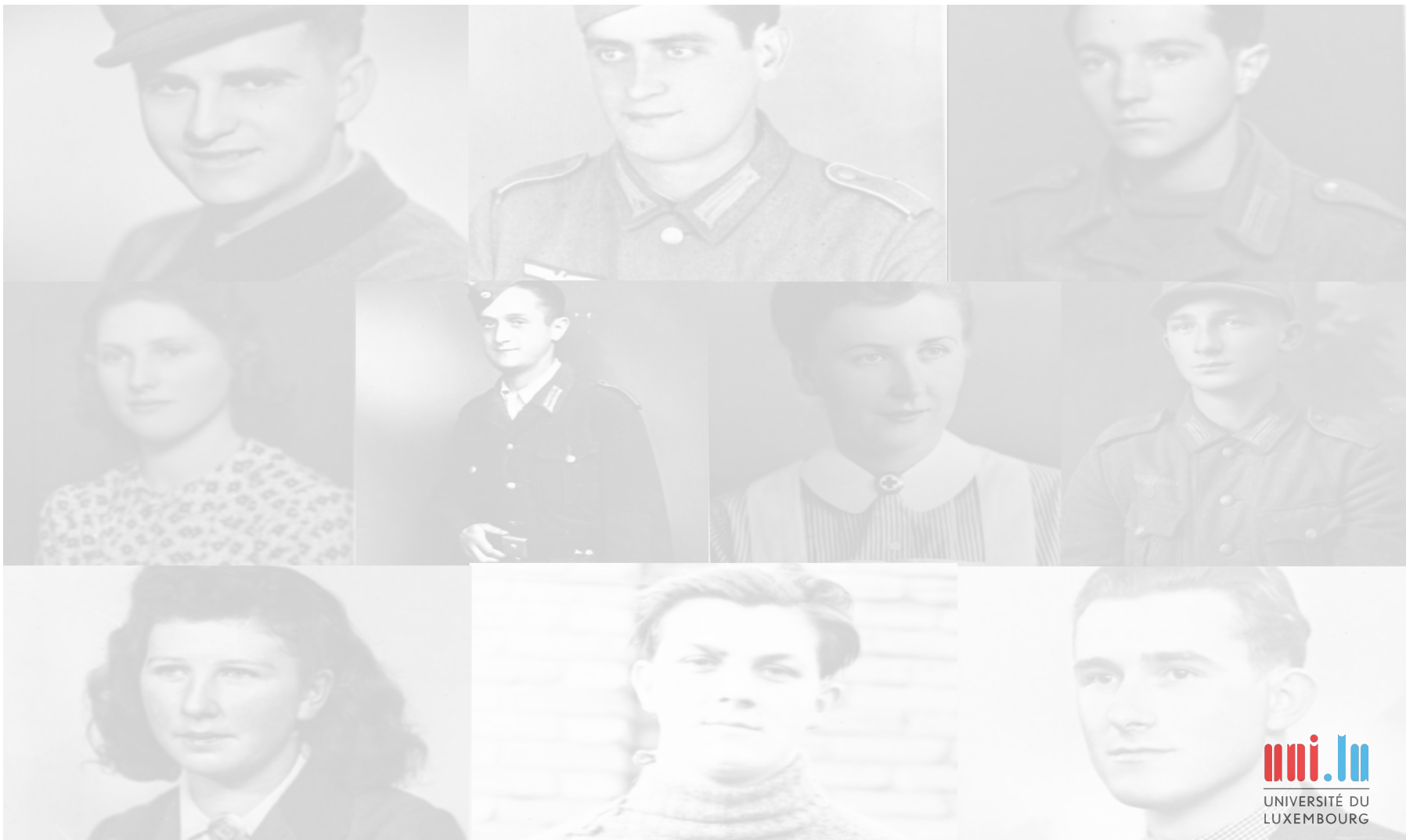


WARLUX – Soldiers and their communities in WWII: The impact and legacy of war experiences in Luxembourg



Introduction by *Nina Janz*

Team

Research Approach

Methodology, database, dataset

Research Part 1 - “Called to arms” - Experience at the front by *Michel R. Pauly*

Research Question, Sources

Research Part 2 - “At home” - Families and communities in occupied Luxembourg by *Sarah Maya Vercruysse*

Research Question, Sources

Outlook by *Nina Janz*

WARLUX: The impact and legacy of war experiences in Luxembourg



Introduction

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Team

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Concept: Juliane Tatarinov, Christoph Brühl, Denis Scuto

Introduction

Research Approach

Biographical and spatial sphere

linking individuals and their experience to their communities

→ Biographies of conscripts born 1920-1927 who served in Reichsarbeitsdienst and Wehrmacht

- around 12.000 in total (estimated numbers)
- Warlux case study – ca. 3000 individuals
- From three different groups
 - South – industrial, steel and mine workers (Schifflange, Esch/Alzette)
 - North – rural, farmers (Clervaux, Weiswampach, Ulflingen etc.)
 - High school students in different Lycée in Luxembourg – educated social group

Methodology

- bottom-up perspective, based on a biographical approach and the study of social profiles
- "zoom – in" into the individuals and their stories
- linking the individuals with their communities (town/village, family, friends, social background and experiences during and after the war
- Connection/linking to "home" – coping with occupation, with the absence of sons, brothers, husbands and others
- using the term of "situative opportunism" to emphasize the link between biographical research and sociological decision theory to question the cumulative heroism and the power of collective forms of decision-making in "forced environments", like the enrolment of young women and men
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Data set and tools

- enlistments, organizational documents, military records....
- Personal records (letters, diaries, memoirs....)
- interviews

Relational database “nodegoat”

- Filter and to analyse the data sets in its complexity
- linking the individual as object and its network (group)
- “flexible” category for using “situative” terms and labels
- visualizing and mapping
- collect, manage and filter the data set (building up an “archive”)

Research Part 1 - “Called to arms” - Experience at the front

by *Michel R. Pauly*

- General Topic
 - Soldiers’ experiences at the front
 - BUT “front” not necessarily “front line”, also includes “home front”
 - SO not only soldiers / men but also women
 - Experience at the “front” can be subdivided into 3 categories:
 - Reichsarbeitsdienst (RAD) (Reich Labour Service): home front, both genders
 - Kriegshilfsdienst (KHD) (War Support Service): home front, both genders
 - Wehrdienst (WD) (Military Service): front line, men only
 - Experience of both “fronts” was possible and common for men

- Research Topic
 - Research topic differs from General topic because general topic too broad
 - Because pool of birth years 1920-1927 includes too many persons
 - Approach: prosopography
 - Chosen group: high school students
 - Social class: educated middle-class
 - Choice of schools:
 - mainly only classical high schools
 - BECAUSE most technical high schools offered only a few years of education
 - SO students of technical high schools had left school before they were recruited

- Research Question
 - Forced enrolment in general:
 - What is it? What does the term mean (emotionally and legally)? How was it perceived from 1945 until now?
 - National Socialism and school:
 - What role did secondary education play? What changed during the German occupation? How was the new order perceived?
 - (Forced) enrolment of Luxembourgish high school students:
 - How many? Who was recruited and who was not and why? Any volunteers? Students' fates?
 - Post-war period:
 - How many survivors, wounded, dead? How did the students perceive the end of the war? How did society and the school system deal with the homecomers? How many could (not) finish their studies during the war and how many would (not) finish school after the war?

Research Part 2 - “At home” - Families and communities in occupied Luxembourg by *Sarah Maya Vercauysse*

- New focus : the social milieu of the soldiers and the people remaining at home
 - Role of families and communities
 - Impact/consequences
 - Coping strategies
- Combine spatial, biographical and temporal approach
 - **Spatial**: sampled regions; North-South
 - **Biographical**: individual experiences (bottom-up)
 - **Temporal**: evolutions during and after the war
 - Multitude of war-experiences
 - Inner-Luxembourgish comparison
- International comparison

- Primary sources:
 - Ego-documents: memoirs, Feldpost letters, diaries,...
 - Interviews
 - Records of community administrations/welfare centres/...
 - Police and intelligence reports of the German occupation
 - Records of national administration
 - Local newspapers
 - Documentation of (local branches of) post-war associations
 - Importance of dataset
- Next steps
 - Research questions
 - Methodology
 - Data collection
 - Archival material
 - Outreach to the public
 - Dataset

Outlook (2021-2023)

- completing data set
 - collection day, crowdsourcing
 - transcriptions of interviews
 - indexing and evaluating names
- completing database
 - import all names into the database (for case study)
- research analysis
 - linking names to communities and other networks/groups
- conference in 2022 about “war experience” (biographical approach...)
- public database/website - for other contributions and informative content and future research projects (similar like <http://www.ons-jongen-a-meedercher.lu>)

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@warlux_c2dh

Blog: “Digital War History” and WARLUX
<https://digiwarhist.hypotheses.org>