. [...]" (ANLux, AE-16854, Letter by Alphonse Arend to the minister of national education, 31/03/1972).

his disappointment that he had never been granted an “adequate administrative and financial status” like his peers in other countries despite “the promises of some ministers”.<sup>2190</sup>

P. Helminger, from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, suggested a scheme defining the competencies between the three ministries in question. The Foreign Affairs Department continued to insist on its prerogatives concerning international relations and external coordination. It would participate in the joint commissions of the bilateral cultural treaties. For other international cultural relations, the diplomatic exchanges would be exclusively managed by the Foreign Affairs, but the responsibilities concerning international organisations would be shared with either Cultural Affairs (for instance the Council of Cultural Cooperation of the CoE) or National Education (e.g. the national UNESCO commission or European Communities).<sup>2191</sup> The grand-ducal decree of 1974 did not differ much from the dispositions of 1969 concerning cultural relations. However, the responsibilities of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs were clarified to include the “coordination between ministerial departments in the field of international relations”.<sup>2192</sup>

The internal debates retraced in this sub-section unfolded on the backdrop of a changing international context. During the Second World War, the Allied countries laid the foundations for the post-war international system. In June 1945, the charter of the United Nations Organisation was signed. Hinting at the new global power relations, the main headquarters was established in New York. Luxembourg was one of the founding members of the UN. The same was the case for the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), created in November 1946. At the European level, the Treaty of Brussels, creating the Western Union in 1948, included cultural goals. The Treaty of London in 1949 founded the Council of Europe (CoE), an intergovernmental organisation dedicated to human rights, democracy, education and culture, with its headquarters in Strasbourg (France). Luxembourg ratified the treaty in July 1949. During the related parliamentary debates, the foreign affairs

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<sup>2190</sup> “A la veille d’abandonner ces fonctions je ne puis cependant pas cacher une certaine déception. En effet le „titulaire“ de ce poste, malgré les promesses de certains Ministres, n’a pas vu accorder à ce poste un statut administratif et financier adéquat, à l’exemple de ses homologues de l’étranger.” (ANLux, AE-16854, Letter from Alphonse Arend to the minister of national education, 31/03/1972).

<sup>2191</sup> ANLux, AE-16854, *Note au dossier. Objet : Relations culturelles avec l’étranger* by P. Helminger, attached to the letter from P. Helminger to Paul Reiles, 09/06/1972.

<sup>2192</sup> ‘Arrêté grand-ducal du 17 juin 1974 portant constitution des départements ministériels’, in *Mémorial A*, vol. 49 (Luxembourg, 1974), 1158, <http://data.legilux.public.lu/file/eli-etat-leg-memorial-1974-49-fr-pdf.pdf>.

minister Bech invoked the tropes of Europe, peace and democracy. He was not the only politician to do so.<sup>2193</sup>

### *Multilateral cultural relations*

The first law of the post-war period related to cultural policy was the ratification of the UNESCO Convention in July 1947.<sup>2194</sup> When the convention was debated in the parliament, the experiences of war informed the discourse. The rapporteur Pierre Grégoire (CSV) highlighted the contribution of the organisation to peace and international cooperation. Besides appealing to patriotic sensibilities, he referred to the master narrative and its constructed continuities when he claimed that “we belong to a race, small, but so glorious, that despite all the vicissitudes of its history it has conserved one pride: that of never despairing [...].”<sup>2195</sup> Grégoire argued that a peace treaty was not enough, but that it needed the “spiritual and intellectual forces of the united peoples.”<sup>2196</sup> The discourse about immaterial values was at the core of Grégoire’s speech; it reappeared when he insisted on the freedom, independence and spiritual and moral values evoked by the convention. Presenting the programme of UNESCO, the rapporteur highlighted the “vastness” and possible “lack of homogeneity” of the organisation, encompassing education, science, culture, and information. As for the area of culture, Grégoire explained that it focused on literature, arts, and philosophy.<sup>2197</sup> Besides this restricted definition of culture, at least apparent in Grégoire’s speech, the organisation, and by extension culture, was also seen as a vector of spiritual values, which were not further specified.

Though Grégoire’s perspective was partly informed by his political views, the idea of democratic values and Luxembourg responding to its obligations was not missing in other speeches. Grasping the opportunity to reflect on the education system, on the application of new media, and on art education in schools, Hubert Clement (LSAP) pointed out that Luxembourg had to support UNESCO as a duty to its democratic and pacifist traditions. Similar

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<sup>2193</sup> Chambre des députés, ‘46ième séance (12 juillet 1949)’, in *Compte-rendu de la session ordinaire de 1948-1949* (Luxembourg: Chambre des députés, 1949), 2260.

<sup>2194</sup> ‘Loi du 25 juillet 1947 ayant pour objet l’approbation de la Convention créant une organisation des Nations Unis pour l’Education, la Science et la Culture’, in *Mémorial A*, vol. 37 (Luxembourg, 1947), 735–741, <http://data.legilux.public.lu/file/eli-etat-leg-memorial-1947-37-fr-pdf.pdf>; See also: Genot, ‘Luxemburg in der UNESCO: Die Anfangsjahre (1943 bis ca. 1950)’; Fabio Spirinelli, ‘De l’enfant pauvre à une image de marque: Une histoire de la politique culturelle au Grand-Duché de Luxembourg de 1945 à 2015 (1)’, *Galerie : revue culturelle et pédagogique* 35, no. 1 (2017): 28–48.

<sup>2195</sup> “[...] nous appartenons à une race, petite, mais combien glorieuse, qui, dans toutes les vicissitudes de son histoire, s’est conservé une fierté: celle de ne désespérer jamais [...].” (Chambre des députés, ‘42me séance (17 juillet 1947)’, 1593).

<sup>2196</sup> Chambre des députés, 1591.

<sup>2197</sup> Chambre des députés, 1592.

to Grégoire, Clement linked the dissemination of values to (public) education, by claiming, for instance, that “since primary school the future citizen has to be guided, so to be incited to entertain a good relationship with his neighbours beyond the borders.”<sup>2198</sup> For the minister Lambert Schaus, replacing the absent Nicolas Margue, the convention was an expression of faith “in the destiny of a saddled and half-ruined humanity”.<sup>2199</sup> Only the Communist fraction in the Chamber of Deputies abstained during the vote, arguing that the “fifth column” in the administrations and the collaborators of Hitler in the economic apparatus had not been purged.<sup>2200</sup> The position of the Communist Party was probably informed by the international context. Indeed, the Soviet Union was not a founding member of the UNESCO and only joined in 1954.

To establish the link between Luxembourg and UNESCO, Pierre Frieden instituted the *Commission Nationale pour la Coopération avec l'Organisation des Nations-Unis pour l'Education, la Science et la Culture* (National Commission for the Cooperation with the UNESCO) in May 1949.<sup>2201</sup> Besides managing the liaison with the organisation, the Commission was entrusted with the sensitisation of and the information on UNESCO's activities in Luxembourg. The members of the commission were representatives of three ministries (National Education, Foreign Affairs, and Justice), of cultural institutions, of the media, of associations and of the cultural society of Luxembourg in general. The list of individuals in the commission in 1950 is another example of the continuity of elites. The group was composed of cultural and political elites, most of them had been implicated in other contexts and initiatives described in the current study (such as the Centenary): Alphonse Arend, Léon Bollendorff, Pierre Grégoire, Joseph Imdahl, Léon Lefort, Nicolas Majerus, Georges Margue, Nicolas Margue, Marcel Noppeney, Alphonse Sprunck, or Paul Wigreux.<sup>2202</sup> The *Association Luxembourgeoise pour les Nations Unies* was also represented in the commission. The president of the association was none other than Pierre Frieden himself.<sup>2203</sup>

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<sup>2198</sup> “Dès l'enfance scolaire le futur citoyen doit être guidé afin d'être incité à faire bon ménage avec ses voisins de l'autre côté des frontières.” (Chambre des députés, 1595).

<sup>2199</sup> “[...] dans la destinée d'une humanité meurtrie et à demie ruinée.” (Chambre des députés, 1598).

<sup>2200</sup> Chambre des députés, 1594.

<sup>2201</sup> ‘Arrêté du 3 mai 1949 portant constitution d'une Commission Nationale pour la Coopération avec l'Organisation des Nations-Unies pour l'Education, la Science et la Culture’, in *Mémorial A*, vol. 22 (Luxembourg, 1949), 519–520, <http://data.legilux.public.lu/file/eli-etat-leg-memorial-1949-22-fr-pdf.pdf>.

<sup>2202</sup> ANLux, MEN-0196, List of the members of the national commission for the cooperation with the UNESCO appended to a letter from Léon lefort, 12/10/1950.

<sup>2203</sup> ANLux, MEN-0196, Letter from Pierre Frieden to François Dausset, 10/02/1950. In fact, Frieden responded to an enquiry of Dausset, secretary of the education commission of the Fédération Mondiale des Associations pour les Nations Unies, on whether the Luxembourgish association was

The national UNESCO commission was divided into five sub-commissions (education, sciences, *beaux-arts*, information, and budget and administration). In July 1949, a grand-ducal decree stipulating the organisation of the Commission was published.<sup>2204</sup> Its principles were more general than those defined by the ministerial decree of May, to which it did not refer. It is possible that the grand-ducal decree was published to comply with constitutional dispositions. Indeed, the creation of the Commission as an execution of the law on the approbation of the UNESCO convention was a constitutional prerogative of the grand duke. As of 2020, the grand-ducal decree is still valid, whereas the ministerial decree was abridged in 1959. The new dispositions of 1959 mainly affected the composition. The number of delegates was reduced, by removing representatives of professional groups related to areas covered by UNESCO and of the “main cultural societies of the country”<sup>2205</sup>. It was simultaneously adapted to the new context, with a delegate of the Compagnie Luxembourgeoise de Télédiffusion (CLT) instead of the Compagnie Luxembourgeoise de Radiodiffusion, and by adding a delegate of the Ministry of the Interior, due to the administrative situation at the time.<sup>2206</sup>

The government repeatedly attempted to use its membership to its advantage and integrate Luxembourgish nationals into the UNESCO administration. Such was the case, each time with a different application, in August 1948<sup>2207</sup>, in March 1949<sup>2208</sup>, and in September 1949 (with the explicit support of Frieden)<sup>2209</sup>. The limited success of these attempts elicited the government’s impatience and exasperation. Already in July 1948, a note to the minister Frieden, mentioning a suggestion by Koenig to launch a call for translators for UNESCO, had considered it rather sceptically: “Is it really worth the effort? After the success we have had

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member of the national commission and played a “rôle utile”. Frieden answered positively to both questions.

<sup>2204</sup> ‘Arrêté grand-ducal du 22 juillet 1949 portant institution d’une Commission nationale pour la Coopération avec l’Organisation des Nations-Unies pour l’Education, la Science et la Culture’, in *Mémorial A*, vol. 36 (Luxembourg, 1949), <http://legilux.public.lu/eli/etat/leg/agd/1949/07/22/n4/jo>.

<sup>2205</sup> ‘Arrêté du 3 mai 1949 portant constitution d’une Commission Nationale pour la Coopération avec l’Organisation des Nations-Unies pour l’Education, la Science et la Culture’, 519.

<sup>2206</sup> ‘Arrêté ministériel relatif à la Commission Nationale pour la coopération avec l’Organisation des Nations-Unies pour l’Education, la Science et la Culture’, in *Mémorial A*, vol. 37 (Luxembourg, 1959), 956–957, <http://data.legilux.public.lu/file/eli-etat-leg-memorial-1959-37-fr-pdf.pdf>.

<sup>2207</sup> ANLux, MEN-0196, Letter from M. Thinnens (detached teacher in the Ministry of National Education) to the Director General of the UNESCO, 20/08/1948.

<sup>2208</sup> ANLux, MEN-0196, Letter from the minister of national education to the director general of the UNESCO, 11/03/1949.

<sup>2209</sup> ANLux, MEN-0196, Letter from the minister of national education to the director general of the UNESCO, 17/09/1949.

until now with our candidates for the UNESCO, I hesitate to do it.”<sup>2210</sup> In a letter to the UNESCO director general Walter Leaves, the minister pointed out that “despite being a UNESCO member since 1946, Luxembourg has not yet managed to place one of its nationals in the administrative services of the UNESCO.”<sup>2211</sup> Though Leaves acknowledged and empathised with the observations, he highlighted that there had been few applications from Luxembourg. Frieden himself possibly noted in handwriting “for a reason!” (“pour cause!”) in the margin of the letter.<sup>2212</sup>

As the years passed, other laws related to cultural diplomacy were voted. The second law associated with cultural policy and informed by the international situation was the approbation of the statutes of the Council of Europe in July 1949.<sup>2213</sup> In 1953, the treaty on the importation of objects of educational, scientific or cultural character was ratified.<sup>2214</sup> The law was signed by Joseph Bech, the minister of foreign affairs, but not by Pierre Frieden. In June 1956, the Chamber of Deputies adopted the European Cultural Convention, which was signed in Paris on 19 December 1954 in the framework of the Council of Europe. The convention aimed to promote the study of languages, history, and civilisations among the adhering states. The law was signed by Bech and Frieden.<sup>2215</sup> In June 1961, the Chamber of Deputies approved the Convention for the protection of cultural goods in case of armed conflicts, developed in the framework of UNESCO.<sup>2216</sup>

Among the post-war institutions and organisations, the Benelux Union, an economic intergovernmental organisation between Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxembourg, did not play a noticeable cultural role. Neither the treaty creating a customs union signed in 1944 nor the treaty of 1958 instituting the economic union encompassed a cultural dimension. The

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<sup>2210</sup> “Est-ce que ça vaut la peine? Après le succès que nous avons eu jusqu’ici avec nos candidatures pour l’UNESCO, j’hésite à le faire.” (ANLux, MEN-0196, Note to the minister Pierre Frieden, 25/01/1949).

<sup>2211</sup> “[...] bien que membre de l’Unesco depuis 1946, le Luxembourg n’a pas encore réussi à placer un de ses ressortissants dans les services administratifs de l’Unesco.” (ANLux, MEN-0196, Letter from the minister for national education to the Director General of the UNESCO, 11/03/1949).

<sup>2212</sup> ANLux, MEN-0196, Letter from the director general of the UNESCO to the minister of national education, 01/04/1949.

<sup>2213</sup> ‘Loi du 22 juillet 1949 portant approbation du Statut du Conseil de l’Europe et de l’Arrangement relatif à la création de la Commission Préparatoire du Conseil de l’Europe, signés à Londres, le 5 mai 1949’, in *Mémorial A*, vol. 35 (Luxembourg, 1949), 853–862.

<sup>2214</sup> ‘Loi du 20 mai 1953 portant approbation de l’Accord pour l’importation d’objets de caractère éducatif, scientifique ou culturel, fait à Lake Success, New-York, le 22 novembre 1950’, in *Mémorial A*, vol. 35 (Luxembourg, 1953), 646–652.

<sup>2215</sup> ‘Loi du 16 juin 1956 portant approbation de la Convention culturelle européenne, signée à Paris, le 19 décembre 1954’, in *Mémorial A*, vol. 35 (Luxembourg, 1956), 871–874.

<sup>2216</sup> ‘Loi du 13 juillet 1961 portant approbation de la Convention pour la protection des biens culturels en cas de conflit armé, signée à La Haye, le 14 mai 1954’.

missions and objectives of the Benelux Union have been economic. None of the commissions within the Benelux organisational framework were tasked with cultural matters, though there was a special commission for tourism.<sup>2217</sup> Furthermore, in the exchanges between Pierre Grégoire and Pierre Werner on the competencies of their respective ministries concerning cultural diplomacy, the Benelux Union was not mentioned among the international organisations and committees. Yet, it cannot be denied that the Benelux Union facilitated the cooperation between its partners and exerted an indirect effect on other areas. Furthermore, the Benelux countries successfully pushed for a multilateral agreement which culminated in the signature of the Brussels Treaty in 1948, instituting the Western Union. Indeed, their proposal was quite different to that of France and Great Britain's suggestion for a series of bilateral military assistance agreements.<sup>2218</sup>

### *Bilateral cultural relations*

The previous examples highlight the development of multilateral relations, undoubtedly one important dimension of cultural diplomacy. The other one, however, was not less relevant and concerned the bilateral exchanges through treaties and embassies. As in the interwar period, the Grand Duchy concluded bilateral agreements, aiming at cultural and educational exchanges. Exhibitions, for instance, were a preferred tool in this context, and it could work both ways: exhibitions with foreign artworks shown in Luxembourg and Luxembourgish art shown abroad.<sup>2219</sup> Furthermore, copies of movies produced in Luxembourg and distributed by the Office du Film Scolaire were regularly sent to embassies, sometimes at their request, sometimes because embassies were approached by other institutes in the respective countries. In 1966, for instance, the embassy in Bonn was contacted by the Institut für Film und Bild in Munich, interested in German versions of the movies *Kutter, Echternach et sa procession*

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<sup>2217</sup> H.G. Schermers and H.A.H. Audretsch, 'Les institutions du Benelux: description schématique dans une perspective historique', in *Regards sur le Benelux: 50 ans de coopérations*, ed. A. Postma et al. (Tielt: Editions Racine, 1994), 157.

<sup>2218</sup> A.E. Kersten, 'Les aspects politiques de la coopération Benelux: l'interaction entre la construction interne et les rapports de force internationaux 1944-1958', in *Regards sur le benelux: 50 ans de coopération*, ed. A. Postma et al. (Tielt: Editions Racine, 1994), 83.

<sup>2219</sup> The first case will be examined in another section. As for the second case, we might cite the example of a travelling exhibition dedicated to Luxembourgish contemporary art and organised in the context of the Belgian-Luxembourgish and the Dutch-Luxembourgish cultural treaties (MNHA archives, unnumbered folder (Bulletin de Documentation 1945-59), Bulletin de documentation no. 1-2, [1951], p. 20).

*dansante* and *Visage du Luxembourg*, for which the Office du Film scolaire created German subtitles.<sup>2220</sup>

The new post-war situation informed the choice of countries. The fact that these countries were geographically close to Luxembourg is not the only and certainly not the most determining rationale. If it could be argued that in the interwar period France and Belgium were chosen for geographical considerations and because French culture was an important reference, the post-war period offered a different context. Of course, cultural agreements were signed with Belgium and France again. Yet, new countries were added to Luxembourg's cultural ties, such as the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, and Italy, thus enlarging the geographical horizon. In October 1948, Belgium and Luxembourg jointly signed a cultural agreement with the United States to finance a cultural and educational programme with funds from a convention regulating the lend-lease of September 1946.<sup>2221</sup> The motivations to create ties with new countries are to be found in the new international system of multilateral agreements, as well as in the experiences of the Second World War and Luxembourg's adhesion to the Allied camp.

The law of 21 August 1953 approved three bilateral treaties, with Belgium (1948), the Netherlands (1949), and the United Kingdom (1950), respectively.<sup>2222</sup> All of these treaties engaged the signatories to promote cultural and educational exchanges, either at the national level or between schools and associations, and to support the mutual recognition of diplomas. The preamble of the treaty with Belgium referred to the previous intellectual agreement of 1923 and added the “new circumstances” as a motivation<sup>2223</sup>. Indeed, it appears that the government analysed the application of the interwar treaty. An internal, undated and anonymous note to the minister of national education concluded, upon assessing the meeting notes of the mixed commission for the application of the 1923 treaty, that the field of action was too limited and without extensive practical impact. According to the note,

One cannot lose the impression that after the first two or three meetings, the delegates experienced difficulties to find topics of discussion, the few secondary questions concerning the equality of admission conditions to certain special schools in Belgium having been resolved in

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<sup>2220</sup> ANLux, AE-13978, Letter from the minister of foreign affairs to the ambassador of Luxembourg in the GFR, 02/03/1966.

<sup>2221</sup> MNHA archives, unnumbered folder (Bulletin de Documentation 1945-59), Bulletin de documentation no. 10 (1948), p. 161.

<sup>2222</sup> ‘Loi du 21 août 1953 portant approbation des accords culturels entre le Grand-Duché de Luxembourg d'une part, la Belgique, les Pays-Bas et la Grande-Bretagne d'autre part’, in *Mémorial A*, vol. 56 (Luxembourg, 1953), 1146–1153.

<sup>2223</sup> ‘Loi du 21 août 1953 portant approbation des accords culturels entre le Grand-Duché de Luxembourg d'une part, la Belgique, les Pays-Bas et la Grande-Bretagne d'autre part’, 1147.

the first meetings. The essential questions for which the treaty was signed [...] were repeatedly addressed, but one felt quite early that they only had a theoretical interest and that the difficulties were too big to enable bigger projects.<sup>2224</sup>

The note concluded that the commission limited itself to a purely consultative role, which did not reflect the intentions of the treaty. Thus, the new treaty with Belgium should be an improvement on the first one.

There was another important reason underlying the wish to conclude such treaties. According to Bech and Frieden in their *exposé des motifs*, the three treaties approved in 1953 were signed in the framework of the Treaty of Brussels of 1948, signed by Belgium, France, Luxembourg, the Netherlands and the UK.<sup>2225</sup> Article 3 of this treaty stipulated that

[t]he High Contracting Parties will make every effort in common to lead their peoples towards a better understanding of the principles that form the basis of their common civilization and to promote cultural exchanges by conventions between themselves or by other means.<sup>2226</sup>

An internal correspondence might at least add a second reason for the treaty with the UK. In June 1946, Nicolas Margue contacted Bech, after being informed that the UK and Belgium concluded a cultural agreement. Margue mainly considered the eventual facilitation of Luxembourgish students' access to English universities.<sup>2227</sup> It is not clear whether similar motivations undergirded other treaties. It might explain why the treaty with the UK was concluded quite early, even years before the Franco-Luxembourgish cultural agreement, for instance. The minister did not want Luxembourgish students to be disadvantaged compared to their Belgian counterparts.

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<sup>2224</sup> “[o]n ne saurait se défendre de l'impression qu'après les deux ou trois premières réunions, les délégués aient été en mal de trouver des points de discussion, les quelques questions secondaires touchant l'égalité des conditions d'admission à certaines écoles spéciales belges ayant été liquidées dès les premières séances. Les questions essentielles en vue desquelles l'accord fut conclu [...] ont été abordées à différentes reprises, mais on sentait bien vite qu'elles n'avaient qu'un intérêt théorique et que les difficultés étaient trop grandes pour que les réalisations d'envergure fussent possibles.” (ANLux, MEN-0258, Note for the minister of national education, anonymous, undated).

<sup>2225</sup> Chambre des députés, ‘Projet de loi n° 47 (371) portant approbation des accords culturels entre le Grand-Duché de Luxembourg, d'une part, la Belgique, les Pays-Bas et la Grande-Bretagne, d'autre part’, in *Annexe du compte-rendu de la session ordinaire de 1950-1951* (Luxembourg: Chambre des députés, 1951), 451–458.

<sup>2226</sup> ‘Treaty between Belgium, France, Luxembourg, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Signed at Brussels, on March 17th, 1948’, CVCE, March 1948, [https://www.cvce.eu/en/obj/the\\_brussels\\_treaty\\_17\\_march\\_1948-en-3467de5e-9802-4b65-8076-778bc7d164d3.html](https://www.cvce.eu/en/obj/the_brussels_treaty_17_march_1948-en-3467de5e-9802-4b65-8076-778bc7d164d3.html).

<sup>2227</sup> ANLux, MEN-0261, Letter from the minister of national education to the minister for foreign affairs, 04/06/1946.

In the 1950s, two other cultural agreements were signed, with France (1954, approved in 1955<sup>2228</sup>) and with Italy (1956, approved in 1958<sup>2229</sup>). The text of the former one referred, like in the case of Belgium, to the interwar treaty signed in 1923. The adaptation to the new circumstances was again invoked as a reason. In addition, both treaties were concluded in the same spirit as the previous ones (Italy joined the WEU in 1954). A treaty with the German Federal Republic was not signed until 1982, even though it joined the WEU, like Italy, in 1954.<sup>2230</sup>

In the case of Italy, Bech and Frieden referred to the Italian community living in Luxembourg and considered it as a means to solve the “social problems” created by the “high number of Italian nationals”; however, what the ministers referred to was not expanded on.<sup>2231</sup> Sources show that the Italian ambassador in Luxembourg approached the Luxembourg government with the request for an agreement. He appended to his letter the draft treaty between Italy and Norway. The Luxembourg minister of national education, in his correspondence to Joseph Bech, welcomed the prospect of a treaty between Italy and Luxembourg and reckoned that the model sent by the ambassador could be useful.<sup>2232</sup> Indeed, a comparison between the final Italian-Luxembourgian treaty and the draft treaty between Italy and Norway reveals some similarities in structure and content.

Once signed, the treaty with Italy experienced a rather difficult start. Until November 1960, the Luxembourg government did not know the members of the Italian delegation. The Luxembourgish delegates met for the first time in November 1960 and approved retroactively the distribution of subsidies of which they had not been informed in advance. They also decided to contact the Italian authorities for a first meeting of the commission. The first official exchange was organised in January 1961.

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<sup>2228</sup> ‘Loi du 22 janvier 1955 portant approbation de l’Accord culturel entre le Grand-Duché de Luxembourg et la République Française, signé à Luxembourg, le 8 février 1954’, in *Mémorial A*, vol. 7 (Luxembourg, 1955), 193–195.

<sup>2229</sup> ‘Loi du 22 janvier 1958 portant approbation de l’Accord culturel entre le Grand-Duché de Luxembourg et la République Italienne , signé à Luxembourg, le 3 mai 1956’, in *Mémorial A*, vol. 8 (Luxembourg, 1958), 105–106.

<sup>2230</sup> In fact, the process of conciliation between Luxembourg and the GFR was not even completed. A settlement and reconciliation treaty with the GFR was signed in July 1959 and approved on 18 May 1961. The debates in the Chamber of Parliament were controversial and heated (Cf. Schoentgen, ‘Zwischen Erinnern und Vergessen: Das Gedenken an den Zweiten Weltkrieg in den 1950er Jahren’, 270).

<sup>2231</sup> Chambre des députés, ‘Projet de loi N° 9 (668) portant approbation de l’Accord culturel entre le Grand-Duché de Luxembourg et la République italienne, signé à Luxembourg, le 3 mai 1956’, in *Annexe du compte-rendu de la session ordinaire de 1957-1958* (Luxembourg: Chambre des députés, 1959), 98–100.

<sup>2232</sup> ANLux, MEN-0265, Letter from Pierre Frieden to Joseph Bech, 24/09/1955.

Though the precise impact of the bilateral treaties concluded until the 1950s is difficult to measure, none of them remained unapplied. Except for the initial problems of the agreement with Italy, the mixed commissions met regularly. Many initiatives took place in the context of these treaties, such as exchanges, conferences, exhibitions or the distribution of scholarships. A general overview of the reports of the mixed commissions reveals that the kind of culture promoted by these agreements was rather restricted. The support to exchanges between pupils, students, teachers and researchers set aside, the organisation of (classic) theatre performances (such as by the Théâtre National de Belgique in Luxembourg), fine arts exhibitions or classical music concerts hinted at a mainly elitist understanding of culture. Radio, television and movies were also discussed in the reports, but they were regarded as media of dissemination of high culture, such as broadcasts of symphonic concerts or screenings of didactic movies. Most importantly, these bilateral agreements presented an opportunity not only to showcase cultures of other countries within Luxembourg, but also to disseminate Luxembourgish culture abroad. In 1953, an exhibition on Luxembourgish art of the previous 50 years was organised in the Belgian cities of Ostend and Mons.<sup>2233</sup> However, an exhibition abroad did not necessarily mean that it was placed under the patronage of a cultural treaty, such as when the artist Auguste Trémont showed his works in Antwerp in 1954. In this case, Lambert Schaus, legate of Luxembourg in Belgium, shared his impressions of the exhibition, which “does honour to our country”, but regretted that his own suggestion to organise it in the framework of the Belgo-Luxembourgish agreement was not accepted by the commission.<sup>2234</sup>

### *International events*

Beyond Luxembourg’s membership in international organisations and official bilateral exchanges, it participated in international events by pursuing various goals: presentation of the country, promotion of its artistic production and support of Luxembourgish artists. Such events combined several forms of international cultural relations. While not being organised in the framework of agreements or international organisations, the involvement of the government conceded an official character. Three major examples of the 1950s and 1960s illustrate this type of cultural exchange: the International Fair in Brussels in 1958 – a one-time event – and Luxembourg’s participation at the Biennials in São Paulo (several times) and at the Biennial in Venice (once). In fact, the 1950s stood out in this respect.

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<sup>2233</sup> ANLux, MEN-0257, *Rapport de la Commission mixte permanente pour l’application de l’Accord culturel belgo-luxembourgeois*, 21/10/1953.

<sup>2234</sup> ANLux, MEN-0257, Letter from Lambert Schaus to Pierre Frieden. 27/08/1954.

The São Paulo Art Biennial, the second oldest art biennial in the world, was created in 1951 by the Italian-Brazilian industrialist Francisco Matarazzo Sobrinho. He was the founder of the Museu de Arte Moderna in São Paulo that organised the biennials until the creation of the Fundação Bienal in 1962, which took over the organisation.<sup>2235</sup> Luxembourg's first participation occurred at the Second Biennial in 1953/1954, but its presence was irregular in the following decades with contributions in 1955, 1957, 1961, 1965, 1967, 1969, 1971 and in 1981. According to the catalogue for the participation in 1981, the previous Luxembourgish sections were all oriented towards the School of Paris.<sup>2236</sup> This observation is not surprising considering that Joseph-Emile Muller, an amateur of these artworks, coordinated all participations in the 1950s and 1960s.

The origins of the first participation in the Second Biennial in São Paulo date back to an invitation from the president of the Biennial Roy Bloem to Joseph-Emile Muller in March 1953<sup>2237</sup>. Muller accepted but let Bloem know that an official request needed to be addressed to the minister of national education Frieden. When he was officially contacted, the latter accepted a Luxembourgish participation as well as Muller's nomination as coordinator.<sup>2238</sup> Throughout the 1950s, this became common procedure. Frieden let Muller much freedom in choosing artists and artworks to be exposed without ever voicing a doubt. As 1953 marked the first participation, Muller was unexperienced concerning the Biennial and its organisation, which resulted in several exchanges with the organisers on the kind of art to be exhibited, and with Emile Langui, a councillor of the Belgian Ministry of Public Instruction and the coordinator of the Belgian section. In his invitation, Bloem had recommended Langui as a contact person. Muller wanted to know, among other aspects, whether Langui chose the artworks himself or let the artists choose. Muller oriented his own approach based on the answers from Langui. As a result, he made the selection of artworks himself. This marked a precedence for how Muller proceeded in the subsequent participations of Luxembourg. For 1953, he decided to include paintings by Joseph Kutter as a kind of "retrospective", and paintings by artists representing contemporary trends. These artists were Will Dahlem, Henri

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<sup>2235</sup> For more information on the Fundação and the biennials, as well as a selection of digitised documents related to the events, see: <http://www.bienal.org.br/home> [last access: 18/02/2020].

<sup>2236</sup> Roland Schauls and Fernand Roda, *20e Biennale de São Paulo 1989: Luxembourg* (Luxembourg: Centre d'art contemporain, 1989), 1.

<sup>2237</sup> MNHA archives, Biennale-001, Letter from Roy Bloem to Joseph-Emile Muller, 23/03/1953.

<sup>2238</sup> MNHA archives, Biennale-001, Letter from Pierre Frieden to Francisco Matarazzo Sobrinho, 20/05/1953.

Dillenbourg, François Gillen, Will Kesseler, Frantz Kinnen, Joseph Probst, Michel Stoffel and Lucien Wercoller. Muller legitimised his choice in a letter to Pierre Frieden as follows:

Following the example of other countries which generally highlight the most important person by exhibiting a larger number of paintings, I recommend sending to São Paulo seven or nine paintings by Kutter (it would be our retrospective) and to let the other artists be represented by two or three paintings or sculptures each. This enables us to constitute a quite homogeneous and important ensemble, I think, to grab the attention of visitors and maybe of the jury [...].<sup>2239</sup>

Over the years, the Luxembourgish actors, especially Muller, reflected on the strategy for the participation at the biennials, not only in São Paulo, but also in Venice. The idea of a homogeneous ensemble, as expressed in 1953, was going to take a clearer shape, based on the experiences of previous participations. The first participation was an exception in the sense that with Kutter, the Luxembourgish section included an artist who was not alive at the time of the Biennial but seemed to be a safe bet for a first participation in São Paulo. At Frieden's request, Muller drafted a note on the possible participation of Luxembourg at the Third Biennial in São Paulo (1955) and the Biennial in Venice (1956) in November 1954. The art critic particularly stressed the importance of a homogeneous ensemble, because only these "have indeed some chance to attract the visitors' attention at large international events". Muller raised a second, pragmatic argument: the number of Luxembourgish artists who can "defend" themselves abroad is "not at all high".<sup>2240</sup> "Thus, everything seems to speak in favour of a 'politics of exhibition' that reduces the number of exhibitors for the benefit of quality and homogeneity of the ensemble," he concluded. As the Biennial in Venice would show thousands of paintings, the choice needed to be homogeneous and strict. For this reason, Muller suggested Kutter and Auguste Trémont, two recognised artists.

Indeed, the selection changed and was optimised in the following years. The number of artists was reduced in 1955, when works by Coryse Kieffer, Irène Nadler, Mett Hoffmann and Jean-Pierre Junius were exhibited.<sup>2241</sup> At the Biennial in Venice in 1956, the first time that

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<sup>2239</sup> Own translation. "A l'exemple des autres pays qui généralement mettent en évidence la personnalité la plus importante en exposant un nombre plus grand de ses œuvres, je serais d'avis d'envoyer à São Paulo sept ou neuf tableaux de Kutter (ce serait là notre rétrospective) et de faire représenter les autres artistes par deux ou trois peintures ou sculptures. Cela nous permettrait de constituer un ensemble assez homogène et assez important, je crois, pour retenir l'attention des visiteurs et peut-être celle du jury." (MNHA archives, Biennale-001, Letter from Joseph-Emile Muller to Pierre Frieden, 16/06/1953).

<sup>2240</sup> MNHA archives, Biennale-005, *Propositions pour une participation éventuelle du Luxembourg aux Biennales de São Paulo et de Venise* by Joseph-Emile Muller, 19/11/1954.

<sup>2241</sup> MNHA archives, Biennale-002, Letter from Joseph-Emile Muller to Pierre Frieden, 10/03/1955.

Luxembourg participated<sup>2242</sup>, fifteen paintings by Kutter and seven sculptures by Trémont were exhibited as suggested in 1954. For many decades, it was to remain the only time that Luxembourg was present in Venice. Though the implicated actors were interested in participating again for 1958, Luxembourg could not be invited due to lack of space.<sup>2243</sup> Indeed, the grand duchy did not have its own national pavilion. In 1956 it had to exhibit in the Italian section where countries without their own pavilion were hosted.

For the São Paulo Biennial in 1957, the number of artists was further reduced to two (Stoffel and Kinnen), while each exhibited more paintings. In fact, Muller's selection was informed by a fortuitous encounter with Sérgio Milliet in Venice. Milliet was a Brazilian writer, artist and artistic director of the Museum of Modern Art in São Paulo and of the Biennial. Muller used the occasion and discussed with Milliet the possible Luxembourgish participation at the next Biennial. His Brazilian peer recommended showing only one or two artists who had already exhibited at a previous Biennial, but with more paintings than usual.<sup>2244</sup> Considering the resulting selection, Muller visibly took Milliet's suggestions to heart.

The presence of Luxembourgish artists at the biennials was crowned with some minor successes. When Muller asked Langui's impression of the Luxembourgish section at São Paulo in 1953 – the Belgian was member of the jury of the Second Biennial – Langui had nothing but praise for the section. According to his statements, the board, the jury and the public unanimously affirmed that Luxembourg's participation counted among the best at the Biennial. "Especially as the Kutter collection was a true revelation for the Brazilians," Langui added.<sup>2245</sup> Muller's bet certainly paid out. Considering the existing newspaper clippings in the archives of the National History and Art Museum, the Brazilian press retained a rather positive impression of the Luxembourgish section, as one text in the newspaper *O Tempo* shows: "Balance and discretion characterise the small room of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg at the Second Biennial."<sup>2246</sup> The article even included a reference to multiple influences on Luxembourg due to the geographical location: "Actually not only Kutter but any Luxembourgish painter cannot escape the Gallic-Flemish-German cultural tensions that are

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<sup>2242</sup> Unlike for São Paulo, the request to participate was addressed by Luxembourg to the organisers, via the embassy in Rome.

<sup>2243</sup> MNHA archives, Biennale-004, Letter from the Embassy of Luxembourg in Rome to Joseph Bech, 30/04/1958.

<sup>2244</sup> MNHA archives, Biennale-006, Letter from Joseph-Emile Muller to Pierre Frieden, 10/08/1956.

<sup>2245</sup> MNHA archives, Biennale-001, Letter from Emile Langui to Joseph-Emile Muller, 14/01/1954.

<sup>2246</sup> Own translation. "Equilíbrio e discrição caracterizam a pequena sala do Grão-Ducado de Luxemburgo na II Bienal [...]." (MNHA archives, Biennale-001, 'Roteiro da II Bienal (VIII): Luxemburgo' by Valter Zanini, in *O Tempo*, 08/01/1954).

exerted on its borders. The proof, by the way, is evident in this room.”<sup>2247</sup> Besides a rather positive appraisal of Kutter, Will Dahlem was lauded as “undoubtedly the best artist among those who study tangible elements.”<sup>2248</sup> In addition to the encouraging feedback, two Kutter paintings were sold: *Pêcheur* to Ziro Ramenzoni, a “well-known” industrial from São Paulo, and *Carnaval* to Miguel Forte, “one of our best architects,” according to Arturo Profili, secretary of the second Biennial.<sup>2249</sup> The participation seemed to have another positive effect. Indeed, it appears that in the meantime Langui and Muller became so well acquainted that they addressed each other with “dear friend” in their letters. The two men discussed a future Luxembourgish exhibition in Oostende. Langui personally took care of the reservation of an exhibition room.<sup>2250</sup> A notable achievement of Luxembourg’s participation happened in 1955, when Mett Hoffmann was awarded an honourable mention by the jury. Muller, upon receiving the news, advised Pierre Frieden to recognise this achievement by acquiring one of Hoffmann’s paintings.<sup>2251</sup>

Luxembourg’s experience at the Venice Biennial was rather mixed. Muller observed that thanks to Kutter, the section “made an excellent impression”. However, the coordinator deplored that in other critiques, Luxembourg was not even mentioned. In his opinion, it was difficult for a country to attract attention with its first participation, especially if it did not have the prestige emanating from an important artistic past. Furthermore, “in Venice one undeniably looks out for the most up-to-date art. Many critics [...] are only interested in the most recent trends. They consider art such as Kutter’s outdated and only deign to look at it with a distracted glimpse.”<sup>2252</sup> Muller concluded that a Luxembourgish participation would certainly make sense, if only for the number of visitors, but it would need to be continuous and take the Biennial for what it is, “a confrontation of contemporary trends”. Some countries printed catalogues of their sections, which should also be done by Luxembourg. “There are even some

<sup>2247</sup> Own translation. “Realmente, não só Kutter mas qualquer pintor luxemburguês jamais poderá fugir da tensão cultural gaulesa-flamengo-germânica, que se exerce sobre suas fronteiras. A prova, aliás, é evidente nessa mesma sala.” (MNHA archives, Biennale-001, ‘Roteiro da II Bienal (VIII): Luxemburgo’ by Valter Zanini, in *O Tempo*, 08/01/1954).

<sup>2248</sup> Own translation. “Will Dahlem é indiscutivelmente o melhor artista entre os que pesquisam nas coisas tangíveis.” Though the original text definitely issued a positive assessment of Dahlem’s works, it is difficult for me to clearly understand what the author meant by “coisas tangíveis”, literally translated into English “tangible things” (MNHA archives, Biennale-001, ‘Roteiro da II Bienal (VIII): Luxemburgo’ by Valter Zanini, in *O Tempo*, 08/01/1954).

<sup>2249</sup> MNHA archives, Biennale-001, Letter from Arturo Profili to Joseph-Emile Muller, 04/06/1954.

<sup>2250</sup> MNHA archives, Biennale-001, Letter from Emile Langui to Joseph-Emile Muller, 14/01/1954.

<sup>2251</sup> MNHA archives, Biennale-002, Letter from Joseph-Emile Muller to Pierre Frieden, 07/07/1955.

<sup>2252</sup> MNHA archives, Biennale-004, *Note sur la participation luxembourgeoise à la XXVIIIe Biennal de Venise* by Joseph-Emile Muller, 29/03/1957.

countries that go further and offer more or less appetising cocktails.” However, in Muller’s opinion, there would be no need to follow this example.<sup>2253</sup>

Over the years, the organisation and coordination slowly shifted its main channels of communication – at least this is what the documents at the archives imply. In 1953, Muller mostly corresponded directly with the organisers in Brazil and Emile Languis, and only contacted the minister for certain decisions in the framework of administrative procedures. This changed, though. In the 1950s, the consul of Luxembourg in São Paulo only appeared in documents related to the transport of the artworks from Europe to Brazil. In 1955, Muller was even in touch with COLUMETA, a Luxembourgish society created by the steel producer ARBED to sell and promote its products internationally. It was notably implicated in the steel industry in Brazil (Minas Gerais). Muller could rely on the company’s know-how of transporting fragile objects between continents. COLUMETA’s implication is only confirmed at this stage for the Biennial in 1955. In the 1960s, the correspondence between the coordination in Luxembourg and the organisers in São Paulo increasingly passed through official diplomatic channels with the consul of Luxembourg in São Paulo, Nicolas Hentgen, as mediator. It is possible that this was the result of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs’ complaints about the independent cultural diplomacy of the Ministry of Cultural Affairs. In 1966, for example, Pierre Grégoire asked the minister of foreign affairs to inform the Brazilian embassy in Brussels of Luxembourg’s participation at the Biennial.<sup>2254</sup> This was different to the procedure of the 1950s. Another hypothesis would consider the regime change in Brazil as a possible reason for the shift. The military dictatorship was established after the 1964 coup d’Etat against the government under the leftist President João Goulart, whose introduction of a presidential system and leftist policies attracted the animosity of anti-communist conservative circles and military leaders. Under the dictatorship, the introduction of censorship and repressive measures might have caused diplomatic relations with other countries to have shifted towards official diplomatic relations as independent initiatives were muzzled.

If the second participation at Venice failed due to circumstances that could not be controlled by the implicated actors in Luxembourg, the presence at São Paulo was, at least for a short period, on less certain grounds after Frieden’s death in 1959. A clear causation cannot be established at this point. Yet, Luxembourg declined the invitation in 1959.<sup>2255</sup> This was a

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<sup>2253</sup> MNHA archives, Biennale-004, *Note sur la participation luxembourgeoise à la XXVIIIe Biennale de Venise* by Joseph-Emile Muller, 29/03/1957.

<sup>2254</sup> MNHA archives, Biennale-008, Letter from Pierre Grégoire to Pierre Werner, 20/12/1966.

<sup>2255</sup> MNHA archives, Biennale-006, Letter from Joseph-Emile Muller to Nicolas Hentgen, 19/08/1959.

decision made by Pierre Grégoire, Frieden's successor. The exact reasons remain unclear. The budget was probably not a factor, as the spending on culture increased from 0.37% in 1958 to 0.43% in 1959. Certainly, Grégoire had a different leadership style than Frieden. Whereas the latter represented a Christian humanism, Grégoire was much more conservative and fiercely anti-communist.<sup>2256</sup> In fact, in 1961 Luxembourg nearly refused to participate at the Biennial again. In March 1961, the councillor Norbert Weber called Muller to share the minister's decision. In May, Grégoire changed his mind for undisclosed reasons.<sup>2257</sup> Luxembourg participated henceforth at each Biennial from 1961 to 1971. The custodians at the museum, as for their part, certainly did not ponder about politics and exclusively evaluated a Luxembourgish participation from an artistic point of view.

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<sup>2256</sup> If such views would have influenced his decision, the internal political evolution of Brazil could have played a role. In 1959, Brazil was presided by the centrist Juscelino Kubitschek, who endorsed the heritage of former President Getúlio Vargas. His Vice-President was the leftist João Goulart. Kubitschek had been criticised by the Right (as well as by the Left for his economic policies), but Goulart became the hated figure of conservative circles. After he had taken over the presidency in 1961, his policies attracted the anger of the right-wing and the military leaders, who felt confirmed in their fears of a communist infiltration. Though we are moving on highly speculative grounds, Grégoire, as a right-wing intellectual in the Cold War era, might have pondered the political situation in Brazil.

<sup>2257</sup> MNHA archives, Biennale-006, Letter from Pierre Grégoire to Eugène Schaus, 26/05/1961.



Fig. 81: The Luxembourgish section at the 6th Biennial in São Paulo (Source: Arquivo Bienal, n° 17-00001-01172, Athayde de Barros, 1961, accessible at: <http://arquivo.bienal.org.br/pawtucket/index.php/Detail/documento/109498>).



Fig. 82: The Luxembourgish section (right) at the 10th Biennial in São Paulo (Source: Arquivo Bienal, n° 21-00001-01352, anonymous, 1969; accessible at: <http://arquivo.bienal.org.br/pawtucket/index.php/Detail/documento/110656>).

Organised more than twenty years after the last international fair in Brussels, the Brussels Exhibition of 1958 followed more varied and universal aims than the representation at an art biennial. In September 1954, the Luxembourg government decided to participate. Two months later, Guillaume Konsbruck, former minister of economic affairs and ARBED manager, became general commissioner of the grand duchy at the International Exhibition. The organisation itself started in May 1955. The overarching aim consisted in “reviewing the contemporary world” (“dresser le bilan du monde actuel”) and giving “a human face to a dehumanised world” (“rendre figure humaine à notre monde déshumanisé”).<sup>2258</sup> The official slogan of the World Fair, “a balance sheet for a more human world”, reflected the expectations of the organisers. In the age of the Cold War, these were decidedly pacifist and humanist ambitions. At the same time, the exhibition was pervaded by an optimism concerning technological progression. “More than a fruitful inventory of the technical progress accomplished during the last decades,” Konsbruck wrote, “[the exhibition] is a rich presentation of everything that, in the world, contributes to the enrichment of civilisation and to the development of human well-being.”<sup>2259</sup> Yet, such ambitions could also be instrumentalised to legitimise colonial power-relations and the Western gaze at non-Western cultures. Such was the case with the area dedicated to the Belgian Congo, *Fifty years of social, economic and religious work in the Congo*.<sup>2260</sup> In the age of decolonisation, Belgium continued to perceive its presence on the African continent as a civilising mission.

For the General Commissariat of Luxembourg, the projected pavilion should follow two objectives: “to show who we are” by exhibiting the “geographical, historical and economic complex”, and “to emphasise everything that Luxembourg can offer to its neighbours”.<sup>2261</sup> A series of selected themes should shape the national presentation. Most of these had already appeared in other manifestations of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and some were going to return in the 1963 Millennium: the dynasty; the social, cultural, artistic and religious life; agriculture, viticulture, forests, industries, tourism; RTL, banks, the Luxembourgish Post Administration, important construction projects (“grands travaux”), development and urbanisation of the City of

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<sup>2258</sup> MNHA archives, unnumbered folder (Bulletin de Documentation 1945-59), Bulletin de documentation no. 4, 1958, p. 16.

<sup>2259</sup> Guillaume Konsbruck, ‘Préface’, in *Le pavillon du Grand-Duché de Luxembourg à l’Exposition Universelle et Internationale de Bruxelles 1958*, ed. Joseph Petit (Luxembourg: Imprimerie Bourg-Bourger, 1958), 13.

<sup>2260</sup> D. de Wouters d’Oplinter, ‘Brussels 1958: “Balance Sheet for a More Human World”’, *The UNESCO Courier*, July 1957, 4.

<sup>2261</sup> Joseph Petit, ed., *Le pavillon du Grand-Duché de Luxembourg à l’Exposition Universelle et Internationale de Bruxelles 1958* (Luxembourg: Imprimerie Bourg-Bourger, 1958), 21.

Luxembourg.<sup>2262</sup> Among the construction projections even figured the future bridge linking the city centre to the plateau of Kirchberg.<sup>2263</sup> Furthermore, the permanent committee (presided by Konsbruck) of 41 people included some members who were later involved in the Millennium Celebration: Jérôme Anders, Paul Bastian, Robert Ginsbach, Joseph Hess, Pierre Linden, Henri Luja, Joseph Petit, Paul Weber, and Alphonse Weicker. This is an additional clue to the recurrence of some tropes.

The pavilion totalled 4,300 m<sup>2</sup> distributed over two buildings connected by a bridge. The design of the pavilion with its metallic supporting structure was to remind visitors of the Grand Duchy's international importance as a steel producer.<sup>2264</sup> Several artists contributed with artworks, which were more or less prominently exposed. Except for one artist, everyone had exhibited once or several times at the biennials in São Paulo and Venice in the 1950s and 1960s. Paintings by Will Dahlem (São Paulo 1953), Henri Dillenbourg (São Paulo 1953, 1961, 1967), François Gillen (São Paulo 1953, 1969), Mett Hoffmann (São Paulo 1955, 1967), Jean-Pierre Junius (São Paulo 1955, 1965), Coryse Kieffer (São Paulo 1955), Joseph Probst (São Paulo 1953, 1965), Michel Stoffel (São Paulo 1953, 1957), and Lou Theisen decorated the walls of the meeting room.<sup>2265</sup> A couple of sculptures by Lucien Wercollier (São Paulo 1953, 1969) were exposed, one of which assembled with steel beams. Frantz Kinnen (São Paulo 1953, 1957) and François Gillen contributed with glassworks depicting agricultural and religious motives, respectively. A bust representing the grand duchess Charlotte by Auguste Trémont (Venice 1956) was placed in the entrance hall.<sup>2266</sup> The official description of the smaller building was reminiscent of the landscape discourse of the interwar period: “[...] the visitors can stroll in front of photos showing the varied but always harmonious aspects of a country that, on a minimum of territory, encompasses an impressive series of landscapes, sometimes calm, sometimes agitated.”<sup>2267</sup>

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<sup>2262</sup> MNHA archives, unnumbered folder (Bulletin de Documentation 1945-59), Bulletin de documentation no. 4, 1958, p. 16.

<sup>2263</sup> Mousset et al., *Un petit parmi les grands*, 251.

<sup>2264</sup> Mousset et al., 250.

<sup>2265</sup> Petit, *Le pavillon du Grand-Duché de Luxembourg à l'Exposition Universelle et Internationale de Bruxelles 1958*, 62.

<sup>2266</sup> MNHA archives, unnumbered folder (Bulletin de Documentation 1945-59), Bulletin de documentation no. 4, 1958, p. 16-17.

<sup>2267</sup> Own translation. “[...] le visiteur peut s'y reposer ou défiler devant les photographies qui montrent les aspects variés, mais toujours harmonieux d'un pays qui, sur un minimum de territoire, réunit une suite impressionnante de paysages aux lignes tantôt calmes, tantôt mouvementées.” (MNHA archives, unnumbered folder (Bulletin de Documentation 1945-59), Bulletin de documentation no. 4, 1958, p. 17).

The pavilion was inaugurated on 17 April 1958.<sup>2268</sup> According to the government news bulletin, it attracted ca. 170,000 visitors. This number led the government to vaunt that the “Grand Duchy is probably the only country in the world having achieved such a high frequency of visits relative to its population number. This record could be attributed to the short distance between Luxembourg and the Belgian capital and to the feeling of solidarity that links it to its big economic partner.”<sup>2269</sup> Used for propagandistic purposes, the calculation on which the statistics are based needs to be relativized. As Luxembourg was a country of a small population, the frequency was obviously higher than for pavilions of large countries. It would have been more accurate to calculate the visitors of the Luxembourg pavilion relative to the total number of visitors of the international exhibition.

For the Brussels Fair, the government commissioned the movie *Luxembourg 1958* by Philippe and Nicole Schneider: a portrait of Luxembourg, its landscapes and its castles, but also of the economic and European dimension of Luxembourg (ECCS). Joseph Petit edited a publication about the Luxembourg pavilion.<sup>2270</sup> The economic links between Luxembourg and Belgium, officialised shortly after the First World War, were particularly highlighted when legitimising Luxembourg’s participation. Luxembourg, “the loyal economic partner of the last 35 years” as Konsbruck noted, had been the first country to be invited by Belgium for the fair.<sup>2271</sup> Following Petit’s description, the pavilion incorporated such themes like Europe and Benelux, the steel production (“The steel constitutes the main element”<sup>2272</sup>), the dynasty and the national history. Indeed, the last two themes were addressed in the same section of the pavilion, which hints at the traditional and conservative historiography that dominated Luxembourg’s self-presentation. For Joseph Petit, the “traditional loyalty to the sovereigns

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<sup>2268</sup> MNHA archives, unnumbered folder (*Bulletin de Documentation 1945-59*), *Bulletin de documentation* no. 4, 1958, p. 17.

<sup>2269</sup> Own translation. “Le Grand-Duché est probablement le seul pays du monde ayant atteint une si grande fréquence de visites relatives au nombre de sa population. On peut attribuer ce record d’une part à la courte distance qui le sépare de la capitale belge, d’autre part au sentiment de solidarité qui le lie à son grand partenaire économique.” (MNHA archives, unnumbered folder (*Bulletin de Documentation 1945-59*), *Bulletin de documentation* no. 9-10, 1958, p. 16).

<sup>2270</sup> André Linden has analysed the brochure in more detail than I do it in my study. Furthermore, it should be noted that Carlo Hemmer and Marcel Schroeder published the book *Aspects du Luxembourg*, also in the context of the Brussels fair (André Linden, “Nous aurions pu et dû le dire avec plus de fleurs”. Mises au point à l’ombre de l’Atomium’, in *Un petit parmi les grands: Le Luxembourg aux expositions universelles de Londres à Shanghai (1851-2010)*, ed. Jean-Luc Mousset and Ulrike Degen, Publications du Musée national d’histoire et d’art Luxembourg 11 [Luxembourg: Musée national d’histoire et d’art, 2010], 336–345).

<sup>2271</sup> Konsbruck, ‘Préface’, 13.

<sup>2272</sup> Own translation. “L’acier constitue l’élément principal.” (Petit, *Le pavillon du Grand-Duché de Luxembourg à l’Exposition Universelle et Internationale de Bruxelles 1958*, 23).

who bore the name of Luxembourg in the millennial history of the country” is a “truth” conveyed by the country’s history.<sup>2273</sup> The Christian tradition, through Echternach and Saint Willibrord, was part of such a worldview. A specific section was dedicated to Luxembourg’s role in the European construction process. “Au service de l’Europe,” as Petit entitled his chapter about the European Communities and the Council of Europe. In the tradition of Luxembourg’s self-perception as a nationalised intermediate space, Petit highlighted Luxembourg’s place in the “heart of Europe”, “between two worlds”, “an international meeting space”, “a crossroad of peoples”. “The traditional bilingualism,” Petit continued in his praise, “supports the country in getting acquainted with the understanding of the very different human mentalities beyond its borders in both directions and who have so often fought each other [...].”<sup>2274</sup>

Considering the development and initiatives retraced in the current sub-section, and despite Luxembourg’s limited resources, the country deployed more efforts in cultural diplomacy than it had done before the Second World War. Luxembourg’s embassies acted as relays of national culture. The end of the neutrality status and the development of new international organisations certainly contributed to the intensification after the war. The cultural relations of Luxembourg in the post-war period were, in part, influenced by the optics of the Cold War. The bilateral agreements and the conventions were instruments of intergovernmental collaboration or multilateral cooperation. The international organisations exerted a visible impact on Luxembourg’s diplomatic ties. The geographical horizon extended beyond the neighbouring countries, but without officially including Germany. The impact of the cultural agreements and the international organisations might not have been considerable, at least in the early years of the post-war period. However, they did not remain without effect. Within the framework of cultural agreements, Luxembourg could disseminate its culture abroad. The membership in

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<sup>2273</sup> Own translation. “Il s’y exprime une vérité qui se dégage de l’histoire du pays: la fidélité traditionnelle à la personne des Souverains qui ont porté le nom de Luxembourg dans l’histoire millénaire du pays, depuis sa fondation en 963 par le Comte d’Ardenne Sigefroi jusqu’à nos jours.” (Petit, 28).

<sup>2274</sup> Own translation. “C’est aujourd’hui, cette vieille terre historique de Luxembourg, au cœur de l’Europe entre deux mondes, le monde germanique et le monde celto-latin, aux portes de quatre nations, continue à jouer le rôle que l’Histoire semble lui avoir départi. C’est maintenant et ce fut toujours un lieu de rencontre international, un carrefour des peuples. Le bilinguisme traditionnel aide le pays à s’initier à la compréhension des mentalités humaines très différentes qui se sont développées de part et d’autre de ses frontières et qui, au cours de l’histoire, se sont si souvent dressées les unes contre les autres avec la volonté de se détruire.” (Petit, 52).

international organisations did not only entail the implementation of further conventions and international agreements, but had real advantages, such as the organisation of exhibitions.<sup>2275</sup>

To frame Luxembourg's cultural exchanges, we can draw from distinctions and categorisations made in the field of international relations. Cultural exchanges in general (encompassing cultural diplomacy) can be considered by distinguishing, for instance, "organised cultural exchanges" and "informal cultural exchanges".<sup>2276</sup> This sub-section focused on the first aspect: cultural treaties and mixed commissions, and the participation of the government in international organisations. Informal exchanges, as we have seen during the interwar period with the case of youth travels organised by Germany, continued in the post-war period through exchanges between associations, for instance. However, it is less clear whether Luxembourg's participation at the biennials in São Paulo and Venice were organised or informal cultural exchanges. Possibly, the reality lies somewhere in between. Joseph-Emile Muller coordinated the Luxembourgish section and exchanged with the organisers. The participation was not part of any cultural agreement. In this sense, it was less organised than the notion implies. On the other hand, the communication was channelled, in part, through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the consul of Luxembourg in São Paulo. Muller had to consult with the minister of arts and sciences/cultural affairs. From this perspective, the participation certainly encompassed an organised dimension.

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<sup>2275</sup> An example is, for instance, the organization of a Leonardo Da Vinci exhibition, composed of reproductions, in the State Museum and in Esch-sur-Alzette in 1952. The UNESCO offered the acquisition of the reproduced works (ANLux, MEN-0196, Letter from the minister of national education to the directors of educational institutions, 13/01/1953).

<sup>2276</sup> Frank, 'Culture et relations internationales: les diplomatisations culturelles', 373.

### V.3. Answering the Public Call: the State Museums after 1945



Fig. 83: The State Museums and the Marché-aux-Poissons in 1965. Source: MNHA photo archives, A. Biver, 1965.

The State Museum centralises, conserves and exhibits, with an educational aim, the treasures that constitute our cultural heritage. On the other hand, it connects Luxembourgers with archaeology, art, history and sciences from abroad. This double aim is achieved through exhibitions, conferences and publications.<sup>2277</sup>

This description of the museum's mission was drawn by Joseph Meyers in 1950. By that time, after a hundred years of pleas, hopes, discarded projects and delays, the museum had opened to the public, which entailed an extension of its missions. The conservation of objects was not the sole issue occupying the custodians' minds, it was also the relationship between the museum and its visitors. Indeed, the museum developed into an educational institution for the nation. Unfortunately, literature on the history of museums in the 20<sup>th</sup> century pales in comparison with the amount of studies dedicated to earlier centuries. This presents an

<sup>2277</sup> Own translation. "Le Musée de l'Etat centralise, il conserve et met en valeur, dans un but éducatif, les trésors qui constituent notre patrimoine culturel. D'autre part, il fait entrer les Luxembourgeois en contact avec l'archéologie, l'art, l'histoire et les sciences de l'étranger. Ce double but est atteint par des expositions, par des conférences et des publications." (Joseph Meyers, *Archéologie, histoire, folklore* [Luxembourg: P. Linden, 1950], 2).

additional challenge in embedding the history of the State Museums after 1945 in an international context. However, a very short overview on the development of museums after the war will be provided.

During the Second World War, bombardments of cities caused considerable destruction to military and civilian targets, besides the innumerable human losses. Cultural institutions were not left unscathed. In the immediate post-war period, the reconstruction of destroyed cultural heritage proceeded without profound reflections on the principles. The reconstruction of museums entailed changes to a limited extent. At least until the 1960s, museums seemed to be disconnected from public interests and lacked adequate funding. The British Museum could only reopen its Duveen galleries in 1962; the Museumsinsel in East Berlin was left in a derelict state until the 1980s.<sup>2278</sup> Dominique Poulot has summarised the development of museums in the post-war period as follows:

The changes in the latest generation of museums are due, altogether, to the multiplication of establishments, the diversification of their collections, the renewal of their architecture, the development of their research tools, the professionalisation of their staff, and the emergence of management and organisation concerns.<sup>2279</sup>

The most decisive change, according to Poulot, concerned the new relationship between museums and their publics. Not only did the number of visitors increase, but since the 1960s in France (much earlier in the United States), new discourses about visitors appeared. Education programmes were implemented and reflections about democratisation made. Exemplified by the study *L'Amour de l'art* by Bourdieu and Darbel, social sciences caught up with questions related to the public.<sup>2280</sup>

The museum landscapes were marked by other developments. Not all of them were the same everywhere. In the European Communist countries, national heritage merged folklore, popular arts and traditions with a political project.<sup>2281</sup> Decolonisation contributed to the disappearance of former empires. The collections of museums in metropolises, such as in Paris or in London, were enriched with objects purloined from former colonial territories. Postcolonial studies contributed to question Western views on non-Western societies. Calls for decolonising

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<sup>2278</sup> Poulot, *Patrimoine et musées*, 156–157.

<sup>2279</sup> “Les mutations des musées dans leur dernière génération tiennent, tout ensemble, à la multiplication des établissements, à la diversification de leurs collections, au renouvellement de leurs architectures, à l’essor de leurs outils de recherche, à la professionnalisation de leurs personnels, à l’apparition de préoccupations de gestion et d’organisation.” (Dominique Poulot, *Une histoire des musées de France: XVIIIe - XXe siècle* [Paris: La Découverte, 2008], 170).

<sup>2280</sup> Poulot, 171.

<sup>2281</sup> Poulot, *Patrimoine et musées*, 157–158.

museums and related debates have not lost relevance in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, as more recent debates show.<sup>2282</sup>

In addition, post-war museums were subject to an internationalisation through the development of organisations, sometimes with predecessors in the interwar period. Besides the UNESCO covering areas of importance to museums, the International Council of Museums (ICOM) was established in Paris in 1947, under the impetus of the director of the Louvre Georges Salles.<sup>2283</sup> Since then, it has been an important space of discussion for the definition of museums. Another organisation dedicated to monuments and sites was founded in 1964/1965: the International Council for Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS). The Belgian art historian Raymond Lemaire largely contributed to its creation.<sup>2284</sup>

Unlike many of its counterparts in Europe, the museum in Luxembourg survived the war without considerable damages to the building or the collections.<sup>2285</sup> As the construction works were halted during the occupation period, much of the interior of the museum remained a construction site. It took several years until the collections of the museum became permanently accessible to the public. Invoking the trope of the patriotic self, the custodians Heuertz and Meyers stated that they “thought adopting a patriotic attitude” in “not insisting too much on the restoration of the building at a moment when so many fellow countrymen had no shelter.”<sup>2286</sup> However, until the official opening in 1948/1949, some rooms were used for temporary exhibitions.

Apparently, the wish to hasten the opening of the museum was not unanimous among politicians. In 1947, for unknown reasons, the second section of the Chamber of Deputies suggested removing the budget line reserved for the accomplishment of the construction works. The Commission of National Monuments and Sites (Commission des sites et monuments nationaux, COSIMO) vividly opposed this idea and urged the minister for national education

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<sup>2282</sup> Hrag Vartanian, ‘Growing Coalition Calls Brooklyn Museum “Out of Touch” and Demands Decolonization Commission’, Hyperallergic, April 2018, <https://hyperallergic.com/437542/growing-coalition-calls-brooklyn-museum-out-of-touch-and-demands-decolonization-commission/>.

<sup>2283</sup> Poulot, *Patrimoine et musées*, 159.

<sup>2284</sup> Poulot, 160.

<sup>2285</sup> MNHA archives, separate shelf, unnumbered folder (Musée d’histoire. Correspondance Générale – Lettres envoyées), Letter from Joseph Meyers to S. Gille-Delafon, 28/02/1949). The glassed roof was not watertight and some of the windows were broken due to shrapnel from the aerial defence and bullets (MNHA archives, separate shelf, unnumbered folder (Correspondance administrative. Lettres envoyées), Letter from Marcel Heuertz to Hubert Schumacher, 17/05/1946).

<sup>2286</sup> “Les conservateurs ont cru prendre une attitude patriotique bien défendable en n’insistant pas trop sur la remise en état du bâtiment à un moment où tant de compatriotes n’ont pas encore de toit sur la tête.” (MNHA archives, separate shelf, unnumbered folder (Correspondance administrative. Lettres envoyées), Letter from Marcel Heuertz and Joseph Meyers to Nicolas Margue, 21/03/1946).

to ignore it. The delay “would turn the museum into the laughingstock of the country and of foreign scientific circles,” the president of the COSIMO warned. Tourists were “eager to see the collections”; historians, archaeologists, museologists who visited the museum were “surprised that the rich collections are not shown to the public”.<sup>2287</sup>

Over the years, smaller sections of the State Museums were progressively opened. Despite having a folklore section since 1935, the exhibition of the collection was delayed. The section, directed by Joseph Hess, was inaugurated on 29 July 1948. Meyers used this occasion to announce the future opening of other sections. Hess, in his speech, highlighted the educational value of the collection, as well as the importance to national identity:

[...] to attract visitors, to awaken and maintain the interest of those of us who are more than ever aware of forming an ethnographic entity, with its own individuality and life; to enable them to draw from an honourable past the rejuvenating sap of their patriotic enthusiasm; to link man to his ancestors in order to give him a sense of responsibility towards those who are no longer with us and those who will come.<sup>2288</sup>

This fitted within the larger context of national reconstruction and democratic rationales. Hess hoped that the museum would soon be completed, “which would allow Luxembourg to claim its place among the nations who take pride in worthily conserving their cultural and artistic heritage.”<sup>2289</sup> By February 1949, most of the collections were accessible: mineralogy, palaeontology, archaeology; prehistorical, Gallo-Roman, medieval and modern collections, ethnography, arms and uniforms, iconographic documentation, and the library.<sup>2290</sup> The official inauguration of the State Museum was celebrated on 20 February 1949. Over the decades, new rooms were opened and old ones refurbished, such as in 1966.<sup>2291</sup> “More than twenty years

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<sup>2287</sup> MNHA archives, unnumbered folder (Correspondance administrative. Lettres reçues), Letter from the President of the Commission des Sites et Monuments nationaux to the minister for national education, 17/03/1947.

<sup>2288</sup> “[...] attirer les visiteurs, éveiller et entretenir l’intérêt de ceux de chez nous qui plus que jamais ont conscience de former une entité ethnographique, ayant son individualité et sa vie propre; leur permettre de puiser dans un passé honorable la sève rajeunissante de leur enthousiasme patriotique; rattacher l’homme à ses ancêtres pour lui donner le sens de la responsabilité vis-à-vis de ceux qui ne sont plus et de ceux qui vont venir.” (MNHA archives, unnumbered folder (*Bulletin de Documentation 1945-59*), *Bulletin de documentation* no. 7 (1948), p. 115).

<sup>2289</sup> MNHA archives, unnumbered folder (*Bulletin de Documentation 1945-59*), *Bulletin de documentation* no. 7 (1948), p. 115.

<sup>2290</sup> MNHA archives, separate shelf, unnumbered folder (Musée d’histoire. Correspondance Générale – Lettres envoyées), Letter from Joseph Meyers to S. Gille-Delafon, 28/02/1949.

<sup>2291</sup> The second Joseph Kutter room was inaugurated in January 1966 (MNHA archives, unnumbered folder (*Bulletin de Documentation 1945-59*), *Bulletin de documentation* no. 1 (1966), p. 31); in December 1966, new rooms of the archaeological section were opened (MNHA archives, unnumbered folder (*Bulletin de Documentation 1945-59*), *Bulletin de documentation* no. 16, 1967, p. 45).

ago,” the *Luxemburger Wort* observed in May 1949, “a Luxembourgish minister of arts and sciences thought that the Fish Market, at the border of the old city, was an ideal location for a Luxembourgish museum. He was right.”<sup>2292</sup> According to the anonymous author, the minister had a less fortunate idea of buying the house and installing a museum in it. “For half the money and much faster a new museum could have been constructed on the Altmünster Plateau.” Nevertheless, the museum was accomplished, “splendidly installed, very modern, scientifically and artistically arranged.”<sup>2293</sup>

Responding to democratisation attempts, the entrance to the museum was free on Thursdays and Sundays. According to a document of 1949, it was open from 10 to 12 in the morning and from 3 to 6 in the afternoon.<sup>2294</sup> It did not take long until voices called for the extension of the opening hours. The president of the National Tourist Office suggested the opening of the museum from 8 to 10 in the evening. The minister was rather reluctant, but offered to test it during the travel season, from 15 July to 15 August.<sup>2295</sup> In the 1960s, the opening hours were still the same than in 1949. The museum was closed on Mondays and Sunday mornings.<sup>2296</sup> Democratisation had its limits. Apparently, even the national public did not flock (voluntarily) in great numbers to the new building, at least according to the following comment in the *Luxemburger Wort*:

Numerous foreigners really visit it and are amazed and full of praise. Do you know how many Luxembourgers have visited our museum at the Fish Market in the last six months? Not even two hundred, excluding many school classes. No further comment!<sup>2297</sup>

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<sup>2292</sup> Own translation. “Vor zwanzig und mehr Jahren war einmal ein luxemburgischer Minister für Kunst und Wissenschaft auf den Gedanken gekommen, der Fischmarkt, am Ausgangspunkt der alten Stadt, sei eine ideale Lage für ein luxemburgisches Museum. Der Gedanke war richtig.”

<sup>2293</sup> ‘A Propos: Nationalmuseum am Fischmarkt’, *Luxemburger Wort*, August 1949.

<sup>2294</sup> MNHA archives, unnumbered folder (*Bulletin de Documentation 1945-59*), *Bulletin de documentation* no. 7 (1949), p. 117.

<sup>2295</sup> MNHA archives, unnumbered folder (*Correspondance administrative. Lettres reçues*), Letter from Pierre Frieden to the president of the Office National du Tourisme, 19/05/1950.

<sup>2296</sup> Cosyn and Koltz, *La ville millénaire de Luxembourg*, 135.

<sup>2297</sup> Own translation. “Fremde besuchen es tatsächlich in großer Zahl und sind des Staunens wie des Lobes voll. Wissen Sie, wieviel Luxemburger seit einem halben Jahr unser Landesmuseum am Fischmarkt besucht haben? Nicht ganz zweihundert, von etlichen Schulklassen abgesehen. Ohne weiteren Kommentar!” (‘A Propos: Nationalmuseum am Fischmarkt’).



Fig. 84: Exhibition room on the Frankish period with seals and a model of the fortress. The left map on the wall in the back is probably referring to the period of John of Luxembourg (his name is indicated in the lower left corner). Source: MNHA photo archives, *Epoque franque. Sceaux Maquette des fortifications* by the Office du Film scolaire, undated [1950].

### V.3.1. An institution for the people: democratisation and education

As analysed in the previous chapter, the German administration reflected about visitors' experiences. The aim consisted in maximising the effect and the message of the permanent exhibition. The museum was undoubtedly a cultural institution, but it was also a cultural propaganda tool. The post-war context changed the premises on which the museum was based. Democratic values, it was assumed, needed to be disseminated to avoid another war. The speeches were imbued with reflections about democratic values and the need to strengthen them. The museum became part of democratic education. In the interwar period, the authorities were mainly preoccupied with the creation of a museum for the nation. After the war, once the museum became publicly accessible, the nation finally had its museum. The institution extended its missions. Education and sensitisation were added to conservation, though the museology had not yet put visitors at the centre of its reflections and focused on objects instead.

The shift towards outreach was visible in the objectives of the Société des Amis des Musées. The committee that convened in 1946 paid particular attention to the contact between the "Luxembourgish public" and the museums, and to concede to the museum all the importance

for the touristic life of capital and country.<sup>2298</sup> Possibly, these objectives were explicitly mentioned because the museum was organising temporary exhibitions at the time. Yet, it also hints at an increasing interest in cultural institutions as centres of education for the national community. Foreign residents and migrants in Luxembourg were not considered in the reflections. The fact that this objective was discussed by the society's committee, which included the custodians of the State Museum and other representatives of the political and cultural fields, illustrates that such ideas circulated among the elites.

The museum organised temporary exhibitions before the official opening in 1949. The first one was mounted in March 1945, dedicated to drafts of post stamps by the Post and Telegraph Administration. In total, the State Museum hosted four temporary exhibitions in 1945.<sup>2299</sup> For Heuertz and Meyers, this was an opportunity to endorse as early as possible the museum's role of "instruction and education of the public."<sup>2300</sup> Hence, they considered that, in a certain sense, "the museum has always been accessible to the public" since the end of the war. They proudly announced that the museum was visited by around 10,000 people until March 1946.<sup>2301</sup> In 1949, according to Meyers' claims, more than 21,000 people stepped into the museum. With 5,400 entries, pupils represented a considerable share of the visitors.<sup>2302</sup> This fact strengthens the perception of the museum as an educational institution, though these numbers did not account for unique entries.

Despite the consideration of the visitors in the discourse surrounding the museum, critical approaches were not developed, nor was a serious interest in radically changing traditional views and premises perceptible. The "public" became a static category; it was a rough diamond that needed to be polished through education. It was not an independent cultural actor, but a mere receiver of high culture. Furthermore, the "public" could also be used as an argument to

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<sup>2298</sup> "[...] établir le contact entre le public luxembourgeois et les Musées dans une interaction aussi féconde que possible pour les deux parties ; donner aux Musées toute leur importance dans la vie touristique de notre capitale et de notre pays." MNHA archives, D-00094, Document concerning the Société des Amis des Musées, undated [1946].

<sup>2299</sup> MNHA archives, separate shelf, unnumbered folder (Correspondance administrative. Lettres envoyées), Letter from Marcel Heuertz and Joseph Meyers to Nicolas Margue, 21/03/1946.

<sup>2300</sup> "afin que les Musées puissent jouer dès à présent leur rôle d'instruction et d'éducation vis-à-vis du public" (MNHA archives, separate shelf, unnumbered folder (Correspondance administrative. Lettres envoyées), Letter from Marcel Heuertz and Joseph Meyers to Nicolas Margue, 21/03/1946).

<sup>2301</sup> MNHA archives, separate shelf, unnumbered folder (Musée d'histoire. Correspondance Générale – Lettres envoyées), Letter from Joseph Meyers to a donator, 17/12/1945.

<sup>2302</sup> Meyers, *Archéologie, histoire, folklore*, 7.

strengthen the position of the institution or cement certain claims. Such was the case in a request to reclaim artworks loaned to various state administrations.<sup>2303</sup>

In order to coordinate the sensitization of the “public” to high culture and ensure its education, the State Museums created the Service d’éducation esthétique in 1945, as one of six special divisions of the museum. Until 1950, it had organised several dozens of exhibitions.<sup>2304</sup> It was headed by the art critic Joseph-Emile Muller (1911-1999), an avid supporter of the School of Paris and a tireless visitor of the French capital. After the war, Pierre Frieden, known for his interest in culture and education, entrusted Muller with the creation of an educational service. Later, Muller directed the Fine Arts Section of the History and Art Museum. Until 1976, he organised exhibitions and guided tours, offered introductions to modern art, held lectures in Luxembourg and abroad (Brussels, Paris, Moscow and Leningrad).<sup>2305</sup> In Muller’s own view, the service introduced the population to art and contributed to the dissemination of “the appreciation for art” (“*sens de l’art*”). As such, the service relied on replicas and reproductions.<sup>2306</sup> According to a publication by the National History and Art Museum in 1992, the educational service practically ceased to exist at the end of the 1970s, but was recreated in 1982.<sup>2307</sup> This was possibly linked to Muller’s retirement in 1976.

Perhaps the most striking aspect is Muller’s virtual non-existence in the cultural society before the war, at least in all the examples and case studies examined so far. In 1929, he started his professional career in the Administration for Pension and Disability Insurances. He was an autodidact, wrote poems, was a member of the *Association pour l’éducation populaire* of

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<sup>2303</sup> MNHA archives, D-00002, *Avertissement* by Joseph Meyers, undated [between 1960 and 1964]. In the 1960s, Pierre Grégoire introduced a rule according to which original artworks were not to be used to decorate public offices, “where they remain inaccessible to the public and in permanent danger.” Except for the explicit wish of the minister, the museum only loaned reproductions for the decoration of offices. Original text: “D’ailleurs, selon le principe établi par Monsieur le Ministre des Affaires Culturelles, les œuvres originales ne sont pas destinées à décorer les bureaux, où elles restent inaccessibles au public et sont en danger permanent. Le bien-fondé de ce principe a été accentué récemment lorsqu’une enquête menée par le Musée sur ses tableaux, objets d’art et meubles prêtés aux administrations, s’est soldé par un résultat franchement négatif. Sauf lorsqu’il s’est agi d’un vœu exprès de Monsieur le Ministre, le Musée n’a plus prêté les derniers temps que des reproductions pour la décoration des bureaux.” (MNHA archives, D-00096, Note by Gérard Thill to the minister of cultural affairs, 17/01/1967).

<sup>2304</sup> Meyers, *Archéologie, histoire, folklore*, 7. Actually, Meyers does not use the official name, but designates it as the “service éducatif” (“educational service”).

<sup>2305</sup> Gast Mannes and Sandra Schmit, ‘Joseph-Émile Muller’, Luxemburger Autorenlexikon, accessed 28 January 2020, <https://www.autorenlexikon.lu/page/author/496/4967/FRE/index.html>.

<sup>2306</sup> ANLux, MEN-1659, Joseph-Emile Muller’s intervention at the International Congress of Artistic Education, appended to his letter to the minister of national education, 25/07/1947.

<sup>2307</sup> Edmond Thill, ‘Le musée et l’action éducative’, *Musée info : bulletin d’information du Musée national d’histoire et d’art*, March 1992, 3.

Luxembourg City and organised cultural activities.<sup>2308</sup> According to Joseph Probst, a personal friend of Muller's, as soon as he was entrusted with the educational service, Muller "led numerous guided tours in schools and in the museum. In addition, [he held] conference cycles or lectures in Luxembourg and larger cities in the country by using slides." Probst estimated the amount of such "performances" in the hundreds.<sup>2309</sup> The custodian and museum director Gérard Thill described Muller as a fine pedagogue and an outstanding lecturer:

Thanks to his well-structured presentation, to his clear ideas, to his right choice of words and to his distinct manner of speaking, but also thanks to his warm and persuasive tone with which he commented especially well-chosen slides, Mr Muller knew how to attract the audience from the beginning until the end of an evening. Of course, some smiled at his "hobby", if they were not accusing him of his "missionary" or "sectarian" spirit; they barely forgave him for his "preconceived" ideas in favour of modern art, as they said. One might wonder if sometimes these opponents had not been filled with unease for succumbing to arguments that were difficult to reject.<sup>2310</sup>

A critical biography of Muller – elucidating different perspectives and opinions on his career – remains to be written. The book from which the previous quotes are extracted was published in 1987. Muller was still alive (he died in 1999) and his personal friends contributed to the anthology. The authors referred to opponents and critics of Muller, but refrained from mentioning names. Eulogies prevailed. The quarrel between Muller and the painter Théo Kerg in the late 1940s and the 1950s is not mentioned in the volume, for instance. The background of this quarrel, not limited to purely professional reasons, has not yet been analysed. According to Kerg, Muller sabotaged him and told gallerists not to exhibit his work; Muller refuted these accusations and hinted at Kerg's behaviour and his past during the German occupation.<sup>2311</sup> In fact, whereas Kerg did not leave Luxembourg, Muller was deported to Silesia. The tensions

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<sup>2308</sup> Mannes and Schmit, 'Joseph-Émile Muller'.

<sup>2309</sup> Joseph Probst, 'Erlebte Freundschaft', in *Joseph-Emile Muller: Témoignages, Choix de textes, Images*, ed. Section des arts et des lettres de l'Institut Grand-Ducal (Luxembourg: Section des arts et des lettres de l'Institut grand-ducal, 1987), 19.

<sup>2310</sup> Own translation. "Grâce à son exposé bien structuré, à ses idées claires, à son verbe juste et à son élocution nette, mais grâce aussi au ton chaleureux et persuasif qu'il mit à commenter notamment ses diapositives toujours bien choisies, M. Muller savait s'attacher ses auditeurs du début jusqu'à la fin de la soirée. Bien sûr, il y en eut quelques-uns parmi eux qui souriaient de son « dada », s'ils n'allait pas jusqu'à lui reprocher son esprit « missionnaire » ou « sectaire » ; ils ne lui pardonnaient guère ses idées « préconçues » en faveur de l'art moderne, comme ils disaient. On peut se demander si des fois ces détracteurs ne se sentaient pas mal à l'aise pour avoir failli succomber à une argumentation difficile à réfuter." (Gérard Thill, 'Joseph-Emile Muller, homme de musée', in *Joseph-Emile Muller: Témoignages, Choix de textes, Images*, ed. Section des arts et des lettres de l'Institut Grand-Ducal [Luxembourg: Section des arts et des lettres de l'Institut grand-ducal, 1987], 27).

<sup>2311</sup> The related sources can be found in: ANLux, AE-11253.

between those who stayed and those who chose exile or considered themselves victims of deportations possibly influenced the personal relationship between both men.

Muller invested a lot of efforts to educate the younger generation. Responding to the new democratising mission of the museum, exhibitions were not only organised within its four walls, but also in other public institutions, namely schools. In 1947, an exhibition of paintings and drawings by French and Scottish children was shown in Dudelange, as well as at the museum. The surplus of the earnings was donated to the association Art à l'Ecole and destined to pupils of Esch and Dudelange who did not possess the financial means to buy brushes and colours.<sup>2312</sup> In a period of hardship, this exhibition fulfilled a social role.

The museum, Muller and his educational service certainly did not lack motivation to initiate young people to art. Yet, this “art” was still dominated by elitist visions of value and aesthetics. Education was anchored in ideas of “high culture”. Some rare examples in the museum’s history and events pull these visions explicitly to the fore. In 1947, at an international conference, Muller explained that exhibitions by the educational service placed reproductions of “fake and distorted paintings” next to “masterpieces” in order to “educate the taste and to ensure an as precise as possible comprehension of the quality of art”.<sup>2313</sup> In 1949, Muller and his service organised the exhibition *Konscht a Kitsch* (“Art and Kitsch”) with the aim to educate visitors in the correct distinction of good art from bad art. The show exhibited “reproductions of masterpieces” next to “mediocre and bad paintings”.<sup>2314</sup> Muller ensured that the exhibition would reach a wider and younger audience than if it had only been shown at the museum. In 1950, the exhibition was hosted in Luxembourg (by the Athenaeum), in Esch-sur-Alzette, in Diekirch and in Echternach. Muller offered tours and lectures. Of course, *Konscht a Kitsch* was not his only exhibition. In October 1950, he inaugurated the exhibition *L’art est l’homme ajouté à la Nature* with photos and reproductions of masterpieces. It sought to highlight the differences between artistic periods and the different concepts of art.<sup>2315</sup> In 1956, the

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<sup>2312</sup> MNHA archives, D-00032, Letter from Joseph-Emile Muller to Joseph Wagener, president of the association L’Art à l’Ecole, 30/04/1948.

<sup>2313</sup> “Pour éduquer le goût et assurer une intelligence aussi exacte que possible de la qualité en art, on place à côté des chefs d’œuvre, des chromos représentant la peinture contrefaite et faussée, ce qu’en allemand on appelle „Kitsch“.” (ANLux, MEN-1659, Joseph-Emile Muller’s intervention at the International Congress of Artistic Education, appended to his letter to the minister of national education, 25/07/1947).

<sup>2314</sup> MNHA archives, unnumbered folder (Expositions et projets 1959-1972), Press release from Joseph-Emile Muller to the newspaper offices, 03/11/1949.

<sup>2315</sup> MNHA archives, unnumbered folder (Bulletin de Documentation 1945-59), Bulletin de documentation no. 10 (1950), p. 198.

educational service organised *Confrontations*. It followed a similar educational logic, with reproductions of “masterpieces” juxtaposed to highlight similarities and differences.<sup>2316</sup>

In addition to traditional means of presentation, the educational service discovered a new medium to refine the public’s taste for Fine Arts: films.<sup>2317</sup> Projections took place in schools or in cinemas. In October 1947, Muller’s service organised a session of four movies at the Cinéma Marivaux about “rediscovered art”, Henri Matisse, Aristide Maillol and Aubusson (probably the textile industry of the French town). Muller held a lecture to complement the programme. The profit was donated to the Oeuvre des Pupilles de la Nation.<sup>2318</sup> In total, 286 tickets were sold.<sup>2319</sup> The newspaper *Tageblatt* positively commented on the event. “Everyone was excited,” the author observed.<sup>2320</sup> The movies were also shown in Esch at Cinéma Rex. In 1950, the Service d’éducation esthétique organised, together with the *Office du Film scolaire*, the projection of an art movie about Michelangelo in the Athenaeum.<sup>2321</sup> In the same year, a film about Rubens was shown in cinemas in Luxembourg, Esch, Dudelange and Diekirch.<sup>2322</sup>

The creation and the presence of the educational service at the State Museums was not at the origins of the democratic and educational vein as such, but it was an expression thereof and contributed to the democratisation of the institution. In the meantime, the museum and the elite were not ready to revise their definition of culture. The values underlying the educational offers were clearly defined from the top. Muller’s vision consisted in refining the taste that he and his peers determined. The only visible change concerned the name. The grand-ducal decree of 22 December 1961 officialised the creation of several special services within the museum, among which the “*service spécial d’éducation artistique et de documentation artistique*” (“special service of art education and documentation”).<sup>2323</sup>

The law of 1960 on the organisation of the State Museum finally established a clear framework for the museum. The *exposé des motifs* by Pierre Frieden and Pierre Werner

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<sup>2316</sup> MNHA archives, D-00159, Press release by Joseph-Emile Muller, 08/11/1956.

<sup>2317</sup> Though it can be legitimately argued that movies were also an art – to which I certainly do not disagree – the use of movies in the present example (and also in other examples of the present study), was more in the sense of a medium than an artistic expression.

<sup>2318</sup> MNHA archives, D-00032, Press release of the State Museum, 29/09/1947.

<sup>2319</sup> MNHA archives, D-00032, *Déclaration*, 05/10/1947.

<sup>2320</sup> ‘Die Kunstdfilme im Cinéma Marivaux’, *Tageblatt*, October 1947.

<sup>2321</sup> MNHA archives, D-00029, Press release of the State Museum, 10/02/1950.

<sup>2322</sup> Various documents related to the projection of the movie about Rubens, for instance: MNHA archives, D-00029, Press release of the State Museum, 24/11/1950.

<sup>2323</sup> ‘Règlement grand-ducal du 22 décembre 1961 ayant pour objet de déterminer le nombre et l’organisation des services spéciaux, les attributions du personnel et les conditions de fonctionnement des Musées de l’Etat’, in *Mémorial A* (Luxembourg, n.d.), 1071,  
<http://legilux.public.lu/eli/etat/leg/rgd/1961/12/22/n1/jo>.

(minister of treasury) introducing the draft law highlighted the important role of the museums “in our cultural life” through the conservation and the knowledge transmitted to the public. The motives mentioned their value “for the education of the Luxembourgish public of all ages”.<sup>2324</sup>

### V.3.2. An institution for the nation: the persistence of the national idea

Museums convey an idea of the nation. The State Museums in Luxembourg are not an exception. They were not only an institution for the “public”, but also for a nation, to which this “public” presumably belonged. The national idea informed the acquisition, exhibition and organisation of the museum. Before the war, the projects and the construction of the national museum were embedded in the nation-building context. In the 1930s, the museum was embedded in the nationalist policies of the government. Ironically, the “nation” was not able to visit this museum. The main mission of the institution resided in the conservation of national heritage, until some future opening would allow Luxembourgers, beyond a small circle of erudite people, to contemplate the treasures of the past. The occupation period brought about the development of a new section dedicated to Fine Arts. Therefore, after the official opening of the museum in the post-war period, the museum did not only become a public institution in the broader sense, but also a more diverse institution concerning its collections.

The democratisation was not disconnected from the national mission. This was the case in both main sections, and it was in part a response to the wounds opened by the occupation. In 1946, the natural history section dedicated an exhibition to two important personalities of its history: the explorer Edouard Luja and the former custodian Victor Ferrant.<sup>2325</sup> According to Heuertz, Luja “collected during his travels to Africa and South America considerable material, which was sent to some of the most respected institutes abroad, in addition to the Museum of Luxembourg; we owe him a series of new species, vegetal as well as animal.”<sup>2326</sup> Victor Ferrant, on the other hand, “was the fortunate counterpart of the explorer,” as he completed the collections with insects and fossils. The aim of the exhibition in 1946 was clear: “bring public and national recognition to two men who honoured Luxembourgish science; one under the vast horizon of Africa and America, the other in the more limited environment of our small

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<sup>2324</sup> Chambre des députés, ‘Projet de loi ayant pour objet l’organisation des Musées de l’Etat’, 1957, 778.

<sup>2325</sup> MNHA archives, unnumbered folder (Bulletin de Documentation 1945-59), *Bulletin de documentation no. 8*, 1946, p. 17.

<sup>2326</sup> Own translation. “[Luja] a rassemblé pendant ses voyages en Afrique et Amérique du Sud un matériel considérable qui est allé alimenter, en plus du Musée de Luxembourg, quelques instituts des plus en vue de l’étranger; on lui doit toute une série d’espèces nouvelles, tant du règne végétal qu’animal.” (MNHA archives, unnumbered folder (Bulletin de Documentation 1945-59), *Bulletin de documentation no. 8*, 1946, p. 18).

fatherland and the modest setting of the museum laboratory.”<sup>2327</sup> In short, national recognition to national figures.

After the liberation, the museum building was used by the *Office des biens séquestrés* (Office of Sequestered Goods) as a deposit for various kinds of objects, such as paintings, reproductions and engravings. In September 1945, Georges Schmitt highlighted that more than a thousand objects had been stocked in the main hall of the museum, occupying a space that was urgently needed for other purposes.<sup>2328</sup> Schmitt suggested keeping only paintings of particular value and invoked, among other criteria, the national essence of objects. The promotion of national heritage (combined with high art) was certainly not limited to this letter. Many initiatives by the museum illustrate the pervasiveness of this trope.

Shortly after the liberation, the history and art section organised an exhibition dedicated to Joseph Kutter in January 1946. For the elite, the painter counted among the most important, if not the best, Luxembourgish contemporary artists. Schmitt had already expressed this view in one of his letters in the context of the restitution investigations, and did so again in a letter to the minister of national education in September 1945.<sup>2329</sup> In his reply, the minister complimented the museum on its initiative to “commemorate with a large retrospective exhibition the fifth anniversary of the death of our great painter Joseph Kutter.” Kutter’s paintings were not only an example of art perceived to be good, but, as the minister’s letter reveals, he played an important role in the national context: “Indeed, we could not commemorate in a better way the memory of an artist whose oeuvre has contributed above all to raise the international prestige of our country and of Luxembourgish painting.”<sup>2330</sup>

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<sup>2327</sup> Own translation. “Le Musée d’Histoire naturelle a tenu à rendre un hommage public et national aux deux hommes qui ont fait honneur à la science luxembourgeoise: l’un sous les vastes horizons de l’Afrique et de l’Amérique, l’autre dans le rayon plus étroit de notre petit patrie et le cadre modeste de son laboratoire de musée.” (MNHA archives, unnumbered folder (*Bulletin de Documentation* 1945-59), *Bulletin de documentation* no. 8, 1946, p. 18).

<sup>2328</sup> MNHA archives, separate shelf, unnumbered folder (Correspondance), Letter from Georges Schmitt to Joseph Wolter, 18/09/1945.

<sup>2329</sup> “Le 2 janvier prochain se renouvellera pour la cinquième fois le jour anniversaire de la mort du peintre luxembourgeois Joseph Kutter. La section des Beaux-Arts du Musée d’Histoire se propose de commémorer cette date par une grande exposition rétrospective de l’oeuvre du peintre. Elle entend y consacrer tous ses soins, afin de faire de cette manifestation une consécration officielle, digne de celui que l’on doit considérer comme le meilleur peintre luxembourgeois contemporain.” (ANLux, MEN-1659, Letter from Georges Schmitt to the minister of national education, 12/09/1945).

<sup>2330</sup> Own translation. “Nous ne saurions en effet d’une manière plus heureuse honorer la mémoire d’un artiste dont l’œuvre avant toute autre a grandement contribué à rehausser dans le monde le prestige de notre pays et de la peinture luxembourgeoise.” (MNHA archives, separate shelf, unnumbered folder (Exposition Kutter), Letter from the minister of arts and sciences to Georges Schmitt, 25/09/1945).

Schmitt, Meyers, Joseph-Emile Muller, Joseph Petit, Joseph Probst and Lucien Wercollier participated in the organising committee. Schmitt acted as the main coordinator of the exhibition. The honorary committee was composed of representatives of the political, economic and cultural spheres: Joseph Bech, Jean Brück (secretary general of the *Compagnie luxembourgeoise de radiodiffusion*), Paul Fieren (custodian at the Belgian Musées Royaux), Pierre Frieden, Joseph Funck, Paul Henckes, Nicolas Margue, Emile Marx (director of the *Nouveaux Cahiers Luxembourgeois*), Aline Mayrisch, Tony Neuman, Albert Nothumb, Ernest Schneider, Hubert Schumacher, Michel Stoffel, Robert Stumper, Joseph Tockert, a certain “Docteur Thurm”, Auguste Trémont, Paul Weber, Paul Wigreux.<sup>2331</sup>

The organisation of the Kutter exhibition begs the question why precisely this painter. The anniversary of his death and the pre-existing recognition of his artwork certainly contributed to the decision. Yet, his oeuvre was not only considered as an expression of high art (or elevated to the rank of high art), but it was additionally conceded national importance. Indeed, Kutter died in early 1941, i.e. the early phase of the occupation period. Unlike other artists, his reputation was not tainted by an endorsement of Nazi ideology or a (coerced) participation in a Nazi organisation. After Hitler’s seizure of power in Germany, Kutter was not allowed to exhibit there.<sup>2332</sup> Though his oeuvre was paradoxically rehabilitated in Luxembourg during the occupation,<sup>2333</sup> this happened after his death. In 1946, the Kutter exhibition allowed to bridge the occupation period and to reconnect with what had been before. In January 1961, the State Museum organised a new retrospective and commemorative exhibition dedicated to Kutter. At the inauguration, Minister Grégoire claimed that the painter “was a fellow countryman who honoured the homeland.”<sup>2334</sup>

The oeuvre of this painter was not only exhibited within national borders. Indeed, it became the subject of cultural diplomacy. After the exhibition in Luxembourg, a Kutter exhibition was organised in Brussels in May 1946. Schmitt hoped that his works could be shown in Paris, too. In March, the assistant-custodian contacted a French visitor, a certain Erlanger, director of the Association française d’action artistique, who had initially made this suggestion. It would, according to Schmitt, “respond to my secret ambition to receive for our fellow countryman a

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<sup>2331</sup> Various letters in: MNHA archives, unnumbered folder (Exposition Kutter).

<sup>2332</sup> Lorent, *Die nationalsozialistische Kunst- und Kulturpolitik im Großherzogtum Luxemburg 1934-1944*, 105.

<sup>2333</sup> Lorent, 266–267.

<sup>2334</sup> Own translation. “Le peintre que nous honorons, est un compatriote qui a bien mérité de la Patrie.” (MNHA archives, unnumbered folder (Bulletin de Documentation 1945-59), *Bulletin de documentation no. 1*, 1961, p. 11.)

more important consecration than [Kutter's] homeland could ever give him.”<sup>2335</sup> Eventually, Kutter was shown in Paris (in 1951), but also in The Hague. From December 1948 to January 1949, Amsterdam hosted a Kutter exhibition. According to the official state bulletin, “the exhibition attracted many visitors and the newspapers published extensive and enthusiastic articles.”<sup>2336</sup> Another exhibition took place in Leverkusen in February 1953. At the inauguration, the ambassador to Luxembourg in Bonn, Pierre Majérus, held a speech that could scarcely have been more illustrative of the idea of *Zwischenraum*. “We people of the border region,” he expounded with conviction, “have always widely opened our windows to East and West and, thanks to our geographical situation, we have the opportunity to participate in the cultural creation of the whole European space.”<sup>2337</sup> This would be part of the “*Volkscharakter*”, the ambassador explained. He considered Kutter to be “Luxembourger and European at the same time”<sup>2338</sup>. Majérus’ speech alluded to Luxembourg’s status as an intermediate space and combined it with the European idea. Though not confirmed, it seems that this exhibition was the first one to be organised in Germany after the war. The choice of words might not be a coincidence, though it remains difficult to evaluate. Compared to Nazi propaganda, it expressed the opposite of Nazi views, while using terms that were vaguely reminiscent: the term “*Grenzländer*” used by Majerus reminded of the “*Grenzland*”.

As with other personalities of national culture, a monument honouring Joseph Kutter, designed by Lucien Wercollier, was erected in 1969. The project was initiated by Kutter’s friends. A fundraising committee was constituted, composed of Joseph-Emile Muller, Tony Neuman, Norbert Stelmes, and Robert Stumper. The national importance of Kutter was symbolised by the grand duke’s patronage. A patronage committee reunited members of the government, Victor Bodson, Joseph Bech, the grand marshall of the Court, and the bishop of Luxembourg, among other people.<sup>2339</sup>

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<sup>2335</sup> MNHA archives, separate shelf, unnumbered folder (Exposition Kutter), Letter from Georges Schmitt to Erlanger, 26/03/1946.

<sup>2336</sup> Own translation. “L’exposition eut de nombreux visiteurs et les journaux lui consacrèrent de longs articles compréhensifs et enthousiastes.” (MNHA archives, unnumbered folder (Bulletin de Documentation 1945-59), *Bulletin de documentation no. 1*, 1949, p. 12).

<sup>2337</sup> Own translation. “Wir Grenzländer halten seit jeher unsere Fenster weit offen nach Ost und West und wir haben durch unsere geographische Lage Gelegenheit, teilzunehmen an dem Kulturschaffen des gesamten europäischen Raumes.” (MNHA archives, unnumbered folder (Bulletin de Documentation 1945-59), *Bulletin de documentation no. 1-3*, 1953, p. 27-28).

<sup>2338</sup> Own translation. “In diesem Sinne war auch der Maler Josef Kutter zugleich Luxemburger und Europäer.” (MNHA archives, unnumbered folder (Bulletin de Documentation 1945-59), *Bulletin de documentation no. 1-3*, 1953, p. 27-28).

<sup>2339</sup> MNHA archives, unnumbered folder (Bulletin de Documentation 1945-59), *Bulletin de documentation no. 5*, 1967, p. 55.

In the same year that the museum honoured Kutter with an exhibition and disseminated national high culture, it was also involved in the dissemination of a national history focused on John the Blind. As examined in a previous section, the remains of the Medieval king were transferred to Luxembourg in August 1946. As a national institution, the State Museums did not miss the opportunity to organise an exhibition, curated by Georges Schmitt.<sup>2340</sup> For the organisation, the museum relied on foreign institutions and launched an appeal to other countries. The National Library in Paris and the Royal Library in Brussels loaned manuscripts to the museum. The museum was supported by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the embassies in Paris and Brussels.

According to an official note, “it was evident that the History Museum of Luxembourg celebrated the return of John the Blind’s remains and the sixth centenary of the battle of Crécy with an exhibition dedicated to the memory of our most popular national hero.”<sup>2341</sup> The idea of “national hero” merely confirmed the elite’s discourse about John the Blind. The exhibition itself filled three rooms and was composed of a choice of books, images and objects. The third room addressed the “Luxembourg politics” of John, his iconography, his “eventful life”, his “heroic death in the battle of Crécy” and other aspects.<sup>2342</sup> This exhibition sought to reconnect with a glorified past and to subtly invoke a continuation. Possibly, contemporaries might have created a connection with the more recent sufferings and the discourse about resistance against the Nazi occupation. Official discourses preferred “heroes” to “traitors”, and “victims” to “collaborators”. The persistence of the image of a “heroic” king who died in a battle while defending the Kingdom of France against an invader might have led some people to compare this with what happened, or was said to have happened, during the German occupation period. In addition, the exhibition and the transfer worked as a compensation for the place conceded to John the Blind in the discourse of *Westforscher* and official Nazi history. Either he was excluded from the narrative, as in the first case, or he was comparably of lesser importance than the Holy Roman Emperors of the House of Luxembourg. Vogler described him as a “tragic figure”<sup>2343</sup>, which stands in a stark contrast with his heroization in the post-war period.

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<sup>2340</sup> ANLux, MEN-1659, Recommendation by Louis Simmer, 06/08/1946.

<sup>2341</sup> Own translation. “Il était naturel que le Musée d’Histoire de Luxembourg célébrât le retour des cendres de Jean l’Aveugle et le sixième centenaire de la bataille de Crécy par une exposition consacrée à la mémoire du héros national le plus populaire chez nous.” (MNHA archives, unnumbered folder [Bulletin de Documentation 1945-59], *Bulletin de documentation no. 8*, 1946, p. 19).

<sup>2342</sup> MNHA archives, unnumbered folder (Bulletin de Documentation 1945-59), *Bulletin de documentation no. 8*, 1946, p. 19.

<sup>2343</sup> ANLux, IP-1809a, Report A by Dr. Vogler, undated, p. 10.

Another opportunity to commemorate the national idea arose in 1967 with the Centenary of the Treaty of London, which proclaimed Luxembourg perpetually neutral and initiated the dismemberment of the fortifications. Large-scale celebrations were not planned. In his note to Pierre Grégoire, the custodian Gérard Thill advanced some ideas. As the government did not foster grand ambitions and the budget and time did not suffice, greater works or exhibitions were excluded. Instead, Thill suggested the organisation of a “modest” exhibition, and proposed focusing on conservation, restoring the surroundings of the fort Thüngen, reconstructing a segment of the wall on the Rahm plateau, or installing a museum about the fortress.<sup>2344</sup> After an exchange between the State Ministry and the Ministry of National Education, the government deemed the creation of a fortress museum “the most adequate” solution to commemorate 1867.<sup>2345</sup> Thill was asked to share his opinion. For him, the commemoration of 1867 would be an “excellent opportunity”. He reminded that his “predecessors at the Section historique” had already flirted with the idea of such a museum. The available space, however, had never been sufficient. To the recent suggestion of creating it in the Thüngen fort on Kirchberg, Thill preferred the Bock promontory, easier to realise and closer to the city centre. Yet, Thill asked why not install it in the State Museums, advancing museological reasons (exhibition and conservation). Certainly, he acted according to institutional and professional logic.<sup>2346</sup> The project of a fortress museum was taken seriously at first, as Grégoire and the State Museums refused to loan some objects to a museum in Belgium, precisely with the argument that they might be needed for the new museum.<sup>2347</sup> Yet, for unknown reasons, the project vanished as quickly as it appeared. It took three decades until it came to fruition. After the Capital of Culture in Luxembourg in 1995, the sensitization to the need of more cultural infrastructures elicited new investments. In 1997, a law was voted to create a fortress museum in the Thüngen fort.<sup>2348</sup>

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<sup>2344</sup> MNHA archives, unnumbered folder (Expositions et projets 1959-1972), *Note concerning the possibilities to commemorate the centenary of the Treaty of London* from Gérard Thill to Pierre Grégoire, 16/02/1967.

<sup>2345</sup> MNHA archives, unnumbered folder (Expositions et projets 1959-1972), Letter from the State Minister to the Minister for Cultural Affairs, 18/02/1967.

<sup>2346</sup> MNHA archives, unnumbered folder (Expositions et projets 1959-1972), *Note à Monsieur le Ministre des Affaires Culturelles concernant la création d'un Musée de la Forteresse selon la suggestion de Monsieur le Ministre d'Etat* by Gérard Thill, 27/02/1967.

<sup>2347</sup> MNHA archives, unnumbered folder (Expositions et projets 1959-1972), Letter from the minister of cultural affairs to the minister of foreign affairs, 10/03/1967.

<sup>2348</sup> ‘Loi du 17 février 1997 relative à l’installation d’un Musée de la Forteresse de Luxembourg dans le réduit du Fort Thüngen’, in *Mémorial A*, vol. 10 (Luxembourg, 1997), 619.

The 1960s did not bring about a notable change in the national idea to be promoted by the State Museum. On the contrary, the institution's position as a national one was strengthened. The previous example of 1967 illustrates the museum's broader involvement in the protection of national heritage. This resulted from the general context, in which new laws on the protection of monuments and sites were passed, but also from the professionalisation of the museum. The law of 1960, for instance, fixed the required educational degree of a custodian. The legislation related to the museum did not define the general missions of the museum. Thus, the national idea was not present in legal texts. This was different from political debates related to the future law of 1960. For the government, the role of the museum consisted of the education of the population and the valorisation of the country's history. The democratic, educational and national ideas were combined in the State Museums.<sup>2349</sup>

Besides reflections about the conservation of heritage, the national trope informed the acquisition policy and the approaches to exhibitions, especially after the law on the organisation of the museum of 1960. The national trope could relate to the geographical extension, to the country's history, or to the perception of what was "Luxembourgish". In the early 1960s, Joseph Meyers complained about the lack of space in the museum to show "Luxembourgish artworks that would merit to be exposed". Here, the national trope was combined with a discourse about value. As Meyers explained, the choice was not "definitive. In the limits that the exiguity of the rooms imposes on us at this moment, it merely tends to strive briefly the key moments of Luxembourgish painting in the 20<sup>th</sup> century." As soon as new rooms would be available, the exhibition could be extended and provide "a more complete idea of what art has been and continues to be in Luxembourg."<sup>2350</sup>

From the 1960s onwards, the acquisition policy of the museum followed a more programmatic scheme, or at least the custodians reflected on transparent and clear rules. The idea of the nation was not missing in the rationales. When Georges Schmitt devised an acquisition programme in 1961, discussing different types of collections and suggesting

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<sup>2349</sup> Chambre des députés, 'Projet de loi ayant pour objet l'organisation des Musées de l'Etat', 1957, 778–779.

<sup>2350</sup> Own translation. "La place dont nous disposons nous empêche pour l'instant de présenter toutes les œuvres luxembourgeoises qui mériteraient d'être exposées. Aussi avons-nous dû faire un choix qui n'a rien de définitif. Il tend simplement, dans les limites que l'exiguïté des locaux nous impose en ce moment, à évoquer brièvement les principales étapes de la peinture luxembourgeoise au XXe siècle. Au fur et à mesure que de nouvelles salles pourront être aménagées, d'autres sélections seront faites, d'autres ensembles seront présentés, qui donneront une idée plus complète de ce que l'art a été et continue à être au Luxembourg." (MNHA archives, D-00002, *Avertissement* by Joseph Meyers, undated [between 1960 and 1964]).

priorities, “national” art was a leitmotif, though Schmitt expanded the geographical horizon to the territory of the old Duchy of Luxembourg.<sup>2351</sup> Among the numerous examples, one could pick Schmitt’s assessment of non-contemporary sculptures:

I think in the coming years it will be necessary to extend the acquisition policy to sculptures that by their creator, by the site of creation, or by their presence of one or several centuries on the territory of the old Duchy [of Luxembourg], are interesting for Luxembourgish art history in its broadest sense.<sup>2352</sup>

Schmitt reiterated the national trope in his conclusions, stressing that the future acquisitions should above all be enriched in the “Luxembourgish sense”, to the “largest extension of the old Duchy”. “Foreign pieces” would only be acquired to “explain and justify, where appropriate, a Luxembourgish aspect of industrial and popular arts”.<sup>2353</sup> Unfortunately, the context of the document is not quite clear. It cannot be determined whether Schmitt was the only custodian suggesting the geographical extension, whether it was shared among the custodians, or whether he was the first one to suggest it. He was certainly not the only one with this criterion in mind. The lawmakers included it in the law of 1966 on excavations and the protection of mobile cultural heritage.<sup>2354</sup>

### V.3.3. Framing the museum: professionalisation and its limits

The present sub-section investigates the evolution of the museum from the perspective of professionalisation, encompassing interrelated aspects such as personnel (qualification, status, growth, remuneration), budget, legal status, internal organisation and conservation. The study posits that, after the war, the museum continued its process of professionalisation, but that this professionalisation was a response to the new missions and a result of the legal framework.

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<sup>2351</sup> MNHA archives, separate shelf, unnumbered folder (*Musée d’histoire. Lettres reçues*), *Programme raisonné des acquisitions à faire pendant les années à venir* by Georges Schmitt, 13/07/1961.

<sup>2352</sup> Own translation. “Dans les années à venir il faudrait, je crois, étendre l’action d’achat aux œuvres sculptées qui tant par leur auteur ou par le lieu de leur création que par un séjour traditionnel de un ou plusieurs siècles sur le territoire de l’ancien Duché, intéressent l’histoire de l’art luxembourgeois pris dans le sens de sa plus grande étendue.” (MNHA archives, separate shelf, unnumbered folder (*Musée d’histoire. Lettres reçues*), *Programme raisonné des acquisitions à faire pendant les années à venir* by Georges Schmitt, 13/07/1961).

<sup>2353</sup> “[...] les acquisitions futures devront avant tout augmenter les collections dans le sens “luxembourgeois” qu’on élargira à la plus grande étendue de l’ancien Duché. Des pièces étrangères seront acquises, avec discernement, pour expliquer et justifier, le cas échéant, tel aspect luxembourgeois des arts industriels et populaires.” (MNHA archives, unnumbered folder, separate shelf, unnumbered folder [*Musée d’histoire. Lettres reçues*], *Programme raisonné des acquisitions à faire pendant les années à venir* by Georges Schmitt, 13/07/1961).

<sup>2354</sup> ‘Loi du 21 mars 1966 concernant a) les fouilles d’intérêt historique, préhistorique, paléontologique ou autrement scientifique; b) la sauvegarde du patrimoine culturel mobilier’, 380.

Furthermore, it was not fully accomplished, and some issues known from previous decades were not solved. They also stood in contradiction to the importance conceded to cultural institutions as pillars of cultural policy in political debates.

Before the occupation period, the professionalisation of the museum had been a slow yet not invisible process. The choice of curators with a background in the area covered by their museum section was probably the most striking evolution. However, both Heuertz and Meyers were detached secondary school teachers. Furthermore, no guidelines for the internal organisation seemed to exist, which was possibly not considered necessary in an institution with a limited workforce. The lawmakers did not conceive a legal text organising the museum. For the occupation period, the assessment is rather mixed. On the one hand, the museum hired people who were qualified for their jobs for full-time contracts (Georges Schmitt, Jean Kieffer, etc.) and the German administration planned to extend and open the museum to the public. On the other hand, the unfinished construction works did not provide a professional working environment. The general occupation context and the primacy of Nazi ideology inhibited or made it impossible to do critical and professional research.

### *Personnel*

After the liberation, the overall situation of the staff was uncertain. The government reportedly wanted to dismiss everyone except those who had worked at the museum before the invasion.<sup>2355</sup> Heuertz and Meyers defended their colleagues and wanted to keep them employed. They might have acted for personal reasons as well as for institutional motivations. In any case, they were successful, as nine people (the custodians included) kept their jobs. A response to a circular of May 1945 confirms this number<sup>2356</sup>, as well as the staff list drawn by Wilhelm.

When François Reinert, in his article of 2001, addressed the planned dismissal and the custodians' efforts, he missed a couple of aspects. The above-mentioned response claims that out of nine employees, all were members of the VdB, one was a member of the NSDAP ("Pg" for *Parteigenosse*), and one was a prisoner. Unfortunately, it is not specified whether the NSDAP member was the prisoner or had been another, regular employee of the museum.<sup>2357</sup> In fact, between December 1944 and June 1945, two people left the museum: Ferdinand Streitz

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<sup>2355</sup> Reinert, ““Inter arma silent Musae”. Les musées d’Etat pendant la guerre”, 65.

<sup>2356</sup> MNHA archives, separate shelf, folder no. 30, Answer to a circular of 24 May 1945, undated.

<sup>2357</sup> MNHA archives, separate shelf, folder no. 30, Answer to a circular of 24 May 1945, undated.

(12 June 1945) and Ferdinand Werling (15 December 1944).<sup>2358</sup> According to the files of the administrative purge, Streitz was discharged and barred from state service because he sold weapons stolen from the museum. However, it was presumably not to Germans, as the purge commission certified a patriotic attitude during the occupation.<sup>2359</sup> As for Werling, he was temporarily employed during the war by the museum to avoid a “Zwangseinsatz”, after he had worked for the Trade Bank (Gewerbebank). At the time of Werling’s responses in the questionnaire – 14 April 1945 – he was working for the Office d’Aide Mutuelle Interalliée. Created by the government on 22 January 1945, this Office of Interallied Mutual Aid implemented the principles of mutual aid established by the Allied Supreme Command and the government from a financial perspective (such as payments for material aid).<sup>2360</sup> Werling’s departure from the museum was either based on a contractual agreement or directly caused by his future employment at the new office.

The war prisoner was a certain Dr Rinck, previously a professor at the University of Gießen and, in 1945, working at the museum library and on the archaeological collection. The archives of the MNHA include contracts between the museum and the authorities defining the details of his employment at the museum.<sup>2361</sup> Rinck is not mentioned in any other post-war report or in Reinert’s text. His contribution was so valuable to Meyers that he wanted his contract to be extended:

The work of this prisoner, who is a specialist in questions of Roman and Frankish archaeology, is of great value to us, especially as the coercive economic reasons will force the Government to reduce our staff in several units; Dr Rinck is for us in this case not only a very esteemed workforce from a scientific point of view but also very welcome from a financial and economic perspective [...].<sup>2362</sup>

Unfortunately, Rinck’s fate is not documented. His name does not appear on the Wilhelm/Adam list.

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<sup>2358</sup> MNHA archives, D-00142, *Personnel* by Eugénie Wilhelm and Françoise Adam, undated [after 1966].

<sup>2359</sup> Cf. ANLux, EPU-01-19693 (Ferdinand Streitz).

<sup>2360</sup> ‘Arrêté grand-ducal du 22 janvier 1945 portant création d’un Office d’Aide Mutuelle Interalliée’, in *Mémorial A*, vol. 4 (Luxembourg, 1945), 32–34.

<sup>2361</sup> See: MNHA archives, separate shelf, folder no. 25.

<sup>2362</sup> Own translation. “Le travail de ce prisonnier, qui est spécialiste dans les questions d’archéologie romaine et franque, nous est d’un grand prix, d’autant plus que des raisons impérieuses d’économie vont obliger le Gouvernement de réduire notre personnel de plusieurs unités ; le Dr. Rinck dans ce cas représentera pour nous une main d’œuvre non pas seulement très estimable du point de vue scientifique, mais encore du point de vue financier et économique particulièrement bien venue [...].” (MNHA archives, separate shelf, folder no. 25, Letter from Joseph Meyers to the Division for War Prisoners at the Reconstruction Commissariat, 06/04/1946).

Beyond the walls of the museum, and more than ever before, the government resorted to the custodians' expertise for various commissions and initiatives. Meyers was present at the transfer of John the Blind's remains; Georges Schmitt was a member of a commission instituted by the minister of armed forces in 1954 to regulate the layout of the flags for the regimental tactical group.<sup>2363</sup>

On rare occasions, the sources inform about financial compensations and salaries of employees. In March 1946, Joseph Meyers requested a promotion for Kieffer junior. The custodian advanced two reasons: the preparator of the natural history section was placed in a higher salary category for the same job, and Kieffer was "an excellent worker and the only preparator of archaeological objects in the country".<sup>2364</sup> The financial compensation of Damien Lamberty was raised in November 1951.<sup>2365</sup> Other than these two explicit examples, though, it is difficult to retrace how the payment scheme changed over time.

Internally, the institution was still finding its way towards more professional structures and procedures. The minister had a lot of decisional power in the matters of the museum. His agreement was necessary to organise exhibitions, for instance. According to an internal note of 16 July 1951, members of staff had accepted missions in the country or abroad eliciting an interruption of their activities in the museum, or they requested a leave from the minister without discussing it with their hierarchical superiors first. The Ministry of National Education urged the museum staff to formally ask for a leave and let the directors (Heuertz for the natural history section, and Meyers for the other sections) transfer the request to the government.<sup>2366</sup>

Throughout the period analysed in the present study, the museum experienced a chronic lack of staff, particularly auxiliary employees. Numerous letters illustrate the recurrent requests addressed to the minister, especially in the context of the opening of new rooms and the extension of the museum. In January, Meyers alluded to the need for more guards in the museum. In the past, he had resorted to military personnel; at the time of his letter, one guard was already employed, and a second person was recommended to the museum and could replace the soldier. Meyers tried to concede more weight to his request by pointing out that the

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<sup>2363</sup> MNHA archives, separate shelf, folder no. 30, ministerial decree of the ministry of the armed forces, 03/02/1954.

<sup>2364</sup> MNHA archives, separate shelf, folder no. 30, Letter from Joseph Meyers to the minister of national education, 26/03/1946.

<sup>2365</sup> MNHA archives, separate shelf, folder no. 30, *Arrêté ministériel*, 07/11/1951.

<sup>2366</sup> MNHA archives, separate shelf, folder no. 30, internal memo from the ministry of national education, 16/07/1951.

Curtius Museum in Liège employed two concierges and a dozen guards.<sup>2367</sup> In June 1950, Meyers voiced the need for more cleaning workforce, more preparators and restaurateurs for the conservation of the collections (in addition to the existing four employees), more guards and one night porter.<sup>2368</sup> The custodian stressed that the museum acquired new missions after the liberation:

Permanent exhibition of the collections of the museum, temporary exhibitions, guided tours, restoration, maintenance, conservation of archaeological, artistical and historical objects of the country (including those belonging to regional museums), excavations, casting, photography, photocopy, drawing of objects: these tasks cannot be accomplished with one or two people. The museum was not entrusted with these tasks before the war; it is now.<sup>2369</sup>

The situation was so intricate that the division of tasks among the staff was messy. The creativity of the museum administration in coping with the issue might elicit surprise today. Though some staff members were not employed for the tasks they ended up with, these additional non-contractual duties still reflected their versatile skills. According to Meyers, only one administration existed despite several departments. The secretary ("dactylo-secrétaire") was also employed at the library of the museum; the illustrator assisted the secretary. The preparator of the archaeology and history collections simultaneously supervised the casting and photography workshops, the electrical installations (he was an electrician), and the vehicle department (he was, on top of that, a mechanic). The concierge, who was trained in wood sculpting, executed restoration works. He further tended to the heating installations. One guard was an illustrator, the other a mechanic, and both assisted the excavation department and in the workshops.<sup>2370</sup> Thus, the museum was not able to maintain a professional administration. In October 1950, Meyers insisted that the opening of around fifty new rooms in the State

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<sup>2367</sup> MNHA archives, separate shelf, folder no. 30, Letter from Joseph Meyers to Pierre Frieden, 10/01/1950.

<sup>2368</sup> MNHA archives, separate shelf, folder no. 30, Letter from Joseph Meyers to Pierre Frieden, 01/06/1950.

<sup>2369</sup> MNHA archives, separate shelf, folder no. 30, Letter from Joseph Meyers to Pierre Frieden, 01/06/1950.

<sup>2370</sup> Original text : "[Le musée] comprend plusieurs sections assez différentes l'une de l'autre, plusieurs services aux champs d'action très distincts – cependant il n'y a qu'une seule administration avec une dactylo-secrétaire qui est occupée également à la bibliothèque. La dessinatrice remplit encore les fonctions d'assistante-secrétaire, le préparateur des collections d'archéologie et d'histoire dirige en même temps les ateliers de moulage et de photographie, il surveille les installations électriques (étant électricien) et s'occupe du service de l'automobile (étant mécanicien). [...] Le concierge, étant sculpteur sur bois, exécute des travaux de restauration ; il fait le chauffage. L'un des gardiens est dessinateur, l'autre carrossier-menuisier. Tous les deux participent aux travaux de fouilles et d'atelier." (MNHA archives, separate shelf, folder no. 30, Letter from Joseph Meyers to Pierre Frieden, 01/06/1950).

Museums would necessitate a second cleaning lady (“femme de charge”) and immediately suggested a candidate he had in mind to be employed.<sup>2371</sup>

The museum was not free from tensions among the workforce,<sup>2372</sup> of which the chronic lack of staff was one source. In January 1959, the custodians had to inform Frieden that Lamberty, due to the refusal to replace him, left the museum closed on Sunday, 11 January, during the whole day, despite the official opening hours stating otherwise.<sup>2373</sup> After the incident, Heuertz and Meyers exchanged with Lamberty on the reasons for his refusal, which they shared with Frieden. Lamberty was not willing to make further “special sacrifices” that he had been doing “for years”. He was required to work on 52 Sundays in addition to all holidays. Due to the lack of personnel, an alternation of duties was impossible. The custodians were sympathetic to his complaints, as they wrote that his arguments corresponded to what they had raised in a letter of November 1958.<sup>2374</sup> The issue continued in the following months. In March, the custodians informed the recently appointed minister Pierre Grégoire that the concierge left the museum closed on 15 February and on 1 March, at his initiative.<sup>2375</sup>

According to the list drawn by Wilhelm/Adam<sup>2376</sup>, the museum hired 26 people between 1960 and 1966. Their positions within the museum are unknown. During the same period, 17 people left the museum. Though these indications certainly need to be considered carefully, they hint at a staff increase. Why they were hired, whether it was related to the laws of 1960 (State Museums) and 1966 (excavations), or to the criticisms unfortunately remains pure speculation.

In November 1965, the Chamber of Deputies discussed the draft law on excavations and the protection of mobile cultural heritage, which directly concerned the activities of the State Museums. The institution used the opportunity to organise a press conference and drew attention to the issues it had been facing. On 16 November, Heuertz, Steinmetz and Thill

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<sup>2371</sup> MNHA archives, separate shelf, folder no. 30, Letter from Joseph Meyers to Pierre Frieden, 04/10/1950.

<sup>2372</sup> Without delving into details for reasons of privacy, the case of Joseph Walentiny, for instance, appeared to cause headaches to Joseph Meyers and Gérard Thill. Hired to draw an inventory of monuments in the country, Walentiny did not carry out his duties as expected from his superiors. The archives of the National History and Art Museum include four folders solely dedicated to the case.

<sup>2373</sup> MNHA archives, separate shelf, unnumbered folder (Correspondance administrative. Lettres envoyées), Letter from Joseph Meyers and Marcel Heuertz to Pierre Frieden, 12/01/1959.

<sup>2374</sup> MNHA archives, separate shelf, folder no. 12, Letter from Marcel Heuertz and Joseph Meyers to Pierre Frieden, 29/01/1959.

<sup>2375</sup> MNHA archives, separate shelf, unnumbered folder (Correspondance administrative. Lettres envoyées), Letter from Joseph Meyers and Marcel heuertz to Pierre Grégoire, 07/03/1959.

<sup>2376</sup> MNHA archives, D-00142, *Personnel* by Eugénie Wilhelm and Françoise Adam, undated [after 1966].

exposed the problems, unresolved despite the new law. According to them, the museum had not been able to fulfil its missions with satisfaction. It would be short on financial resources, only sufficient for basic tasks. Due to the lack of staff, such as qualified workers and employees, work remained undone or had to be postponed. For excavations, the State Museums needed to rely on the collaboration of “amateurs” who considered “archaeology as an ideal recreational activity”.<sup>2377</sup> The new law would only slightly improve the text of 1937. Furthermore, the custodians stressed the administrative hurdles to employing a worker. If such a position was not provided by the state’s staff appointment scheme, the museum was not allowed to employ one. The *Letzeburger Land* dramatically described this situation:

Yet, even worse is the impact of the incomprehensible stubbornness, which denies the State Museum to hire more staff. The employment of a single carpenter who preserves the valuable furniture, the frames and the exhibited objects of the museum, entails an administrative fight to the knife.<sup>2378</sup>

The law and the press conference might have sparked new debates and an increased consciousness about the protection of cultural heritage. The issues faced by the museum were made public, yet they were not going to be solved so soon. Tensions continued to persist. The activity report of the State Museums (history and art section), published as part of the cultural affairs report in 1966, was riddled with small criticisms. The preparator had a “very primitive” installation; the inventory of the collections progressed slowly, due to lack of time and personnel; a systematic excavation on the Titelberg was not possible for the same reasons; restorations of monuments dragged on because of overcharged services, of lack of interest from the companies, of money and of qualified workers. In the concluding remarks, the museum’s many and various activities were stressed, but the progress in some areas was “not always satisfying”. Though the technical and subaltern staff increased, scientific collaboration was still deficient.<sup>2379</sup>

The examination of the staff and its evolution after the war provide us with the opportunity to take a closer look at the case of Joseph Meyers, who had been working at the museum since the interwar period. The previous chapter highlighted Meyers’ ambiguous behaviour during

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<sup>2377</sup> j.m.m., ‘Gesetze, Geld und Personal’, *Journal*, November 1965, D-00110, MNHA archives.

<sup>2378</sup> Own translation. “Noch schlimmer aber wirkt sich die unbegreifliche Hartnäckigkeit aus, mit welcher dem Staatsmuseum die Erweiterung seines Personalstabes verweigert wird. Um einen einzigen Schreiner einstellen zu können, der die kostbaren Möbelstücke, die Bilderrahmen und das Ausstellungsmobiliar im Museum unterhält, muß ein Verwaltungskampf bis aufs Messer ausgefochten werden.” (Kr., ‘Randbemerkungen’, *d’Letzeburger Land*, November 1965).

<sup>2379</sup> Ministère des Affaires culturelles, *Débats budgétaires 1966 : Mémoire concernant le Ministère des affaires culturelles* (Luxembourg: Ministère des Affaires culturelles, 1966), 1–10.

the war. After the liberation, he was cleared by the purge commission. The occupation period did not hinder his professional career. The custodians, as we have seen, painstakingly constructed the trope of the “patriotic self”, highlighted the protection of national heritage while avoiding thorny issues. During the war, both men did not publish, at least according to the catalogue of the National Library in Luxembourg. Meyers, though, resumed publishing immediately after the war.

In 1945, Joseph Meyers published a revised edition of his history schoolbook. The tropes related to the period covered in previous editions (such as in 1939) did not change, as was the case with the “foreign dominations”. Given the general context, this is not surprising, as other cases analysed in this study have shown the continuities in historiography. Yet, Meyers augmented his post-war edition with a chapter on the Second World War and the occupation period in Luxembourg. Hence, covering a period that he had personally experienced. Indeed, both identities as historian and witness merged in his narrative. He wrote in first person plural and shared judgements about what happened during the war. The narrative was constructed on the opposition of “us” versus “them” and highlighted the brutality of the Nazi regime:

[...] the “eternal Germanicness” in Nazi Germany [...] prepared to destroy our independent existence that belonged to the culture of Western Europe and to the Christian Occident. [...] It began with brutal terror methods that had been unknown to us before. Elements of suspicious repute attacked their fellow citizens, whom they reproached a national-Luxembourgish attitude, and mistreated them or beat them down; other patriots were thrown into jail.<sup>2380</sup>

Meyers somewhat acknowledged that there was collaboration with Nazis, but he avoided the term “collaboration” and did not speak of Luxembourgers in relation with this group. Moreover, he insisted on its small size and framed his narrative in a way to convey an impression of this group being seduced, mislead or doing it for opportunistic reasons.<sup>2381</sup>

Meyers also drew an overview on the cultural policy and the cultural sector during the occupation period. He explained that cultural actors had been controlled by Nazi organisations, that the Grand-Ducal Palace had been renamed “Stadtschloß”, that it hosted concerts and the

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<sup>2380</sup> Own translation. “[...] das “ewige Germanentum” in Nazideutschland [...] schickte sich an, unser der Kultur Westeuropas und dem christlichen Abendland angehörendes Eigenleben zu zerstören. [...] Mit brutalen Terrormaßnahmen, die uns vorher unbekannt gewesen waren, wurde der Anfang gemacht. Elemente von zweifelhaftem Ruf fielen über ihre Mitbürger her, denen sie eine nationalluxemburgische Gesinnung zum Vorwurf machten, und mißhandelten sie oder schlugen sie nieder; andere Patrioten wurden ins Gefängnis geworfen.” (Joseph Meyers, *Abriß der Geschichte des Luxemburger Landes* [Luxembourg: Éd. Paul Bruck, 1945], 33–34).

<sup>2381</sup> Original text: “Nur sehr wenige “Volksgenossen” (die Nazis liebten dieses Wort) waren von der Parteipropaganda, die alle ihre Kampfmittel bei uns zum vollen Einsatz brachte, betört worden und hatten den großen nationalsozialistischen Schlagworten Glauben geschenkt; oder sie hatten sich den Nazis angeschlossen, um aus der neuen Konjunktur materiellen Gewinn zu ziehen.” (Meyers, 35).

*Künstlerkameradschaft*, and encompassed a restaurant and a wine tavern (“Weinstube”).<sup>2382</sup> Yet, the most crucial dimension is missing: the cultural institutions, and particularly the Landesmuseum. Meyers remained tacit on this subject, though he witnessed the evolution of the museum first-hand. His personal experience, however, might have informed his affirmation about Germans trying to help Luxembourgers who got into trouble; he explicitly mentioned the VHKA in this respect.<sup>2383</sup> Meyers’ account generally applied the same tropes as observed in other cases of historiography and personal testimonies: the Manichean opposition and the suffering and resistance of the Luxembourgish people, as apparent towards the end of his book: “In its great suffering, the Luxembourgish people firmly held onto its belief that its good and just cause would one day prevail over the powers of the evil.”<sup>2384</sup>

In some cases, immediate post-war publications, when containing texts written before the war, provide an anachronistic impression. This was the case with a small book by Meyers published and by the Amitiés françaises. The volume’s title, *Bastions et frontières de l’Est* (1945)<sup>2385</sup>, carried a decidedly French (or pro-French) connotation, in opposition to a westward-oriented, German perspective. In the second part, “Esquisse d’histoire ethnographique luxembourgeoise”, Meyers explained the geology, geography and ethnography of Luxembourg and the Luxembourgish people. The text was initially written in 1939. While being informed by research of the interwar period (whether Meyers made changes to the text in the meantime cannot be assessed), the publication contributed to a continuity of interwar narratives. The historian endorsed the idea of a *Luxemburgertum* by applying *völkisch* and racial concepts. He shared anthropological reflections about the “ethnic type” of Luxembourgers. According to the historian, it was difficult to determine. Luxembourgers would resemble either people of Lorraine or farmers of the Eifel and the Ardennes. Besides general assumptions, he did not provide any verifiable proofs. He wrote that

on rencontre des têtes rondes aussi bien que des dolichocéphales, des grands et des petits; les cheveux blonds et les yeux bleus sont répandus autant que les bruns et les noirs. D’autre part, il

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<sup>2382</sup> Meyers, 35–36.

<sup>2383</sup> Meyers, 38.

<sup>2384</sup> Own translation. “In seinem großen Leid hielt das geknechtete Luxemburger Volk standhaft an seinem Glauben fest, daß seine gute und gerechte Sache eines Tages über die Mächte des Bösen triumphieren würde.” (Meyers, 38).

<sup>2385</sup> As the historian Wolfgang Freund has outlined, the German expression *Westmark* and the French counterpart *marches de l’Est* carried ideological and political meanings. In 1905, the French journalist and politician Maurice Barrès reflected in *Les bastions de l’Est* on how the Alsatian border region could be appropriated for the French state reason and used against Germany. For more on the concept of *Westmark*, see: Freund, *Volk, Reich und Westgrenze*, 33–45.

s'est produit toutes sortes de mélanges dont les plus récents ont été opérés avec les nombreux étrangers établis dans notre pays depuis la fin du 19me siècle.<sup>2386</sup>

With such a description and the use of the concept “dolichocéphale”, Meyers applied categorisations (vaguely) reminiscent of racial theories. Ironically, while depicting the Luxembourgers as a people between two cultures and ethnic types, his description is so broad that it deconstructs his own categorisations. Indeed, he implied that any type of human beings can be found in Luxembourg. Yet, a couple of pages later, Meyers stressed that the Luxembourgers were characterised by a physiognomy that would differ from the Belgians, French and Germans. He did not only categorise, he also linked physiognomy (a construction based on apparent natural traits) to nationality (a construction based on administrative/political decisions).

Meyers looked at the past from a teleological perspective. According to him, the *sentiment national* had taken deep roots in the Luxembourgish people; it originated in the “spirit of independence which has been inspiring the Mosans and Mosellans for thousands of years”. This consciousness would also be connected to the particular physiognomy of the Luxembourgers.<sup>2387</sup> In case the text was not revised by Meyers after the war, he must not have seen any reason to do so. The *Livre du Centenaire* (edition of 1949) included a very similar article by Meyers entitled “*Le peuple luxembourgeois*”.

It does not seem that Meyers published texts based on research carried out during the war. While being the acting director of the Landesmuseum (though he declined the official title of director), he continued to head the history and art section of the museum after the war. As a result of the law of 1960 and the ensuing regulations, Meyers officially became director of the State Museums. He helped to shape the museum in the late interwar period, personally and professionally survived the occupation period, and continued to work there until his death on 5 October 1964.<sup>2388</sup> His successor as director became Marcel Heuertz,<sup>2389</sup> who retired in 1969. Considering the evolution of the personnel, the 1960s were marked by a change. In those years, the generation of the occupation period disappeared and was followed by a new generation of custodians. Gérard Thill, hired in the early 1960s, succeeded Heuertz in 1969. Thill, born in 1925, lived through the war as a teenager. How exactly the generational change impacted the

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<sup>2386</sup> Joseph Meyers, *Bastions et frontières de l'Est* (Luxembourg: Amitiés françaises, 1945), 28.

<sup>2387</sup> Meyers, 30. On the same page, Meyers explicitly used the concept of “race”. In fact, he did not discard it as a scientific category, but acknowledged, to a certain extent, the role of “races” in the physiognomy of peoples.

<sup>2388</sup> MNHA archives, separate shelf, folder no. 30, obituary of Joseph Meyers, 07/10/1964.

<sup>2389</sup> MNHA archives, separate shelf, folder no. 30, *Arrêté grand-ducal*, 03/11/1964.

museum is difficult to assess, but Thill was the first director who had not been employed at the museum before or at the time of the war.

Though questions surrounding gender are not the focus of the present study, the force with which this topic blatantly protrudes from some of the sources requires reflection, even if it is far from exhaustive. At least during the first decades of the post-war period, women were not supposed to be employed for a lifetime and not for higher positions. It was a men's world in which men disseminated a conservative vision of family values. In January 1956, the minister of family and population Pierre Frieden (who was, as should be reminded, also the minister of arts and sciences), sent a circular to administrations confirming this vision. In this note, "young women" were invited to participate in "preparatory classes for marriage and family education" that Frieden's ministry organised in Luxembourg City.<sup>2390</sup> Similar courses for men were not offered. The circular is one example of the construction and ascription of gender roles. Another circular emanating from the State Ministry in January 1958 raised the "issue" of the "admission of women to public offices". According to the content, this "issue" needed to be studied, as well as restrictions and limitations imposed on the admission of women for "reasons of incompatibility of the necessities intrinsic to state administrations and for reasons of opportunity and harmonious functioning of the services"<sup>2391</sup>. The heads of administrations and services were requested to share their opinion on "different aspects that the problem of admission of women to public employments present", as well as "add to their evaluations concrete suggestions" for those positions that did not "pose an issue to the employment of women, as well as for those that cannot be confided to women".<sup>2392</sup> The circular did not specify what was specifically an "issue" about women or a "limitation" in the public sector. In any case, this discourse subordinated women to men and created hierarchies based on gender. The aspect of gender still needs to be analysed in depth in Luxembourg, especially as these sources were probably not an exception. The fact that they are conserved in the archives of the MNHA also means that they were received and read by at least some employees, probably by the leading custodians. If the State Museums replied to the second circular discussed here, the

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<sup>2390</sup> MNHA archives, separate shelf, unnumbered folder (Musées de l'Etat. Circulaires), Circular by Pierre Frieden, 03/01/1956.

<sup>2391</sup> Own translation. "L'étude du problème de l'admission de la femme aux fonctions publiques soulève la question des limitations et des restrictions auxquelles cette admission devra, le cas échéant, être subordonnée tant pour des raisons d'incompatibilité avec les nécessités propres aux administrations de l'Etat que pour des raisons d'opportunité et de fonctionnement harmonieux des services."

<sup>2392</sup> MNHA archives, unnumbered folder (Musées de l'Etat. Circulaires), Circular from the State Ministry to the ministerial departments, 25/01/1958.

answer remains to be discovered. However, it cannot be denied that the few permanently employed women – Wilhelm and Adam – found themselves in subaltern positions; over the whole period analysed in the study, not a single woman became custodian. A letter of Joseph Meyers to Georges Henri Rivière (director of the ICOM) in January 1963 informed about the members of the national ICOM commission. It was composed of collaborators of the museum and, at the same time, reveals who was working in what position at the time. Besides Meyers and Heuertz, the museum employed Alfred Steinmetzer (chief clerk), Joseph-Emile Muller (head of special services), Joseph Walentiny (head of special services), Georges Schmitt (head of special services) and Eugénie Wilhelm (employee).<sup>2393</sup> The higher positions were occupied by men hired either before 1944 or shortly thereafter. Their positions were created by the law of 1960 (and ensuing decrees), which proved advantageous to their careers. Ironically, Wilhelm and Adam were in a certain sense a counterexample to the traditional vision of women's place in society, due to their long-standing employment at the museum. From a historian's perspective, they contributed with some of the most important sources in the museum's history.

### *Funding*

The increased activities of the museum, the extension of exhibition space, and the need to renew equipment required proper funding. The lack of sources does not permit to retrace a continuous evolution of the demands of the museum, but the propositions by Joseph Meyers for the state budget of 1957 provide some indications. Meyers requested increased funding for different budgetary items such as travels, restoration, implication in excavations, or equipment. The acquisitions were particularly stressed:

The experience of the past years and the example of museums abroad that have more or less the same importance than the Museum of Luxembourg have proven that, with the modest funding of the article 880 of the post-war years, the Grand Duchy will never achieve the constitution of artwork collections that are worthy of a capital, for as small as it might be.<sup>2394</sup>

For the financial year 1956, the used acquisition budget grazed the limit of 120,000 francs already in July; these expenses did not include the special budget for the collection of

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<sup>2393</sup> MNHA archives, D-00046, Letter from Joseph Meyers to Georges Henri Rivière, 16/01/1963.

<sup>2394</sup> Own translation. “L'expérience des années passées, et l'exemple des musées étrangers qui sont de l'importance plus ou moins du Musée de Luxembourg, ont prouvé qu'avec les chiffres modestes de l'Article 880, des années d'après-guerre, le Grand-Duché ne parviendra jamais à constituer au Musée de l'Etat des collections d'œuvres d'art dignes d'une capitale, si petite soit-elle.” (MNHA archives, separate shelf, unnumbered folder (Correspondance administrative. Lettres envoyées), Letter from Joseph Meyers to the minister of national education, 10/07/1956).

Luxembourgish coins.<sup>2395</sup> In total and compared to the budget of 1956, Meyers requested a raise of 242,000 francs for the history and art section of the museum, of which 180,000 francs were reserved for acquisitions (artworks and historical collections). In fact, the government accepted all requests and the budget lines were modified accordingly. Considering the evolution of the budget conceded to the cultural institutions in the 1950s and the 1960s, and the fact that they were the (theoretical) main pillars of cultural policy, the concessions by the state based on the request of the custodian might not be very surprising. Indeed, within the budget for arts and sciences/cultural affairs, the institutions were one of the fastest-growing categories. Starting with 825,000 francs in 1946, the budget for institutions amounted to 7,275,000 francs by 1960, and 21,698,000 francs by 1970 (not considering inflation). Even after the conversion to euros and the adaptation to inflation, the evolution still shows an overall positive trend.

Despite the increased funding and the symbolic importance attributed to the museum in political discourse, the institution faced a series of problems after the liberation, of which some had underpinned its history since the beginnings. Others were related to the context of shortage. In the immediate post-war period, the custodians Heuertz and Meyers criticised the heating deficiencies in the building. In October 1945, when the cold season started and winter approached, they bemoaned that ten people had no heating, among them seven members of the Book Commission and “one of the princesses who regularly works in the museum for a scientific study.”<sup>2396</sup> Their impatience found expression in their second letter more than a week later, still expecting an answer. “The situation in our building is beginning to become unbearable for those people who work there without heating,” the custodians reminded.<sup>2397</sup> Early November, following the advice of Schumacher, they contacted the Office for Fuel Supplies (Office des Combustibles) and explained the situation. As the heating oil installation was removed by the German administration, they were forced to switch to coke. In total, 15 to 20 people worked in the building, including personnel of external services placed there due to insufficient office space. The custodians stressed the importance of heating not only to

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<sup>2395</sup> MNHA archives, separate shelf, unnumbered folder (Correspondance administrative. Lettres envoyées), Letter from Joseph Meyers to the minister of national education, 10/07/1956.

<sup>2396</sup> MNHA archives, separate shelf, unnumbered folder (Correspondance administrative. Lettres envoyées), Letter from Marcel Heuertz and Joseph Meyers to Hubert Schumacher, 17/10/1945.

<sup>2397</sup> “La situation dans notre bâtiment commence à devenir intenable pour les gens qui y travaillent sans chauffage [...].” (MNHA archives, separate shelf, unnumbered folder [Correspondance administrative. Lettres envoyées], Letter from Marcel Heuertz and Joseph Meyers to Hubert Schumacher, 26/10/1945).

employees, but also to the collections and the technical equipment.<sup>2398</sup> This issue did not contribute to adequate working conditions. However, in the following years, the question of heating was not raised anymore. Presumably, the problem was solved, but other issues were more persistent.

### *Issues of space and conservation*

In September 1945, the limited space was the main reason why Georges Schmitt demanded the liberation of the museum's main hall and used criteria of value to distinguish between "good" and "bad" artworks. The latter, despite belonging to deported or emigrated families, could be eliminated.<sup>2399</sup> A month later, Schmitt raised the issue again. In the meantime, the original owner of a house behind the museum returned from exile. During the occupation, the house was cleared and used as a depot for the museum. As the museum needed to relocate its collections, Schmitt urged to find a "fast and radical decision". The museum was still encumbered with "objects mostly without value".<sup>2400</sup>

The problem of space was not to be solved so soon. Over the years, the custodians of the museum repeatedly wrote letters in which they criticised the situation. In 1950, Joseph Meyers reiterated a proposal to add a roof, which would create a new floor. Part of the museum's collection was deposited in Pfaffenthal and in Echternach.<sup>2401</sup> In October 1961, Meyers drew Pierre Grégoire's attention to the example of Esch-sur-Alzette, where the municipality hosted exhibitions in an art gallery. "Such a gallery in the capital would liberate the State Museums of a quite heavy 'burden', of a real servitude," Meyers argued. "[...] it would allow us to finally open in our beautiful glass ceiled rooms [...] the quite important gallery of paintings and artistic objects belonging to the State, which the Luxembourgish public has been wanting to see for so long."<sup>2402</sup> Certainly, the argument of the "Luxembourgish public" also served the own interest

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<sup>2398</sup> MNHA archives, separate shelf, unnumbered folder (Correspondance administrative. Lettres envoyées), Letter from Marcel Heuertz and Joseph Meyers to Alex Weicker (Office des Combustibles), 05/11/1945.

<sup>2399</sup> MNHA archives, separate shelf, unnumbered folder (Correspondance), Letter from Georges Schmitt to Joseph Wolter, 18/09/1945.

<sup>2400</sup> The owner of the house used by the museum was Sternberg, probably the same who owned the Sternberg department store in Luxembourg City (rue du Fossé), and which became the "germanised" Hansa-Kaufhaus during the occupation. (MNHA archives, separate shelf, unnumbered folder (Correspondance), Letter from Georges Schmitt to Joseph Wolter, 26/10/1945).

<sup>2401</sup> MNHA archives, separate shelf, unnumbered folder (Correspondance administrative. Lettres requêtes), Letter from Joseph Meyers to the minister of national education, 21/11/1950.

<sup>2402</sup> Own translation. "Je trouverais il est vrai plus intéressant pour les Musées de l'Etat que la Ville de Luxembourg et peut-être le Gouvernement imitent l'exemple d'Esch-sur-Alzette, dont la municipalité reçoit dans une galerie d'art ouverte durant toute l'année les expositions les plus diverses. Une galerie pareille dans la capitale libérerait les Musées de l'Etat d'une « hypothèque » assez lourde, d'une réelle

of the museum where it was opportune. In the early 1960s, the director bemoaned that it was not possible to create a continuous and extensive permanent exhibition on Luxembourgish art.<sup>2403</sup>

The lack of space caused visible dissatisfaction among the custodians and elicited public debates. In February 1962, the newspaper *Journal* published an article about the State Museums and the director Marcel Heuertz. The author described a “national cultural misery”. Implicitly highlighting the chaos and the outdated presentation, the author depicted the museum as a “cabinet of curiosities” and a “cultural labyrinth”. The lack of space was bemoaned. According to the article, more objects were hidden in the cave and in the attic than exposed in the exhibition rooms. The director did not approve small incremental expansions, but defended a long-term solution, either by integrating the museum into a cultural centre or by using the old courthouse.<sup>2404</sup> The latter, as we recall, had already been envisaged by the German administration. When Heuertz, Steinmetz and Thill organised their press conference in November 1965, they criticised the lack of space, too. Despite the acquisition of some buildings, it was still insufficient.<sup>2405</sup>

In 1966, the problem concerning space resurfaced in the letters of the museum to the minister for cultural affairs. Gérard Thill, who joined the museum’s team after the death of Joseph Meyers, complained several times about the situation in the storages. According to the custodian, the storehouses in Val Sainte-Croix and Pfaffenthal were both used for objects that were either too big, too heavy or not interesting enough to be included in the museum’s reserve. Yet, the storehouse in Val Sainte-Croix revealed structural defects, as the rain trickled through the roof. In addition, as some of the windows were broken, “amateurs” and “vandals” could access the building, “whose traces can be easily detected”.<sup>2406</sup> The preservation conditions in the depot in Pfaffenthal were at least as bad:

The Pfaffenthal depot is so cramped that it is impossible to find even objects of large dimensions. For example, a large leather tapestry from Echternach was “rediscovered” thanks to the rearrangement of shelves in the attic that the Museum shares with the supervisor of

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servitude, et nous permettrait d’ouvrir enfin, dans nos belles salles à plafonds vitrés, soustraites désormais aux emprises étrangères, la galerie assez importante des peintures et objets d’art appartenant à l’Etat, que le public luxembourgeois depuis longtemps voudrait voir. ” (MNHA archives, unnumbered folder (Expositions et projets 1959-1972), note by Joseph Meyers to Pierre Grégoire, 16/10/1961).

<sup>2403</sup> MNHA archives, D-00002, *Avertissement* by Joseph Meyers, undated [between 1960 and 1964].

<sup>2404</sup> ‘Das Kuriositäten-Kabinett am Fischmarkt’, *Journal*, February 1965, D-00110, MNHA archives.

<sup>2405</sup> Ministère des Affaires culturelles, *Débats budgétaires* 1966, 1–10.

<sup>2406</sup> MNHA archives, D-00095, Letter from Gérard Thill to the minister of cultural affairs, 21/03/1966.

domains Mister Beck. Hay and heating wood represent by the way a barely reassuring proximity to our objects.<sup>2407</sup>

Clearly, the discourse about the importance of cultural institutions for the country stood in partial contradiction with reality. A handwritten note next to the paragraph quoted above, probably by the minister Grégoire himself, remarked: “so we have no inventory!” (“donc on n'a aucun inventaire!”). Thill requested the depots to be evacuated, by “sacrificing everything that is only pasture for the vermin”. Thill was in touch with Paul Spang, the director of the State Archives, who agreed to put their depots at disposal as soon as they would have convenient spaces in the upper city (in 1968, the State Archives moved to the old casern on the Saint-Esprit plateau).<sup>2408</sup> A couple of days later, Grégoire instructed the minister of public works to authorise his Administration of Public Buildings to carry out the necessary works.<sup>2409</sup> Grégoire might not have been pleased with the lack of inventory, but he was still sensible to the issues of the museum. Thill’s intervention helped, but the result was rather mitigated for the custodian. Indeed, in December 1966, he stated that after his letter of March, workers of the state architect’s department started to clear the Pfaffenthal depot – in autumn. “The works,” Thill bemoaned, “are currently far from being accomplished, which leaves us no possibility to transfer the chimney plaques stored in Val-Ste-Croix.” Thill appealed to the minister to talk with the state architect.<sup>2410</sup>

Thill’s predecessor Meyers had already complained about the insufficient space for stocking the collections. In April 1950, after the minister allowed the museum to accept a private donation, Meyers used the opportunity and reminded him that “the building at the Marché-aux-Poissons has been since long packed with objects to the extent that there is no space for the furniture in question.”<sup>2411</sup> Meyers had raised a similar issue in several previous writings in 1949, when there had been the prospect of renting an apartment. In the note on the back of the letter, the minister enquired about the number of objects included in the donation and the

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<sup>2407</sup> Own translation. “Le dépôt du Pfaffenthal est si encombré qu'il est impossible d'y retrouver même des objets de grandes dimensions. Une grande tapisserie en cuir provenant d'Echternach y a été p.ex. « redécouverte » grâce au déplacement d'étagères sous les combles que le Musée partage avec le surveillant des Domaines Monsieur Beck. Le foin et le bois de chauffage forment d'ailleurs un voisinage peu rassurant avec nos objets.” (MNHA archives, D-00095, Letter from Gérard Thill to the minister of cultural affairs, 21/03/1966).

<sup>2408</sup> MNHA archives, D-00095, Letter from Gérard Thill to the minister of cultural affairs, 21/03/1966.

<sup>2409</sup> MNHA archives, D-00095, Letter from the minister of cultural affairs to the minister of public works, 23/03/1966.

<sup>2410</sup> MNHA archives, D-00095, Note by Gérard Thill transferred to the minister of cultural affairs, 08/12/1966.

<sup>2411</sup> MNHA archives, separate shelf, unnumbered folder (Correspondance administrative. Lettre reçues [1944-1960]), Letter from Joseph Meyers to the minister for national education, 25/04/1950.

amount of the rent.<sup>2412</sup> In another letter of the following month (May 1949), the minister referred to a suggestion of moving the folklore collection to the Orangerie and the abbey of Echternach. He was not disinclined but requested a series of logistic and practical details.<sup>2413</sup>

As long as the main sections were sharing the same building, the issue of space could not be solved. In 1967, the permanent exhibition was dispersed over four floors without following any clear logic. Gallo-roman, medieval and modern tombstones were exhibited in the basement. The space was shared with objects related to the fortress and with medieval paintings. The mezzanine was dedicated to modern paintings, arms, uniforms and ethnographic collections. On the ground floor, the museum showed collections related to geology, mineralogy, palaeontology and prehistory. The first floor was filled with Gallo-Roman and medieval collections, while including a section on the House of Luxembourg. The second floor was reserved for the natural history collection.<sup>2414</sup>

### *Legal framework*

The law of 17 August 1960 marked one of the most important steps in the history of the State Museums, though it needed many years to reach a conclusion. A first draft law was submitted by Nicolas Margue in 1948. In the following years, members of parliament, especially Margue himself, repeatedly voiced the situation of the museum. In March 1955, the former minister complained that he had been referring for six years to the lacking statute of the State Museums. “We are really the only country on this planet that does not have any statute for its cultural institutions,” he highlighted. To emphasise his argument, he assumed that even “uncivilised countries certainly have something to show in this respect.” Margue threatened to vote against the state budget in the following year if no visible progress would be made. He was backed in his criticism by Eugène Schaus (Democratic Party). While Frieden agreed that the institutions were lacking a clear framework, he skirted the thorny question why it had been taking such a long time. Marcel Heuertz, who added excerpts of the debates in his chronicle, was clearly unsatisfied by Frieden’s response to Margue and Schaus. “The statements by the minister are an example of political bad faith and incomprehension,” Heuertz noted.<sup>2415</sup>

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<sup>2412</sup> MNHA archives, separate shelf, unnumbered folder (Correspondance administrative. Lettre reçues [1944-1960]), Note from the minister for national education to Joseph Meyers, 26/04/1950.

<sup>2413</sup> MNHA archives, separate shelf, unnumbered folder (Correspondance administrative. Lettre reçues [1944-1960]), Letter from the minister for national education to Joseph Meyers, 08/05/1950.

<sup>2414</sup> Cosyn and Koltz, *La ville millénaire de Luxembourg*, 135.

<sup>2415</sup> Musée national d’histoire naturelle and Marcel Heuertz, ‘Chronique: Musée d’histoire Naturelle de l’Etat’ (n.d.), 98.

In 1960, the legislator finally organised the administration of the institution and recognised the constitution of two museums within the State Museums: a museum for history and art, and a museum for natural history. The law allowed both museums to be subdivided into sections and to create “special services”. The State Museums could accept donations (a mere confirmation of a long-standing practice) and supervise local and private museums. Each museum was directed by a custodian, and the State Museums were headed by a directing custodian (“*conservateur-directeur*”). The law further stipulated the number of staff members as well as the necessary qualifications for higher positions. At least nine people had to work at the State Museums, but the institution was granted some flexibility to hire additional staff according to the needs and the budget. Moreover, the law instituted a surveillance commission for each museum.<sup>2416</sup> In August 1960, Joseph Meyers became, by grand-ducal decree, directing custodian.<sup>2417</sup> However, Meyers remained a detached high school teacher, explicitly required by the law. Georges Schmitt was promoted to head of special services (“*chef de services spéciaux*”)<sup>2418</sup> and Alfred Steinmetzer became chief clerk (“*chef de bureau*”).<sup>2419</sup> Finally, it should be noted that the law cleared uncertainties concerning the official denomination of the museum, which was henceforth “State Museums” in plural.

A grand-ducal regulation of 22 December 1961 specified the dispositions of the law, by precisely listing the responsibilities of the different positions in the State Museums. In total, eight special services were created. In the case of the history and art museum, a service was created for fine arts (paintings and sculpture), restoration (paintings and sculpture), industrial and popular arts, inventory and documentation of monuments, artistic education and documentation (succeeding the service for aesthetic education), and archaeologic excavations. Concerning organisational matters, the regulation officialised a common practice: the exhibition rooms of the museum could be used by societies with the approval of the minister, for “scientific, artistic or educational activities”.<sup>2420</sup> The law and the regulation both highlight the strong dependence of the State Museums on the supervising minister; it was a semi-autonomous institution, as it had some flexibility in specific matters, but needed the explicit authorisation of the minister in others, such as for temporary exhibitions or the determination

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<sup>2416</sup> ‘Loi du 17 août 1960 ayant pour objet l’organisation des Musées de l’Etat’, 17.

<sup>2417</sup> MNHA archives, separate shelf, folder no. 30, *Arrêté grand-ducal* (Joseph Meyers), 25/08/1960.

<sup>2418</sup> MNHA archives, separate shelf, folder no. 30, *Arrêté grand-ducal* (Georges Schmitt), 25/08/1960.

<sup>2419</sup> MNHA archives, separate shelf, folder no. 30, *Arrêté grand-ducal* (Alfred Steinmetzer), 25/08/1960.

<sup>2420</sup> ‘Règlement grand-ducal du 22 décembre 1961 ayant pour objet de déterminer le nombre et l’organisation des services spéciaux, les attributions du personnel et les conditions de fonctionnement des Musées de l’Etat’.

of the opening hours. To a large extent, the legal texts merely officialised rather common and institutionalised practices.

The laws of the 1960s relating to excavations and to the protection of sites and monuments did not explicitly mention the State Museums in their dispositions. As the latter were an institution implicated in the protection and conservation of cultural heritage, they were indirectly impacted, possibly also involved in the formulation of the draft laws. In any case, the State Museums were an actor to be reckoned with when it came to these laws. It is possible that, as in the interwar period, these might have been influenced by criticisms addressed by the custodians, dating back to the early post-war period. In the case of a discovery in March 1946, Heuertz and Meyers complained about excavations organised by two individuals who applied the same “absolutely unacceptable amateur methods” than those “that we have always criticised in the past”. They bemoaned that the excavation service of the museum was the last actor to be informed. In their view, such activities were not motivated by scientific interest, but they resembled more the “rampant passion of gold diggers”.<sup>2421</sup> It should be recalled that the question of amateur excavators was precisely discussed during the parliamentary debates about the law of 1966.

These debates undeniably sparked some public debates about excavations. The organisation of a press conference by the history and art museum in November 1965, when the parliamentary debates were ongoing, is one example. According to the museum, the law would entrust it with new responsibilities that would require more budget. In other words: no budget, no serious implementation of the law.<sup>2422</sup> Around the same time, a certain Krieps (probably Rosch Krieps) published an article in the *Letzeburger Land*, reporting on excavations in Nospelt led by a certain priest Georges Kayser, who received an official authorisation from Pierre Grégoire. The journalist used the opportunity to criticise deficiencies in the legal framework and the excavations. Those in Nospelt, for instance, would be executed with basic tools and without support from the national authorities. According to Gérard Thill, quoted in the article, the lack of financial resources and the insufficient staff would limit the museum to a control of private excavations.<sup>2423</sup>

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<sup>2421</sup> MNHA archives, separate shelf, unnumbered folder (Correspondance administrative. Lettres envoyées), Letter from Marcel Heuertz and Joseph Meyers to Nicolas Margue, 21/03/1946.

<sup>2422</sup> j.m.m., ‘Gesetze, Geld und Personal’.

<sup>2423</sup> Kr., ‘Schutz vor “wilden” Geschichtsgrabungen: In einem Wald bei Nospelt wurden römische Ruinen entdeckt’, *d’Letzeburger Land*, November 1965.

Several days after the publication of the article, Thill criticised it in an internal note. He had a telephone call with Krieps on the subject on 3 November (the article was published on 5 November), discussing the excavations by Kayser near Goeblange-Nospelt. Krieps, according to Thill, did not visit the site, and “ignored absolutely everything that a serious journalist needs to know in order to write an article about this subject.” Thill pointed out the (unspecified) mistakes during the phone call and asked to receive the article before publication. Krieps refused and Thill retorted that he would not refrain from answering to the article in the newspapers. “I have to say,” Thill added, “except for a dozen of imprecisions that I would voluntarily ascribe to the slightly confused or acrimonious spirit of the journalist, the article has lost its touch of aggressivity that it would certainly have had without our preceding phone call.”<sup>2424</sup>

The impact of the law of 1966 (and possibly that of 1968) on the museum is difficult to measure and it cannot be concluded whether, at least from the museum’s perspective, a professionalisation was not only theoretically but also practically taking place. In the 1970s, the excavating activities still suffered from an understaffed service. According to the report of 1972, most excavations could only be assured thanks to the collaboration of volunteers.<sup>2425</sup> The call for more employees, including surveillance, were reiterated in the following years. The museum found itself in an ambiguous situation: it criticised the lack of professionalism of amateurs who did excavations yet had to rely on volunteers for its own activities.

### *Acquisitions*

The process of professionalisation inevitably impacted the acquisition policy of the museum, which was continued after the war but at a slower rate than during the occupation years. According to the inventory of the National History and Art Museum, between 1945 and 1956, the museum acquired less than sixty objects per year. After 1957, the rate regularly exceeded this number, in 1968 the museum made more than a hundred acquisitions. Between 1968 and 1974, the rate varied between 84 (1973) and 155 (1971) acquisitions.

After the liberation, Georges Schmitt continued to ensure the acquisition policy of the museum. A series of letters and reports illustrate Schmitt’s assessments, sometimes directly addressed to the minister for national education. Indeed, some sources reveal that Schmitt

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<sup>2424</sup> Own translation. “Je dois dire, sauf une douzaine d’inexactitudes que je veux bien mettre sur le compte de l’esprit un peu embrouillé ou acrimonieux du rédacteur, l’article a perdu sa pointe d’agressivité qu’il aurait certainement eue sans notre entretien préalable.” (MNHA archives, D-00097, Internal note by Gérard Thill, 08/11/1965).

<sup>2425</sup> Ministère des Affaires culturelles, *Budget des dépenses 1973*, 12–13.

evaluated the objects at the ministry's request, and not necessarily because it was a genuine wish of the museum. Hence, the government, especially the competent minister, still had an important say in the affairs of the museum.

In 1961, Georges Schmitt drafted an elaborate acquisition programme for fine arts, popular arts, and applied arts, from sculptures over ceramics to decorative art.<sup>2426</sup> We might identify four recurrent criteria in Schmitt's proposals. Not all these criteria are used for every category, but they can occur in different combinations: origins, intrinsic value, enrichment, and comparison. Concerning the first criterion, Schmitt explicitly stressed the necessity to acquire objects of Luxembourgish origins for nearly every category he mentioned. In doing so, he extended the geographical origin to the territory of the old Duchy of Luxembourg; this rationale is present, for instance, when Schmitt discusses the collection of ceramics, and particularly those produced by Boch in Septfontaines. For Schmitt, they were of particular importance to Luxembourg's history: "The fine faïence ware is the only old industrial art branch that made the Duchy, and still makes it today, internationally renowned."<sup>2427</sup> The second trope, intrinsic value, is explicit in some cases, such as in reflections about contemporary sculptures: "It is evident that we try to collect at the Museum as many works from our sculptors of the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and beginning of the 20 century as possible, but only if these works possess an undeniably artistic character."<sup>2428</sup> The third criterion, enrichment, concerns the acquisition of objects to complete existing collections, such as glassworks or fabrics. The criterion of comparison, finally, applies to the acquisition of "foreign" artworks, i.e. of non-Luxembourgish origin, to compare with national art, discern influences and identify artistic movements.

Unfortunately, Schmitt's text remains an isolated source. Reactions by his peers, superiors and the minister are not known. In any case, it clearly exposes Schmitt's views on what criteria to apply. It probably did not attract much disagreement, as Schmitt had been involved in the

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<sup>2426</sup> MNHA archives, separate shelf, unnumbered folder (*Musée d'histoire. Lettres reçues*), *Programme raisonné des acquisitions à faire pendant les années à venir* by Georges Schmitt, 13/07/1961.

<sup>2427</sup> Own translation. "La faïence fine est la seule branche d'art industriel ancien qui ait valu au Duché, et qui lui vaut encore de nos jours une renommée internationale." (MNHA archives, separate shelf, unnumbered folder [*Musée d'histoire. Lettres reçues*], *Programme raisonné des acquisitions à faire pendant les années à venir* by Georges Schmitt, 13/07/1961).

<sup>2428</sup> Own translation. "Il va de soi qu'on s'efforcera de rassembler au Musée autant d'œuvres que possible de nos sculpteurs de la fin du 19e et du début du 20e siècle, mais pour autant seulement que ces œuvres présentent un caractère artistique indéniable." (MNHA archives, separate shelf, unnumbered folder (*Musée d'histoire. Lettres reçues*), *Programme raisonné des acquisitions à faire pendant les années à venir* by Georges Schmitt and sent to the Minister for Arts and Sciences, 13/07/1961).

acquisition policy since the occupation period without visible disagreements between him and Joseph Meyers, for instance. The acquisition programme might have confirmed an existing approach. Indeed, the evaluations issued by Schmitt in the 1940s and 1950s followed a similar logic than the programme of 1961, which expanded on the criteria and considered each sub-collection separately. The acquisition of archaeological discoveries – for instance through excavations, as part of national heritage and framed by legal texts – is based on specific criteria and results from different processes than, for instance, the acquisition of 19<sup>th</sup> century paintings. In hindsight, the tension between efforts to apply objective criteria and interferences of individual tastes and interests is difficult to evaluate. How much was discussed and exchanged and has never been written down? This does not mean that such tensions did not exist. Schmitt's advice against a painting chosen by Margue and Meyers (as recorded in the archives) could be considered from this perspective. Both Margue and Meyers, despite their background as historians and participants in the cultural (policy) field, did not possess professional skills to evaluate artworks in the interest of the State Museums (neither one was a trained art historian).

The late 1950s marked the first time that the involved actors reflected about a clear framework. Some years before Schmitt's acquisition programme for the folklore and history section, Joseph-Emile Muller exposed his ideas related to the acquisition of a contemporary art collection in 1957. The “ideal”, according to Muller, “would be the constitution of a ‘complete’ museum” representing the main artists and schools since the Renaissance. Yet, due to financial restrictions, this would not be possible. Muller suggested focusing on a more recent period, as implemented by museums in Saarbrücken, Hanover or Eindhoven. Younger artists such as Bissière or Le Moal could be envisaged. For Muller, the acquisition policy should focus on the contemporary period in France, Italy, Germany, Belgium, Luxembourg, and other countries. He also recommended the acquisition of impressionist paintings if possible.<sup>2429</sup> Though the title of the note does not explicitly mention the acquisition of *contemporary* art, Muller's suggestions clearly point to this direction. The note attracted Pierre Frieden's attention, who requested more details and raised, for the first time, the idea of a commission.<sup>2430</sup> The exchange between the custodians and the minister were dragging on for months. Muller's initial ideas were eventually approved by Frieden and not questioned in principle. The minister agreed with the custodians that acquisitions should focus on contemporary art and entrusted to an expert

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<sup>2429</sup> MNHA archives, D-00003, *Note aus sujet de la constitution d'une collection de tableaux et de sculptures au Musée de l'Etat* by Joseph-Emile Muller, 10/07/1957.

<sup>2430</sup> MNHA archives, D-00003, Letter from the minister of national education to Joseph Meyers, 19/08/1957.

commission. In January 1958, Frieden asked Meyers to submit proposals for its composition and its attributions.<sup>2431</sup> In the following months, several further decisions were taken. Frieden reserved 200,000 francs to the acquisition of contemporary art (foreign and Luxembourgish). As for the commission, Edmond Goergen (restorer), Meyers, Muller and Schmitt were designated representatives of the museum.<sup>2432</sup> The other members were Mathias Demoullin (physician), Tony Neuman (president of the commission), Joseph Pauly (pharmacist)<sup>2433</sup>, Richard Maria Staud, Robert Stumper, Alphonse Weicker (Banque Générale) and Pierre Wurth. In July 1958, the first meeting took place. However, the commission was merely a consultative body and the minister had to agree with its suggestions.

This first acquisition commission was active until 1960/1961. Before its creation, the museum had been buying paintings from Luxembourgish artists, either to support them, or to create a future Luxembourgish art gallery. Artworks by foreign artists were sometimes bought, too. After 1958, their acquisition was intensified. Among them, the School of Paris occupied an important place.<sup>2434</sup> In order to evaluate paintings by foreign artists discussed in the meetings, the commission created a small committee to visit exhibitions abroad for practical and financial reasons. When such visits were noted and the destination and place of an exhibition mentioned, Paris figured in the majority of cases.<sup>2435</sup> Once acquisitions were made, the commission visited the museum to see the artworks that were bought.<sup>2436</sup> In addition, it continued to buy paintings from Luxembourgish artists discovered at exhibitions, for instance at the annual *Salon* of the CAL.<sup>2437</sup>

When Pierre Frieden died in February 1959, his disappearance marked a break in the affairs of the commission. The report of 28 February addressed the minister's death; the president reminded of Frieden's decision to create a contemporary art collection and the commission's

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<sup>2431</sup> MNHA archives, D-00003, Letter from Pierre Frieden to Joseph Meyers, 31/01/1958.

<sup>2432</sup> MNHA archives, D-00003, Letter from Pierre Frieden to the designated members of the expert commission, 14/04/1958.

<sup>2433</sup> Quite interestingly, and as of 2020, the museum exposes in the arts and crafts section of the permanent exhibition a living suite that belonged to the spouses Pauly-Groff. According to the museum's description, the couple "was particularly modern for its time" and it had "decorated its home with several abstract School of Paris paintings" (<https://collections.mnha.lu/object/mnha00155/>, last access 20/05/2020). The School of Paris was indeed a focus of the acquisition commission.

<sup>2434</sup> MNHA archives, D-00002, *Avertissement* by Joseph Meyers, undated [between 1960 and 1964].

<sup>2435</sup> For instance : MNHA archives, D-00003, Letter from the acquisition commission of the State Museums to Pierre Frieden, 28/11/1958.

<sup>2436</sup> For instance : MNHA archives, D-00003, Meeting report of the State Museum acquisition commission, 28/02/1959.

<sup>2437</sup> In 1968, for instance, the commission recommended buying paintings by Marie-Paul Fixer and Nicole Stein, shown at the *Salon* (MNHA archives, D-00001, Acquisition proposal, 23/10/1968).

debt owed to him. “His disappearance,” the report quotes the president, “leaves an emptiness in our cultural life that will be difficult to compensate.”<sup>2438</sup> His successor to the department for arts and sciences, Pierre Grégoire, announced several changes during the commission’s meeting of 8 December 1959. While the new minister confirmed its missions, he shared his intention to merge the budgets for “old” artworks and contemporary art. Furthermore, he planned to impose stricter limits on travels abroad, in accordance with a related government note. For Grégoire, two people instead of three or four would suffice to visit exhibitions. Furthermore, he said that the commission should not only look for artworks in Paris, but also in Germany and in Italy.<sup>2439</sup> Whether this wish for diversification was respected by the commission remains difficult to assess. The available sources (commission reports and letters) rather hint at the opposite.

In the meeting of 8 December 1959, the members discussed a list of seven paintings. For three of them (Brianchon, Limouse, Marzelle), the vote was unanimously in favour of an acquisition; the others (Chastel, Deyrolle, Gillet, Lagrange) still assembled a majority of votes, but every time with one or two opposing votes. Goergen and Muller were entrusted by the commission to travel to Paris and take a look at the paintings.<sup>2440</sup> In the meantime, the seven paintings were suggested for acquisition in Neuman’s letter to the minister of 9 December.<sup>2441</sup> After the travel, Goergen drafted a note in which he recommended paintings by four artists who were already discussed on 8 December (Brianchon, Limouse, Lagrange, Marzelle)<sup>2442</sup> and made new proposals (Guillaumin, Lebourg, Fontanarosa, Cheyssial).<sup>2443</sup> On 30 December, the commission considered Goergen’s suggestions and those by Muller (Beaudin, Arnould, Mouly, Montanier, Singier and Cottavoz). For the Brianchon, Limouse, Lagrange and Marzelle paintings, the vote was unanimously in favour; the same was the case for the Arnould. The

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<sup>2438</sup> MNHA archives, D-00003, Meeting report of the State Museum acquisition commission, 28/02/1959.

<sup>2439</sup> MNHA archives, D-00003, Meeting report of the State Museum acquisition commission, 08/12/1959.

<sup>2440</sup> MNHA archives, D-00003, Meeting report of the State Museum acquisition commission, 08/12/1959.

<sup>2441</sup> MNHA archives, D-00003, Letter from Tony Neuman to Pierre Grégoire, 09/12/1959.

<sup>2442</sup> According to the meeting report of 30 December, the Brianchon, Limouse and Marzelle were the same; only the Lagrange was a different painting than the one discussed on 8 December, as this one was not available anymore. However, a comparison between Goergen’s list and the originally discussed paintings might lead to some confusions. The Brianchon painting bore the same title and had the same value. The Limouse and the Lagrange had the same price, but Goergen indicates different titles. The Marzelle painting had a different title and was cheaper. However, according to the report of 30 December, the Marzelle painting was the same.

<sup>2443</sup> MNHA archives, D-00003, *Note concernant une proposition pour constituer une collection d’art contemporain* by Edmond Goergen, undated [written between 9 December and 30 December].

Chastel, Gillet, Beaudin, Mouly, and Singier attracted a majority of favourable votes. The remaining paintings either were not considered due to lack of information or were not approved by a majority of the members.<sup>2444</sup>

The tensions that followed cannot be understood without this background information. On 31 December – the day following the meeting – Tony Neuman informed the minister about the paintings suggested for acquisition: Brianchon, Limouse, Lagrange, Marzelle, Arnould, Chastel, Gillet, Beaudin, Mouly and Singier.<sup>2445</sup> On the letter, a red, hand-drawn “x” was marked next to the Brianchon, Limouse, Marzelle and Lagrange. These were accepted for acquisition by the minister. However, a note from Edouard Probst (government councillor) to Meyers mentioned six paintings marked with a red cross. This must certainly have elicited Meyers’ and Muller’s surprise. Indeed, on 6 January 1960, Muller had a phone call with Meyers to discuss Probst’s note. Besides the four marked paintings on Neuman’s letter, two other paintings were marked on a letter that Goergen sent to Neuman on 23 December (Lebourg and Cheyssial).<sup>2446</sup> Muller ignored where the Cheyssial could be – only Goergen saw it. Both custodians decided that Meyers should talk to the minister. On 8 January, the custodians had another conversation on the issue. Meyers seemed to have changed his mind and was less sure whether he should contact the minister, but still wanted to think about it.<sup>2447</sup> On 12 January, Muller enquired about the progress made in the affair. As it turned out, Meyers, upon having contacted the minister, was delegated by the latter to acquire the six paintings in Paris, which he did. Muller did not seem to be pleased. From his handwritten notes, it appears that he felt ignored as the secretary of the commission. Indeed, he wanted to know from Meyers who gave him the addresses in Paris but received no reply. Muller wondered why he was not put in charge of the correspondence. Meyers defended himself by putting the responsibility on the minister’s shoulders:

I ask him [Meyers] who communicated the addresses in Paris to him. He does not give me an answer. I am surprised that, as secretary of the commission, I have not been asked to write these letters. Mr Meyers answers that he has only executed the orders of the minister.<sup>2448</sup>

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<sup>2444</sup> MNHA archives, D-00003, Meeting report of the State Museum acquisition commission, 30/12/1959.

<sup>2445</sup> MNHA archives, D-00003, Letter from Tony Neuman to Pierre Grégoire, 31/12/1959.

<sup>2446</sup> Muller refers to the report by Goergen on his travel to Paris and the suggestions he made for acquisitions.

<sup>2447</sup> MNHA archives, D-00003, Handwritten note by Joseph-Emile Muller, 09/01/1960.

<sup>2448</sup> Own translation. “Je lui [Meyers] demande qui lui a communiqué les adresses à Paris. Il ne me donne pas de réponse. Je m’étonne qu’en tant que secrétaire de la commission je n’ai pas été chargé d’écrire ces lettres. M. Meyers répond qu’il n’a fait qu’exécuter les ordres du Ministre.” (MNHA archives, D-00003, Handwritten note by Joseph-Emile Muller, 12/01/1960).

What exactly happened afterwards is unclear. For the period between December 1960 and January 1961, meeting reports are lacking, even though the commission might have convened. For 1961, the sources provide only a very fragmented view. In fact, according to the activity report of the History and Art Museum of the State Museums, the commission met around twenty times in 1961.<sup>2449</sup> According to Muller's activity report for 1961, the custodian participated in seven commission meetings, but wrote three reports.<sup>2450</sup> These reports are probably those of January, August and October 1961. They do not bear any signature and are the only ones available.

On 28 January 1961, the meeting report of the commission mentions the resignation of Neuman over the course of 1960. One might wonder why Neuman stepped down as president of the commission. Was it a consequence of the affair concerning the six paintings? The reports of 1961 support this hypothesis. The commission decided to discuss the situation caused by the resignation in another meeting. In August 1961, the members deplored the choice of six paintings, explicitly referring to the decision of December 1959. According to them, the minister's selection expressed a bias towards figurative art. Furthermore, some members criticized that two artworks (Lebourg and Cheyssial) had been acquired without their knowledge and despite the commission's disapproval. Stumper, Demoullin and Pauly raised the question whether the commission would still have any legitimacy and envisaged to resign. In the end, the men decided to evaluate together with the minister the artworks acquired so far and to elaborate the criteria for the constitution of a contemporary art collection.<sup>2451</sup>

Apparently, the minister was displeased with the fact that the commission convened. On the day following the meeting, Joseph-Emile Muller received a phone call from Norbert Weber, government councillor and enquiring in Grégoire's name. During the conversation, Muller did not only explain that it was he who convoked the meeting, he also exposed why the members met. As Muller probably noted down only an excerpt of the phone call, it is not known if and what conclusions were agreed on.<sup>2452</sup> A couple of days later, the commission sent a letter signed

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<sup>2449</sup> MNHA archives, unnumbered folder (J. Meyers II [correspondances]), Report on the History and Art Museum by Joseph Meyers, undated [1961].

<sup>2450</sup> MNHA archives, unnumbered folder (J. Meyers II [correspondances]), *Rapport d'activité pour la période du 1<sup>er</sup> janvier au 31 décembre 1961* by Joseph-Emile Muller, 23/01/1962.

<sup>2451</sup> MNHA archives, D-00002, Meeting report of the Commission chargée de faire des propositions en vue de constituer une collection d'art contemporain, 30/08/1961.

<sup>2452</sup> MNHA archives, D-00002, Handwritten note by Joseph-Emile Muller regarding a phone call with Norbert Weber, undated [31/08/1961].

by the vice-president Stumper to Grégoire. It requested a joint evaluation of the acquisitions.<sup>2453</sup> Grégoire took three weeks to reply in a rather resentful tone:

While reading this report [of the meeting of 30 August] I could not help myself but being strongly surprised to learn the viewpoint of some members, according to which it would be regrettable that the Minister, in his decisions, does not act in conformity with the suggestions of the commission. I could not accept that one considers these suggestions as obligations for the Minister, and that he does not have the faculty to accept or refuse according to his own judgement. In presence of these erroneous concepts, I am wondering whether it would not be advised to reorganise the commission, while providing it, through an official decree, with a framework of which it has been deprived until now.<sup>2454</sup>

The response of the commission, upon analysing the letter, was as simple as radical: it resigned collectively.<sup>2455</sup> This paved the way for a reorganisation of the commission. While it remains unclear how the process of reorganisation unfolded, the new commission was composed of Edouard Probst, Joseph Meyers, Steinmetzer, Muller, Walentiny, Schmitt, Goergen and Weber; all of them were either representatives of the State Museums or of the government (Probst and Weber).<sup>2456</sup> According to the 1961 report of the history and art museum, the new commission met “several times”.<sup>2457</sup> In its essence, the commission did not proceed radically different than its predecessor. The members regularly visited exhibitions to choose artworks of interest, in Luxembourg and abroad.<sup>2458</sup> Financial constraints continued to play a role. This was explicit in a meeting of the commission in December 1963. Some members considered the purchase of impressionist artworks from renowned artists too

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<sup>2453</sup> MNHA archives, D-00002, Letter from the acquisition commission to Pierre Grégoire, 02/09/1961.

<sup>2454</sup> Own translation. “A la lecture de ce rapport je n’ai pu me défendre d’une vive surprise en apprenant la manière de voir exprimée par plusieurs membres, selon laquelle il est regrettable que le Ministre, dans ses décisions, ne se soit pas conformé aux propositions faites par la Commission. Je ne saurais admettre que l’on considère que ces propositions constituent, pour le Ministre, des obligations, sans qu’il lui reste la faculté, d’y prendre et d’y laisser selon son jugement. En présence de ces conceptions erronées, je suis à me demander, s’il n’est pas indiqué de remanier la commission, tout en lui donnant par un arrêté pris en due forme la base dont elle est privée jusqu’à ce jour.” (MNHA archives, D-00002, Letter from Pierre Grégoire to Robert Stumper, 25/09/1961).

<sup>2455</sup> “Les membres de la Commission chargée de faire des propositions en vue de constituer une collection d’art contemporain au Musée de l’Etat, ayant pris connaissance de votre intention de remanier cette commission, estiment qu’il est de leur devoir de vous faciliter cette tâche dans tout la mesure du possible et ont l’honneur de vous présenter leur démission collective.” (MNHA archives, D-00002, Letter from the acquisition commission to Pierre Grégoire, 30/10/1961).

<sup>2456</sup> See for instance: MNHA archives, D-00002, Meeting report of the Commission d’achat des Musées de l’Etat, 20/12/1963.

<sup>2457</sup> MNHA archives, unnumbered folder (J. Meyers II [correspondances]), Report of the History and Art Museum by Joseph Meyers, undated [1961].

<sup>2458</sup> The travels of the commission were discussed, for instance, in their meetings.

expensive; “it would be better”, according to the commission, “to stick to contemporary artists with an acquired reputation and whose prices are adapted to our budget.”<sup>2459</sup>

Despite internal tensions, the fact that a specific commission for the acquisition of contemporary art was instituted is one example of the professionalization of the museum. Another one concerns the systematic reflections about the criteria to apply and the choices to make. However, even such initiatives were still limited in terms of professionalism. The museum was not run by custodians who were necessarily experts yet evaluated all the acquisitions. The acquisition commission for contemporary art was not composed of studied experts, scholars and art historians, but of people who in one way or another professed an interest in modern art, were themselves art collectors or simply had the necessary social capital to be nominated by the minister. In addition, the museum was not completely independent in the choices it made. This was not only true from a budget perspective, but also because the minister held considerable decisional power and could accept or decline acquisitions even against prior evaluations.

#### *Temporary exhibitions*

One of the major changes in the museum concerned the organisation of temporary exhibitions. Though they were not completely absent during the occupation period, for instance, the post-war period was different in the sense that the organisation of temporary exhibitions, either internal or external, became a common activity. In the present context, we will take a look at the external requests for temporary exhibitions, because here too, the museum had to operate a choice, ask the supervising minister’s authorisation, and needed to think about criteria.

Unfortunately, it is difficult to assess when these criteria were established, how stable they were, and whether some reasons were provided to the requesters as a pretext. Usually, the ministers followed the custodians’ opinion. In some cases, though, they refused to concede an authorisation for specific reasons, even when the custodians were in favour or did not oppose. In October 1961, for instance, Joseph Meyers transferred to Pierre Grégoire a request of the company Euralux to show paintings by Salvador Dali in the museum. Meyers did not see any

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<sup>2459</sup> “Plusieurs membres de la Commission sont d’ailleurs d’avis que, tant que nos crédits ne permettent pas l’acquisition d’œuvres impressionnistes représentatives des grands maîtres, il vaut mieux s’en tenir aux artistes contemporains dont la renommée est acquise et dont les prix sont encore adaptés à nos moyens.” (MNHA archives, D-00002, Meeting report of the Commission d’achat des Musées de l’Etat, 20/12/1963).

“inconvenience”, under the condition that the exhibition would not entail any fees.<sup>2460</sup> Grégoire, however, did not authorise the exhibition, as Euralux was not a non-profit organisation.<sup>2461</sup> In other cases, the custodians already declined before transferring the request to the minister; this usually happened, among other reasons, due to lack of space. In September 1965, Marcel Heuertz wrote a negative response to a painter, who wanted to exhibit with his wife in the museum; lack of space was invoked, but also that the museum “is not used to mount exhibitions as suggested” by the painter.<sup>2462</sup> In December 1968, Joseph-Emile Muller declined the request of an artist as the museum organised only a few exhibitions because of insufficient space. For each temporary exhibition, the museum needed to remove its own collections. Furthermore, exhibitions with only one artist were not successful, except when the artist was well known.<sup>2463</sup> The latter criteria was applied in a similar fashion, only the other way around, by Gérard Thill in March 1966 to recommend the organisation of an exhibition by the Croatian painter Yvan Generalić. According to Thill, “en organisant cette exposition le Musée continuerait, à mon sens, de respecter absolument le principe selon lequel il n’accepte de présenter les œuvres d’un seul artiste que si celui-ci est reconnu.”<sup>2464</sup>

The criteria concerning non-profit organisations were, apparently, not applied in 1953 when the State Museums showed an exhibition dedicated to Leonardo da Vinci, organised by the US company International Business Machines (IBM).<sup>2465</sup> In addition, it cannot be evaluated what topics, painters, or artistic movements were accepted by the succeeding ministers. It could be advanced, rather tentatively, that exhibitions by recognised Luxembourgish associations were more easily accepted. Furthermore, requests emanating from the Church or Catholic institutions had higher chances. In 1965, Grégoire authorised a “sacral” exhibition in the context of the Octave, an annual traditional religious celebration in Luxembourg.<sup>2466</sup> In January 1954, the association Pro Juventute suggested organising an exhibition “mainly dedicated to

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<sup>2460</sup> MNHA archives, unnumbered folder (Expositions et projets 1959-1972), note by Joseph Meyers to Pierre Grégoire, 16/10/1961.

<sup>2461</sup> MNHA archives, unnumbered folder (Expositions et projets 1959-1972), Letter from Pierre Grégoire to Euralux, 19/10/1961.

<sup>2462</sup> MNHA archives, unnumbered folder (Expositions et projets 1959-1972), Letter from Marcel Heuertz to Marcel Dusaussois, 14/09/1965.

<sup>2463</sup> MNHA archives, D-00001, Letter from Joseph-Emile Muller to Ignacy Witz, 06/12/1968.

<sup>2464</sup> MNHA archives, unnumbered folder (Expositions et projets 1959-1972), Letter from Gérard Thill to the minister of cultural affairs, 01/03/1966.

<sup>2465</sup> MNHA archives, unnumbered folder (Bulletin de Documentation 1945-1959), *Bulletin de documentation no. 1-3*, 1953, p. 38.

<sup>2466</sup> MNHA archives, unnumbered folder (Expositions et projets 1959-1972), Letter from Pierre Grégoire to Monsignor Jean Hengen, 26/10/1966.

the organisation of leisure time of young people with families and to youth literature”<sup>2467</sup>. The minister of national education received the request and transferred it to Joseph Meyers; the exhibition was shown in May 1954.

In the immediate post-war period, the policy towards external exhibitions seemed to be stricter, especially because the museum was approached by an increasing number of requests from associations. When the minister Nicolas Margue was approached by the CAL for two retrospectives, he asked Meyers’ opinion whether there would be any inconvenience. Due to the occupation, the CAL lost its property and had no exhibition material.<sup>2468</sup> Taking Meyers’ opinion into account, Margue informed the president of the CAL, Michel Stoffel, that the exhibition rooms were in principle reserved for in-house exhibitions, which, as Margue added, was the procedure in all capitals and was not different before the war. Though the CAL was told to organise exhibitions in another location, with the support of the museum, the society could organise one of the exhibitions, on deceased artists, in the museum.<sup>2469</sup> What happened afterwards remains undisclosed, but the State Museum hosted the annual *Salon* of the CAL in October 1946. This collaboration remained in the following years.

In March 1947, Meyers wrote Nicolas Margue concerning the high number of requests and following a letter by the photographic association Camera Luxembourg about a national photography exhibition. The custodian raised several questions concerning temporary external exhibitions. Should a part of the building be reserved for them? Should the number of such exhibitions be limited? What would be the limit? Meyers himself was uncertain about the possibility of providing rooms, as the museum was slowly filling the spaces with its collections.<sup>2470</sup> Margue’s decision was very clear and strict – in theory. The minister decided that no temporary exhibitions should be organised in 1947 to hasten the inauguration of the museum.<sup>2471</sup> The permanent reservation of a room for temporary exhibitions was discarded, as it might entail “requests from organisms whose activities would not have any link with those pursued by the museum”.<sup>2472</sup>

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<sup>2467</sup> MNHA archives, unnumbered folder (Expositions et projets 1959-1972), Letter from Pro Juventute to the minister of national education, 29/01/1954.

<sup>2468</sup> MNHA archives, D-00099, Letter from Nicolas Margue to Joseph Meyers, 21/02/1946.

<sup>2469</sup> MNHA archives, D-00099, Letter from Nicolas Margue to Michel Stoffel (president of the CAL), 20/03/1946.

<sup>2470</sup> MNHA archives, separate shelf, unnumbered folder (Musée d’histoire. Correspondance générale – Lettres envoyées), Letter from Joseph Meyers to Nicolas Margue, 10/03/1947.

<sup>2471</sup> MNHA archives, D-00099, Letter from Nicolas Margue to Joseph Meyers, 21/03/1947.

<sup>2472</sup> Original text: “L’affection définitive d’une salle de rez-de-chaussée à des expositions temporaires nous vaudrait une suite de demandes émanant d’organismes dont l’activité n’a plus aucun rapport

Margue's decision should favour the museum and avoid any ongoing reflections about when and what kind of exhibitions could be authorised. Backed by this decision, Meyers contacted Camera Luxembourg and denied their request.<sup>2473</sup> Paradoxically, however, the CAL was treated differently. Whether it was, as so often in the small cultural and political field of Luxembourg, a question of personal relations (or any other reason) is not known. In any case, the CAL was not the only exception to the rule. On the same day Meyers replied to Camera Luxembourg, he informed a priest of a decision taken by the government concerning an Eastern exhibition. The museum would host it in the entrance hall.<sup>2474</sup>

#### **V.3.4. Of junk, masterpieces and other things: the value of art and its definition**

When the educational service organised exhibitions, it relied on a definition of "good" art; when the State Museum organised the Kutter retrospective, it applied a definition of "good" art; and when the custodians advised getting rid of artworks, they resorted to a definition of "good" art. The value of culture and art, defined and disseminated by the elite, was measured with criteria that, in hindsight, are difficult to discern. Actors did not necessarily record them at each decision they took. These criteria could include the quality of an artwork and its market value, the reputation of an artist, or the historical context of creation. Even the aura of the owner or collector could exert some influence on the evaluation of an object. Yet, for all the difficulties that might arise in its delimitation, "good" art was a powerful concept. The current sub-section examines examples and instances in which custodians applied criteria to evaluate art. It will close on an ambiguous example that did not seem to follow criteria of high art, but was still informed by certain views that combined value, historical importance and national tropes.

##### ***Acquisitions***

Considering examples or activities that were quite prominently informed by reflections on the value of art, the acquisition policy certainly ranges among the most important and revealing activities. Indeed, criteria of value informed the acquisition of objects as well as the destruction or deaccessioning of objects. In the immediate post-war period, the State Museums' rooms

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avec celle qui est poursuivie avec le musée." (MNHA archives, D-00099, Letter from Nicolas Margue to Joseph Meyers, 21/03/1947).

<sup>2473</sup> MNHA archives, separate shelf, unnumbered folder (Musée d'histoire. Correspondance générale – Lettres envoyées), Letter from Joseph Meyers to the association Camera Luxembourg, 25/03/1947.

<sup>2474</sup> MNHA archives, separate shelf, unnumbered folder (Musée d'histoire. Correspondance générale – Lettres envoyées), Letter from Joseph Meyers to an unnamed priest, 25/03/1947.

were used as a depot by the Office des biens séquestrés. Georges Schmitt was discontent about the lack of space in the building:

The Museum's management, being obliged to reorganise its collections of paintings because of the bad season, will soon be in urgent need of the space currently occupied by your deposits. The question of their allocation will therefore require an immediate solution.<sup>2475</sup>

The custodian suggested sorting out valuable paintings. "Only 150 paintings and reproductions deposited by you in the museum merit to be conserved, and out of these, barely 20 have a museum value," Schmitt opined. For the other objects, he considered their artistic or commercial value insignificant or nonexistent, rendering their conservation futile. Schmitt suggested destroying these objects, while possibly keeping the glasses and frames. This would allow deported or exiled Luxembourgers to recover their lost possessions, but "only," as Schmitt added, "if it concerns objects of value". When it comes to the "cause of the good taste", Schmitt thought that the destruction of objects, even belonging to Luxembourgers, would not be a condemnable act.<sup>2476</sup>

Schmitt's statements support the hypothesis that the recovery of artistic objects mainly served the elites in Luxembourg. Indeed, lower social classes did not have the financial means to buy "objects of value". The Nazis destroyed works under the label of "degenerate art". Schmitt advocated the destruction under the label of valueless art. In both cases, the decisions were imposed from above. Schmitt's arguments were formulated from a high culture perspective. Furthermore, he expressed his apprehension concerning the visit of potential owners to the museum, revealing the importance of conservation over the accessibility of the museum to the public or the museum as a public space:

On the few occasions that we allowed returning exiles (each time Israelites) to search through the mass of deposited objects (at their repeated request and each time without result) the damage caused to both the glasses and the frames was greater than the value of the object sought. Not

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<sup>2475</sup> "La direction du Musée, étant obligée de remanier ses collections de tableaux à cause de la mauvaise saison, elle aura sous peu un besoin urgent de la place occupée présentement par vos dépôts. La question de leur affectation demandera donc une solution immédiate." (MNHA archives, separate shelf, unnumbered folder (Correspondance), Letter from Georges Schmitt to Joseph Wolter, 18/09/1945).

<sup>2476</sup> Original text: "Je considère en effet que la destruction d'objets de pacotille même appartenant à des luxembourgeois n'est pas un acte répréhensible puisqu'il sert la cause du bon goût. D'ailleurs, cette récupération est pour le moment chose impossible, vu le grand nombre des objets." (MNHA archives, separate shelf, unnumbered folder (Correspondance), Letter from Georges Schmitt to Joseph Wolter, 18/09/1945).

to mention that the disorder caused in the carefully sorted paintings created a surplus of work for us.<sup>2477</sup>

In October, Schmitt reiterated his request and urged a “fast and radical decision”.<sup>2478</sup>

The issue dragged on for months. Even a year later, the Office of Sequestered Goods had artworks stored in the museum. This must have created a major impediment to the usual business of the museum, but neither Heuertz nor Meyers mentioned this situation in their post-war reports. Whereas the argument of value was still applied in October 1946, the objective had slightly shifted, though. The sources prove the implication not only of Schmitt, but also of Meyers and Muller. As Schmitt reported in his letter to the Ministry of National Education, Muller wanted to avoid that “paintings, chromos and engravings of bad taste deposited in the exhibition hall would be sold to the public.”<sup>2479</sup> The museum employees proceeded to a triage of about a thousand objects. Schmitt regretted that some could not be assessed.

Possibly as a reaction to Schmitt’s letter, the minister of national education Nicolas Margue contacted Joseph Wolter from the Office des Séquestrés. Margue had been informed that the administration collected a large stock of paintings, chromos and engravings “of bad taste” and wanted to sell this “junk” (“objets de pacotille”) at an auction. He was concerned about the possible propagation of “an already widespread bad taste” among the population. “It is in my opinion inadmissible,” Margue concluded, “that the state offers a bad example of this trade.” Only objects of artistic value should be reserved for sale and a “serious” triage must be done. The minister recommended to Wolter a collaboration with Muller and Schmitt.<sup>2480</sup> Wolter replied that the triage formed part of an arrangement, but some objects were deposited in other places than the museum. While accepting to collaborate with the custodians, Wolter defended his administration by highlighting that it had never planned to sell objects without previous evaluations.<sup>2481</sup>

The triage and liquidation of objects started shortly thereafter. In December, Meyers informed Margue about the progress and explained that the museum and the office were

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<sup>2477</sup> “Les quelques fois que nous avons permis à des exilés de retour dans le pays (c’étaient chaque fois des israélites [sic]) de fouiller dans la masse des objets déposés (sur leurs instances réitérées et chaque fois sans résultat) le dommage causé tant aux verres qu’aux cadres a été plus grand que la valeur de l’objet recherché. Sans compter que le désordre causé dans les tableaux soigneusement triés nous a créé un surplus de besogne.” (MNHA archives, separate shelf, unnumbered folder (Correspondance), Letter from Georges Schmitt to Joseph Wolter, 18/09/1945).

<sup>2478</sup> MNHA archives, separate shelf, unnumbered folder (Correspondance), Letter from Georges Schmitt to Joseph Wolter, 26/10/1945.

<sup>2479</sup> ANLux, MEN-0002, Letter from Georges Schmitt to Mathias Thinnes (Ministry for National Education), 17/10/1946.

<sup>2480</sup> ANLux, MEN-0002, Letter from Nicolas Margue to Joseph Wolter, 09/11/1946.

<sup>2481</sup> ANLux, MEN-0002, Letter from Joseph Wolter to Nicolas Margue, 14/11/1946.

“liquidating” the artworks sequestered after the liberation.<sup>2482</sup> Thus, the authorities and the museum voluntarily accepted to destroy (alleged) private property not only to empty the rooms of the museums for other purposes but also because the elites chose to avoid disseminating art that was, in their opinion, not valuable enough. Similar arguments were not limited to the immediate post-war period. As we have seen, in the late 1960s, Thill requested the depots of the museum to be evacuated, by “sacrificing everything that is only pasture for the vermin”.<sup>2483</sup>

The previous section analysed the question of professionalisation concerning acquisitions. However, it largely evaded questions surrounding criteria and specifically that of the value of art, except in the case of Schmitt’s acquisition programme. Several examples might help to shed light on the criteria Schmitt applied while supervising the acquisition of artworks, at least in the early post-war period. In August 1945, Schmitt visited, at the request of the minister, an artist with the prospect to acquire a painting. Schmitt advised against it, as the artist was a “very eager amateur” who “will never outperform his limits.”<sup>2484</sup> Around the same time, Schmitt wrote a report about another visit to the brother of a deceased painter. The assistant custodian raised the question of the budget allocated to acquisitions<sup>2485</sup>, eliciting the need for “a lot of caution”. The acquisition of one single painting would cost 15,000 francs, “which would make it impossible to buy any object of value for the rest of the year”. For Schmitt, the value of the paintings would be less, anyway (6,000 to 8,000 francs). The additional sum would constitute a subsidy to the brother for continuing his studies. “It would,” Schmitt assumed, “particularly disadvantage other young artists who are as much promising, if not more.” However, the letter then took a rather peculiar twist. Despite Schmitt’s reservations, he still advised the acquisition of one painting, as it was “promised in principle to Mr R. Jacoby [the brother of the deceased painter].”<sup>2486</sup> Was it the minister himself who made this promise? The sources, unfortunately, do not reveal more. For a similar budget reason, another acquisition was not recommended by Schmitt in September 1945.<sup>2487</sup>

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<sup>2482</sup> ANLux, MEN-0002, Letter from Joseph Meyers to Nicolas Margue, 10/12/1946.

<sup>2483</sup> MNHA archives, D-00095, Letter from Gérard Thill to the minister of cultural affairs, 21/03/1966.

<sup>2484</sup> MNHA archives, separate shelf, unnumbered folder (Musée d’histoire. Lettres reçues), Letter from Georges Schmitt to the minister of national education, 29/08/1945.

<sup>2485</sup> According to Schmitt, the budget amounted in 1945 to LUF 100,000, a third of this amount for each section (natural history, archaeology and history, fine arts and folklore).

<sup>2486</sup> MNHA archives, separate shelf, unnumbered folder (Musée d’histoire. Lettres reçues), Letter from Georges Schmitt to the minister of national education, 30/08/1945.

<sup>2487</sup> MNHA archives, separate shelf, unnumbered folder (Musée d’histoire. Lettres reçues), Letter from Georges Schmitt to the minister of national education, 12/09/1945.

Other evaluations written in 1946 mixed considerations about the intrinsic value of the artworks with their importance for the collections of the museum and for the country. In November 1945, Schmitt supported the acquisition of several Boch faience wares from the antiquarian Henri Schmitt; not only because it would allow a comparison with another ensemble of the museum's collection, but also because the museum should acquire every possible Boch ware. Besides the destruction of some collections during the war, Schmitt stressed that "the Museum of Luxembourg as a national museum should create in the capital a collection accessible to the public, and representative of this Luxembourgish manufacture that has, since a century and a half, a European reputation for the good taste and quality."<sup>2488</sup> In 1946, other potential acquisitions were positively evaluated for historical and documentary reasons related to Luxembourg (explicitly or implicitly using the national trope), for completing and enriching existing collections of the museum, or because a particular painting was representative of the oeuvre of a Luxembourgish artist. When Schmitt advised against the acquisition of artworks, it was the result of considerations about intrinsic value, lack of importance, or financial reasons. Schmitt once wrote a negative assessment because the museum "is crammed with embryonic artworks" that "have often remained mere promises." For Schmitt, the museum would have to "reserve its budget to high-class artworks, of confirmed artistic, documentary or didactic value."<sup>2489</sup> It happened that he advised, though hesitantly, against the wish of the minister of national education. In October 1946, for instance, Schmitt evaluated a painting that Nicolas Margue had chosen with Meyers during a visit of an exhibition. Schmitt qualified Margue's choice as "an oeuvre full of charm that would merit to be acquired by the state", but he preferred two other artworks that were more representative of the artist.<sup>2490</sup>

### *Temporary exhibitions*

The activities of the museum and questions surrounding the value of culture and the definition of high culture were not limited to the acquisition policy. Temporary art exhibitions were an important vector for the dissemination of an idea of culture. These exhibitions could

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<sup>2488</sup> Own translation. "Le Musée de Luxembourg en tant que Musée national se doit de monter dans la capitale une collection accessible au public, représentative de cette manufacture luxembourgeoise qui depuis un siècle et demi jouit d'une renommée européenne de bon goût et de bonne qualité." (MNHA archives, separate shelf, unnumbered folder (Musée d'histoire. Lettres reçues), Acquisition evaluation by Georges Schmitt, 16/11/1945).

<sup>2489</sup> MNHA archives, separate shelf, unnumbered folder (Musée d'histoire. Lettres reçues), Letter from Georges Schmitt to the minister of national education, 28/10/1946.

<sup>2490</sup> MNHA archives, separate shelf, unnumbered folder (Musée d'histoire. Lettres reçues), Letter from Georges Schmitt to the minister of national education, 30/10/1946.

be marked by the general context, by the nature of diplomatic relations, or by the preferences of the custodians and the museum's definition of high culture. In July 1945, the museum hosted an exhibition under the patronage of the government and the auspices of the CAL on the "Peintres-Soldats Américains" (approximate translation: "American Soldiers as Painters"),<sup>2491</sup> hinting at the particular context created by the aftermath of the war. In 1948, another exhibition was placed under the sign of war experiences, i.e. the photographic exhibition « *Non-Rentrés* » *lorrains*. The Court's grand marshall, the president of the Œuvre des Pupilles de la Nation Alfred Loesch, the minister of repatriation Osch, the president of the *Comité pour le rapatriement des Lorrains et Alsaciens non rentrés de la Moselle*, and other Luxembourgish and French representatives of the political and socio-cultural fields assisted at the inauguration.<sup>2492</sup>

Countries with which Luxembourg developed the closest diplomatic ties were overrepresented in the temporary exhibitions, often organised in the framework of (cultural) treaties, such as the exhibition *Artistes Wallons Contemporains* (Belgo-Luxembourgish cultural agreement) in November 1949,<sup>2493</sup> a Belgian exhibition on educational theatre (Treaty of Brussels) in January 1954,<sup>2494</sup> or a Rembrandt exhibition in 1961 (Dutch-Luxembourgish cultural treaty). Indeed, temporary exhibitions figured among the most visible expression of cultural agreements. As such, a Western European perspective dominated. It might have been the only vision disseminated by the museum at least until the 1950s.

In April 1948, the State Museums hosted an exhibition on Dutch painting, in the context of the cultural treaty between Luxembourg and the Netherlands. Among the high-ranking political and diplomatic guests, Nicolas Margue held a speech at the inauguration and stressed the "many ties" between both countries. They were "invaded on the same day and, despite not sharing a common border, suffered a similar fate." Margue referred to the German invasion in 1940. He highlighted the "courage" with which "your people and ours" opposed a "perverse enemy who tried to repent the brutality of his usurpation by what he called the moral conquest

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<sup>2491</sup> MNHA archives, unnumbered folder (Bulletin de Documentation 1945-59), *Bulletin de documentation* no. 8, 1946, p. 9.

<sup>2492</sup> MNHA archives, unnumbered folder (Bulletin de Documentation 1945-59), *Bulletin de documentation* no. 2, 1948, p. 26.

<sup>2493</sup> MNHA archives, unnumbered folder (Bulletin de Documentation 1945-59), *Bulletin de documentation* no. 10-11, 1949, p. 299.

<sup>2494</sup> MNHA archives, unnumbered folder (Bulletin de Documentation 1945-59), *Bulletin de documentation* no. 1-2, 1954, p. 29.

of hearts and minds.”<sup>2495</sup> Even at the opening of an art exhibition, war remembrance was not missing in speeches.

The same observation applies to an exhibition of artworks by French painters Denis, Vuillard and Bonnard in 1948, organised by the educational service with the participation of the National Modern Art Museum in Paris. At the inauguration, the minister of national education Pierre Frieden declared that “the times of closed borders are over; autarky is a thing of the past; it has caused enough damages and elicited too many catastrophes. [...] the spiritual life is without national borders.”<sup>2496</sup> Frieden shared the hopes of the director of the National Modern Art Museum Jean Cassou that “Luxembourg will rediscover in these paintings [by the three exhibited artists] the essential virtues of the French genius.” In Frieden’s view, “becoming aware of the great qualities of the French people equals regaining confidence in the destiny of a people that has always extended on our country the benefits of its custodial genius and has always been more than a neighbour: a friend and a protector.”<sup>2497</sup> This decidedly pro-French speech, like others, illustrates the ambiguous situation of Luxembourg as an intermediate space after the war and the bias towards France.

The choice of exhibitions and cultural initiatives in the post-war period mirrored the preferences of the political and cultural elites. From 24 May to 15 June 1947, the museum showed an exhibition on French *Nouvel Art*, organised by the Service d’éducation esthétique.<sup>2498</sup> It was not the only one dedicated to French art: *Nouvelle Peinture Française* in May 1949<sup>2499</sup>, or *L’Art Français dans les collections luxembourgeoises* in July 1949.<sup>2500</sup> In November 1947, Muller suggested the organisation of an exhibition on French modern tapestry and asked the minister for permission to use the rooms of the museum,<sup>2501</sup> finally organised by the educational service in April 1950, under the auspices of the Ministry of National Education

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<sup>2495</sup> MNHA archives, unnumbered folder (Bulletin de Documentation 1945-59), *Bulletin de documentation no. 3*, 1948, p. 64-65.

<sup>2496</sup> MNHA archives, unnumbered folder (Bulletin de Documentation 1945-59), *Bulletin de documentation no. 11*, 1948, p. 173.

<sup>2497</sup> MNHA archives, unnumbered folder (Bulletin de Documentation 1945-59), *Bulletin de documentation no. 11*, 1948, p. 173.

<sup>2498</sup> ANLux, MEN-1659, *Rapport sur l’exposition « Le nouvel art français »* by Joseph-Emile Muller, 16/07/1947.

<sup>2499</sup> MNHA archives, unnumbered folder (Bulletin de Documentation 1945-59), *Bulletin de documentation no. 5-6*, 1949, p. 189.

<sup>2500</sup> MNHA archives, unnumbered folder (Bulletin de Documentation 1945-59), *Bulletin de documentation no. 5-6*, 1949, p. 203.

<sup>2501</sup> ANLux, MEN-1659, Letter from Joseph-Emile Muller to the minister of national education, 21/11/1947.

and the embassy of France.<sup>2502</sup> In November 1958 (*Du Néo-Impressionnisme à nos jours*)<sup>2503</sup> and in February 1960<sup>2504</sup>, the State Museums mounted exhibitions with artworks belonging to the National Museum of Modern Art in Paris.

However, the museum progressively enlarged its scope to countries beyond France, Belgium and the Netherlands, even if they remained important geographical references. Already in 1947, a Danish exhibition was hosted by the State Museums.<sup>2505</sup> In 1949, in the framework of the cultural agreement between Luxembourg and Great Britain, an exhibition on contemporary art in Great Britain was created.<sup>2506</sup> In April 1955, an exhibition was mounted with the collaboration of the Italian ambassador and in the framework of a bilateral cultural agreement.<sup>2507</sup> The Federal Republic of Germany was not represented; in fact, Luxembourg did not officialise cultural diplomatic relations with the country until the 1980s. In the 1960s, the rare appearance of exhibitions related to non-Western European countries (Russia, Poland, Czechoslovakia) represented a minor extension of the museum's geographical horizon. Non-European cultures were barely represented, except for a Chinese art exhibition (UNESCO) or one on Thailand (organised by the association Fraternité Mondiale). In these cases, the State Museums were not the organisers, but either took advantage of existing offers (which was often the case with UNESCO travelling exhibitions) or agreed to put their rooms at the disposal of external actors.

As a national institution, the State Museums were additionally dedicated to the exhibition and dissemination of national (high) culture. The case of the Kutter exhibition examined in a previous section illustrates this approach. It was one among many such temporary exhibitions: *Cent Ans de Peinture Luxembourgeoise, 1800 à 1900* in July 1949,<sup>2508</sup> a Nico Klopp

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<sup>2502</sup> MNHA archives, unnumbered folder (Bulletin de Documentation 1945-59), *Bulletin de documentation no. 3-4*, 1950, p. 47.

<sup>2503</sup> MNHA archives, unnumbered folder (Bulletin de Documentation 1945-59), *Bulletin de documentation no. 11-12*, 1958, p. 17.

<sup>2504</sup> MNHA archives, unnumbered folder (Bulletin de Documentation 1945-59), *Bulletin de documentation no. 1-3*, 1960, p. 23.

<sup>2505</sup> MNHA archives, separate shelf, unnumbered folder (Musée d'histoire. Correspondance Générale – Lettres envoyées), Letter from Joseph Meyers to the Union des Educateurs luxembourgeois, 22/09/1947.

<sup>2506</sup> MNHA archives, unnumbered folder (Bulletin de Documentation 1945-59), *Bulletin de documentation no. 3*, 1949, p. 137-138.

<sup>2507</sup> MNHA archives, unnumbered folder (Bulletin de Documentation 1945-59), *Bulletin de documentation no. 5*, 1955, p. 113.

<sup>2508</sup> MNHA archives, unnumbered folder (Bulletin de Documentation 1945-59), *Bulletin de documentation no. 5-6*, 1949, p. 203.

retrospective in January 1951,<sup>2509</sup> or *La Faïence Luxembourgeoise Ancienne (1769-1858)* in April 1952.<sup>2510</sup> Most of these exhibitions were dedicated to fine arts as well as applied arts. Historical exhibitions in the strict sense were quite rare. Sometimes, the museum focused on other, non-artistic subjects, such as the former *oppidum* Titelberg (1965), weapons (1966) or numismatic collections (1967). In the framework of the Millennium in 1963, the State Museums showed two “Luxembourgish” exhibitions, subsumed under the title *Etapes de l'Art Luxembourgeois*. The first one, *Etapes de la peinture luxembourgeoise*, attracted politicians and the cultural elite at its inauguration. Joseph Probst, who held a speech in Pierre Grégoire’s name, stressed the museum’s important place “for two reasons. The first one is that the Museum is located at the heart of the city, close to the same spot where the settlement flourished a thousand years ago.” The second reason was the “vast collections”.<sup>2511</sup> The other exhibition, *Des Impressionistes aux Expressionistes*, showed artworks by renowned Luxembourgish artists, such as Berthe Brincour (the only woman), Beckius, Klopp, Kutter, Dominique Lang, Michel Stoffel, or Sosthène Weis.<sup>2512</sup>

Generally, the State Museums were a place where high art was defined and consolidated through exhibitions and by the custodians. The strong presence of French art was barely surprising, considering the context and certain biographies, such as Muller’s interest in the School of Paris. The concept of culture remained restricted in the period examined in the present study. The most visible extension concerned photography, and it mainly happened in the 1960s. The most prominent example constitutes the exhibition *Family of Man*, curated by the Luxembourg-born photographer Edward Steichen and hosted by the State Museums in July 1965.<sup>2513</sup> Two years before, in August 1963, the institution had already hosted an exhibition composed by the Museum of Modern Art and dedicated to Steichen.<sup>2514</sup>

The exhibition *Konscht a Kitsch* (“Art and Kitsch”), arranged by the Service d’éducation esthétique in October/November 1949 was one of the rare events in which the idea of high

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<sup>2509</sup> MNHA archives, unnumbered folder (Bulletin de Documentation 1945-59), *Bulletin de documentation no. 1-2*, 1951, p. 30.

<sup>2510</sup> MNHA archives, unnumbered folder (Bulletin de Documentation 1945-59), *Bulletin de documentation no. 3-4*, 1952, p. 71-72.

<sup>2511</sup> MNHA archives, unnumbered folder (Bulletin de Documentation 1945-59), *Bulletin de documentation no. 10*, 1963, p. 26.

<sup>2512</sup> MNHA archives, unnumbered folder (Bulletin de Documentation 1945-59), *Bulletin de documentation no. 10*, 1963, p. 26-27.

<sup>2513</sup> MNHA archives, unnumbered folder (Bulletin de Documentation 1945-59), *Bulletin de documentation no. 11*, 1965, p. 34.

<sup>2514</sup> MNHA archives, unnumbered folder (Bulletin de Documentation 1945-59), *Bulletin de documentation no. 12*, 1963, p. 55.

culture and the value of culture were apparent. The documents related to the exhibition were very clear about the goal: educate visitors (and especially pupils and students) to distinguish good art from bad art. In his press release to the newspaper offices dated 28 October 1949, Muller wrote:

You see the poetics of a Dutch interior by Jan Vermeer or by Pieter de Hooch, and you see how hollow and boring a painting about the same theme can be when it emanates from one of their weak imitators.<sup>2515</sup>

In a press release of 3 November, Muller reminded that visitors can see “next to a series of mediocre and bad paintings, around fifty very beautiful reproductions of masterpieces” (such as Pieter Brueghel, Cranach, van Gogh, Cézanne, Picasso, Dix, and Renoir).<sup>2516</sup> The artworks were chosen by the Service d'éducation esthétique, but the process of selection remains unclear. The exhibition disseminated an idea of high culture as defended by the organisers. The German exhibition texts were very explicit in their evaluations of the paintings. A painting by Corot (German title: *Der Weiher von Ville d'Avray*) was juxtaposed with another painting by an unknown artist. The text about the second painting wondered why this would be so “embarrassing” and answered by referring to the lack of feelings of the painter expressed through the painting. Another painting, this time confronting one by Pieter Brueghel, “might have been produced by Brueghel if he would not have had any genius (and not even much talent) and if he would have been less interested in the art of painting than in the anecdote.”<sup>2517</sup> In 1956, the educational service organised the exhibition *Confrontations*. It followed a similar educational logic, this time with reproductions of “masterpieces” to highlight similarities and differences between them.<sup>2518</sup> The destruction of artworks mentioned at the beginning of this sub-section and the two aforementioned exhibitions by the educational service had one important element in common: they made sure that “bad taste” would be reduced, that only “good art” would be disseminated, and that the population would be educated accordingly.

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<sup>2515</sup> Own translation. “Sie sehen wie voll Poesie ein holländisches Intérieur von Jan Vermeer oder von Pieter de Hooch ist, und wie leer und langweilig ein Bild mit dem gleichen Sujet sein kann, wenn es von einem ihrer schwächlichen Nachahmer stammt” (MNHA archives, D-00088, Press release from Joseph-Emile Muller to newspaper offices, 28/10/1949).

<sup>2516</sup> MNHA archives, unnumbered folder (Expositions et projets 1959-1972), Press release from Joseph-Emile Muller to newspaper offices, 03/11/1949.

<sup>2517</sup> Own translation. “So hätte Brueghel vielleicht gemalt wenn er kein genie (und nicht einmal viel Talent) gehabt und wenn ihm an der Malerei weniger gelegne hätte als an der Anekdote.” The exhibition texts are conserved in: MNHA archives, D-00088.

<sup>2518</sup> MNHA archives, D-00159, Press release by Joseph-Emile Muller, 08/11/1956.

### *Industrial and popular arts: a special case?*

In 1961, the museum created a special service for industrial and popular arts. It might seem to invalidate the importance attributed to high art as argued until now. Yet, the present study posits that this was not the case. In fact, the selection of objects subsumed under industrial and popular arts was informed by criteria not unlike those underpinning the evaluation of high art. It might be regarded as a rather ambiguous case, where national culture and criteria of value were combined.

The origins of the service and the pertaining collection date back to the 1930s with the creation of a folklore section in 1935, headed by Joseph Hess. The expression “industrial and popular arts” stood in continuation with folklore and with what in France was more commonly known as “popular arts and traditions” (*arts et traditions populaires*). In his account about the section’s history and published in 1981, Jean-Luc Mousset, then custodian of the concerned section, started with the folklore section in the interwar period.<sup>2519</sup> According to Mousset, it could not be permanently installed after the war for financial reasons. For twenty years only temporary exhibitions had been organised.<sup>2520</sup> A folklore section was apparently inaugurated in 1948,<sup>2521</sup> but it is not clear how it evolved until the 1960s.

In 1969, after the acquisition of bourgeois houses on the opposite side of the museum, which form the Wiltheim wing of the MNHA today, the industrial and popular arts section was installed in this new space.<sup>2522</sup> Between 1975 and 1978, the buildings were renovated. In 1978, the section reopened and in the same year additional rooms were completed. In 1980, it was further extended by eight rooms.

When the folklore section was inaugurated in 1948, Hess framed the collection and its aims in a national context. In 1980, Mousset’s description of the industrial and popular arts section was more sober, but the national perspective still dominated. The section, “which aims to be the museum of Luxembourgish life”<sup>2523</sup>, would encompass three parts: aristocratic and

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<sup>2519</sup> Jean-Luc Mousset, ‘La nouvelle section des arts industriels et populaires’, *Publications de la Section historique de l’Institut grand-ducal de Luxembourg* 94 (1980): 305.

<sup>2520</sup> Mousset, 305.

<sup>2521</sup> MNHA archives, unnumbered folder (Bulletin de Documentation 1945-59), *Bulletin de documentation* no. 7, 1948, p. 115.

<sup>2522</sup> In 1961, the buildings were added to the list of protected national monuments. See: Service des sites et monuments nationaux, ‘Liste des immeubles et objets classés monuments nationaux ou inscrits à l’inventaire supplémentaire’, accessed 20 May 2020, <https://ssmn.public.lu/dam-assets/fr/publications/Liste-des-immeubles-et-objets-proteges.pdf>. At the time of consultation, the list was last updated on 5 March 2020.

<sup>2523</sup> Own translation. “La Section des Arts Industriels et Populaires veut être le musée de la vie luxembourgeoise [...].”

bourgeois living conditions exhibiting decorative or industrial art; popular arts and traditions; and the history of country and capital. However, the actual plan of the exhibition followed another logic. Popular arts and traditions (*arts et traditions populaires*) represented a subsection of the industrial and popular arts.<sup>2524</sup>

In his acquisition programme of 1961, Schmitt dedicated a significant part of his document to industrial and popular arts. The sub-divisions indicate what was considered to belong to this category: ceramics, glassworks, metal crafting (“*art du métal*”), crafting with wood (“*art du bois*”), decorative objects, card games, textiles, tools and production installations of manufactures and workshops, games and sports. Hence covering a vast area from craftsmanship to leisure activities, and similar to what was understood under popular arts and traditions in France. However, it explicitly related to a pre-industrial or proto-industrial period in Luxembourg, covering the early modern times until the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. The objects that were to be collected should bear witness of crafting skills. While industrial and popular arts were not to be confounded with the perception of high culture, some criteria were not quite dissimilar, though. Schmitt, for example, highlighted that ceramics were the only industrial branch in Luxembourg of international reputation.<sup>2525</sup>

In the interwar period, an explicit opposition between popular art and high art was not drawn. The same applies to the present case. The museum did not oppose “industrial and popular arts” to “high art”, because the former was related to Luxembourgish history and, thus, responded to the museum’s mission as a national institution. Certain ambiguities, however, persisted as to the boundaries and normative aspects of industrial and popular arts: because of the evolution of the concept and the fact that the closest counterpart, popular arts and traditions, was not a static field. “Industrial and popular arts” was not (commonly) used in France, for instance.

In 1988, with the law on the reorganisation of the cultural institutions, the special service (or section) of industrial and popular arts disappeared. Henceforth, the National History and Art Museum encompassed a “section covering the Luxembourgish life and the contemporary period”.<sup>2526</sup> This section disappeared in 2004, when a section of decorative arts and of popular

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<sup>2524</sup> Mousset, ‘La nouvelle section des arts industriels et populaires’, 306.

<sup>2525</sup> MNHA archives, separate shelf, unnumbered folder (Musée d’histoire. Lettres reçues), *Programme raisonné des acquisitions à faire pendant les années à venir* by Georges Schmitt, 13/07/1961, p. 3.

<sup>2526</sup> Own translation. “section couvrant la vie luxembourgeoise et l’époque contemporaine” (‘Loi du 28 décembre 1988 portant réorganisation des instituts culturels de l’Etat’, in *Mémorial A*, vol. 71 [Luxembourg, 1988], 1483, <http://legilux.lu/eli/etat/leg/loi/1988/12/28/n1/jo>).

arts and traditions was introduced, thus explicitly marking a return to an older and more common concept.

#### V.4. Preliminary Conclusions

The present chapter has proven that the multi-layered essence of cultural policy in the post-war period would not be sufficiently grasped with generalisations about the development of the welfare state or the “invention” of cultural policy. In fact, the post-war period itself was far from being a homogeneous era. This still lacks recognition in literature about cultural policy. During the immediate post-war years, possibly described best with the French notion of *sortie de guerre*, from 1944 to the early 1950s, the Luxembourg government focused on reconstruction and restitution. The administrative purge should ensure the identification and exclusion of questionable state employees. A contextual state apparatus was devised in response to issues and challenges arising from the situation. Cultural policy was not left untouched by these efforts, in some cases aiming at a return to the status quo of the pre-war period or by keeping German decisions for pragmatic reasons. Restitution of artworks and books, elimination of Nazi literature, reconstruction of damaged religious and secular monuments range among the most defining elements of cultural policy at the time. These initiatives were organised by and benefitted the elites. The restitution of artworks, supervised by Georges Schmitt in collaboration with the Belgian authorities, exclusively concerned objects illegally exported from Luxembourg. The State Museums were not considered despite their problematic acquisitions and the opaque context.

The war left its mark on post-war discourse. Luxembourg mourned victims and celebrated proclaimed heroes. The “return” of John of Luxembourg’s remains was a symbol of this heroization. The national master narrative was updated to include Luxembourg’s collective suffering and resistance during Nazi occupation. Pupils should learn about the “patriotic” behaviour of Luxembourgers during the war. Policies of national unity were sitting uneasily with the complexities of human behaviour. Narratives about a patriotic and resisting nation versus an insidious invader accommodated better the elites, themselves involved in or affected by the German occupation. The cultural society produced publications containing these recurring tropes, such as *Luxembourg Martyr* by Tony Krier. The continuity of historians (Joseph Meyers) ensured that tropes of the master narrative as disseminated before 1940 did not change in their essence.

The status and self-perception of Luxembourg as an intermediate space was slightly afflicted, but not questioned in its essence. The wartime experiences elicited an ambiguous stance towards this status, often expressed through linguistic preferences. Germans were regarded with suspicion and some actors expressed fears about the spread of German. Some

cultural initiatives aimed to reconnect with French culture, such as the French books exhibition in 1945. However, the negative connotations attributed to German did not contribute to a serious questioning of the bilingual status or the intermediate space. Even the attempts to promote and codify Luxembourgish did not produce tangible results and, except for the project of the Luxembourgish dictionary, the post-war period was generally marked by a relative decline in Luxembourgish language policy. The idea behind the notion of *Mischkultur* returned after the war, as exemplified by Raymond Mehlen's hybrid culture discourse. The government had never planned to abandon German at school. The intermediateness of Luxembourg was as strongly perceived as it had been before the war, especially in the context of the European integration process.

Post-war cultural policy was characterized by some (interrupted) continuities at administrative, normative and personal levels. The category of *arts et sciences* reappeared in the administration and the state budgets. Cultural institutions continued to exist, affected only internally by the occupation. Some actors, such as Marcel Heuertz and Joseph Meyers, had been employed since the interwar period. Others, like Pierre Frieden, returned to positions they had held before the war. In the cultural society, associations such as the CAL, the Grand-Ducal Institute or the Amis des Musées were reactivated, partly with the same actors.

Despite initial crises, difficulties and ministerial reshufflings, cultural policy had been consolidated by the 1960s. Even the appearance of "cultural affairs" in 1959 did not impact the content of cultural policy, neither in France nor in Luxembourg, though in the latter "arts and sciences" and "cultural affairs" were co-existing for several years. These decades marked the age of the state-administrator and the strong weight of a conservative cultural policy. The premises of cultural policy were not fundamentally questioned, but incremental improvements were applied to existing structures. The consolidation and stability of cultural policy was also informed by the profiles, views and backgrounds of the ministers. The state budget confirms this evolution. Certainly, it grew more complex over the years and needs to be considered in the larger context, but much of the cultural budget was allocated to the conservation of monuments and to national cultural institutions. The ordinary expenses and direct state spending increased steadily. A notable change happened at the end of the 1960s in the spending scheme, expressed through a growing share of indirect expenses and non-statal structures.

The appearance of the democratic vein reflected the wish to strengthen certain values. However, it did not entail a bottom-up approach to cultural policy. It rather meant that reflections about the accessibility of high culture to the population and its education developed into prevalent aspects of national cultural policy. Meanwhile, the national idea was persisting

without contradicting discourses about democracy. After all, national cultural policy had not been devised for foreigners and migrants living in Luxembourg. They were an ignored minority.

If there is such a thing as a development of a “modern” understanding of cultural policy, it might be anchored in various elements: public intervention, self-awareness of this intervention, reflections on the content of cultural policy, creation of dedicated administrations, and recognition of the societal role of cultural policy. However, this is a simplified depiction. Not all these elements co-existed at the same time. In any case, the “modern” understanding of cultural policy does not constitute a revolution or is marked by an “invention” of cultural policy.

The changes in continuity are visible in the Millennium Celebration of 1963. The main commission and the various committees and working groups applied similar tropes and ideas than in 1939, some actors having already participated in the Centenary. Though the celebration concerned the capital, the implication of the government and the symbolic importance attributed to it ensured that it would be regarded as a national event. Again, the elites and the cultural society were mobilised, with more than 200 actors implicated in the organisation, leading to some tensions. The event was not only organised by the elite, but it encompassed a dispositif of patronage for the cultural society. The Millennium became a stage for national and European ideas, both not mutually exclusive, besides other prevalent tropes such as urban development and tourism. Unlike in 1939, a war was not looming on the horizon. Luxembourg was perceived as an intermediate space with a European destiny.

After the war, the government deployed a new cultural diplomacy. Luxembourg abandoned its neutrality, participated as a founding member in new international organisations such as the UNESCO, signed international treaties and agreements, and reformed its diplomatic corps. The geographical horizon of the government’s cultural relations was extended. Traditional partners remained and new ones were added. The conclusion of bilateral agreements clearly followed a broader Cold War logic and Luxembourg’s integration in the Western Bloc, though the Federal Republic of Germany was kept at distance and eyed with suspicion. The kind of culture disseminated in the context of these agreements was that of a high culture, consistent with the general cultural policy context. In addition to formalised multilateral and bilateral exchanges, Luxembourg participated in international events, of which the biennials in São Paulo and Venice and the International Fair in Brussels in 1958 were the most visible examples. Besides promoting Luxembourg’s cultural production, the national pavilion at the Brussels Fair further

served as a stage to boost tourism and applied tropes that would return some years later for the Millennium Celebration.

After years of construction, the State Museums finally opened to the public. Despite the administrative purge and with the intervention of Heuertz and Meyers, most of their collaborators hired during the war remained employed. The two main custodians were themselves a pertinent example of the continuities of elites. Unlike other museums abroad, the State Museums were not damaged by war-related events. At first, only temporary exhibitions were shown, then the permanent exhibition was progressively made accessible. This step led to a new set of reflections on the relationship between the museum and its public, an observation that does not only apply to Luxembourg.

The new missions of the museum were not only a result of its opening, but they were also embedded in the general cultural policy context with the appearance of the democratic vein. Indeed, as soon as the museum welcomed the broad public, it extended its missions beyond the conservation of its collections. A special service headed by Joseph-Emile Muller organised the museum's educational activities. These initiatives, however, implicitly addressed a Luxembourgish public. Furthermore, in the context of these efforts to educate the national population, objects remained the focus and the museum continued to disseminate a high culture. Though the democratic vein clearly affected the institution, it did not replace the national trope. On the contrary, the museum remained a site where national culture was conserved and protected. Temporary exhibitions conveyed the idea of national culture and disseminated the national master narrative. The national trope also appeared in the acquisition strategies.

As said above, the state-administrator proceeded to incremental improvements without questioning the foundations and premises of cultural policy. The State Museums were legally regulated in 1960. The limited professionalisation of the interwar period continued in the post-war years. As for the traditional activities of the museum, especially the acquisition, the custodians reflected on transparent criteria and the best approach to complete and enrich the collections. The criteria were fourfold: origins, intrinsic value, enrichment, and comparison. The professionalisation of the acquisition policy was limited, though. The commission for the acquisition of a contemporary art collection, instituted by Pierre Frieden in 1958, then re-organised under Pierre Grégoire after internal tensions in 1961, was not composed of a board of trained experts in art history. In continuation of the interwar period, internal organisational issues were not solved. The custodians still criticised the lack of workforce, the insufficient space and the inadequate conservation of collections. The State Museums had to establish a

rather peculiar and not quite professional division of tasks to cope with the situation. In the case of excavations, regulated in the 1960s, the institution relied on amateurs despite its scepticism towards them. Gender inequalities were not addressed. Considering the prevailing conservative family values, they were not raised, anyway. Higher positions in the museum were occupied by men.

As was observed above, the State Museums were a place of high (national) culture. The custodians, as the elites in general, defined and disseminated their vision of art and culture. The perception of art by the custodians would ultimately impact the acquisition and destruction of objects. Exhibitions organised at the museum were dominated by a Western European perspective, partly an indirect result of diplomatic relations and Luxembourg's participation in the Western Bloc. Some exhibitions and related tropes were reminiscent of Luxembourg's status as an intermediate space. A French exhibition in 1948 was regarded as an opportunity to reconnect with the "French genius". Yet, temporary exhibitions slowly extended the geographical scope beyond neighbouring countries. This development started quite early with a Danish exhibition in 1947. The 1960s were marked by a tentative extension to Eastern Europe. Non-Western cultures were barely represented.

With the end of the 1960s approaching, signs hinting at a transformation of cultural policy accumulated. In this case, we have the advantage of hindsight. Where this process would lead and how far it would go was not possible to evaluate at that time. It might not even have been perceived by contemporaries. Several reasons can be highlighted for this transformation. Firstly, the 1960s and the 1970s marked a generational change. Many members of the elites who experienced the occupation period as (young) adults and shaped cultural policy or participated in major related events retired or passed away: Pierre Frieden (died in 1959), Lucien Koenig (died in 1961), Joseph Meyers (died in 1964), Pierre Grégoire (retired as minister in 1969), Marcel Heuertz (retired in 1969), Nicolas Margue (died in 1976), or Jean-Pierre Erpelding (died in 1977), to name a few examples. This generational change figures among the most unexpected findings in the present study, but only strengthens the argument to treat the post-war period until the late 1960s and early 1970s as a rather distinct period. The advent of the liberal-left government in 1974 would confirm the transformation process. The Department of Cultural Affairs was passed on to Robert Krieps (LSAP). He certainly did not exemplify a generational change (he experienced the occupation period), but he represented a political change and was the first minister of cultural affairs not known for activities or occupations linked to the cultural society. Furthermore, in 1975, Krieps recruited Raymond

Weber, a young state official who had experienced the political and social waves following May 1968 during his studies in France, for the Department of Cultural Affairs.

Secondly, compared to previous decades, the 1960s were marked by a stronger legal regulation of cultural policy, most prominently in the area of heritage protection and conservation. Even as the focus of this regulation relied heavily on a traditional, high culture definition of heritage, Madeleine Frieden-Kinnen defended a new approach. This paradigm shift was the result of Luxembourg's participation in international organisations, especially the Council of Europe. In the 1970s, the Department of Cultural Affairs further strengthened related policies through the creation, for instance, of the Service des Sites et Monuments Nationaux (SSMN) in 1977.

Thirdly, the changes in cultural policy could not be disconnected from societal and cultural transformations. Existing research carried out in other fields or from different perspectives confirms that the 1960s and especially the 1970s were a period of changes. Looking at the literary production, Fabienne Gilbertz examined the professionalisation of the Luxembourgish "literature system" (*Literatursystem*) on the backdrop of a changing cultural policy. Indeed, the 1960s and 1970s were marked by new and emerging initiatives, discourses and structures, from literary journals, over the theatrical landscape, to a changing self-perception of the authors.<sup>2527</sup> Meanwhile, as analysed by Tobias Vetterle in his study on political participation and related discourse, political and contestational movements entered the stage: anti-nuclear protests, feminist movements, struggles for the rights of non-Luxembourgers, and the protests of May 1968.<sup>2528</sup> The education system and the recognition of diplomas (*collation des grades*) was reformed as a result of student demands. At the end of the 1960s, reflections about mass media intensified in cultural policy discourses, as the example of Frieden-Kinnen shows. Opinions on the use and abuse of mass media could vary among politicians. The demographic changes entailed debates, sometimes natalist or racist, about the role and the attention paid to migrants and foreigners, who were themselves not a homogeneous group. In fact, these debates did not disappear and have been shaping political debates until today.

Periodisations simplify a much more complex reality. The 1970s did not constitute a *tabula rasa*. Yet, the reasons cited above – and there might be even more – prove that the foundations

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<sup>2527</sup> Gilbertz, *Wortproduzenten*.

<sup>2528</sup> Vetterle, 'Die Teilhabe am Politischen: Eine Diskursgeschichte der "politischen Partizipation" in Luxemburg, 1960-1990'.

of the state-administrator and the conservative cultural policy as had been constructed since the interwar period were built on ever shakier foundations.

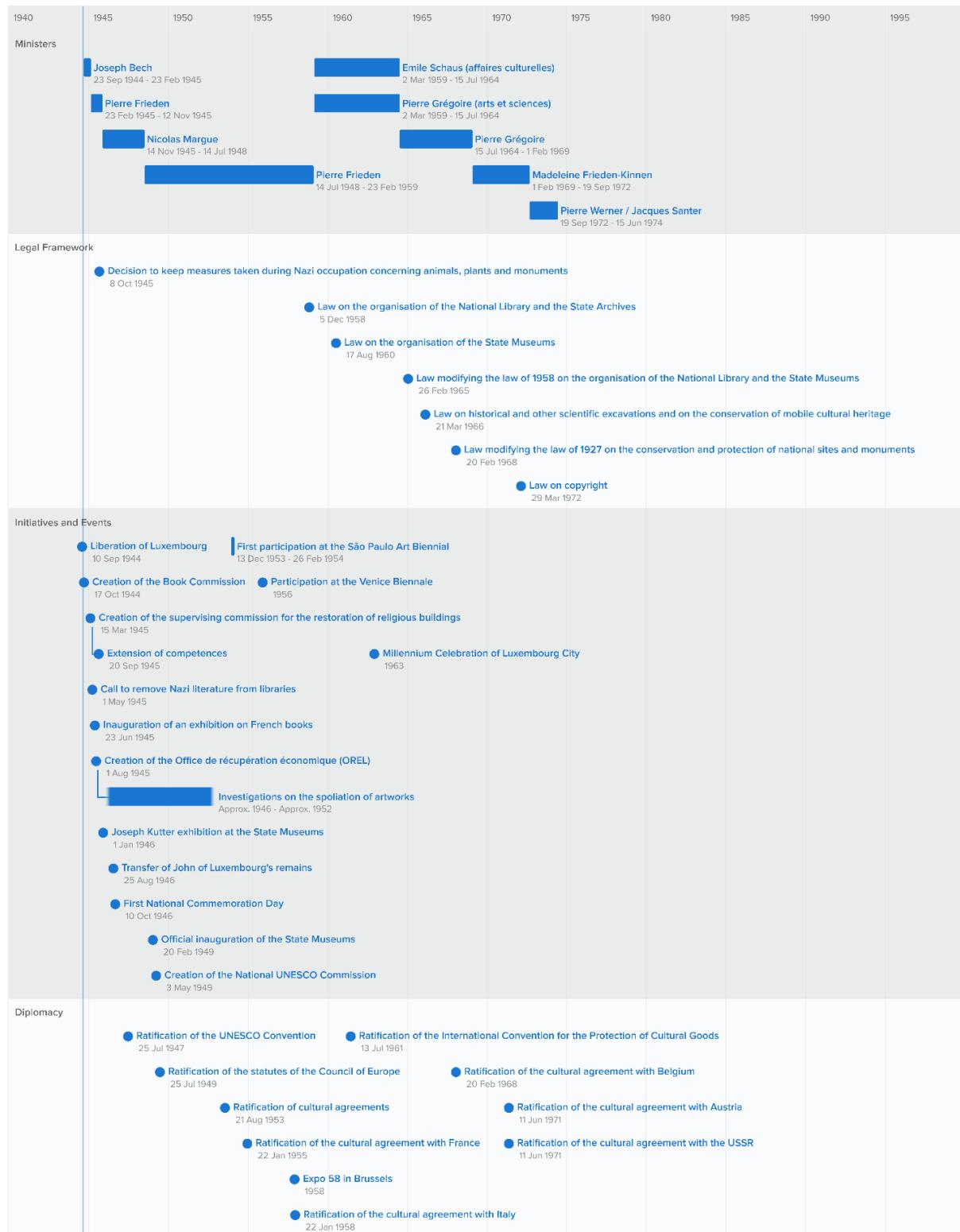


Fig. 85: Timeline providing an overview and a selection of the administrative and legal evolution, notable events and initiatives, and diplomacy in the post-war period (1944-1974). Created with Preceden.

## CONCLUSIONS

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The “invention” of cultural policy does not necessarily equal the creation of a distinct ministry. It has already existed at a time when barely anyone would utter “cultural policy” while meaning a policy category or referring to the activity of a “ministry of culture”. Furthermore, the term “invention” does not adequately describe the emergence of cultural policy, which cannot be attributed to a certain point in time. This observation also applies to Luxembourg and to many other states. Cultural policy before the existence of an explicit policy category is a legitimate object of study. In fact, during the entire period analysed in the present study, a Luxembourgish ministry of culture did not exist.

The present study set out to analyse the evolution of cultural policy in Luxembourg, while considering the country as a nationalised intermediate space. It has covered five decades of cultural policy history; if the (pre-)history of the State Museum is included, this period extends to approximately a hundred and thirty years. Consequentially, this study has not even considered all actors, discourses and structures in the cultural policy field. This was, however, not the ambition. Every study imposes some limits, every historian depends on the sources they discover and examine. Every research that seeks to answer questions will inadvertently elicit new ones. Narratives have a beginning and an end, but there is no end to History.

The theoretical and methodological reflections pursued two main objectives. The first objective consisted in the conception of a framework and methodology for a historiographic approach to cultural policy and applied to the case of national cultural policy in Luxembourg. As a result of these reflections and based on the existing literature, I posited that a cultural policy history must consider actors, discourses and structures within the (inter)national context. Individuals like Joseph Bech, Joseph Meyers or Pierre Frieden, collective actors such as the Historical Section or the Amis des Musées, general political structures encompassing legislative processes and the legal framework, discourses surrounding *Mischkultur*, *Deutschstumpflege* or the bilingual character of Luxembourg are examples of the analytical elements identified in the methodological part. We have seen how structures could impose limits to (or create loopholes for) the activities of individuals; how actors disseminated certain ideas widely acknowledged among the elites in a specific context; how discourses were disseminated by actors and responded to certain needs. The second objective was to produce an analysis of a cultural institution embedded in a cultural policy context. It was based on the observation that this has not yet been sufficiently acknowledged in historiography; hence the inclusion of a case study, i.e. the State Museum and particularly its history section.

The present study distinguished three periods of national cultural policy in Luxembourg: the interwar period, inscribed in a longer evolution of nation-building including its climax, the Centenary Celebration in 1939; the German occupation period, which reversed, or attempted to reverse, the previous nation-building by neutralising the idea of the nation; and the post-war period, which marked a return to the national idea and, despite some ambiguities, to discourses related to the intermediate space. In fact, from the interwar period to the early 1970s, the examples of the self-perception and of foreign cultural references of a small country between “two cultures” are legion. Cultural policy in Luxembourg, from the national era of the interwar period over the Nazi occupation to the age of the state-administrator, has been guided by an idea of the nation accommodated to the dominant discourses or the views of the elites of the respective period.

### *Building, neutralising, rebuilding*

In the interwar period, the Luxembourg government attempted to strengthen and disseminate the national idea, without ever giving up on the perception of a *Zwischenraum*. To a certain extent, one might recognise tensions between the self-ascribed identity of a united and distinct nation, and the widely accepted belief – at least among the elites – that Luxembourg was some sort of border region. In contrast with the liberal era of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the state became increasingly interventionist. Cultural heritage (1927) and excavations (1937) were the first areas regulated by laws explicitly related to cultural policy since the creation of an autonomous state. The draft version of the law of 1927 was first submitted by the Historical Section and was largely inspired by a French law of 1913. State spending on conservation and protection of heritage increased. Public authorities organised celebrations honouring important figures not only of French and German high culture, but also of a national canon defined by the elites. Monuments were erected to convey symbols of the nation-state. The national idea was promoted by the elites, who claimed to speak for the “nation” as a whole. Non-national residents were excluded from the nation-building, while foreign visitors were usually reduced to the role of tourists. The historical understanding in this nationalist and conservative period was based on a romanticised past, where nature was untouched by human intervention and heavy industrial activities.

Eventually, the belligerent and nationalist storm brewing over Europe did not leave Luxembourg untouched, though. In the 1930s, Luxembourg intensified its Francophile tone, as seen in the example of the international exhibition in Paris in 1937. Meanwhile, the Grand Duchy was a cultural and diplomatic battlefield between two cultures. With no existing cultural

agreement, Nazi Germany organised its cultural activities through unofficial and informal channels and saw itself in a competition with French culture. At the same time, annexationist fears in Luxembourg fuelled the insistence on the distinctiveness of the country, which would be more than the sum of French and German, and certainly neither of both. The national aggrandizement of the Centenary of Independence in 1939 was a celebration of this self-perception and provided a stage to disseminate the master narrative. Not only was nationalism a menace to Luxembourg, but the government responded with its own nationalism to this threat. It would ultimately not save the country from invasion by Nazi Germany.

After the invasion of May 1940, the Nazis sought to establish a new order. The civil administration headed by Gustav Simon was determined to neutralise and eradicate French influence, and thus, the bilingual status. For the Nazis, Luxembourg was German in its essence and their policies would merely correct a historical mistake. Formerly a nationalised *Zwischenraum*, Luxembourg became a *Grenzland* of the Third Reich. Despite the occasionally different goals pursued by authorities at different levels, it was unquestionably regarded as a strategic territory and as an important platform from where German culture could radiate towards the West. The plans for cultural institutions are an illustration of this ambition, though it could never be brought into fruition fully. Whenever projects could not be realised, they were postponed to an imagined future after the war. Nazi cultural policy clearly aimed to strengthen a “German consciousness”, not only by removing French culture but also by providing a high quality of German cultural offers.

To suppress undesired culture and promote state-sanctioned works, the regime created a dispositif of control. The cultural society was reshaped in a top-down process, for instance through the activities of the *Stillhaltekommisar*. Any association that could have posed a potential threat or opposition to the regime was dissolved. The Landeskulturmutter, the Kunstkreise or the Volksdeutsche Bewegung participated in the coercion of cultural workers and the dissemination of conformist culture. Artists could grasp the opportunity to exhibit their works in German cities and regional exhibitions were organised in Luxembourg. Attitudes within the cultural society towards the regime could vary. A significant minority was clearly collaborating with the regime, otherwise the Nazi dispositif could not have been upheld, but many tried to keep a fragile balance between not collaborating too much and not risking their lives. This image is further complicated by the fact that actors could also change their stance over the course of the occupation.

After the liberation of Luxembourg, the difficult phase of reconstruction began. The occupation period marked a break in many respects. War experiences of cultural actors, which

were far from homogeneous, informed post-war discourse. In some cases, though, the occupation period did not erase continuities, or it marked an interference as post-war society was attempting to reconnect with the interwar period. The situation of the elites – politicians, cultural workers, public servants, intellectuals – is a case in point. Pierre Frieden, removed from his position as director of the National Library in 1942, returned to this occupation after the war and did not abandon it until his death, even while being minister of national education.

In the immediate post-war period, cultural policy was characterised by four approaches: return to a status quo, pragmatism, restitution and reparation, and introduction of new measures and structures. Some of these approaches led to either immediate or intermediate continuities. The first of these approaches, the return to a status quo, equalled a reconnection with the interwar period. It was visible in the administrative structures (budget, *arts et sciences*), partly in the cultural society (ministers, state officials, cultural workers), and partly in post-war discourses (safeguarding the bilingual status). The second approach, pragmatism, underpinned some decisions of the government to uphold policies of the German occupiers. In cultural policy, this was notably the case with the protection of monuments and sites. The third approach, restitution and reparation, encompassed the reparation of damages caused by the war, the reorganisation of ownership structures, the reconstruction of monuments and church buildings, and the restitution of cultural goods. The last approach, introduction of new measures and structures, was a response to the situation elicited by the end of the occupation period and the war, and partly overlapped with the previous approach. New administrations, services and committees were introduced to cope with damages, economic and social issues, and penuries.

The 1950s and 1960s marked the age of the state-administrator, constructed on the background of the extension of the welfare state. Cultural policy consolidated as a policy category. The government pursued a conservative approach, not only from a political and philosophical viewpoint with ministers such as Pierre Frieden or Pierre Grégoire, but also in the formulation and the development of policies related to culture: conservation and protection of cultural heritage, importance conceded to traditional cultural institutions, dissemination of high art. The government proceeded to incremental improvements without questioning the foundations of cultural policy. The competencies of the ministry supervising culture was not experiencing dramatic shifts, despite the introduction of “*affaires culturelles*” as a new concept, around the same time that France created the Ministry of Cultural Affairs. Some changes brought about by the war and the new international system clearly left their mark cultural policy. Even more than in the interwar period, culture was intertwined with education and

regarded as a vector of dissemination of democratic values, an attitude shaped by the experiences of the war. Luxembourg's cultural diplomacy underwent the most visible break, from the end of the neutral status, over the participation in new international organisations, to the conclusion of cultural agreements with countries in the Cold War context. West Germany/FRG, however, was regarded with suspicion.

Moreover, the age of the state-administrator was shaped by changes in continuity, exemplified by the Luxembourg pavilion at the Brussels Expo in 1958 and the Millennium Celebration of 1963. The idea of nationalised intermediate space was updated with a European dimension. Some individuals who had already been active in the cultural policy field of the interwar period were engaged in the organisation of these events. Unsurprisingly, then, tropes and ideas discussed for the Centenary of Independence resurfaced, despite the different context, in 1963 with the renewed national aggrandizement in particular. Such events, in addition to Luxembourg's participation in the art biennials in São Paulo and Venice, disseminated the elite's perception of (Luxembourgish) high culture.

The extreme nationalism that led to the Second World War did not disqualify the idea of the nation, on the contrary. As briefly mentioned above, the elites attempted to reconnect with the national idea of the interwar period after the war. The cultural society revived associations disbanded by the Nazis, such as the Friends of the Museum. Continuities among the elites partly explain the pervasiveness of some tropes, narratives, and discourses, even though they were updated to include accounts of collective victimisation and heroization, still pervasive decades later and expressed through the construction of monuments or the commemoration of war-related events. The master narrative was updated accordingly, especially as it was written by historians such as Joseph Meyers who witnessed the war and the occupation. A case in point is the transfer of the remains of John of Luxembourg, described as a "national hero" despite being a medieval ruler, who had been relegated to secondary importance by Nazi discourse. As for national culture, the canon barely changed, with the notable exception of Joseph Kutter's integration in the cultural hall of fame of the nation-state. Despite scepticism towards German culture and language, the bilingual self-perception of a nationalised *Zwischenraum* was never seriously questioned by the government or by large parts of the elites. In the immediate post-war period, the elites felt the need to reconnect with French culture, but this did not mean that they were ready to abandon German altogether, if only for pragmatic reasons. Derivatives of the *Mischkultur* discourse were circulating, later adapted to the European integration process and depicting Luxembourg as a crossroads of cultures in the heart of (Western) Europe.

In some respects, the late 1960s and the early 1970s marked a limited transition period to what followed in 1974 with the liberal-left government. The approaches conceived by the Council of Europe undeniably shaped Luxembourg's cultural heritage policy. Such developments did not avoid the destruction of cultural heritage, though. In the early 1970s, a new discourse about mass media appeared in the political debates, with Madeleine Frieden-Kinnen clearly expressing her suspicions and rejection of mass media.

The nation has been a powerful idea in cultural policy. Yet, this was not specific to Luxembourg. More specific of its situation was a double tension. On the one hand, a tension between the perceived possibilities of cultural orientation – towards France (and Belgium) or towards Germany. On the other hand, a tension between foreign cultural influences and a national culture constructed by the elites. The combination of both tensions, and at a scale as experienced in Luxembourg, would be unimaginable in other, much larger nation-states – first and foremost those that served as references to Luxembourg. It is an expression of Luxembourg's status as a nationalised intermediate space.

The nation is not a static idea, as much as actors, discourses and structures are not fixed entities. It is not a natural phenomenon, but a social, political, and cultural construction. It leads to inclusion and exclusion; it expresses power relations. Throughout the period considered in the present study, migrants and foreign residents in Luxembourg constituted a forgotten or excluded minority. From all the conclusions drawn here, this ranges among the most significant and “expected unexpected” ones. Unexpected because of the extent of the continuous and consistent exclusion of resident foreigners from cultural policy initiatives (except when their own actions elicited disdain, as in 1939). Expected because it was a consequence of the national context and of the strong presence of the national idea. In this context, the State Museum was not constructed or conceived as a space to welcome foreigners, except when they were tourists. Considering this, we need to draw a difference between the nationalised *Zwischenraum* as an analytical concept and a nationalised *Zwischenraum* as the product of a self-perception of the elites. Was the “intermediateness” of Luxembourg really limited to the tension between the two geographically closest cultures? How did the silenced perceive the “intermediateness”?

### An institution for the nation-state

As a national cultural institution, the State Museum and particularly the MNHA's predecessor, the historical section, could not elude this double tension. From the era of nation-building to the era of the state-administrator, the history of the museum had been connected to the history of Luxembourg. The interplay between actors, discourses and structures on a

broader national scale was also noticeable on the smaller scale of the museum. The idea of a national museum originated in the private initiative of the Archaeological Society. The fact that the government left historical research and excavations in the hands of a private society mirrored the liberal era of the time. In the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, the idea of a national museum gained traction among government circles, especially under Paul Eyschen. Meanwhile, the custodians of the archaeological collection, managed by the Historical Section of the Grand-Ducal Institute, were criticising the difficult working and conservation conditions. The collections moved several times; in the 1890s, while a commission was debating the idea of a monumental national museum, the objects were transferred to the remote and obscure abode of the Vauban Casern in Pfaffenthal.

Since the beginning, the national museum had been conceived as a place of conservation of national treasures, intimately linked to nation-building. Yet, in the first decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the project was abandoned and revived only after the First World War, more precisely in the national period. Instead of erecting a new building, the state acquired a bourgeois house in the city centre and refurbished it. The cause of the museum mobilised the cultural society, with the creation of the Société des Amis des Musées in 1926. As the construction works were dragging on, the Historical Society was growing impatient. In the meantime, the museum underwent a limited professionalisation – the skills of the custodians were better suited to their duties – but the work and conservation conditions barely improved and the focus lay on conservation. The museum was only accessible to a limited extent, seemingly through personal contacts and with an appointment.

The inauguration of the State Museum was postponed several times. In 1939, it was a declared goal of the Centenary of Independence, but it did not happen. Nevertheless, the 1930s still marked a turning point, as the historical collections, like the natural history collections, were transferred to their new location. A technical committee monitored the construction works and discussed the internal organisation of the future museum. The public authorities developed plans for the creation of a folklore museum, but they were never implemented. With Joseph Meyers (history section) and Marcel Heuertz (natural history section), a new generation of custodians started to work at the museum. Heuertz was the first custodian of his section with an academic background in natural sciences. Meyers, as for him, was a notable figure in the cultural society through his participation in several associations, his contributions to the dissemination of the national master narrative, and his contacts with the *Westforscher*.

After the invasion of Luxembourg, the Germans developed their own plans for the museum. The German civil administration was investing considerable efforts, at least compared to the

limited financial means of the interwar period. The Landesmuseum, as the State Museum was called during the occupation, was to be transformed into a central regional institution collecting objects related to Luxembourg. This did not contradict previous goals, with the difference that Luxembourg was not a nation-state, but a *Grenzland*. Under Karl Vogler's supervision, the permanent exhibition should historically legitimise Luxembourg's belonging to the "East". Furthermore, concrete reflections on the visitors' experiences were formulated for the first time. In the end, none of the plans were realised. The construction ban of February 1942 interrupted the internal reorganisation.

This ban undoubtedly avoided the custodians' further involvement in the Nazi plans and in not having to work towards an official inauguration during the occupation. Yet, this should not draw our attention away from the rather ambiguous situation of the Landesmuseum. During the occupation period, the museum greatly increased its collections, its financial resources, and its workforce. Heuertz and Meyers could count on the official backing of their direct superiors and the VHKA. According to the decree of November 1940, the Landesmuseum had a pre-emptive right to acquire objects from antiquarians and art dealers. Exportation of these objects required official authorisation from the regime. The measures were reiterated in September 1941, possibly even strengthened over time. The custodians penned reports about the effectiveness of the decree and its implementation and highlighted loopholes. They acted according to institutional and professional logic, attempting to strengthen the position of the museum.

During the occupation period, the Landesmuseum continued with its traditional activities, but under different conditions. Some temporary exhibitions were organised, but traces of these exhibitions are barely left and not all seemed to be public. After the construction ban, the custodians continued to work on some aspects of the permanent exhibition. They did not publish during the occupation period, allegedly declining every invitation. The most sensible issue, though, concerns the acquisition policy. Until today, it is impossible to retrace the origins of every object acquired at the time. Nevertheless, the Landesmuseum took at least indirectly advantage of Nazi policies, from the acquisition of objects from the DUT to the acquisition of the Reiffers collection with financial support from the *Aufbaufonds*. Some objects were clearly acquired in the context of spoliations, as the restitutions after the war show. Around the time Meyers protested the introduction of the compulsory military service by returning his VDB membership card, he requested the inventory and acquisition of possessions of those resettled in the context of the resettlement initiative. His letters and budget requests illustrate the complex nature of human behaviour, impossible to be grasped by binary categories of

resistance and collaboration. In their post-war reports, the custodians interpreted their actions through the lens of (passive) resistance and protection of national heritage, while distorting the power relations in the occupation period.

Before the invasion, the State Museum was a tool in the nation-building process. During Nazi occupation, it was a tool to legitimise the new regime and its ideology. After the liberation, the museum participated in the reconstruction of the nation and its “intermediateness”. Even before its official inauguration, the institution hosted temporary exhibitions. These exhibitions were organised in the framework of cultural agreements or expressed the wish of the elites to reconnect with French culture. Moreover, some exhibitions clearly reconnected with national culture and history, as exemplified with the Kutter retrospective or the exhibition dedicated to John the Blind. The official inauguration in 1949 marked an important step in the museum’s history: the institution was finally open to the public with a permanent exhibition and regular opening hours.

The strong interconnection between culture and education in cultural policy and the appearance of the democratic approach were noticeable in the strategy of the museum. In 1945, an education service was created under the supervision of Joseph-Emile Muller. It organised temporary exhibitions in and outside of the museum to educate the national public, particularly the young. With the public accessibility of the museum, the visitors became a new factor to be included in the custodians’ reflections. The State Museum was not only an institution for the nation, it was also an institution for the education of a public that belonged to this nation. It was a place where both high culture and national culture were to be defined and disseminated. Unsurprisingly, its collaborators were involved in major events of the post-war period, from the “return” of John of Luxembourg to Luxembourg’s participation at the Biennial in São Paulo.

In the age of the state-administrator, the State Museum was directly benefitting from incremental improvements. With the law of 1960, it received its first legal framework. Joseph Meyers became the legal director and remained in this position until he died in 1964 – succeeded by his colleague Marcel Heuertz. Under Pierre Frieden, an acquisition commission was created to constitute a contemporary art collection; it was reorganised under Pierre Grégoire. At the end of the 1950s and the beginning of the 1960s, the history and art section of the museum reflected on the acquisition policy. At the same time, the institution was facing (old) issues, such as a lack of space and a lack of personnel. In 1965, the historical section of the State Museums organised a press conference to raise public awareness, against the backdrop of parliamentary debates about a draft law on excavations.

An object of imagination in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, after decades of unrealised plans and postponed inaugurations, the State Museum had become a pillar of Luxembourg's national cultural policy by the 1960s. Around that time, the old guard of the museum was progressively replaced. Joseph Meyers and Marcel Heuertz were succeeded by a new generation of custodians. This was the first hint at the changes that were slowly unfolding from the 1960s onwards and intensifying in the 1970s.

### *Branding the nation?*<sup>2529</sup>

I previously stated that there is no end to History. The focus of the present study should not draw our attention away from the changes that occurred after the 1970s in cultural policies in Luxembourg and internationally, of which some general tendencies should be explained. In the grand duchy, during the liberal-left government from 1974 to 1979, the new minister of national education and cultural affairs Robert Krieps and his collaborators introduced what might be called a new cultural policy (NCP). The NCP was influenced by developments abroad, especially in the neighbouring countries (minister of cultural affairs Jacques Duhamel's "cultural development" in France and the *Neue Kulturpolitik* in the Federal Republic of Germany). The NCP was not a *tabula rasa*, though. Traditional cultural institutions still occupied an essential role in national cultural policy. Yet, whereas reflections on the inclusion of mostly neglected social groups – workers and non-Luxembourgers – had been quasi-absent from cultural policy, this changed with the NCP. The Ministry reflected about the "permanent education" and cultural democracy, in addition to the democratisation of culture, a concept that had already circulated in the 1960s. For the first time in the history of cultural policy in Luxembourg, not only a detailed reflection on new (or less novel) concepts was pursued, but the Ministry also analysed the situation of cultural policy and of the cultural society in Luxembourg. Krieps' Ministry promoted a bottom-up approach, for instance through the organisation of local cultural weeks and the promotion of "cultural animation". Cultural policy was not simply about disseminating high culture to the population, but culture should spark critical reflections about the environment and lead to the emancipation of citizens.

In the 1970s and the 1980s, cultural heritage protection was further developed. The Service des Sites et Monuments (SSMN) was created. Protection and conservation were extended to include industrial heritage, in the context of the declining steel industry and officially

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<sup>2529</sup> This section is, for the most part, a synthesis and combination of research I had previously carried out, either for my Master's thesis or for several articles published over the years. May the reader forgive the lack of footnotes.

recognised by law in 1983. However, the new cultural policy reached its limits, especially in the context of budget constraints due to the steel crisis. In the area of heritage protection, the national authorities could not prevent the destruction of historical buildings, often the result of decisions taken by local authorities.

Of course, the national idea did not vanish from cultural policy in the 1970s. The societal turn embodied by the NCP, however, produced another discourse, in which the nation became a more inclusive concept, at least in theory. The success of the cultural weeks and the long-term effects of the NCP are difficult to measure, as they depended on bottom-up movements and the motivation of local actors. At the same time, facing an increasing number of non-Luxembourgish residents, discourses surrounding national identity and fears of its loss appeared in political debates. From the end of the 1980s onwards, the protection of national identity became an official goal of the Ministry of Culture. In 1984, Luxembourgish was recognised as an official language. A certain tension developed between the protection and strengthening of national identity and national heritage on the one hand, and the importance conceded to the multicultural society on the other. The European integration process and the Maastricht Treaty in the early 1990s reinforced this trend, as the government sought to strengthen Luxembourg's cultural presence. Luxembourgish language and literature produced in Luxembourg were particularly promoted. The creation of the Centre national de littérature (CNL), first as an annexe of the National Archives in 1994, then as a distinct national institution in 1999, is the most notable example in this context. In the area of cultural heritage, the conservation of the remaining fortifications in the capital attracted a lot of attention from public authorities, partly related to considerations about tourism. In 1994, they were declared UNESCO world heritage. Meanwhile, the government was stressing the multicultural character of Luxembourg and its situation at the heart of Europe as a crossroads of cultures. This was particularly visible in the most important cultural event of the 1990s, the European Capital of Culture in 1995. While seeking to promote national identity, the Luxembourg government defended a discourse that was favourable to cultural diversity.

Beyond the pervasiveness of the national idea, though, the 1980s marked an economic turn, following a similar tendency in other countries. In Luxembourg, the presence of economic rationales in cultural policy has intensified since their first appearance in the 1980s. In 1982, the Fonds Culturel National (FOCUNA) was founded to promote business sponsorship and patronage. Around the turn of the 1990s, and to some extent the result of European initiatives, the audiovisual sector was institutionalised with a legal framework introducing a tax shelter for cinema production, with the launch of the Luxembourg Film Fund (or rather of its predecessor),

and with the creation of the *Centre national de l'audiovisuel* (CNA). The audiovisual sector played a significant role in the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Luxembourg's independence in 1989, with the publication of illustrated books, the commission of a movie about the national exhibition organised in the framework of the celebration, and the production of a Luxembourgish feature film, *Schacko Klak*, based on a novel by the writer Roger Manderscheid.

From the 1990s onwards, the government increasingly paid attention to Luxembourg's image abroad. In this case, economic rationales and national identity were both interrelated. To improve its international image tarnished by criticisms targeting its financial sector, cultural policy became an instrument to improve the country's international standing. This goal was pursued in the European Capital of Culture events of 1995 and 2007, the latter extended to the Greater Region and promoting Luxembourg as its economic centre. Luxembourg strengthened its presence at events such as the Biennial in Venice or the Frankfurter Buchmesse. In the early 1990s, the travelling exhibition *Imago Luxemburgi* aimed to increase Luxembourg's visibility in other countries.

Since the late 1980s, the cultural landscape was enriched with new cultural institutions, some of them linked to discourses surrounding Luxembourg's image. These projects, inspired by the French *grands projets*, were showcased in the temporary exhibition *Les équipements culturels du Luxembourg: Réalisations et grands projets (1985-2000)*, organised in Paris in 1997. In some cases, the cultural year of 1995 partly elicited an awareness of the necessity to extend cultural infrastructures. Among these cultural projects, the Musée d'art moderne Grand-Duc Jean (MUDAM), a contemporary art museum, is one notable example. In the early 1990s, when the government presented the first plan produced by the architect I.M. Pei (who had conceived the Louvre pyramid), the Centre d'art contemporain (CAC), as it was called at the time, became the most controversial cultural project of the 1990s with criticisms about the financial costs, the choice of the location on Kirchberg, the use of the Thüngen Fort as an entrance hall, or the internal organisation of the museum. In 1992, the project was put on hold. After the cultural year, it was reactivated and modified. The Thüngen Fort was transformed into a separate museum; the entrance to the MUDAM was relocated. The art museum was inaugurated in 2006.

In 1988, the existing national cultural institutions were reorganised. The history and art section and the natural history section of the State Museums were separated, and each transformed into a distinct institution: the National History and Art Museum and the National Natural History Museum (MNHN). In the 1990s, both museums were physically separated. The MNHN moved to a renovated building in the Grund. Around the millennial turn, the

MNHA was renovated. It reopened in 2002. In 2004, all national cultural institutions were reorganised by law again.

In the wake of the cultural year of 1995, new laws related to cultural policy were voted and the cultural sector experienced a professionalisation. State spending on culture skyrocketed and reached a historic level in 2006 with 1.41% of the total state budget. The financial crisis in 2008 and the ensuing economic recession, however, reversed this trend. In 2014, the budget fell below the symbolic mark of 1%, despite a cultural landscape that had diversified and comprised more cultural institutions than ever before. Unsurprisingly, this situation elicited criticism about the “austerity policy” of the government and of the Ministry of Culture.

Over a century, Luxembourg’s geographical horizon has shifted. If France and Germany were the main references in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, international institutions and trends have had an increasing impact since the late 20<sup>th</sup> century. In this context, and despite the European construction process, Luxembourg finds itself in competition with other countries, regions and cities to attract economic actors. New discourses have appeared, the most notably one related to the creative industries. After their first major adoption in cultural policy discourse in the UK at the end of the 1990s, creative industries have made their appearance at the EU level, in documents and initiatives such as the Creative Europe programme (2014). In Luxembourg, creative industries have been an official competence of the Ministry of Culture since 2013. The most visible initiatives in this area, however, have emanated from the Ministry of Economy, such as the creative industries cluster of Luxinnovation, the national agency for research and innovation. In political debates, they are linked to economic growth and job creation, to the revitalisation of neighbourhoods, and to questions surrounding intellectual property and creativity. The development of the audiovisual sector in the late 1980s might be regarded as an early step towards the promotion of creative industries at a time when this concept was not in use.

Considering the promotion of national culture, the strengthening of economic rationales and the initiatives to improve Luxembourg’s image, the nation-branding project launched in 2014 was only a further step in this direction. The goal was to identify a national profile to promote Luxembourg abroad in a coherent manner. The result was a logo depicting the word “Luxembourg” with an outstanding “X” in the colours of the national flag and accompanied by the slogan “Let’s make it happen”. Of course, Luxembourg’s nation branding was not a dedicated cultural policy initiative, but its emergence was the result of evolutions since the 1990s. The nation-branding project has, in fact, heavily relied on services that could be

identified as belonging to the creative industries, such as graphic design, marketing, and the production of audiovisual resources.

It would be wrong to limit cultural policy of the past two decades or so to the mere economic rationale and its use to improve Luxembourg's image. This account would be incomplete if it would not mention the professionalisation and organisation of the cultural sector, especially since the first cultural year in 1995. Despite all the criticisms that may or may not be legitimately addressed to the Ministry of Culture and its policies in the past years, it was not an idle observer. Several laws and reforms were passed. In 2018, an archival law was voted. Despite causing many headaches – not only to the researcher writing these lines – it was the first such law in the history of Luxembourg. In the same year, the first Cultural Development Plan for Luxembourg was published, suggesting objectives and actions for the period 2018–2028. In 2019, the National Library moved to its new building on Kirchberg, the first edifice constructed specifically for this institution since its existence.

If we may simplify the evolution of cultural policy, though, we could draw the following conclusions: In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, the idea of the nation aimed to strengthen Luxembourg's legitimacy. It was mainly oriented inward to build a national consciousness among its subjects. In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the idea of the nation is used to promote Luxembourg internationally. It is outward-oriented. Though in both cases the use aims to introduce – or invent – a certain coherence and unity, nation branding indirectly assumes that the process of nation-building is accomplished, but that the nation-state is economically competing on the international stage. However, as was the case with nation-building, nation branding chooses what to show and what to hide. It constructs its own narratives.

That culture might be one of the most complicated words in the English language, as Raymond Williams observed, may not pose an issue, as at least the historical perspective is not so much concerned with defining culture as with analysing its evolution and its use. The same applies to cultural policy. It changes and evolves. Neither culture nor cultural policy have definitions with universal applications. Cultural policy at a given time was the product of structures, reflections, ambitions and attitudes. Today, cultural policy in Luxembourg, as well as in other countries, faces a series of challenges, most notably that of not being exclusive. It faces the question of how to do justice to a diverse society, to different cultures, and to multiple perspectives. Every policy creates its privileged groups; every policy creates excluded and silenced groups. Debates surrounding colonial heritage – also in Luxembourg – are a case in point. As cultural policy has been implemented to a large extent by the elites, it has unquestionably led to exclusions. Reflections on how cultural policy can contribute to the

deconstruction of unequal power relations are necessary. This, however, is not a historical issue, but a societal and political one, which does not mean that historians should distance themselves from these debates. Culture may not necessarily be one of the most complicated words, but rather one of the most delicate concepts that need to be handled with care.

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Fabio Spirinelli  
Differdange, October 2020

## ANNEX

### Administrative evolution, 1918-1974<sup>2530</sup>

Legislative period - Start	Legislative period - End	Government	Ministry supervising culture (official title)	Minister	Period in office - Start	Period in office - End
1916	1917	Gouvernement Thorn	Directeur général de l'Intérieur et de l'Instruction publique	Léon Moutrier	24-02-1916	18-06-1917
1917	1918	Gouvernement Kauffman	Directeur général de la Justice et de l'Instruction publique	Léon Moutrier	18-06-1917	28-09-1918
1918	1925	Gouvernement Reuter	Directeur général de l'Instruction publique	Nicolas Welter (Indépendant appuyé par le Parti socialiste)	28-09-1918	15-04-1921
-	-	-	Directeur général de l'Intérieur et de l'Instruction publique	Joseph Bech (Parti de la droite)	15-04-1921	19-03-1925
1925	1926	Gouvernement Prüm	Directeur général des finances et de l'instruction publique	Etienne Schmit (Libéral)	19-03-1925	15-07-1926
1926	1937	Gouvernement Bech	Directeur général des Affaires étrangères, de l'Instruction publique et de l'Agriculture (Arts et Sciences)	Joseph Bech (Parti de la droite)	15-07-1926	24-03-1936
-	-	-	Ministère des Affaires étrangères, de l'Instruction publique et de l'Agriculture (Arts et Sciences)	Joseph Bech (Parti de la droite)	24-03-1936	05-11-1937
1937	1940	Gouvernement Dupong/Krier	Ministère des Affaires étrangères	Joseph Bech (Parti de la droite)	05-11-1937	10-05-1940
1940	1944	Gouvernement en exil	Ministère des Affaires étrangères	Joseph Bech (Parti de la droite)	10-05-1940	23-09-1944
1944	1945	Gouvernement de la libération	Ministère des Affaires étrangères	Joseph Bech (Parti de la droite)	23-09-1944	23-02-1945
-	-	-	Ministère de l'Éducation nationale	Pierre Frieden (CSV)	23-02-1945	12-11-1945
1945	1947	Gouvernement d'union nationale	Ministère de l'Éducation nationale	Nicolas Margue (CSV)	14-11-1945	01-03-1947
1947	1951	Gouvernement Dupong/Schaus	Ministère de l'Éducation nationale	Nicolas Margue (CSV)	01-03-1947	14-07-1948
-	-	-	Ministère de l'Education nationale	Pierre Frieden (CSV)	14-07-1948	03-07-1951
1951	1958	Gouvernement Bech/Bodson	Ministère de l'Éducation nationale, de la Population et de la Famille, et de l'Intérieur	Pierre Frieden (CSV)	03-07-1951	29-03-1958
1958	1959	Gouvernement Frieden	Ministère d'Etat	Pierre Frieden (CSV)	29-03-1958	23-02-1959
1959	1964	Gouvernement Werner/Schaus I	Ministère de l'Éducation nationale	Emile Schaus (CSV)	02-03-1959	15-07-1964
-	-	-	Ministère de l'Intérieur	Pierre Grégoire (CSV)	02-03-1959	15-07-1964
1964	1969	Gouvernement Werner/Cravatte	Ministère de l'Éducation nationale et des Affaires culturelles	Pierre Grégoire (CSV)	15-07-1964	01-02-1969
1969	1974	Gouvernement Werner/Schaus II	Ministère des Affaires culturelles et des Cultes	Madeleine Frieden-Kinnen (CSV)	01-02-1969	19-09-1972
-	-	-	Ministère d'Etat	Pierre Werner (CSV); Jacques Santer (CSV), secrétaire d'Etat	19-09-1972	15-06-1974
1974	1979	Gouvernement Thorn/Vouel/Berg	Ministère de l'Education nationale	Robert Krieps (LSAP)	15-07-1974	16-07-1979

<sup>2530</sup> Sources: Grand-ducal decrees on the constitution of the governments and the distribution of ministerial portfolios, and Thewes, *Les gouvernements du Grand-Duché de Luxembourg depuis 1848*.

## Evolution of the Cultural Budget: 1918-1940

Year	Ordinary spending on culture (LUF)	Share of ordinary cultural budget in ordinary state budget	Total spending on culture (LUF)	Share of total spending on culture in total state budget
1918	161,485	0.24%	161,485	0.24%
1919	198,435	0.20%	198,435	0.20%
1920	231,081	0.12%	231,081	0.12%
1921	177,355	0.12%	177,355	0.12%
1922	161,735	0.11%	175,735	0.12%
1923	179,422	0.09%	179,422	0.09%
1924	162,700	0.13%	162,700	0.13%
1925	201,550	0.16%	201,550	0.16%
1926	203,050	0.12%	203,050	0.12%
1927	243,250	0.12%	243,250	0.12%
1928	472,465	0.16%	472,465	0.16%
1929	739,200	0.24%	739,200	0.24%
1930	1,167,350	0.29%	1,167,350	0.29%
1931	1,143,085	0.25%	1,143,085	0.25%
1932	693,271	0.17%	693,271	0.17%
1933	491,001	0.15%	491,001	0.15%
1934	491,124	0.14%	491,124	0.14%
1935	515,755	0.16%	515,755	0.16%
1936	599,682	0.17%	599,682	0.17%
1937	633,632	0.19%	633,632	0.19%
1938	762,124	0.23%	762,124	0.23%
1939	1,023,197	0.29%	1,023,197	0.29%
1940	539,747	0.15%	539,747	0.15%

Spending on arts and sciences 1918-1940, expressed in Luxembourgish francs and in percentage of the state budget. Calculations based on the yearly state budgets as voted by the Chamber of Deputies.

Year	Institutions	Specified societies	Non-specific (Societies and individuals)	Mixed (State and societies)	International relations	Specific events	Cultural heritage	Total
1918	38,125	19,500	101,350	1,650	860	0	0	161,485
1919	46,125	21,500	128,300	1,650	860	0	0	198,435
1920	62,662	22,500	135,300	1,650	1,469	7,500	0	231,081
1921	54,936	22,300	85,000	1,650	1,469	12,000	0	177,355
1922	47,616	22,500	85,000	1,650	1,469	3,500	0	161,735
1923	62,762	22,500	85,000	3,210	950	5,000	0	179,422
1924	55,500	21,500	70,000	2,750	950	0	12,000	162,700
1925	81,500	30,500	76,000	2,750	3,800	0	7,000	201,550
1926	76,000	34,500	86,000	2,750	3,800	0	0	203,050
1927	87,000	43,500	105,000	2,750	0	5,000	0	243,250
1928	137,500	60,500	130,000	4,465	0	50,000	90,000	472,465
1929	134,000	83,500	230,000	3,150	0	8,550	280,000	739,200
1930	136,690	105,000	260,000	3,150	0	0	662,510	1,167,350
1931	414,935	105,000	270,000	3,150	0	0	350,000	1,143,085
1932	143,721	92,500	195,000	3,150	0	0	258,900	693,271
1933	100,351	57,500	155,000	3,150	0	0	175,000	491,001
1934	100,474	57,500	155,000	3,150	0	0	175,000	491,124
1935	105,105	57,500	155,000	3,150	0	20,000	175,000	515,755
1936	102,982	77,500	171,000	3,150	0	20,000	225,000	599,632
1937	102,982	32,500	230,000	3,150	0	40,000	225,000	633,632
1938	128,474	32,500	263,000	3,150	0	55,000	280,000	762,124
1939	354,297	32,500	203,000	3,400	0	100,000	330,000	1,023,197
1940	180,347	6,000	150,000	3,400	0	0	200,000	539,747

Ordinary spending on cultural according to destination, expressed in Luxembourgish francs.

<b>Year</b>	<b>Direct investments</b>	<b>Indirect expenses</b>	<b>Total</b>
1918	11,635	149,850	161,485
1919	14,635	183,800	198,435
1920	31,781	199,300	231,081
1921	31,855	145,500	177,355
1922	24,735	137,000	161,735
1923	45,922	133,500	179,422
1924	45,200	117,500	162,700
1925	43,050	158,500	201,550
1926	30,550	172,500	203,050
1927	37,750	205,500	243,250
1928	186,965	285,500	472,465
1929	355,700	383,500	739,200
1930	732,350	435,000	1,167,350
1931	678,085	465,000	1,143,085
1932	326,871	366,400	693,271
1933	213,501	277,500	491,001
1934	213,624	277,500	491,124
1935	238,255	277,500	515,755
1936	292,132	307,500	599,632
1937	306,132	327,500	633,632
1938	401,624	360,500	762,124
1939	722,697	300,500	1,023,197
1940	333,747	206,000	539,747

*Ordinary spending on culture according to nature, expressed in Luxembourgish francs.*

## *Evolution of the Cultural Budget: 1948-1974*

Year	Ordinary spending on culture (LUF)	Total spending on culture (LUF)	Share of ordinary cultural budget in ordinary state budget	Share of total spending on culture in total state budget	Ordinary spending on culture (in EUR and adjusted for inflation)	Extraordinary spending on culture (in EUR and adjusted for inflation)
1948	2,768,000	7,568,000	0.37%	0.19%	557,719	967,143
1949	4,053,000	13,173,000	0.21%	0.35%	793,305	1,785,089
1950	4,517,000	13,482,000	0.22%	0.35%	821,042	1,629,538
1951	4,549,000	19,389,000	0.21%	0.48%	799,660	2,608,689
1952	4,991,000	11,271,000	0.19%	0.27%	827,542	1,041,263
1953	5,886,000	11,796,000	0.19%	0.28%	967,970	971,917
1954	8,150,000	11,150,000	0.25%	0.26%	1,337,017	492,154
1955	8,718,000	11,118,000	0.26%	0.23%	1,414,311	389,346
1956	10,064,000	12,264,000	0.28%	0.28%	1,636,489	357,741
1957	11,043,000	13,018,000	0.27%	0.27%	1,747,041	312,452
1958	12,185,000	18,985,000	0.28%	0.37%	1,872,428	1,044,936
1959	13,387,000	23,087,000	0.30%	0.43%	2,057,137	1,490,569
1960	13,985,000	23,735,000	0.30%	0.44%	2,143,797	1,494,602
1961	18,092,000	35,342,000	0.37%	0.60%	2,751,184	2,623,142
1962	18,497,000	35,747,000	0.36%	0.57%	2,793,168	2,604,859
1963	23,930,000	42,930,000	0.43%	0.66%	3,587,769	2,848,628
1964	24,082,000	39,082,000	0.41%	0.58%	3,480,546	2,167,933
1965	27,244,000	29,244,000	0.38%	0.37%	3,817,871	280,274
1966	31,999,000	37,749,000	0.41%	0.43%	4,307,172	773,971
1967	40,400,000	44,900,000	0.48%	0.45%	5,203,344	579,580
1968	45,432,000	53,432,000	0.50%	0.51%	5,837,264	1,027,869
1969	46,899,000	46,899,000	0.48%	0.42%	5,885,022	0
1970	49,011,000	49,011,000	0.47%	0.41%	5,934,568	0
1971	57,177,000	57,177,000	0.48%	0.42%	6,656,924	0
1972	68,361,000	68,361,000	0.52%	0.47%	7,554,800	0
1973	77,985,000	77,985,000	0.53%	0.46%	8,152,451	0
1974	88,906,000	88,906,000	0.50%	0.44%	8,704,737	0

*Total spending on culture = ordinary spending + extraordinary spending. Share of ordinary spending on culture is calculated in relation to the total ordinary state budget; total spending on culture in relation to total state budget (ordinary + extraordinary). Numbers converted to EUR, then adjusted to changes in consumer price index. Reference (end date) for the calculation of the inflation rate: January 2015. Start date: January of the respective year. 1 euro = 40,3399 Luxembourgish francs. Note: The total amount for the arts and sciences section in the original state budget for 1964 comprises a mistake (LUF 24,079,000 instead of LUF 24,082,000), which has been corrected in the calculations.*

Year	Cultural production, creation and activities (C)	Research (R)	Public administration (PA)	Cultural institutions (I)	Objectified destination (H)	Non-national structures (N)	Specific events (E)	International relations (IR)	Total
1948	111,427	0	10,071	312,302	96,715	27,204	0	0	557,719
1949	160,894	0	9,783	415,149	172,248	35,231	0	0	793,305
1950	147,228	0	9,085	468,410	159,957	36,354	0	0	821,034
1951	164,361	0	14,941	451,600	137,117	31,641	0	0	799,660
1952	183,214	0	14,093	462,765	137,618	29,845	0	0	827,535
1953	193,229	0	13,978	487,766	231,879	32,891	8,220	0	967,963
1954	209,163	0	18,867	818,617	257,559	32,811	0	0	1,337,017
1955	267,674	0	20,281	793,782	283,898	48,670	0	0	1,414,305
1956	325,218	4,880	21,955	853,529	398,391	32,522	0	0	1,636,495
1957	380,477	6,331	21,360	903,819	403,420	31,642	0	0	1,747,049
1958	368,797	6,149	20,748	941,979	445,633	50,707	38,415	0	1,872,428
1959	368,797	6,149	20,748	1,165,102	445,633	50,707	0	0	2,057,136
1960	503,566	7,662	22,225	1,115,207	444,548	50,584	0	0	2,143,792
1961	499,538	7,600	55,504	1,443,416	691,904	53,222	0	0	2,751,184
1962	513,423	30,202	55,117	1,454,494	687,082	52,851	0	0	2,793,169
1963	557,729	59,973	81,709	1,477,537	967,032	67,466	374,817	1,500	3,587,763
1964	554,268	57,813	66,774	1,680,148	1,011,700	65,037	43,360	1,446	3,480,546
1965	629,912	70,070	62,359	1,885,393	1,051,021	119,116	0	0	3,817,871
1966	721,475	94,225	66,359	2,301,181	1,009,525	114,413	0	0	4,307,178
1967	717,393	90,159	62,467	2,291,920	1,352,353	689,056	0	0	5,203,348
1968	750,987	89,941	70,665	2,407,395	1,349,076	1,169,199	0	0	5,837,263
1969	733,449	87,840	73,910	2,530,361	1,317,569	1,141,894	0	0	5,885,023
1970	719,860	84,763	80,884	2,627,332	1,301,682	1,107,943	0	12,109	5,934,573
1971	709,620	81,501	68,458	2,821,481	1,729,518	1,065,305	0	181,041	6,656,924
1972	763,756	93,937	150,077	3,258,155	2,122,410	1,005,671	0	160,799	7,554,805
1973	769,507	88,858	112,170	3,702,238	2,216,742	1,071,522	0	191,409	8,152,446
1974	746,169	73,432	76,955	4,032,596	2,506,480	1,116,169	0	152,935	8,704,736

*Ordinary spending on culture according to destination. Numbers expressed in euros and adjusted for inflation. The differences between the total amount compared to that in the previous graph are the result of automatic rounding up or down, as each category was converted to euros and adjusted for inflation. Even a difference of one franc could cause a difference of several euros.*

<b>Year</b>	<b>Direct investments (D)</b>	<b>Indirect expenses (IN)</b>	<b>Mixed/Undefined (M)</b>	<b>Total</b>
1948	382,422	114,849	60,448	557,719
1949	499,705	156,583	137,017	793,305
1950	537,482	156,320	127,240	821,042
1951	533,341	160,844	105,475	799,660
1952	539,865	179,897	107,774	827,536
1953	576,569	189,123	202,278	967,970
1954	874,392	205,066	257,559	1,337,017
1955	823,794	330,944	259,566	1,414,304
1956	941,342	386,196	308,957	1,636,495
1957	935,454	487,265	324,316	1,747,035
1958	972,713	530,917	368,797	1,872,427
1959	1,195,836	492,503	368,797	2,057,136
1960	1,260,829	515,062	367,900	2,143,791
1961	1,613,730	529,191	608,263	2,751,184
1962	1,629,663	559,481	604,023	2,793,167
1963	1,655,949	604,958	1,326,862	3,587,769
1964	1,861,820	664,833	953,893	3,480,546
1965	2,059,163	875,849	882,859	3,817,871
1966	2,471,859	987,317	848,002	4,307,178
1967	2,534,056	1,510,128	1,159,160	5,203,344
1968	2,657,294	2,023,614	1,156,351	5,837,259
1969	3,093,029	2,791,994	0	5,885,023
1970	3,264,613	2,669,955	0	5,934,568
1971	3,728,444	2,928,480	0	6,656,924
1972	4,664,546	2,890,255	0	7,554,801
1973	5,025,279	3,127,171	0	8,152,450
1974	4,936,203	3,768,534	0	8,704,737

Ordinary cultural spending according to nature, expressed in euros and adjusted for inflation (reference: January 2015).

## Categorisation of the Post-War State Budget: Explanations

### **Categorisation according to destination**

The categorisation based on the destination of the budget allocation is more complex than the one used for the interwar period. In total, six categories are considered:

- The category of cultural institutions (I) includes all the expenses related to the national cultural institutions, i.e. institutions managed by or subordinated to the state. For the period analysed in this study, these institutions are the State Museums, the National Library and the State Archives;
- The category of non-national structures (N) relates to all regional and local institutions and structures (excluding specific activities) managed by sub-national authorities and subsidized by the state;
- The category “international relations and cultural diplomacy” (IR) includes bilateral and multilateral treaties, payments to international organisations, international exchanges, support for activities and culture abroad, and interregional projects;
- Cultural production, creation and activities (C) encompass subsidies and grants. In addition, some more specific cases are included in this category: organisation of exhibitions or productions of the ministry responsible for culture; campaigns organised by the ministry; acquisition of books and artworks with the clear purpose to support cultural production. All these elements support cultural production and creativity;
- The category of public administration (PA) encompasses every expense directly linked to the normal functioning of the ministry, of its services and commissions, to studies and surveys, etc. It includes indemnities, operating costs (*frais de fonctionnement*, only when no specification concerning culture, otherwise attributed to category C), salaries, and acquisition of material. These are costs that are necessary to organise cultural activities in the first place, such as machines, equipment, and arrangement of rooms;
- The category of objectified destination (H) includes expenses related to heritage, acquisition and restoration of objects, acquisition of artworks (as long as it is not specified that these are meant to support cultural production), monuments, buildings, but also the acquisition of terrains for purposes related to heritage;
- The category “research activities” (R) encompasses every expense directly related to research, but it was created for a very specific reason. For this same reason, it figures among the most problematic categories. For a long time, research did not exist as a separate, clearly identifiable section in the budget. Furthermore, cultural institutions,

- though comprised in category I, have been carrying out research. The article *Recherches scientifiques du musée d'histoire naturelle* (12.1.12.06) in the budget for 1971 illustrates this problem. Category R has been created for all budget articles that are not to be found under a separate section, but that can be attributed to research activities. Yet, category R does not necessarily encompass every expanse related to research, because it was impossible to break down the exact amount in mixed budget items. For many years, the section dedicated to culture included, for instance, a budget line entitled *Encouragements pour des activités littéraires, artistiques et scientifiques*;
- The last category to be introduced is entitled “specific events” (E) and relates to events that occur only once or for exceptional occasions, organised by the state or any other public authority. It does not include subsidies to events organised by associations, as these appear as intermediaries. Furthermore, it does not include campaigns, which take place over a longer period, include different activities and are supposed to exert a long-term impact.

An issue that appears through the explanations provided in this section is the constructed character of the categorisations. As far as possible, clear boundaries have been defined between these categories, but even then, they are not always clear enough. For more ambiguous cases, the inclusion of a budget item in a category can be a matter of interpretation. Every time an ambiguous budget item was indicated in several state budgets, it was subsumed under the same category in subsequent state budgets to avoid inconsistencies. Of course, other researchers might construct different categorisations. The categories are applied to many state budgets stretching over decades. These categories are anachronistic. Besides these issues, though, the main purpose resides in providing a detailed and structured analysis of the budget to produce insights into evolutions that would not be visible otherwise.

### **Categorisation according to nature**

Considering the nature of spending, the present study distinguishes between three categories: direct (D), indirect (IN), and mixed/undefined (M) expenses. This last category is the most problematic one. Indeed, in many cases budget lines do not provide enough information on whether the money was directly invested or distributed to intermediaries; budget lines might also comprise mixed expenses. All these cases are aggregated in category M.

Category D subsumes all expenses directly operated by the state for specific purposes. In these cases, there are no intermediaries receiving subsidies. Per definition, D encompasses all

PA expenses. Spending on state cultural institutions and *établissements publics* is also subsumed under category D. When budget lines relate to subsidies for public schools, these are still considered direct expenses, as the money stays within the ecosystem of the state. A problem, however, appeared with cases of budget articles such as “*Participation aux frais [...]*”. It can be a direct expense as well as an indirect expense. In these cases, it depends on what else is specified in the budget line. If the contribution concerns an activity of the ministry or the government itself, it falls under category D.

The category labelled indirect expenses (IN) generally encompasses those budget lines that include a third party, i.e. money is transferred to another actor for purposes that do not fall under direct state control. It generally relates to subsidies or grants that do not stay within the ecosystem of the state. From a legal perspective, money is transferred to a juristic person distinct from the state.

List of actors and committees of the Centenary Celebration in 1939

0 = Not member

1 = Member

2 = President

3 = Secretary

4 = Joined later

Name	Surname	Commission du centenaire	Comité du Cortège historique	Comité du Monument historique	Comité du drapeau national	Comité touristique	Comité linguistique	Comité des Auteurs du Livre du Centenaire	Comité restreint des Auteurs du Livre du Centenaire	Comité d'organisation de la soirée de gala du 19 avril 1939	Comité de presse et de propagande	Comité de l'illumination de la Ville de Luxembourg
Anders	Jérôme	once?	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	1	0	0
Berens	Adolf	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
Berg	?	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
Bervard	?	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Braunshausen	Nicolas	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
Calmes	?	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
Camille	Erdmer	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Duchscher	Max	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
Engels	Victor	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Etienne	Emile	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
Faber	Paul	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Frieden	Pierre	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0
Funck	Joseph?	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Glatz	Félix?	0	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Godefroid	Hary?	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
Goergen	Willy	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
Grégoire	Pierre	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Guill	?	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
Hanne	Adolphe	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Heldenstein	Frantz	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Hess	Joseph	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Jacquemart	Gustave?	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Jeitz	Georges	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Kesseler	Guillaume	0	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Koenig	Lucien	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
Koltz	Jean-Pierre	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0
Luja	Henri	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Majerus	Pierre	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	0	3	0	1
Mandres	François?	4	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
Margue	Nicolas	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
Medinger	Paul	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Meyers	Joseph	0	4	0	1	0	1	1	1	0	0	0
Muller	Paul	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Neumann	Tony? Emile?	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
Noppeney	Marcel	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
Nothumb	Albert	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0
Olinger	Joseph	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Palgen	Hélène?	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
Pauké	Venant	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Pétain	Jean	once?	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Petit	Nicolas	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Philippe	?	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Poutty	Stein	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
Probst	Edouard? Emile? Joseph?	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
Putz	M.	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Ries	Nicolas	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0
Schaul	?	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Scholtus	A.	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0
Schulté	?	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
Simmer	Louis?	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Simon	François	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Stein	Putty	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
Stoffel	Michel	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Thiry	Eugène?	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Trémont	Auguste	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Weber	Batty	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0
Weber	Paul	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Wehrer	Albert	2	0	0	2	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Wigreux	Paul	0	2	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1

Information based on the following folders in the National Archives of Luxembourg: ET-103, ET-105, ET-113, ET-143, ET-170, ET-205. Carlo Hemmer, Robert Metz and J.M. Weis also seemed to be involved, but it was not possible to identify in what function or in which committee.

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ET-132	IP-1844	MEN-0288
ET-142	IP-1850	MEN-1658
ET-170	IP-1856	MEN-1659
ET-174	IP-1857	MEN-1660
ET-190	IP-1858	MEN-1661
EPU-01-07804	IP-1861	P-272
EPU-01-13207	IP-1863	TP-491/TRP-03769
EPU-01-14440	MEN-0002	TP-540/TRP-04036
EPU-01-17501	MEN-0003	TP-540/TRP-04038
EPU-01-19693	MEN-0006	TP-540/TRP-04039
EPU-01-22286	MEN-0007	
FIN-03748	MEN-0008	

#### **Arquivo Bienal São Paulo (digitized resources)**

17-00001-01172

21-00001-01352

#### **Bundesarchiv Berlin-Lichterfelde, BArch Berlin**

NS 19/1163	R 55/20536	R 1506/1048
NS 21/98	R 55/20537	R 4901/13703
R 43-II/1350	R 56-V/55	R 4902/1483
R 55/219	R 57/133	R 4902/7085
R 55/20464	R 83-Luxemburg/10	
R 55/20535	R 83-Luxemburg/11	

#### **Centre national de l'audiovisuel, CNA**

AV000327	IA0003SG	IA000649
AV000347	IA0004PN	

## **Landeshauptarchiv Koblenz, LHA Ko**

662,005-123	662,006-501	662,006-916
662,005-212	662,006-882	662,006-917
662,006-340	662,006-915	

## **Musée national d'histoire et d'art – internal archives, MNHA archives**

Biennale-001	Separate shelf, unnumbered folder
Biennale-002	(Correspondance administrative.
Biennale-004	Lettres reçues [1944-1960])
Biennale-005	Separate shelf, unnumbered folder
Biennale-006	(Exposition Kutter)
Biennale-008	Separate shelf, unnumbered folder
D-00001	(Musées de l'Etat. Circulaires)
D-00002	Separate shelf, unnumbered folder
D-00003	(Musée d'histoire. Correspondance
D-00029	Générale – Lettres envoyées)
D-00032	Separate shelf, unnumbered folder
D-00046	(Musée d'histoire. Lettres reçues)
D-00088	Separate shelf, folder no. 1
D-00094	Separate shelf, folder no. 4
D-00095	Separate shelf, folder no. 5
D-00096	Separate shelf, folder no. 9
D-00097	Separate shelf, folder no. 12
D-00099	Separate shelf, folder no. 20
D-00142	Separate shelf, folder no. 25
D-00159	Separate shelf, folder no. 27
Separate shelf, unnumbered folder (Correspondance)	Separate shelf, folder no. 28
Separate shelf, unnumbered folder (Correspondance administrative. Lettres envoyées)	Separate shelf, folder no. 29
Separate shelf, unnumbered folder (Correspondance administrative. Lettres reçues)	Separate shelf, folder no. 30
	Separate shelf, folder no. 34
	Separate shelf, folder no. 37
	Separate shelf, folder no. 38
	Unnumbered box (Historique Musée national d'histoire naturelle)

Unnumbered folder (Bulletin de Documentation 1945-59)

Unnumbered folder (Expositions et projets 1959-1972)

Unnumbered folder (J. Meyers II [correspondances])

**Photothèque de la Ville de Luxembourg**

no. 1921/1/2005	no. 1939/3/3539	no. 1939/3/3547
no. 1923/1/2069	no. 1939/3/3540	no. 1939/4/3556
no. 1939/3/3533	no. 1939/3/3541	no. 1939/4/3561
no. 1939/3/3535	no. 1939/3/3543	no. 1939/4/3569
no. 1939/3/3536	no. 1939/3/3545	
no. 1939/3/3538	no. 1939/3/3546	

## Legal texts

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